Jasper National Park

A Social and Economic History

By

Great Plains Research Consultants (1985)

Illustrations

34. “Jasper Airport”

36. [Construction of the Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line Through Jasper National Park]

54. “Foley, Welch and Stewart Cache, Jasper Park, Alta”

63. [Sketch of Proposed Subdivision for the Townsite of Fitzhugh Alberta]

64. “View of Part of Jasper, 1913”

65. “Administration Building at Jasper, Alberta

66. “Canadian National Railway Depot, Jasper”

67. “Jasper From Top of Coal Chutes, Alta., 1914”

68. “Pupils at School, Jasper, Alberta”

91. “Coal Mine Buildings at Pocahontas, Alta.; Looking North Across Athabasca River”

98. “Coal Cars, Jasper Area, Alta.”

169. “Three Climbers on Glacier on Mount Resplendent”

184. “Pack Horse Outfit, Jasper, Alberta”

195. “Charlie Matheson, Hinton, Alberta”

201. “Lunch at Maligne Canyon, Jasper, Alberta”

216. [Map of Jasper National Park]

227. “Prisoner of War Camp, 4 Miles Southwest of Jasper”

239. “Superintendent of National Parks, J.A. Wood, Jasper”

249. “Hot Spring, Jasper, Alberta”

250. “Tent City, Lac Beauvert, Jasper Park, Alberta.”

251. “The Bungalows, Jasper Park Lodge”

252. “Jasper Park Lodge”

253. “Jasper”

260. “Jasper Fish Hatchery”

262. “Mona Harragan, Guide for Brewster in Jasper National Park, Alta.”

264. “Cars on the Edmonton-Jasper Trail”

266. “Jasper National Park Entrance”

267. “Wapiti Campground, Jasper”

268. “Pine Auto Camp”

269. “Tourists Riding Snowmobiles on Athabasca Glacier in Jasper National Park, Alberta”

270. “Jasper and Banff”

272. “Jasper Winter Carnival”

274. “Canadian Junior Ski Championships, Jasper”

276. “Canadian National Railway Station, Jasper”

Preface

In April, 1984, Parks Canada (Western Region) engaged Great Plains Research Consultants to prepare a series of interrelated histories of selected topics in the history of Jasper National Park. It was intended that those histories would meet the needs of in-park interpretive staff who routinely require concise information about specific facts relating to the park and its history. This report is the result of the past year's endeavour.

Based on primary, secondary and oral sources, the report is divided into two sections, each corresponding to the interpretive needs of established Interpretive Management Units. Within each section are discrete chapters on single topics. In order that each chapter be self-contained, some repetition of material was essential, but it is to be hoped that repetition has been kept to a minimum. The report is fully indexed to facilitate use.

Many people had a hand in the preparation of this report. W.B. Yeo and R.G. Stuart of Parks Canada willingly shared their abundant knowledge of many topics within the report. The staffs of the Archives of the Canadian Rockies, the Provincial Archives of British

Columbia, the Glenbow-Alberta Institute and Archives, the Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta, the Public Archives of Canada, the McCord Institute, McGill University, and Canadian National Railways proved most co-operative, as always, and repeatedly steered the author in the right direction. Mary Porter and Shirley Klettl of the Jasper-Yellowhead Historical Society participated in the project with enthusiasm from the beginning, provided the author with unlimited access to the Society's impressive collections, and helped develop the oral history programme. And Merna Forster, Interpretive Officer at Jasper National Park, contributed much to the betterment of the report by providing access to numerous historical files, by putting the author in contact with local informants, and by sharing her own critical insights into the park's development. Any errors that remain in the report are, of course, solely the author's responsibility.

Finally, it should be noted that the opinions expressed in this report are exclusively those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of Parks Canada.

Part 1 Yellowhead Interpretive Management Unit

Transportation in the Yellowhead Corridor

Jasper House: A Transportation Depot

In his later years, Henry Moberly often muddled his facts. When sketching Jasper House as it was in the 1850s, the veteran fur trader neglected to include an entire building. When describing his association with the old post, he declared his pack train to have been the first to travel west from Fort Edmonton, although it was well known that several had preceded him. Such confusion was also evident in his claim that Jasper House "always was one of the best paying posts in the Saskatchewan district, as nothing but the most valuable furs were brought there."[1] During its sixty-odd years of operation, Jasper House brought its resident traders an abiding sense of loneliness, frequent famine, and crude, uncomfortable quarters, but very few furs of any description. It was never, in fact, a fur trading post of significance, but rather a small depot in a vast fur trade transportation network.

The North West Company started Jasper House in about 1813[2] as a way-station between its fur trade posts on the

North Saskatchewan River and those of the New Caledonia district across the mountains. This northern route through the Rockies had been blazed by David Thompson just three years earlier, after hostile Peigan Indians forced him to abandon a shorter passage through Howse Pass. With a party of twenty-four men, an equal number of horses, and an Iroquois guide named Thomas, Thompson became one of the earliest white explorers to cross the mountains by way of the Athabasca Pass. Only obscure fur traders had ever traveled there before. Even before departing, Thompson wrote that use of a northern pass "would place us in safety [from the Indians], but would be attended by great inconvenience, fatigue, suffering and privation."[3] Thompson's intuition foretold the arduous way of life that awaited several generations of traders and travelers. Nevertheless, with death as the possible price of using the Howse, Thompson became an eager supporter of the Athabasca Pass route to the Columbia River Valley.

Thompson's employer, the North West Company, had traded for furs on the west side of the mountains since 1805. The company partners believed that by harvesting the furs of the western slope, the North West Company could eventually establish British sovereignty over that territory and gain a trade monopoly for itself. For these reasons, the discovery of a satisfactory mountain pass was all important. The company's partners seriously considered and then rejected Thompson's new Athabasca

route as the main transportation route to the west, but the defiant traders who manned the canoes and pack trains soon made the Athabasca one of the few regularly-used passes south of the Peace River.

Two brigades crossed the Rockies annually, between about 1813 and 1846. The first came east from the Columbia in the spring, its canoes laden with furs from the Shuswaps, Kootenays, and other tribes of the interior plateau. By mid-May, the canoemen would usually reach the Boat Encampment near the height of land that divided the waters of the Pacific from those of Hudson Bay and the Arctic Ocean. There they were met by the express brigade from Fort Edmonton who exchanged mail for the winter's fur packs. This done, the men of the eastern brigade set out on horseback through the pass, and followed the Athabasca River to a point called the Portage, near the mouth of the Miette River. This was where the horses were generally brought for use, near the site of Henry House, a small cabin built by William Henry of the North West Company in 1810. At that point, canoe navigation could be resumed. The journey across the mountains took between ten days and one month, depending upon the weather. The return brigade, in the early autumn, followed the same route. Its cargo consisted of trade goods and provisions for posts west of the mountains, as well as the fur packs that the Hudson's Bay Company paid annually as a rental to the

Russian government for funding the indigenous on the west coast. **Can't read original**

Jasper House was constructed by the North West Company to assist these bi-annual brigades. When first built on the northwest shore of Brule Lake, Jasper House was but “a miserable concern of rough logs, with only three apartments….”[4] **Endnote 3 repeated in original document.** A trader named Francois Decoigne, whom the Company held in low esteem, was placed in charge of the post.[5] But, as one early visitor to the post noted, he "does not procure many furs for the [North West] Company, which has only established the house as a provision depot, with the view to facilitating the passage of the mountains to those of its employes [sic] who are repairing to, or returning from the Columbia."[6] Any trading between the resident trader and the local Indians usually involved provisions rather than furs. The abundant pasture of the broad valley enabled the trader to maintain a large herd of horses for the use of the passing brigade crews. Because of its limited utility, Jasper House was open only in the spring and fall. In summer and winter, the resident trader usually retreated to the more genial confines of Fort Edmonton.

Life at the post varied little over the years, regardless of whether the North West Company or, after 1821, the Hudson’s Bay Company, was in charge. It seems certain that the resident trader was seldom alone at Jasper House. When Ross Cox passed through in 1817, he

recorded that in addition to the old clerk Jasper Hawes (after whom the post was named), there were two Canadiens, two Iroquois, and three hunters, presumably local Indians or Metis.[7] In 1824, three years after the amalgamation of the rival North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, George Simpson indicated that the work at the post was sufficiently demanding to warrant the presence of a clerk as well as the trader. Despite this increase in manpower, however, he continued to describe Jasper House as "merely a temporary Summer post for the convenience of the Columbians in crossing…."[8]

Very little is known about the life led by these people. Maintaining the horse herds that roamed the valley at will took little time, and the men generally found themselves employed on the hunt and at the fishery. Mountain sheep and goats were plentiful and the local lakes yielded many whitefish. Of the mountain goats, an unusually gullible George Simpson said: "no sooner do they discover an Enemy than they roll down showers of stones…."[9] Dogs were often employed in the hunt for these and other game animals. Less cunning and more delectable by far were the local whitefish, which moved another passer-by to say that "he who eats the whitefish has no reason to envy the banquets of a London Alderman."[10] Gardening had been tried, but the severe winds and blowing sands rendered it next to impossible. On those rare

occasions when travelers stopped overnight, the place could take on a festive air. When Edward E[rmatinger]'s party and botanist David Douglas stayed overnight at Jasper House in 1827, "an old violin was found at our new lodgings, and Mr. E[rmatinger]'s servant being something of a performer, nothing less than dancing in the evening would suit them…."[11]

Both companies had long sought good trade relations with the natives west of the mountains. Of course the Nor'Westers were successful from the start, but the rival Hudson's Bay Company had tried, since 1818, to make inroads into the New Caledonia and Columbian districts of the western slope. To find a satisfactory route into those districts, the HBC engaged a free (unattached to any one company) Iroquois named Pierre Bostonnais – better known as Tete Jaune (or Yellowhead) – to prepare the natives of the northern interior of British Columbia for the arrival of the HBC's traders.[12] So valuable did George Simpson consider Tete Jaune's knowledge of the mountain country and its people that he instructed his subordinates to retain the Iroquois's services regardless of cost. It was on one of his trips through the mountains that Tete Jaune cached his furs in the western pass that would later bear his name. Just a few years later, Tete Jaune met his death at the hands of a party of belligerent mountain Indians.

The trade competition between the great fur companies

ended abruptly in 1821 when the Hudson's Bay Company absorbed the North West Company. Under the strict direction of George Simpson, the HBC tried earnestly to rationalize its trading practices. Elsewhere this usually meant the elimination of redundant posts or men, but in the Athabasca Valley it signaled a shift in the role of Jasper House and a re-examination of the Athabasca Pass as the main transportation route through the forbidding Rockies. At first Simpson intended to communicate with the posts of New Caledonia via the Smoky River, but in 1824 he changed his mind and ordered that a winter establishment be constructed close to the Yellowhead Pass. Unlike Jasper House, this was to be a fur trading post.

All did not go as planned. Simpson had hoped that the new post would capture the trade of the Shuswaps and the Iroquois on either side of the mountains, but during the first winter the resident trader was compelled to withdraw due to a lack of game and fish. This unexpected turn of events prompted Simpson to permit the Shuswaps to continue trading at Fort Kamloops and the Iroquois at Fort Assiniboine. At the same time, he recommended to his superiors that Jasper House be closed as a stopping house for the Columbians, who reportedly used the available horses to transport both heavy luggage and their families across the mountains. "Single Gentlemen," advised Simpson, "can or ought to be able to walk."[13]

Though known for several years the Yellowhead Pass route did not come into regular use until 1826. The lack of game animals on the western side of the mountains made it necessary to import all leather goods from eastern posts. The Yellowhead was chosen as the route over which the leather was transported and, as a result, the pass was just as often called the Leather Pass. After 1829, however, the Company decided to move these goods via the Peace River. The Yellowhead Pass apparently relapsed into disuse and the Athabasca regained its unchallenged prominence.

In 1830 Michael Klyne, who was in charge of Jasper House, built a new post several miles farther up the Athabasca River, near the point where it turns into Jasper Lake. Accounts of the post soon after its establishment are scarce, but when artist Paul Kane visited it in 1846, it consisted

> only of three miserable log huts. The dwelling-house is composed of two rooms, of about fourteen or fifteen feet square each. One of them is used by all comers and goers: Indians, voyageurs, and traders, men, women, and children being huddled together indiscriminantly; the other room being devoted to the exclusive occupation of [resident trader] Colin [Fraser] and his family, consisting of a Cree squaw, and nine interesting half-breed children. One of the other huts is used for storing provisions in, when they can get any, and the other I should have thought a dog-kennel had I seen many of the canine species about. This post is kept up only for the purpose of supplying horses to parties crossing the mountains.[14]

The sad condition of the little post reflected its diminishing importance. After the Treaty of Washington,

concluded in the year of Kane's visit, ceded most of the Columbia district to the Americans, that importance diminished even more. In the mid-1850's, starvation settled over the valley as the game disappeared. The situation became so serious that the Company prohibited freemen from hunting within about fifty kilometers of Jasper House. Spring often found the trader and his men eating wild horses. If Father De Smet's 1846 account of local appetites is any indication, it is easy to see why starvation followed swiftly on the heels of reduced game populations. He observed that in twenty-six days the Jasper House hunters killed 12 moose, two reindeer, 30 large big horn sheep, two porcupines, 210 hares, one beaver, two muskrats, 24 geese, 115 ducks, 21 pheasants, one snipe, one eagle, one owl, 30 to fifty whitefish daily and twenty trout, and still complained that theirs was a hard life and they were often obliged to fast.[15] Despite this problem, Jasper House persisted for another decade, until Governor Simpson of the Hudson's Bay Company decided in 1857 to close it for good. The herds of horses were rounded up and moved to Fort Edmonton, the Indians dispersed to other trading posts, and the resident trader withdrawn.

Despite convincing arguments for its closure, Jasper House quickly reopened. In the autumn of 1858, Henry J. Moberly, who had spent a summer at Jasper House some years

before, somehow persuaded Chief Factor W.J. Christie at Fort Edmonton that the post should be revived as a trading centre for the local Iroquois. Moberly arrived to find that "the dwellings were in a most dilapidated state – mud chimneys down, no windows, and some roofs fallen in…. It looked remote, unfriendly, and slow, and we felt exceedingly melancholy."[16]

Whatever his initial feelings, Moberly soon established a new routine for the post that must have left little time for loneliness. Despite the loss of trade in the lower Columbia Valley, the Hudson's Bay Company still possessed its New Caledonian posts in the northern interior and consequently maintained a herd of 350 horses in the Athabasca Valley for the benefit of those crossing the mountains.[17] Moberly's men had to ensure that these horses were in good health and available when needed. Provisioning also occupied much of their time. Hunting parties set out regularly, remained in an area until its game animals were exhausted, and then moved to another favourable hunting ground. With only muzzle-loading, smooth-bore .28 calibre arms at their disposal, however, it was difficult to hit game at a distance. Once slaughtered, the meat of the moose, caribou, sheep, bear and marmots had to be dried and cached. The men also netted whitefish in the Athabasca River and, in the winter months, trapped some marten, foxes, and lynx. Much of the trade they conducted with the Indians involved mooseskins,

which they used to construct the many boats needed by the transmontane travelers.

This busy way of life lasted only a short time. By the early 1860s Jasper House usually received only a semi-annual visit from a trader, and even this diminished over time. In 1884 the Company finally decided to abandon the post permanently.

By the time of its abandonment, Jasper House was a relic in more than one sense. Of its physical decrepitude, there can be no doubt. Ill-maintained for decades, and seldom used, Jasper House had degenerated from the picturesque Swiss-style log establishment James Hector had visited in 1859 to “two wretched little log cabins” in 1872.[18] More importantly, it had become the last local symbol of the dying fur trade of the mountains. The annual brigades had not used the Athabasca Pass for decades and the local Indians secured few furs over a winter. If its new-found insignificance as a fur trade transportation depot was not sufficiently evident in its forlorn aspect, it could surely be read in the activities of the transcontinental railway survey crews who entered the valley in 1872.

Seekers of a Railway Route

The idea of a transcontinental railway had been raised as early as the 1850s. It was seen as a means of bringing

the far-flung and diverse British North American colonies into a lasting political and economic union. Rarely, however, did those visionaries (or madmen, as some believed) who recommended railway construction across an empty and inhospitable land have any idea of possible mountain pass routes. Even those who attempted the less difficult task of identifying the best horse route across the Rockies – such as explorer Henry Youle Hind, who wrote such a pamphlet to assist the Overlanders in 1862[19] -- relied upon earlier fur traders' accounts rather than personal knowledge when recommending the Athabasca Pass. Only Dr. James Hector, who explored possible railway routes through the mountains in 1859 as a member of the British-sponsored Palliser expedition, drew his conclusions from first-hand knowledge.

It was to be a northern rail-line. This notion was based not only on Hector's pass expedition, but on other exploration work done in the late 1850s and early 1860s, which declared that the southern prairies were like a desert while the more wooded northern regions had for decades grown excellent crops of all descriptions. This was important, for the railway would need freight shipments from a populated North West if it was to survive financially.

It was undoubtedly with relief that Sandford Fleming, the chief engineer of the railway, noted the happy

coincidence of low gradient northern mountain passes northern agricultural potential. Without undue concern, then, he was able to write in one of his first reports to the government that "it appeared from all information that could be gathered from different sources that, of all the passes through the Rocky Mountains, those named the Howse and Yellow Head Passes, would prove most eligible for the Railway."[20] Preliminary surveying work had determined that in the contest between the Howse and the Yellowhead, the latter won handily. It "promised to be less costly; to have a generally better alignment, with less severe gradients and fewer difficulties of construction, and to be no longer than the Howse Pass route."[21] Much was at stake in this preliminary decision, and to confirm the soundness of his conviction, Fleming undertook a personal reconnaissance of the old routes across the plains and through the northern mountains in the summer and fall of 1872. Parties of surveyors were already in the field and Fleming's expedition hoped to meet them between Jasper House and the Yellowhead Pass.

The man in charge of the Athabasca Valley survey parties was Walter Moberly, a half-Polish engineer who had sought gold in the Cariboo in 1858, helped to survey the city of New Westminster in 1859, and went on to become a member of the colonial legislature of British Columbia. He was the brother of Henry J. Moberly, who had been the resident trader at Jasper House for several years. His job

was to confirm the superiority of the Yellowhead Pass route. This task he detested, as his personal choice was the Howse Pass. He and Fleming would ultimately part company over the issue, but for the time being Moberly instructed his survey crews to move north from Howse Pass and begin work in the Athabasca Valley.

The life of those who blazed the railway route across the mountains was not easy. Pathfinders, axemen, chainmen, transit-men, rodmen, levelers, and engineers – they all endured the same trials. Isolated for months, often years, in some of the wildest country the nation could offer, living on bacon, beans, and bannock, and toiling in all kinds of weather with companions of dubious character, the men needed and eagerly seized any form of relief available. The less outgoing wrote voluminous letters, letters that might not be delivered for half a year. The more gregarious endlessly played cards and sought out the illicit liquor that found its way to every survey camp. Others sought companionship among the local Indians, and some got more than they anticipated. One surveyor with Moberly's crew accepted an invitation to an Indian encampment on the Fiddle Creek committed the error of sitting on a bearskin rug next to a young native girl, and found himself betrothed. Only the speedy offer of a ring in exchange for his freedom saved the day.[22]

The surveyors carried on their work in the Athabasca

Valley through 1873. By then there could be no doubt: the Yellowhead Pass offered the best route through the Rockies. Yet that sound geographical preposition, raised up by the engineering genius of Sandford Fleming and carried through by his surveyors in the field, was dropped ignominiously by maladroit politicians in Ottawa. Scandal tainted the government's plans for the CPR, and then a serious depression dealt them another bad blow. When those plans were finally revived, in 1881, the railway was firmly in the hands of a private investment syndicate that swiftly abandoned Fleming's cherished northern route in favour of one nearly three hundred kilometers to the south. Traffic along the Jasper House trail dwindled to almost nothing and life in the Athabasca Valley resumed its customarily unhurried pace.

Two Northern Transcontinental Railways

More than twenty years passed before the prospect of not one, but two, railways promised to breathe life back into the remote valley of the Athabasca. By then, the prairie west was rapidly filling with settlers whose livelihood depended on easy access to the railways that carried their grain to distant markets. Because the CPR served only the southern region, it was possible for two competing lines – the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway and the Canadian Northern Railway – to convince the federal government to grant them operating charters in western Canada. With no

great concern about the senseless duplication involved, the optimistic government stipulated that both lines would have to serve the northern agricultural frontier.

The Grand Trunk Pacific was first in the field. Its initial inclination was to follow the route laid out by Fleming in the 1870s, but once a terminus at the mouth of the Skeena River was decided upon, the company began to consider all the favourable northern mountain breaches – the Yellowhead, the Athabasca, the Peace River, and the Pine River passes. However, in 1906, when the Canadian Northern filed an application to pass through the Yellowhead, the GTP mischieviously declared its desire to use the same route. A political storm broke and threatened to become a federal-provincial convulsion before it was decided to allow both lines to cross the Rockies via the Yellowhead. Just as political maneuvering had sabotaged the Athabasca Valley’s first railway prospect, the same kind of manipulation now blessed it with two transcontinental lines.

The Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern were built through the valley so few years apart that there were no genuine differences between the methods of construction used. If anything, the work of the Grand Trunk Pacific in the mountains provided an example for the Canadian Northern to emulate. That work began, as did all railway construction, with a flying survey to lay out a

general route through the terrain ahead of the tracklayers.[22] Even this haphazard, tentative survey proved difficult in mountains that "had no thought for the railway-builder…the privations he would have to suffer, the perils that he would have to face, and the fatalities that their conquest would occasion….[23] Almost 26,000 square kilometers of isolated country among the peaks would be explored anew before even the approximate route of the line could be selected with some measure of confidence. With beans and bacon as a diet staple, with the simplest of personal comforts, with little heed to all but the poorest weather, and with only their horses for companionship, the railway 'spy' (as the reconnaissance man was known) and his native guide plumbed the wilderness just ahead of the surveyors.

Two weeks or more after the flying survey was initiated, the survey crews began to run their trial lines. Based on the tree blazes and other markings made by the 'spy', axemen would carve possible rights of way through the thick timber flanking the mountains so that surveying instruments could be used. Then, with transit and level, the surveyors often laid out as many as fifty potential lines in order to reach a final decision about the best route. In this methodical manner, the surveyed route inched forward. All the while, the spy and his guide stayed a step ahead of the location surveyors.

Semi-starvation was routine in the field. So that

progress would not [be] impeded unduly, the survey camps were stocked with a minimum of food. Because the men rarely had time to hunt game, however, it was necessary to set up provision caches along the intended route. This was the job of the packers, who were hired as needed, usually at places like Fort Edmonton and Lac Ste. Anne, to carry in the provisions on horseback.

These were the true trail-blazers of the Rockies. The nature of their work meant that they inevitably preceded the location survey crews and thus the tough job of clearing a reasonably good path through the bush fell to them. Of course many trails had been developed between Fort Edmonton and Jasper House, but decades of fires, windstorms, and disuse made their clearance a veritable nightmare. No packer ever had a good word to say about the condition of the local trails. It was commonly said that the pack-trains moved down the trails at a tortoise's gallop. Once a strategic cache site was reached, the packer had to construct a small shack in which to store the provisions. This was "a sturdy, windowless log building…equipped with a door that, when it swung at all, swung out, so that inquisitive bears could not easily push it in."[23] **This is endnote # 24 in the original document.** Still, thefts by bears were not unknown. One surveying party related their experiences: "The animals had pierced tins of milk, fish, and fruits, and had sucked dry the contents. Dried fruits, butter, and

other comestibles had been demolished, while those edibles which did not appeal to Bruin's palate had been scattered and trampled to destruction."[24] Only a long march to the next packer's cache provided relief.

The timing of survey and construction activity along the lengthening rail-line was a carefully choreographed performance. The latter could not occur until the former was concluded. Most of the construction work on the Grand Trunk Pacific through the foothills and mountain region did not begin until 1911, despite the fact that survey crews had been at work since 1906. Construction camps were established at about three kilometer intervals along the intended right of way. Wolf Creek camp, at the junction of that stream and the Macleod River, became the official starting point for construction of the mountain division of the Grand Trunk Pacific, which stretched west as far as Tete Jaune Cache. As the line advanced, goods for the crews were brought as far as possible by train and thence by wagon along tote roads or by packtrain.

Construction work on the mountain section began, as it did on virtually the whole length of the northern transcontinental line, with brush clearing. Equipped with Swedish axes and grub-hoes, a small army of labourers cut and cleared away the dense timber stands and stumps from the right of way, stacked and burned them. Where necessary, muskegs were drained and then the horse-drawn Fresno scrapers and men with shovels and pick-axes

fashioned a graded roadbed between the pines and poplar. Rails and other supplies were brought as far as possible along the existing rail line by train, and then freighters moved them to the construction sites by horse-drawn wagons in summer and by sleigh in winter. Steel rails, barrels of spikes, boxes of fishplates, and flatcars of ties were the staple items from which the track materialized. On the uncomplicated stretches of the roadway, the railhead would advance as much as 3.2 kilometres during a ten-hour workday. Once the track was laid and usable, ballast cars dumped their loads of gravel uniformly among the ties to prevent shifting from the disruptive vibration of the trains.

And so the track moved westward, leaving only temporary gaps where a creek had to be bridged or an obstructing rock blasted. It was slow work, repetitive work, hard work. As was the case with the Canadian Pacific Railway to the south, construction through the relatively short mountain division took as long as work on the entire prairie stretch. But by the end of 1912 Grand Trunk Pacific steel had reached Tete Jaune Cache, while within two years the tracks of the Canadian Northern would lie a mere forty metres away throughout the valley of the Athabasca.

In these pre-diesel days, the railways required servicing depots, called divisional points, at regular

intervals along the line. There roundhouses were built in which engines could be repaired and refurbished; there the sidings were as much as a dozen tracks wide to permit the most efficient assembly of trains; there the regular divisional train crews made their permanent homes. These needs led to the establishment of the rival divisional points of Fitzhugh (later Jasper) on the Grand Trunk Pacific line, and of Lucerne, just across the Alberta-British Columbia boundary, on the Canadian Northern route.

For about a decade, between 1913-14 and 1924, precisely the same activities occurred in these railway towns, a duplication of effort in the same sense that the two railways offered identical services through the mountain region. And, just as this senseless duplication of rail services across the parklands and through the mountains ceased with the amalgamation of the Grand Trunk and Canadian Northern as the Canadian National Railway during the Great War, so too the burden of two divisional points was relieved in 1924 through the consolidation of services at Jasper. But where the lifeblood of a community is at stake, opposition to such consolidation was to be expected. The citizens of both communities fought a protracted and often bitter campaign to retain their divisional point status. Ultimately, Canadian National came to favour the retention of Lucerne as the divisional point, but a Royal Commission reversed this decision.[25] For years hard feelings prevailed between the

Canadian Northern railroaders from Lucerne and those who had worked for the Grand Trunk Pacific at Jasper.[26] The railway may have unified its services, but its people remained divided.

The Advent of the Automobile

Even before the consolidation of the railways in 1917, Jasper Park had had its first experience with the internal combustion engine that would ultimately dominate transportation to and from the park. It arrived from Edmonton in 1915 or 1916 in the form of a motorcycle aboard a packhorse. Of course there was nothing that could justifiably be called a road from Edmonton to Jasper and the owner had no alternative but to pack his motorcycle in or ship it by rail. In fact, the streets of the townsite were less than a year old. Colonel S. Maynard Rogers, who served as the first resident park superintendent, was incensed by the presence of this mechanical abomination in his sedate mountain reserve and he ordered his small contingent of wardens to pursue it on horseback, capture it at all costs, and eject it from the park. A.C. Webb, an early Jasper resident and one-time manager of the station restaurant, recalled this local variation of the contemporary Keystone Kops routine: “He [the motorcyclist] couldn’t go far because there were no roads to go on, so they finally captured him. I don’t

know whether they fined him or not, but they put him and his motor cycle on the train and shipped him out of the park as fast as they could put him there!"[27]

Even the imperious Superintendent Rogers could not prevent the intrusion of automobiles, much as he objected to their proliferation. That he himself had one at Jasper, which he of course used only for official business, did not alter his conviction that in the hands of the masses the automobile was little more than a plague upon all efforts to increase local wildlife populations. Nonetheless, it appears that cars were permitted in the park as early as 1916.[28] Perhaps the apparent ease with which this permission was granted reflected the difficulty of using a car in the park. In a single paragraph written in early 1918, acting superintendent R.S. Stronach identified the two central problems confronting those who would use cars in the park. In the spirit of austerity that guided all governmental spending during the Great War, Stronach advised his superior that for reasons of economy the park roads might be closed to automobile traffic during the war. "I do not think," he wrote, "[that] prohibiting the use of cars here would affect more than two or three people as any cars to be used must be brought in by rail at considerable expense. Further[more,] the roads available for driving purposes do not exceed at the most more than 8 miles…."[29] Not until

the mid-1930s would the condition of the abandoned railway grade (and of the old tote road farther west) to Jasper Park from the east be good enough to permit routine automobile traffic.

Access to the park from outside was one thing; the quality of roads within the park was, however, quite another matter. Because the Dominion Parks Branch deemed good roads essential to the development of tourism within its national parks, superintendents were permitted to spend rather lavishly on road, trail, and bridge construction for horse-drawn vehicles. This work awaited only the appointment of a resident superintendent, which took place in March 1913. Superintendent Rogers decided to confine his initial road-building activities as much as possible to the east side of the Athabasca River which the tracks of the Grand Trunk Pacific followed, in order to avoid excessive and costly bridge-building and to open as much as the park as possible to the first influx of tourists.[30] In this manner, roads and railways became complementary to one another within the park.

The surveying and construction of a replacement for the Miette River tote road which had been literally destroyed during the construction of the Canadian Northern Railway was undertaken first. It stretched from the townsite to Snaring Junction.[31] By the mid-1920s this old road, extended to include an abandoned railway grade farther east, had become known as the Jasper Highway.

Then, just months after his arrival in Jasper, Rogers learned that a Dr. Mitchell and his party of twenty were planning to camp on Teck Island in Pyramid Lake during early July. In preparation for this visit, the superintendent issued orders for the construction of a permanent road to that lake, just northeast of the townsite. During the same season, Rogers also approved the laying out of trails to Punch Bowl Falls and the Miette hot springs, from Maligne Canyon to Medicine Lake, from Medicine Lake to Jack Lake, and to Caledonia, Cabin lakes and the Stoney River. This was the extent of road and trail construction within the park before the Great War.

As the war drew to a conclusion in 1918, Alfred Driscoll, who acted as superintendent while Rogers was on overseas service, took up the work begun by his superior. His main initiative was the development of a 22.5 kilometre carriage drive from the townsite to Mount Edith Cavell, a magnificent 3400 metre peak that had been named to commemorate the martyrdom of a British nurse executed by the Germans in Belgium. Plans were also made for construction of a rustic chalet at the foot of the mountain, in accordance with government policy on tourist attractions, which would encourage visitors to remain several days and explore the surrounding territory.[32]

At about the same time, some tracks of each railway

were taken up east of Jasper and shipped to France for war purposes, which promoted Driscoll to recommend that a highway be made along the abandoned roadbed.[33] Nothing came of this immediately. In the next half dozen years, only limited appropriations were made for the improvement of this and other park roads, yet by the end of the 1924 only 66.6 kilometres of roads suitable for auto traffic were in existence.

This limited network did not seem to dampen the enthusiasm of motorists for trips to the park. So great was interest in establishing better communication with Jasper that the Edmonton Automobile and Good Roads Association undertook a reconnaissance from the provincial capital through the Athabasca Valley in 1921.[34] The survey party agreed wholeheartedly on the potential for a good highway along the abandoned railway line and in the following year the Association raised $4,000 for the removal of the remaining ties and rails. Thereafter, all its efforts were directed at construction of a highway from Edmonton to the west coast. In this, the Association got no help from the Canadian National Railway, which of course wished to maintain its monopoly on traffic through the mountains. To prove the feasibility of such a highway, the Association even offered gold medals to the drivers of the first car to complete the drive from Edmonton to Victoria, British Columbia. The honour was taken by the four drivers of two competing Edmonton cars

in 1922. Unfortunately, local railroaders later revealed that both teams of drivers had cheated by shipping their cars by rail along part of the route.[35]

While strenuously campaigning to build the Yellowhead Pass road, the Association continued to advise many unflappable motorists on the best means of reaching Jasper by car. A typical letter from the Association to an enquiring automobile owner, written as late as 1927, went as follows:

> We regret to advise that it is impossible to motor from Edmonton to Jasper. There is a good motor road from Edmonton to Edson, and from Edson to Obed, a short distance west, a fair one, but from there to [the] Park boundary, a distance of some thirty-five miles [,] there is no passable road. Some tourists are shipping their cars from Edson to Jasper at a cost of some $42, for one way only. Once in the park there are excellent roads.[36]

Some intrepid motorists, like Merle Clark, did manage to drive into the park by car, even without the incentive of a gold medal.[37] In May of 1928, Merle shipped a new Chrysler by rail to Edson, and then set out along the old railway grade. Once as far as Marlboro, he could not find any sign of the trail he had been expecting, nor could he locate anyone who knew anything about Jasper Park. Finally, after much searching, he found the old freighters' tote road that led him into the park. The quality of this road, with its unrelenting muskeg and cavernous potholes, was such that at it once took him eight hours to go 12.8 kilometres. Despite intermittent

successes in trying to have the provincial government upgrade this road, it was 1959 before cars could follow a paved highway to Jasper.

Park superintendents were obliged to generate revenue whenever possible and, encouraged by the prospect of additional revenue from this occasional motor traffic, a toll gate was constructed across the road at the east boundary of the park. In 1926 a total of six cars passed through the gate, but by 1932, when the condition of the road was much improved, the number had risen to 720.[38] The first gate-keepers had to live in a tent adjacent to the gate, which straddled the roadway and prevented unauthorized entry.[39] Each motorist had to register with the gate-keeper and pay $2 for the privilege of entering and camping in the park. In exchange, he received a metal buffalo-shaped plate that he attached to the car radiator with wire. To prevent abuse of this registration system, the park changed the metal from which this 'buffalo plate' was made on a three-year basis, from copper to aluminum to brass. Jasper residents who owned cars were given a special red strip to attach to their licence plates so that they would not be charged entry fees.

Airplanes in the Park

In the aftermath of the Great War, Jasper Park residents were also introduced to the wonders of the airplane. On

returning home, many of those young men who had flown fragile wooden crafts over Europe during the war swiftly became the nucleus of a Canadian commercial air service. Others sought the security of government employment and joined the Canadian Air Board or provincial forest fire services. These were the enterprising pilots who contributed to increasing geographical knowledge of Jasper National Park and helped to buttress its sagging tourist trade during the depression years.

The first record of planes landing at Jasper dates from 1920. In the autumn of that year, three planes belonging to the Alaskan Flying Expedition (which tested the feasibility of a route between the lower forty-eight United States and Alaska) put down at "Henry House landing field," prior to proceeding to Edmonton.[40] In reporting this event to his superiors at Ottawa, Superintendent Rogers took the opportunity to suggest that this landing strip, situated near the Athabasca River some 14.5 kilometres from Jasper, might be upgraded in the near future. "Owing to the distance of this landing ground from Jasper, with its consequent inconveniences and extra expense," he proposed "recommending in the next years [sic] estimates the preparing of one of two sites within a mile and a half of Jasper, as it is likely such will be required during the coming year…."[41]

This otherwise unremarkable event demonstrates two points about early aviation in the park. First, the

existence of the Henry House landing field makes it plain that these Alaskan Flying Expedition planes were not the first to land at Jasper. And, secondly, Roger's recommendation to Ottawa indicates that some discussion had already occurred regarding more intensive use of planes in the park.

Undoubtedly Rogers had learned firsthand of the capabilities of airplanes during his overseas wartime service. He favoured bringing them into the park for mapping and fire control purposes and never missed an opportunity to inform Ottawa of his strongly held view. In 1921 he finally had the chance to test the wisdom of that opinion in the air. Through the co-operation of the Canadian Air Board, Rogers was taken up in a DeHavilland 4 float-plane for three days of trial aerial reconnaissance and photography. He was the photographer. He and the pilot flew mainly over the southern part of the park, using lakes for landing and takeoff as necessary.

Enthralled by the experience, the usually reserved Rogers was scarcely able to contain his childlike excitement as he wrote to Parks Commissioner J.B. Harkin:

> I am pleased to say that I not only enjoyed every minute of these three days [sic] experiences but have suffered no bad effects from the same save that I am a little hoarse from having to expose myself to the strong wind caused by the great speed [required] so as to secure the photos…. Without wishing to appear too enthusiastic I may say that it appears almost incredible that one could have covered such enormous distances in so short a time and with such absolute comfort and enjoyment.[42]

On a more professional level, Rogers advised Harkin that conditions in the mountains in no way precluded the use of airplanes for fire surveillance and fighting, as well as for aerial mapping. He hoped that 1922 would see the establishment of a permanent hydro-plane station at Jasper for these purposes. But by the time the Department would consider such a plan in earnest, the depression of the 1930s had settled over the country, reducing government appropriations across the board, and ending all hope of a government-operated aerodrome at Jasper.

In the interim, private enterprise tried valiantly to supply air service to Jasper Park, although for very reasons different from those espoused by Superintendent Rogers. In 1928 Rogers received a request from a man named G.R. Baker, who wished to establish a private aerodrome for tourist flights and aerial instruction.[43] Nothing came of this. Nine months later, acting superintendent R.H. Knight had to explain to a Canadian National Railway official that it would not be feasible to land planeloads of tourists on the railway's Jasper Park Lodge golf course. This sensible decision was not made for safety reasons, but rather because none of the fairways seemed long enough.[44] All that Knight could suggest was that if the Lodge would notify him of the impending arrival of a tourist flight, he would see to it that smudges were lit on the otherwise unmarked Henry

House field. By 1930 an Edmonton lawyer named Alfred Koch was negotiating with Canadian National for the rights to an aerial concession in connection with Jasper Park Lodge, but whether or not this deal was concluded is not known.[45]

The depression years witnessed further development of tourist-oriented air transport into and around Jasper National Park. In 1932 a Jasper correspondent to the Edmonton Journal lightheartedly reported that "mountain 'barnstorming' threatens to develop into a new mode of sight-seeing in this mountain resort and the old-timers with their packs and saddles gaze aloft in disgust. Instead of hitting the trail to fish…all the indolent need do now is troll from their aeroplane."[46] Presumably this sport-fishing service was provided by pilot Bill Holland, who sought and received permission from the federal government to operate a daily passenger run from Banff to Jasper during the summer months with a Boeing 'flying boat' and to conduct charter tours throughout the park.[47] Superintendent Rogers, who was back in control of the park, also convinced the Department to allow him to hire Holland for emergency fire suppression work only at a rate of $47.50 per hour.

Holland used both Lac Beauvert and Lake Edith for his commercial operations. Canadian National raised no objections to this arrangement, which suggests that Holland's chief clients were guests of the luxurious Jasper Park Lodge. But those tourists who boated

frequently on Lake Edith wasted no time informing the Parks Branch of their displeasure at the noise of Holland's planes and of the danger to canoeists.[48] The park authorities obviously considered this service to be a considerable asset, as they allowed Holland to continue his landings on Lac Beauvert, which he did "with perfect safety."[49] Holland provided these services at least until 1936.

In 1934 Canadian Airways Limited, the fledgling commercial carrier that would ultimately become CP Air, announced to the federal government that it planned to include Jasper on its Edmonton route during the summer months. Superintendent Rogers obligingly informed the company that landings could be made with seaplanes on Lac Beauvert or Pyramid Lake, or at Henry House field if wheeled aircraft were used. Apparently to facilitate matters, the government undertook improvements to the Henry House field and renamed it National Park Airport.[50] It is not known, however, whether Canadian Airways ever initiated this service. It is possible that the carrier did not, as local service groups called for upgrading of the field in 1940 for use as an Empire air training base.[51] On the other hand, Superintendent Wood argued in favour of the proposed upgrading because of the post-war benefits when, as both Canadian Airways and TransCanada Airways had indicated, Jasper would become a regular stop

on the Edmonton-Prince George route.

Interestingly, there was never any question of the appropriateness of allowing such flights. Even by the end of the war, the philosophy of those responsible for national parks had shifted little. As controller J. Smart wrote, “the general opinion is that it is not in keeping with the spirit of the National Parks to allow barnstorming and commercial sight-seeing by aeroplane within the boundaries of a National Park…. The use of aircraft continuously taking off and landing for short sight-seeing trips would be a distinct annoyance to many people.”[52] But as long as no commercial carrier operated from a base in the park, flights in and out of Jasper remained quite permissible.

Oil Across the Mountain

As the ground and air transport systems of the Yellowhead corridor matured following World War II, Jasper residents witnessed the inauguration of yet a third major transportation network that was next to invisible once completed and not for carrying tourists at all. This was transmontane oil pipeline, built by a company appropriately named the Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line Company Limited. In 1951 the firm applied to the Board of Transport Commissioners for permission to build the line through the Athabasca Valley in Jasper National Park.[53] It is obvious from the few remaining documents about this

application that it was a formality which followed extensive discussions with both government officials at Ottawa and those in Jasper. The National Parks Branch had already determined that such permission could easily be granted by amendment under section 6 of the National Parks Act, and it allowed company surveyors to lay out the line during the summer of 1951.

The pipeline was to begin at the petroleum refineries of Edmonton, cross the mountains at the Yellowhead Pass, and terminate at the port facilities of Vancouver. When the company's surveyors set up camp in Jasper National Park, Superintendent G.H. Dempster maintained a constant surveillance to ensure that their proposed route would not interfere in any way with future development sites or deface the natural beauty of the valley. By December of 1951 the franchise for this operation had been awarded to Trans Mountain and in the spring of the following year the work crews arrived. Immediately the problem of housing them arose. No one in the Parks Branch wished to see the thirty to sixty crudely-constructed family house trailers parked conspicuously in their tourist haven. After considerable debate, it was finally decided to place the trailers on the old nuisance ground site, which had been used earlier as a construction campsite by road workers. And, to the relief of the park officials, housing for the 300 single workmen was eagerly provided by A.C. Wilby,

CAPTION:	[Construction of the Trans Mountain Oil Pipe Line through Jasper National Park]
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:	
DATE:	c. 1952
PHOTOGRAPHER:	Unknown
SOURCE:	Public Archives of Canada
REFERENCE NUMBER:	RG 84, Volume 228, File 529-1/2 Photography No. 140 [now accessioned as C-123347]

owner of the only plot of freehold land in Jasper National Park, who agreed to billet the workers at his Pyramid Mountain Lodge (later the National Training Centre).[54]

Work on the pipeline within the park lasted only one summer. Canadian Bechtel Limited, a subsidiary of the giant American firm, handled all engineering and construction work on the line.[55] The pipe was shipped in by rail; welded, burnished, primed, coated and fiberglass-wrapped on site; and then lowered to a depth of 76 centimetres in normal soil and to 60 centimetres in rocky areas. Wherever a stream had to be crossed, the pipe was buried to a depth of 2.5 metres or more under the riverbed. On a good day, as much as a 1.6 kilometres of pipe could be readied for burial. When completed, the pipeline occupied only a 60 centimetre right of way through the park. The company undertook land reclamation in such a way that the only evidence of the line was intermittent pumping stations. At its peak, the pipeline was capable of moving 200,000 barrels per day of crude oil at 1.2 metres per second. But this impressive technical achievement had its detractors, too. The park superintendent and his superiors at Ottawa had to contend regularly with letters that lambasted them for allowing such a commercial invasion of primeval landscape. All they could reply was that no alternate route had been available.

Conclusion

In 1952 the Yellowhead corridor reaffirmed its historical transportation roots, which were sunk deeply in the movement of profitable goods across the mountains. In a very real sense, the oil pipeline was merely the modern counterpart of the great fur trade brigades of yesteryear. It was developed because, as park officials suggested, there was no alternative to crossing the forbidding mountains. The perennial problem of overcoming the obstacle of the mountains had not abated; only the means of doing so had improved.

Distance implies isolation, and it is this relationship that defines so much of the corridor’s history. Two perceptions of the mountains and their passes spring from this relationship. The first, illustrated well by the fur trade brigades, the railway packers, and the freight trains, sees the Rockies as hostile obstacles and their passes as exits from a forbidding wilderness without utility. The other, exemplified by tourist vehicles like cars, buses, planes, and passenger trains, views the mountains as an isolated retreat, gained only through entry via one of the welcoming, sheltering passes. However perceived, transportation remains the key to one’s vision of the mountains and of the Yellowhead corridor.

Settlement in the Yellowhead Corridor

The Native People of the Park Area

Squatters. That was the name officials first gave to the indigenous peoples of Jasper National Park. It did not matter that those people had hunted, trapped, and fished in the area for as much as a century. To the federal government, the establishment of effective sovereignty within national parks was seen as a legal and practical necessity.

The reasons for this attitude are not hard to find. When the government took the unprecedented step of creating five national parks in the two decades after 1886, its motive was not always the replication of international resorts like Banff National Park across the west. Rather, the government was codifying the emerging conservation ethic by setting up reserves in which natural resources might be managed for the long-term good of the country. Linked to this idea, but of more immediate importance, was the belief that within such reserves wildlife might flourish, overflow the park boundaries, and bolster the food supply of often starving indigenous peoples and the big game stocks that sport hunters sought. National parks were seen not so much as resort areas as

they were unfenced breeding farms. The government felt that if it allowed natives and mixed bloods to reside in the reserves, it could not prevent the reckless slaughter of game animals.

The people who were tragically caught up in the rigid enforcement of this new ethic were of both native and mixed blood origin. They had built their lives as hunters and trappers in the park area around Jasper House, which the fur trading North West Company had established in about 1813. Before then, natives seem to have visited the Jasper area most infrequently.

Jack Elliott, an archaeologist who pioneered research in this area, suggested that "the region within the mountains was of marginal cultural and ecological importance for prehistoric groups preferring to reside outside the mountains."[1] Historic native use of the area prior to 1813 was just as sporadic. Bands of Sekanis, Shuswaps, Kootenays, Salish, Stoneys, and Cree seasonally hunted the large game that ranged east of the continental divide, including wood bison, plains bison, woodland caribou, moose, mule deer, and bighorn sheep. Small game, fish, and waterfowl were also sought.[2] But it was rare for these bands to stay in the mountains for any length of time; they usually preferred the foothills and Peace River country.

This intermittent travel through the Yellowhead

corridor, this infrequent hunting of game, came to a virtual halt with construction of Jasper House. This tiny, insignificant post, a mere provisioning depot in a transcontinental fur trade transportation network, set the pattern of native settlement in the area for the next century. Henceforth, the fur trade would provide an anchor for their wanderings. It would provide them with a market for their labour skills and introduce them to the market economy, in which their work brought them wages or credits for the first time. It would provide them with a new sense of geographical identity. Henceforth, they would be Jasper House people.

Shortly after the opening of Jasper House, members of the Shuswap tribe often visited the post, even though it had not been established with any thought of trade in furs. These natives, originally from the Columbia lakes area, had moved permanently to a region between Tete Jaune Cache and the headwaters of the Thompson and Fraser rivers by 1830.[3] Michael Klyne, who was in charge of Jasper House during the late 1820s and early 1830s, remarked that in 1828 these people most often visited the post in parties of two or three.[4] But within two decades, the itinerant artist Paul Kane recorded that some of them had become much more attached to the post. “The Indians about here,” he wrote, “do not number above fifteen or twenty; they are of the Shoo-Shchawp tribe, and their chief, of whom I made a sketch, is called ‘Capote Blanc’ by the

voyageurs….”[5] Kane went on to say that this band had previously lived some distance to the northeast, where their numbers were decimated during an unprovoked attack by another tribe. The remaining members fled for their lives, and had ever since resided at Jasper House.

Milton and Cheadle, two adventurers who passed through the area in 1863, further explained that these ‘Rocky Mountain Shuswaps’ lived between Jasper House and Tete Jaune Cache and were “a branch of the great Shuswap nation, who dwell near the Shuswap Lake and [the] grand fork of the Thompson River in British Columbia. Separated from the main body of their tribe by 300 to 400 miles of almost impenetrable forest, [the Jasper House band] had little communication with them.”[6] At one time there had been 30 families near Jasper House, but by the mid-1860s there were only about 30 individuals. This apparent decline may have resulted from the closure of Jasper House in 1857, for after Henry Moberly unexpectedly reopened it in the next year he felt it necessary to send word to the Shuswaps that they could return to trade there once again.[7]

The Iroquois were the other great tribe of Jasper House Indians. They, too, were immigrants. Unlike the Shuswaps, however, the Iroquois had come willingly to the North West from their reserves in Lower Canada. Those who had been converted to Christianity by Jesuit priests and

resided near Montreal were well acquainted with the fur trade and its rewards. Between 1790 and 1815 the Montreal-based fur trading concerns hired some 350 of these people, many of whom followed the canoe brigades to the North West.[8]

As early as 1800 David Thompson, who was later led through the Athabasca Pass by an Iroquois guide named Thomas, was trying to introduce Iroquois into the southern foothills as trappers for his employer, the North West Company. A decade later, many of these natives could be found along the eastern slopes in the region of the Smoky River. In less than another decade, many were participating in the transmontane trade with the district of New Caledonia in British Columbia's northern interior. Tete Jaune, perhaps the most famous of the Jasper area Indians, was an Iroquois.[9] Before a third of the century had elapsed, Iroquois were engaged in the fur trade throughout western North America.

While the Shuswaps limited their fur trade activities to provisioning and trapping, the Iroquois found many different tasks to their liking. Most were either voyageurs or trappers, but many also worked as guides, interpreters, and provisioners.[10] As voyageurs, they ranked with the best. Many were the debates within the trade about the relative worth of Canadien and Iroguois canoe men. George Simpson, the governor of the powerful Hudson's Bay Company, went so far as to claim that one of

his Iroquois voyageurs was “nearly aquatic.”[11] As trappers, the immigrant Iroquois outshone Indians who had spent all their lives in the North West. They applied themselves to the task with alacrity, and benefited substantially from the importation of steel traps, which more traditional natives were reluctant to use.[12] Unfortunately, this combination of zeal and skill brought the rapid depletion of many fur fields.

As guides, the Iroquois were deemed equally valuable. When the Hudson’s Bay Company decided to move into the New Caledonia district in 1820-1, George Simpson instructed his men to employ Iroquois as guides regardless of cost.[13] But while few fur trade employers challenged the ability of the Iroquois, there were many who railed against their typically independent disposition. Alexander Ross, whose attitude has been taken as representative, said that “they are sullen, indolent, fickle, cowardly, and treacherous; and an Iroquois arrived at manhood is still as wayward and extravagant as a lad of other nations at the age of fifteen.”[14]

As far as is known, all the Iroquois who came to the North West were young men. It is not surprising, therefore, that they soon formed liaisons with the women of local tribes and mixed blood villages. Soon many adopted local ways of life. And, being practicing Roman Catholics, it was common for them to marry into similar

religious groups, such as those who lived at Lac Ste. Anne. Most other tribes seem to have had no objection to this. Nonetheless, the freeman among the Iroquois – that is, those whose contracts with a fur trade company had not been renewed – tended to associate almost exclusively with one another.[15] Eventually, they formed their own bands.

Certainly this is the pattern that prevailed in the Jasper area. When the Roman Catholic priest, Father De Smet, passed by Jasper House in 1845 he met an old Iroquois named Louis Kwaragkwante who lived with thirty-six members of his family near Jasper Lake.[16] Doctor James Hector, visiting Jasper House in 1859, remarked that the local Iroquois

> were originally trappers in the service of the N.W. Company, and on the junction of that company with the Hudson Bay Company [sic], they turned 'freemen,' as those are termed in the country who are not in the service of the Company, and have since tented about like Indians, trading the skins and furs they procure at Jasper House. There are about 30 tents of them, and they all talk the Cree language besides their own, and have latterly intermarried a good deal with the Cree half-breeds of Lac Ste. Ann's [sic].[17]

Most Iroquois trapped and traded, but a few were attached permanently to the service of Jasper House as hunters. Hector noted that they usually killed bighorn sheep and lynx with the aid of dogs.[18] To supplement their diet and provide a measure of release from the recurrent starvation that gripped the valley, however, some had experimented with the cultivation of turnips, potatoes, and barley on

the flats along the Smoking River. Most lived in huts of pine branches along the banks of rivers. When Jasper House was not open, they regularly took their furs to the post at Lac Ste. Anne or to Fort Assiniboine.[19]

By 1860, as Gainer has rightly suggested, “the main Indian inhabitants of the upper Athabasca Valley were people of Iroquois descent.”[20] At that time most were, of course, of mixed blood origin. So extensive had marriages become between the Iroquois and the Cree and Metis of the Lac Ste. Anne area that Cree was rapidly becoming the local language of choice. In the 1870s, when the federal government negotiated treaties with the natives of the North West, many of the Jasper House Indians and Metis chose to accept life on reserves near St. Albert and Wabamun Lake.[21] But others remained near their birthplace, among them the descendants of Henry J. Moberly, who had operated Jasper House in the late 1850s and of Andre Cardinal, a St. Albert freeman who had been born at Jasper House. By the twentieth century, these leading local families and a few others formed a close community, bound tightly by their common Iroquois ancestry.

Those who remained in the valley lived a quiet existence, following the seasonal rounds of hunting, trapping, and fishing that had governed the lives of their ancestors. A few among them, mostly mixed bloods, took to small-scale farming, guiding, and packing. The experience

of Ewan Moberly is a case in point. The son of Henry J. Moberly and Susan Cardinal, Ewan was born at Jasper House in 1857 and grew up in the valley. By the 1890s, Ewan and his brother John were two of the most respected men in the district and, as befitted their station, they each constructed an unusually comfortable log cabin in which to live. Ewan built on a flat below Cobblestone Creek, on the left side of the Athabasca, while his brother set up across the river, near the Isidore Finlay farm. This was near their favourite hunting area, along Fiddle Creek where, as one family member has claimed, Ewan discovered the Miette hot springs. There, on Moberly Flats, Ewan raised his family (he had married Madeleine Finlay), bred horses and raised cattle, and traded with other local people from a small storehouse in front of the main house. Within a decade or so, he and his family had become well-known packers and outfitters for both the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern railways.[22] Five other mixed bloods families lived similarly, although their enterprises do not seem to have been as extensive as those of Ewan Moberly.[23]

This engaging way of life ended swiftly in 1910, when the federal government decided to evict all who had traditionally lived in the forest reserve (established in 1907) that was about to become Jasper National Park. This sweep took in not only mixed bloods who had settled in the

vicinity of Moberly Flats, but also about a hundred Indians who hunted and trapped in the area. The Indians, who had never established permanent dwelling sites, were apparently just told to leave and a detachment of Royal North West Mounted Police constables was sent in to ensure an orderly evacuation. William Shovar, who was packing from Prairie Creek to Mile 109 for the railway in 1910, remembered meeting a “drove” of Indian people under Police escort near Pocahontas. All their goods were aboard packhorses and in wagons. They told him they were on their way to Grand Cache and Hinton.[24]

The Moberleys and other mixed blood families were more fortunate. In its traditional manner, the government sent in a commissioner to settle their claims. They were not given the option of remaining, but the government did promise them compensation for their improvements and free land anywhere outside of the park. Six families settled for cash payments ranging from $175 to $1670.[25] Most moved to the Grand Cache or Entrance-Edson areas. In 1914, the naturalist S. Prescott Fay visited the Moberlys and their mixed blood neighbours at Grand Cache. “They have a number of horses and cattle and live here all the year,” he wrote, “going to Hinton where the railway is, one hundred miles away, once in a great while for supplies or going into the mountains to get a supply of meat as there are moose and sheep around.”[26] With the removal of these people, Jasper Park was primed to become a very

different sort of settlement frontier.

Lewis Swift and the Townsite Frontier

The eviction of the Indians and expropriation of the mixed bloods from Jasper Park unconsciously followed a pattern that had been common to Western Canada for some forty years. The logic of it was impeccable, if cold and insensitive. Its basic premise was that the settlement frontier would be a white frontier, with natives and mixed bloods shunted aside for both their own good and for the good of the incoming society. This assurance of mutual security was not the principal intent of the federal government in removing the natives from Jasper Park, but it quickly became a practical consequence. Plans to build two transcontinental railways through the park made it so.

In the early years of the twentieth century, the wheat boom on the prairies made the West's future seem limitless. Enterprising railway builders took advantage of the general feeling of optimism to convince the federal government that two more coast-to-coast railways were a practical necessity. Both were to cross the mountains through the Yellowhead Pass. Trains, which were then driven by steam locomotives, required regular servicing stops called divisional points. On the prairies these might be quite far apart, but in the mountains the steep grades dictated a closer arrangement. Divisional points

were born of large railway crews and their families and always grew to sizable towns. Because of geography and distance, it happened that the railways needed divisional points within the Jasper Park area. The government, having cleared the park of competing interests in its quest for better game management, inadvertently readied the area for the inevitable inflow of white settlers. In this respect, Jasper Park would become a settlement frontier like any other.

If railways and their townsite progeny were conspicuous features of the Western settlement frontier, so too was the townsite speculator. This indigenous frontier species was a gambler who entered an area ahead of the railway and patented lands at a strategic location in the hope of capturing a railway station that would blossom into a town. It was a risky affair, but if the speculator succeeded, he invariably became wealthy from the sale of his town lots. At least some of the time, he would also have the town named after him. Such riches and glory more than justified the gamble.

Jasper Park, like all other settlement frontiers, had its own speculator. Lewis Swift, an Ohio-born drifter and backwoodsman, came into the Provisional District of Alberta from the American Middle West in the late 1880s, while in his early thirties.[27] During the next couple of years, he visited the rising town of Calgary and, perhaps

finding it too cosmopolitan for his unrefined tastes, moved north to Edmonton, where some of the locals told him about the unpeopled Athabasca Valley. With a small string of pack horses, he made his way west as far as Kamloops, reconnoitering the country for a homestead and trading post site. There he stopped, amid the dusty hills and drab sagebrush, turned his pack horses around, and returned to a verdant patch of alpine prairie in the Athabasca Valley. T.C. Young, a Jasper resident who knew Swift and his wife in their later years, claimed that Swift had spied some railway stakes driven by Marcus Smith of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the 1870s, and jumped to the conclusion that the site was ideal for a railway terminal.[28] If this were true, Swift was remarkably uninformed about railway matters for a man who had been in the country for several years, when all talk was of railways and townsites. Whatever his motives, in that same year, 1892, Swift laid out a farmstead on the land known locally as Henry House Flats, on the west bank of the Athabasca River and about 6.5 kilometres north of its confluence with the Miette. He then applied to the Dominion government for a patent to the as-yet unsurveyed land.

Throughout the 1890s, and even more so following the births of his six children, Swift concentrated his efforts on improving his farmstead.[29] He added outbuildings to the snug log cabin he had completed in 1892, fenced his

land, and dug irrigation ditches for a few hectares of wheat, barley, oats, and root crops. The wheat he ground into flour using a homemade flour-mill crafted from wooden coffee-grinder and driven by a handmade water-wheel. All the way from Edmonton, fastened clumsily aboard pack horses, came a small brood of chickens and a crate of pigs to provide the family with eggs and extra meat. Then, around the turn of the century, Swift trailed in some cattle. It is hard to believe that his farm "astonished visitors from all over the globe,"[30] as one reported suggested, but certainly it was among the finest such establishments in the valley at the turn of the century.

Like the other valley settlers, Swift was approached by the federal government in 1910 with an offer of compensation. His application for title to the land complicated matters and, whatever else the government officials may have called him, they could not rightfully say that he was a squatter. The only known first-hand account of the negotiations between Swift and the government commissioner, Acting Superintendent J.J. McLaggan, has it that McLaggan made him an offer only to have Swift tell him to "get the hell out," declaring that "you can't buy me, you can't drive me out of here…."[31] McLaggan left, and shortly after Swift was proved right, as the Dominion Lands Board ruled that because his application for patent preceded creation of Jasper Park,

he had a prior claim to the land. His homestead became a valuable oasis of freehold land within the government reserve.

As it became obvious to all that the park and the railways would bring rapid, clamorous and quite possibly enriching change to the sedate valley, Swift the backwoodsman matured rapidly in Swift the businessman. Two contrasting incidents bear this out. In 1908 the Grand Trunk Pacific surveyors had tried to buy him out so they could run their right-of-way through his level property; Swift and his wife reacted by holding them off with a rifle day and night until they gave up three days later and moved the line over.[32] **Is endnote #33 in original document.** Just four years later, however, Swift was negotiating with no less a personage than Charles Melville Hays, president of the Grand Trunk Pacific, for the establishment of a private cottage resort to be located on his homestead.[33] It was to be called Swiftholm. This was more than a pipedream; it was a sincere and somewhat costly effort to capitalize on two fundamental attractions: the seemingly endless public interest in wilderness cottages that had begun around the turn of the century and the unique freehold nature of the Swift property within Jasper Park. Unlike the situation in Banff National Park, where all property owners were leaseholders bound by government regulations, Swiftholm offered proximity to the developing attractions of a national park coupled with the freedom that accompanied

private ownership. To encourage sales, a glossy prospectus was issued and a survey of cottage lots undertaken. Sale of these was entrusted to the Edmonton real estate firm of Inglis, Macdonald and Thom, which offered 500 lots to the public, at prices of $150 to $500.[34] It has been said that the untimely death of Hays aboard the Titanic in April of 1912 scuttled the resort plan, even though the promotional brochures were printed in 1913.[35] It seems more likely, however, the start of the Great War contributed to the abandonment of the project, as it did hundreds of other real estate schemes throughout the west.

The Railway Camps of the Yellowhead Corridor

Tourists may have been in short supply in the newly-created Jasper National Park in 1911, but railway navvies were not. Surveyors, clearing and blasting crews, track-layers and trestle-builders from both the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern could be found throughout the park and over the divide into British Columbia, their numerous road camps forming a loosely-knit, slowly-moving community that persisted for several years. There were no restrictions on camps outside the park, but within Jasper the government stipulated that they had to be 9.6 to 12.8 kilometres apart.[36] With

Picture:

CAPTION: Foley, Welch and Stewart cache, Jasper Park, Alta

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

DATE: c. 1913

PHOTOGRAPHER: Unknown

SOURCE: Glenbow Archives

REFERENCE NUMBER: NA-2896-14

40 and 200 men to a camp, the park contained between 500 and 2,750 railway workers. For a number of years before the Great War, these workmen's camps provided Jasper Park with a special flavour, a rough and ready frontier character that it would never possess again.

Virtually all construction work on the two rail lines was contracted out to private firms, and these contractors were responsible for the establishment and maintenance of bush camps for their construction gangs. When the survey crews were laying down the route of the line, they would incidentally mark out appropriate locations for the work camps. The best were near a reliable source of potable water and sheltered from the prevailing winds. Once a site was cleared, camp-building crews came in to erect rough log bunk-houses and mess-halls for the men. At stipulated points, like Prairie Creek and Fitzhugh, the contractors were obliged to erect hospitals. With a contractor's permission, enterprising individuals were usually allowed to erect stopping-houses, restaurants, and stores. The cost of establishing an ordinary camp ranged from $3,000 to $6,000.[37]

The camps were peopled by young men of every nationality. Russians, Turks, Canadians, Italians, Britons, Slavs, Scandinavians, and Americans might all be found in a single camp. Wages were high and so was transiency. Unskilled labourers earned around two dollars per day – much more than they could have made in the old

country – and this led many to work only long enough to save the grubstake that would allow them to become farmers. Usually these steady defections meant little to the railways; new workers eagerly awaited the chance for employment. Only during the mining booms in Alaska and the northern interior of British Columbia in 1910 were the camps depleted of much necessary labour.

Life in the camps followed a monotonous routine. The cook – easily the most important man in camp – invariably started his fires at five o'clock in the morning and rudely roused the men with a clanging bell or steel triangle within the hour. Those who tarried ran the risk of missing breakfast altogether, for like all camp meals, it was served on a first-come, first-served basis with no limits on refills. By seven o'clock, the men had left for their various work sites, where they toiled without a break until noon. A single toot of an engine whistle, and the stampede to the mess shack began again. This generous meal of meat, meat and more meat, a few canned goods, and the ever-present fruit pie was followed by another five hours of steady toil. Supper, at six o'clock, finally brought the work day to an end. One sitting of this evening meal was recounted by a GTP chainman, E.N. Copping, at a camp near Mile 109 (about five kilometers from Jasper) in 1911:

> … the supper gong sounded, and we followed sixty or seventy men into the large log building wherein long

> tables were set up with forms [benches] on each side, the tables laden with enamel cups and plates, cutlery, bowls of meat, greasy potatoes and the ubiquitous beans, platters of sliced bread, butter, chees[e] and cake. We herded around the tables like cattle in a corral at round-up time, with scarcely room to manipulate the arms. It was every man for himself, and the spoils go to the long reach. The company [was] not at its best, for the most part unwashed, unshaven, and obscene. Garbed in an assortment of more or less dirty jerseys and overalls, sheepskin coats and mackinaws. Here and there one spotted a cleaner, better type. How they pounced on those victuals, swilling down the tea, grumbling, cussing, belching.(38)

After supper, the men spent the remaining daylight in various ways: fishing, gardening, gambling, reading.[39] Only on Sundays were they able to relax from the endless round of hard work and hurried meals, do some laundry, perhaps attend a church service held by an itinerant preacher. The rest of the time, as one observer wrote, “they work like horses, eat like pigs, and sleep like logs.”[40]

The ‘line missionary’ was a regular visitor to most of the camps. This was a time when many churches, especially the Protestant ones, were turning increasingly to the social gospel; that is, to meeting the needs of the indigent, the misguided, the underprivileged. Whether he was with the Young Men’s Christian Association, the Frontier College, the Salvation Army, or the Navvies’ Mission, the preacher traveled to the camps like a commodity, by rail as far as possible and then in the cramped wooden wagon of a freighter. On arrival at a camp, his task was clear. He had to spread the gospel, of

course, but just as importantly he had to counterbalance the grim effects of all sorts of vice. Contrary to the opinion of GTP publicist Frederick Talbot, the railway camps did not possess "a social level and a moral code superior to what may be found in many thriving towns."[41] More to the point, as one missionary put it, "the average man in a camp seems to have two great topics of conversation – whisky and women."[42]

In law, all railway construction camps were 'dry', without liquor of any sort. The reality was quite different. It seems that wherever there were loose women, there was also moonshine. The camp at Tete Jaune Cache, which existed from the summer of 1911 to the winter of 1912-13, was particularly notorious for this combination of vices. It was a "real frontier town," remembered bridge-builder C.S. Whitten, filled with bootleggers and hookers.[43] The liquor, cleverly smuggled into camp in the bottom of a coal tender or stuffed into the bellies of dressed hogs, made its way into the community and down the grade just as ingeniously. The arrival of 'dancehall girls' was always eagerly awaited in the outlying camps. Each came well-endowed with a hot water bottle full of liquor under her dress. From the bottle ran a length of rubber tubing that attached to the girl's garter. Fred Hindley described the complex operation run by the girls:

> they did most of their business in the camps around Fitzhugh and out on the line and they carried their

> ‘bar’ around with them until the bottles were empty …. They also carried a small whiskey glass made with very thick glass which I doubt very much … would hold an ounce of liquid. This glass was used to dispense the liquor which was accomplished by lifting the skirt, releasing the tap from the garter, holding the glass underneath, turn on the tap and fill the glass, drop the skirt and everything was undercover so to speak. Whiskey 50 cents, moonshine two bits.[44]

This crafty means of keeping booze on tap was seen by many as an invitation to further vice, as it was no doubt intended. The all-male camps ensured that prostitutes felt welcome along the line, even those who once rented nun’s costumes at Edmonton and then took up a collection of some $2,000 on the way to their home at Tete Jaune Cache.[45] One bewildered young missionary even quantified the extent of this vice when he wrote his parents that “the women make large sums of money, and are constantly going down to Edmonton to cash regular stacks of cheques. Some make 200 or 300 dollars a week.”[46]

Publicity agents for the railways inevitably used their screeds to proclaim that “lawlessness was practically unknown” along the railway grade.[47] In many camps, this was undoubtedly true. J. Arthur McCrimmon, who ran a stopping house and restaurant at Mile 109 for eight months before the steel arrived, said he never had a bit of trouble.[48] The reality of the situation in other camps, according to men who knew life along the line, was that their isolation and monotony bred both vice and violence. J. Burgeon Bickersteth, who traveled the

length of the grade west of Edmonton as a preacher and educator, said that "an end-of-steel town is a wicked place. Every log shanty or tent that you see is either a gambling joint, drinking saloon, brothel, or pool room."[48] Fred Hindley, who was well acquainted with the camp at Tete Jaune Cache, recalled the 1912 murder of a barber who had an affair with the wife of a Fraser River scow pilot.[50] Sensational events like this are always remembered best, but it is probably wise to conclude that while an undercurrent of vice pulsed through all the camps, violence remained conspicuous by its absence.

As the track-laying gangs moved westward through the park in 1912-13, the utility of the work camps ended. The number of men diminished weekly and the log bunkhouses that had sheltered them were abandoned by the contractors with no thought of sale or compensation. An odd one was purchased by an incoming park employee to serve as a shelter until something better could be built, but mainly they stood as empty reminders of a transient community that had come, done its work, and would never return.

From Fitzhugh to Jasper: The National Park Townsite

Selection of the main townsite of Fitzhugh within Jasper National Park was a matter in which the federal government had little say. Certainly it was never doubted that both the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern railways

would require divisional points in or near the park. In an age of steam-driven locomotives, the tyranny of mountain topography allowed no other option. Yet the government remained remarkably aloof from the matter until it could no longer be avoided.

The Grand Trunk Pacific forced the issue when its construction timetable demanded a decision concerning a townsite location. Near the end of 1910 the railway chose to establish its divisional point at Mile 112 (as measured from the Macleod River) near a plateau between the Miette and Athabasca rivers.[51] It duly applied to the government for over 700 hectares on which to develop the town. It would be called Fitzhugh, after the vice-president and general manager of the railway, E.H. Fitzhugh, a protégé of Charles M. Hays. But Robert H. Campbell, the sternly opinionated superintendent of the Forestry Branch which still controlled Jasper Park, rejected this proposition. He believed that townsite creation and administration within the park was the sole prerogative of the government. This impasse resulted in the referral of the problem to the Minister of the Interior, Edmonton’s Frank Oliver, who compromised by allowing the railway to select a suitable townsite, which would then be administered solely by federal authorities.

The Grand Trunk Pacific had followed a traditional pattern in these negotiations with the federal government. Divisional points always grew to a considerable size

because of their resident train crews and the services they attracted, and the railway wanted very much to control lot sales in order to benefit financially from the foreseeable real estate boom. Undaunted by the government's initial refusal of a land grant, the railway submitted a reduced request for just 132.4 hectares in 1911.[52] But this sortie came too late. The government had already decided to make Fitzhugh its park administration centre and was anticipating eventual expansion of the railway yards to handle the trains of the Canadian Northern Railway.[53] Undoubtedly lurking behind the new rejection was the perceptive observation that administration of the park would be much simpler if all railway and park facilities were consolidated in one town. Ultimately, the Grand Trunk settled for a grant of just 25.8 hectares, which was more consistent with its actual rail yard needs, and erected a large station and a 12-stall roundhouse.[54]

It was not long before the government became aware that the GTP assumption of a small boom in town lots had been quite correct. By October of 1911 Howard Douglas, the Chief Superintendent of Parks, called for an immediate survey of the Fitzhugh townsite, as "there are a great number of people waiting to obtain lots there in the early spring."[55] As it had done in other national parks, the government moved to implement a system of leaseholds on a

renewable term basis. This effectively ended all possibility of speculation in townsite lots and ensured a greater degree of building regulation. With regard to a survey of lots, however, the government was slow to act. The reasons are unclear, but quite possibly this indecision was related to uncertainty about the intended route of the Canadian Northern.[56] Undeniably, there would have been little point in laying out building lots in an area that might become a railway yard. The Grand Trunk Pacific took it upon itself to prepare and submit a plan that would have seen a town extending back from the Athabasca River and bisected neatly by the tracks, but this idea, too, was left in abeyance.

By the spring of 1912, Douglas had to report that the existing situation was inhibiting tourism. The train stopped only at the Fitzhugh station, of course, and those tourists wishing to stay in the park were obliged to "walk back a mile and a half to [Mile] 111 to very inferior tent stopping houses."[57] It was clear that such a situation could not be tolerated for long, and early in 1913 the government began to cast about for the best means of conducting the Fitzhugh survey. At this time, a town planning movement that had taken root in Canada in the 1880s was reaching full flower with its plea for sensitively-planned 'garden communities' and 'cities beautiful', in which all citizens might enjoy the same amenities and be free from unregulated and ill-conceived

developments. These were concepts that received the full approbation of Edouard Deville, the Surveyor-General, whose office would undertake the townsite survey.

Deville saw national park townsites as perfect places in which to implement the foremost in town planning concepts. Such towns were government-regulated, non-industrial, and dedicated to the pursuit of an idyllic lifestyle. For such reasons, he urged the Department to consider giving the commission to a young Chicago landscape architect named William Bernhard, who had just won a national competition in townsite design.[58] The idea was rejected. Instead, the government would survey the townsite piecemeal, in order to leave room for the yards of the Canadian Northern. This work was carried forward in mid-1913 under the direction of an accredited land surveyor, and was formally approved one year later. When asked to comment on the plan, Deville disdainfully replied that it "is just a common gridiron pattern of the real estate man, made to face on 95 acres of railway yards. It is devoid of any characteristic or attractive feature and ignores every principle of town planning."[59]

Development of the town began in earnest in the summer of 1913. The first change was to the townsite name, which became Jasper, ostensibly because of an internal railway imbroglio involving E.H. Fitzhugh.[60] All improvements in Jasper came under the personal direction

PICTURE PAGE

CAPTION:	Sketch of the proposed subdivision for the townsite of Fitzhugh Alberta
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:	As the sketch indicates, the Proposed townsite would have been located much closer to the Athabasca River than is presently the case. It is believed that it was moved back from the river to allow room for construction of the Canadian Northern terminal at Jasper, which never occurred.
DATE:	c. 1912
PHOTOGRAPHER:	
SOURCE:	Public Archives of Canada
REFERENCE NUMBER:	RG 84, Volume 228, File J29-1/2 [photograph now accessioned as C-123346]

of the first resident park superintendent, S. Maynard Rogers, who replaced Byron Burton of Edmonton in June of 1913.[61] By all accounts, the town was a sorry sight, much in need of improvements. Fred Brewster, a local packer and businessman, recalled that it was nothing more than “a boulder strewn flat [overgrown] with a second growth of Lodgepole pine about four feet high” when he arrived.[62] Rogers, as dedicated a superintendent as the Department could hope for, soon had much of the scrub pine cleared away and found several uses for the over-abundant rocks. The park offices had for some time been located in a log cabin on what became known as Cabin Creek, but Rogers found this arrangement neither convenient nor to his taste. He sought, and received, Ottawa’s permission to proceed with construction of a combined administrative office and residence at the Jasper townsite.[63] The services of Edmonton architect A.M. Calderone were retained, and by winter a splendidly designed fieldstone and log structure had been erected in a simplified Eastlake Gothic style. Undoubtedly the English-born Rogers had had something to say about the design, of which he was justly proud. Its effective use of local stone and logs gave it a suitably ‘rustic’ look which Rogers expected others in town to emulate in order to achieve “a harmonious and appropriate appearance in the [local] class of buildings.”[64]

Roger’s immediate insistence on the grading of a

street system in this wilderness setting, where there were few people and fewer vehicles, seemed to suggest a preoccupation with the imposition of order. Those who knew Rogers would have been the first to agree. He was a meticulous man of military background, dedicated wholly to the pursuit of strict economy and the enforcement of discipline. He not only built the roads, he gladly undertook to name them when asked to do so by the Surveyor-General. For the most prominent, he suggested regal names, like King George Avenue and Queen Mary Avenue; for lesser drives he offered up the names of local features and; for plain residential streets, he thought the names of trees would suffice.[65] His superiors could not abide even more references to the Crown in a nation whose streets fairly reeked of monarchist sentiment, but they did let the others stand. When the park became the site of an internment camp during the Great War, Rogers had the internees pick rocks to line his cherished boulevards.[66] **Footnote Repeated**

Despite Roger's best efforts at civilizing this spot of wilderness, Jasper proved less than enchanting to some of the earliest permanent residents. This was particularly true of the wives of those men who had found employment with the park administration or on the railway. While their husbands daily enjoyed the company of their fellow workers, these women remained isolated, bereft of

PICTURE PAGE

CAPTION:	Jasper from top of coal chutes. Alta., 1914
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:	
DATE:	1914
PHOTOGRAPHER:	Unknown
SOURCE:	Public Archives of Canada
REFERENCE NUMBER:	PA-11041

companionship. M.A. Richardson recalled that her mother, who had arrived in about 1912, "was a City girl and was very lonely, after about a year or so, tired of the coyotes howling and the pack rats thumping around all night, and no near neighbors at all…"[66] **Footnote # Repeated** Mrs. Merle Clarke characterized the town as "desolate" in 1913.[67] Mrs. B.R. Arends, who arrived in 1915 and lived with her husband two miles east of Jasper at Milner's dairy farm, recalled that her sole visitor that winter was Mrs. Lewis Swift.[68]

Compounding the sense of isolation, in many cases, was the lack of adequate accommodations. Mrs. Merle Clark's parents found refuge in an abandoned railway engineers' cabin on Cottonwood Creek.[69] George Fleming, who came to Jasper to serve as Superintendent Roger's secretary, remembered that "there was then scant housing accommodation in the small village and I had difficulty securing housing for my wife and two young children."[70] Having no other choice, they moved into another abandoned engineers' cabin on Snape's Hill. Others, somewhat less fortunate, lived in tents.

As 1913 advanced, the tar-paper and canvas tent town slowly shed its frontier countenance. The new administration building and railway station provided a focus for development and examples to emulate. Assured by these handsome facilities that Jasper was indeed to be a permanent settlement, several merchants quickly erected

more substantial buildings. The Stewart Brothers, who had been running a general store and restaurant out of an immense tent with wooden sidewalls,[71] put up a new frame building. Dr. Niven, a physician employed by the Grand Trunk Pacific, built a combined post office and drug store. Within a few years the town's developing commercial district, most of which fronted on the railway tracks, consisted of "one hotel run by Mr. Wooley; drug store and post office occupied by Mr. & Mrs. Jackman; general store of Mr. Jeffery; small branch bank managed by Mr. Kinnair; and a large frame building used for community purposes, known as Otto's Hall."[72] During the summer of 1914, an imposing firehall arose on the north side of Elm Street, to protect the considerable investment made by local businessmen. To the east of the railway station, on a slope at the back of town, Rogers judiciously located the government and packers' stables and corrals "with their attendant smells and flies."[73]

Like residents of frontier communities everywhere, the people of Jasper could not long abide the absence of their cherished social institutions. Their intellectual baggage, that remarkably constant amalgam of experience and heritage that imparted order to their daily lives, permitted no course other than the rapid re-establishment of schools, churches, and their related clubs and organizations. In 1913 the first school opened in a left-

over construction shack that had once housed the offices of railway contractors Phelan and Shirley, with 19-year old Lillian Taylor of Banff as teacher.[74] Superintendent Rogers soon condemned the shack as an eyesore and new accommodations were provided in a large canvas and board tent at the rear of the townsite. This may have improved the appearance of the townsite, but it did nothing for the quality of the classroom. As Gainer has written, “there was no floor so the seats rocked on the dirt [,] and the blackboard, resting on chairs, blew down whenever the wind blew.”[75] This appalling situation led to erection of the first permanent schoolhouse in the same year. Churches arose with the same speed. The Anglicans erected a log church in 1914, as did the Unionist congregation of Methodists and Presbyterians. The inevitable Women’s Auxiliaries raised much of the needed funds for these churches.

Life in Jasper around the time of the Great War reflected the isolation of the community. In this, it was like most other small towns of the period. Medical treatment, for example, forced local residents to adopt a stoic attitude toward suffering and death. The first hospital was a mere tent that had been used for injured railway workers during construction of the transcontinental line. Dr. Nevin, who was in charge from 1915 to 1917, had to do his best with limited equipment and no chance for consultation. In such circumstances, it

surprised no one when Dr. Nevin pronounced the young wife of a local man dead, only to have her recover and go on to bear three more children.[76] Nonetheless, local residents must have had second thoughts about Nevin when he was confronted on another occasion by a newly-widowed wife who insisted that she saw her husband's eyelid flicker when viewing his body before the funeral. Despite a suspicion of the hysteria that often accompanies bereavement, Nevin re-examined the man and found that he had no option but to rescind the death certificate.[77]

Jasper had more than isolation in common with other small towns of the day; it also lacked basic utilities. For example, drinking water was initially hauled into town and kept in big barrels, from which it was sold to residents who brought their own pails.[78] After the First World War, a primitive water distribution system was installed on Cabin Creek by the Canadian National for its own use, although the company did allow houses to make connections. This worked only in summer, of course, and during the winter months Alex Wylie bottled water from a small hydrant and delivered it to homes three times a week for a charge of $2.50 per month.[79] Sewage was disposed of in the timeless natural way: down outdoor privies. Garbage was buried.[80] Electricity and a proper sewage system were not installed for more than a decade after the war.

The social life of the community was linked closely with the railway. Down the tracks to the west lay the community of Lucerne, which had been developed as the Canadian Northern divisional point, while to the east were the coal mining towns of Pocahontas and Brule, the lime kiln community of Marlboro, and the GTP divisional point of Edson. Along a spur line running south from Bickerdike were strung the villages and collieries of the Coal Branch – Robb, Coalspur, Mercoal, Luscar, Leyland, Cadomin, Mountain Park, Sterco, Coal Valley, Foothills, and Lovat. It was only natural that the people in this extended arc of railway towns would socialize and compete as all small towns socialized and competed, on the sports field. Hockey teams and baseball teams were the order of the day, and the players either hitched a ride in a freightcar or went in style with the special sports fan cars that the railway generously allowed to be coupled with the regular freights.[81]

Some of this solidarity eroded during the early 1920s, as the Canadian National Railway moved to consolidate its divisional points. This excess of railway communities was, of course, a legacy of the separate railways that existed prior to 1917. In the mountains, where the lines ran just metres apart, the adjustment was painful. Talks about the consolidation seem to have begun in 1918, and Canadian National clearly favoured the retention of Lucerne as the only divisional point between

the Macleod River and the Yellowhead Pass.[82] Because of the heavy annual snowfalls between Lucerne and Blue River, that subdivision already had one of the heaviest workloads in the entire Pacific district, and the company did not think it wise to place an additional burden on the rail crews.

Despite this early internal agreement on the best solution to the divisional point problem, the railway took no action for several years. In the interim rumours leaked out of corporate headquarters at Montreal and spread into both Jasper and Lucerne. The reaction from the railroaders in both communities was one of outrage. In this, they had the full support of local businessmen, who naturally feared the loss of sales that would accompany any reduction of railway staff. Petitions of protest were forwarded with regularity to Montreal, only to be ignored. When it became obvious that the railway would abandon one of the towns, the petitions for corporate clemency were swiftly replaced by demands for assurances of compensation against property loss and dislocation costs.

As late as the spring of 1922 the railway had still made no public announcement about its intentions, but within the company it was well known that Lucerne would be the divisional point that was retained.[83] President D.B. Hanna and his colleagues decided to seek the approval

of the Board of Railway Commissioners before making the decision known to the citizens of Lucerne and Jasper. With the added weight of that final authority in railway matters, it would be much easier to fend off the criticism that would inevitably follow. After the application was submitted to the Board, public hearings were held to elicit the arguments on both sides. After considering all the factors involved, the Board declared that Canadian National had to retain Jasper as its divisional point. In favour of this view, it cited the greater value of railway facilities there, the value of employees' housing, the better grades on the old GTP line, and both the smaller financial and human costs of operating out of Jasper.[84] The CNR strategy had failed, for against the judgment of the Board of Railway Commissioners there was no appeal. The rail crews of Lucerne would have to move to Jasper.

This singular transfusion of people into Jasper, with its population of perhaps 350 people,[85] nearly tripled the population and consequently propelled the community into the mainstream of modern urbanity. It was not that the former Lucerne railroaders were men of great sophistication or influence; they were not. Nor were they coming from a model community; by all accounts, Lucerne was a poor cousin to Jasper, which was itself no cosmopolis. Rather, this change occurred simply because of the number of people who moved. That number remains unclear, although it probably did not exceed 100.[86] The

move took place in 1924.

The demands of Jasper's growing population forced the federal government to reconsider its spending in the town. Better services became a priority. While there was undoubtedly some concern for the needs of the residents, particularly in light of the 1918 Spanish Flu epidemic and a 1921 scarlet fever outbreak, the government also considered the attractiveness and convenience of the townsite from a tourist point of view. Its first action was to assume control of the water distribution system that the CN had installed and to upgrade it through construction of a concrete dam on Cabin Creek.[87] This meant that an adequate flow of water existed and that individual houses could be serviced. It also meant better fire protection. In the next year, 1925, federal officials installed an electrical distribution system which obtained its power from the steam-powered generators that lighted the CN station, roundhouse and the Jasper Park Lodge.[88] For the first time, residents could strike coal-oil from their shopping lists. Three years later, the government dealt more vigorously with the sanitation issue by beginning installation of a sewage system, which was completed in 1930. Unfortunately, it dumped raw sewage directly into the Athabasca River, a situation which was not rectified until 1972. With these services in place the townsite came of age.

Conclusion

Jasper National Park was settled as the rest of Western Canada had been settled. The indigenous Indians and mixed bloods had been thrust aside and replaced by white settlers. Most came by train, down the transcontinental tracks that had given their townsite life. These were not farmers, as so many of their prairie counterparts had been, but they were people seeking the same kind of opportunity, a chance to make a better life. The community they built reflected their unflagging optimism. The isolation, the inconvenience, the coarseness – these were nothing to bear in light of the promise of the future. Within a decade, that optimism had been rewarded. Jasper grew from a town of shanties to a fully-serviced railway and tourist centre. To anyone but a westerner, this would have seemed a startling transformation.

Resource Development in the Yellowhead Corridor

Laying the Groundwork

Resource exploitation came quickly to Jasper Park. Even before the forest reserve was declared a national park in 1911, dozens of coal mining leases had been secured by groups of investors who sought to serve the markets that would soon be opened up by the Grand Trunk Pacific and Canadian Northern railways. Within three years, Edmonton-based entrepreneurs were excavating limestone near the coaltown of Pocahontas on the park's eastern edge. At nearly the same time, timber cutting began on the Whirlpool River. Such rapid development did much to reinforce the popular view of the mountains as a resource-rich frontier whose economic growth awaited only the coming of the freight train. There was much truth to this view, yet it tended to obscure the half-century of scientific exploration that made such development possible. Without the efforts of a number of dedicated scientists, the resources of the park would not have been known in 1910, let alone exploited. It is against a

backdrop of scientific discovery that began in the mid-nineteenth century that the resource development of the Yellowhead corridor must be seen.

The roots of the search for ‘economic’ minerals in the Yellowhead corridor, and indeed in Canada as a whole, can be traced with ease to the spread of rationalist thought that emerged from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. In its time, this was a radical way of looking at the world. Instead of seeing a universe peopled by mysterious forces and riddled with superstitions, the philosophers of the Enlightenment conceived a world of order, governed by immutable laws, which could be discovered through critical experimentation. The scientific hallmarks of this movement were observation and repeated testing, from which emerged basic principles which made the world a predictable place.

All of the early scientific reports on the Jasper area conform to this formula. They are redolent with precise, even overwhelming, detail. They exude impartiality. They arrive at conclusions only after considering all the alternatives. If these characteristics sound overly familiar, it is because they are. The scientific method of these reports conforms to our present way of looking at the world around us. But however mundane the approach may seem, it should never be

dismissed as insignificant, for it is the bedrock upon which were built the industries of Jasper Park.

The practical exercise of this scientific method began in Canada with the work of the Geological Survey, established in 1842. This institution, which carried out most of the scientific investigation of Jasper Park, was set up at a critical juncture. In many parts of the world the technology of railways was rapidly rolling back the geographic frontier at the same time as the industrial revolution created an insatiable demand for ferrous minerals and fuel coal. In other words, railways, like new transportation systems, facilitated the exploitation of natural resources for economic gain. The role of the Geological Survey of Canada in this sequence of events was to study the geology of Canada to establish its essential nature, from which reasonable predictions might be drawn about the mineral resources of specific locales. Research on the ground would then be undertaken to confirm those hypotheses. The Geological Survey was, without exaggeration, the scientific method applied to unknown Canadian frontiers.

The work of the Geological Survey did not begin in the North West until it became a Canadian possession in 1870. For most of the next decade, only tentative exploratory surveys were undertaken in this geological terra incognita. The basis for those surveys was a mere handful of scientific reports about the country, most of

which had been compiled by travelers with another purpose. Such reports did not exist for the Yellowhead corridor. As a remote and forbidding region used only by taciturn fur traders, it remained a scientific wasteland. Its geology was known only from the cursory examinations of Sir James Hector of the Palliser expedition, which had been sponsored by the British government to explore the resources and railway routes of the North West in 1857-9.

Fortunately for the earliest survey members to reach the Yellowhead corridor, Hector was a brilliant observer who produced much more reliable information during his brief local explorations than anyone had a right to expect. His only visit to the Jasper area occurred in January of 1859. With three Hudson's Bay Company servants, he set out by dogsled from Fort Edmonton on the cold, clear morning of the 12th.[1] At the last minute Chief Factor William Christie had decided to accompany Hector's party as far as the 'horse-guard', some 30.5 kilometres northwest of the fort, so that they could enjoy a picnic in the evening. With the merriment of that evening as fortification for the trip to come, Hector and his men headed west the next morning.

As was his practice, the explorer meticulously recorded his impressions of the country in a journal. These observations covered virtually everything he saw and experienced, and many of the passages related to the

resources of the region. As they crossed the Pembina River, for example, Hector jotted down the fact that “the timber is much finer all over the country we are now passing through than any in the neighbourhood of Edmonton.”[2] Two days later, at the site of abandoned Fort Assiniboine, he noted the remains of a once-flourishing garden and the abundance of birch stands. The party’s progress was poor, as the track was nearly always covered by windfall timber, but by the 31st they had made Roche Miette, that grand rock which Hector likened to the Devil’s Head he had recently seen near the Bow River. Hard driving brought them to Jasper House at ten o’clock that evening.

After a two day rest, during which Hector learned much about the life led by Jasper House inmates, he accompanied trader Henry Moberly on a lynx-hunting expedition up the valley of the Snake River.[3] He used the occasion to study the geological strata of the district, and was struck by the heavy coal seams nestled among limestone and shale rocks. These strata were, he remarked, just like those he had recently examined in the Bow River Valley. On the next day, he and Moberly climbed some 1050 metres up Roche Miette before being stopped well beyond the treeline by the sheer verticality of the rock’s upper block. Again, Hector made notes on the vast limestone deposits that made up the rock. He also sought fossils, but the strong valley winds had left only the

faintest traces in the soft rock.

After sending his men back to Fort Edmonton as punishment for having eaten all the pemmican in his absence, Hector took his dogsled and, with the help of an Iroquois guide named Tekarra, journeyed to the source of the Athabasca River in the company of Moberly and a few men from the fort. But due to the weather and an injury to Tekarra, this was an unremarkable trip. Hector religiously took his barometric readings and made notes about the general character of the country through which they passed, but his geological observations are few. Tekarra's sore foot precluded a climb to the Committee's Punch Bowl, so they swung instead past the mouth of the Whirlpool River before turning back to Jasper House. Within days Hector was on his way back to Fort Edmonton.

To the casual observer, it was a journey of little consequence, but to the trained geologist Hector's hurried explorations revealed much. His brief notes told of a district rich in timber, limestone, and possibly coal. And, although far from a comprehensive survey, Hector's excursion suggested that the resources of the valley lay near the eastern front range. Those who would follow him in search of the mineral resources of the valley would benefit immeasurable from these hastily-drawn, yet sound, conclusions.

The Work of the Geological Survey of Canada

Once control of the North West had passed from Great Britain to Canada in 1870, the Geological Survey began its survey work in the unknown territory. The first attempt at a reconnaissance of the Yellowhead Pass area came in 1871. This was made by 47-year old Alfred Selwyn, a British-trained geologist who had arrived in Canada only two years before to become the second director of the Survey. His expedition was motivated by the government's desire to provide all possible assistance to the Canadian Pacific Railway, which was then planning to cross the Rockies through a northern pass. The Survey assisted this monumental effort by preparing topographical maps and inventories of minerals along intended routes.

Selwyn intended to explore the Yellowhead Pass and then proceed on to Jasper House. In a classic illustration of that region's continuing isolation, he traveled from Montreal via American railways to San Francisco and then by coastal steamer to Victoria, where he purchased needed provisions and assembled a pack train for the trip into the northern interior. It was hard traveling up the Thompson River; at one point it took five days to go four miles through the tangled bush and swampy creeks. Nonetheless, his party reached the pass in mid-October.

There they had expected to be met by a second party

travelling in from the Cariboo, but the rendezvous did not occur. Selwyn was much disappointed.[4] He instructed the packers to take whatever action was best for their horses in view of the impending winter season and threw in his lot with a railway crew that was grading a trail near Canoe River. For two days he occupied himself by supervising the Notman photographers that had accompanied the expedition and then decided to strike out for the pass with a lightly-equipped party. As it turned out, this trip was Selwyn's only opportunity to record the strata of the area before the winter season forced his evacuation to safer southern climes. Like the Survey geologists before and after him, he assiduously recorded everything about the expedition, even though he failed in his main objective of reaching Jasper House.

More than twenty-five years passed before another Survey expedition made its way into the Yellowhead corridor. The 1881 decision of the Canadian Pacific to use a southern route through the mountains ensured that exploration of the northern passes was not a priority with the busy Survey. But as the end of the nineteenth century approached, geological and natural history surveys had been conducted throughout much of the southern Territories. Thus, in 1898, the Survey launched a major reconnaissance of the Yellowhead corridor under the direction of James McEvoy.

McEvoy, a topographer who had worked previously in

the northern interior of British Columbia and in the Rockies, was charged with responsibility for conducting the first geological and natural history survey of the country between Edmonton and the Canoe River. In the preface to his report, he tersely established the lack of reliable, in-depth information about that district. James Hector, Milton and Cheadle, Canadian Pacific Railway surveyors, and Alfred Selwyn had been the only people to record their observations of the country in anything resembling a systematic fashion. "Notwithstanding these explorations," wrote McEvoy, "little was known about the country except the location of the [railway] line and the sketching of the streams in the immediate vicinity thereof."[5]

The report that McEvoy prepared may be regarded as something of a minor classic within its genre. It is difficult to imagine more acute observations, more incisive conclusions, duller prose. This was exactly the detachment that was highly valued in topographic and geological reporting. It betrayed no special interest beyond a seeking after objective truth; it exaggerated no claims; it sought no excuses for the as-yet inexplicable. Yet it did permit those with highly-developed commercial instincts to plot their futures with a greater degree of exactitude. For example, the packtrip into the mountains revealed that beyond the McLeod River most of the valuable

timber had been destroyed by fire. “It is now a wilderness of bare trunks,” McEvoy wrote with uncharacteristic flourish.[6] This statement alone would preclude all efforts to establish sawmills that produced for any beyond small, local markets. More significant, in terms of subsequent developments, were McEvoy’s observations of promising coal seams on the Brazeau River, thick limestone beds near Roche Miette, quartz deposits containing iron pyrites (already being mined on the Miette River). His may have been a survey report at best, but it clearly guided the course of resource development within the Yellowhead corridor.

The Geological Survey invariably worked from the general to the specific, from the regional context to individual locales. This work was usually undertaken as the pressures of economic development demanded it. Such was certainly the case in the Yellowhead corridor as it became known that two transcontinental railways would pass through it in the early years of the twentieth century. The preoccupation of those railways in the mountains and foothills was the search for workable coal seams. Coal was of cardinal interest as the primary fuel of the nineteenth century, but particularly to the railway companies whose trains relied exclusively upon coal as fuel in their locomotives. The cursory investigations of McEvoy had revealed few excellent seams and, consequently, the Survey sent in an acknowledged expert on Western

Canadian mineral resources, D.B. Dowling, to undertake a detailed search in the Jasper Park area for coalfields.

Dowling went west in 1906, just as the railway surveys began through Jasper Park. The Survey wished to have the northern limits of the Cascade coal basin established and to have the northern rail routes explored "in the hope that workable coal seams of the better class of coal might be found nearer the proposed route of the railways through the Yellowhead Pass."[7] From Morley, his party made its way north, past the Panther, Red Deer, Clearwater, Sheep, Saskatchewan, he reported that "behind the Bighorn range there is brought to the surface the same coal bearing rocks as are found in the [southern] mountain basin, and another coal field is available which extends northward to past Brazeau river."[8] On the basis of this report, the Grand Trunk Pacific made plans to run a spurline southwest from the main line.[9] Later that spur would become known as the Coal Branch.

Dowling returned to the country between Jasper Park and the Brazeau River several times over the next few years to continue his investigations and to identify more precisely the most economical coalfields adjacent to the railways. His concluded that there were two fields that might be profitably exploited along the main lines.[10] The first was located to the north of Brule Lake, near the

site of the first Jasper House, and the second was found just inside the front range, on the eastern side of Roche Miette. His examination of the local geology also pointed to the possible development of extensive limestone and iron ore deposits.

Resource Development and National Park Policy

To those with some knowledge of current Parks Canada policies, the question must arise: why was the government inventorying natural resources in Jasper Park as though it was just a common tract of western real estate that might be developed for profit? The roots of this resource conservation policy, which seems to have prevailed in the national parks of the period, remain tangled. Certainly there is no doubt that the federal government saw resource development and national progress as one in the same. That has been demonstrated time and again, and the earliest national park policies conform to that vision.[11] It is equally clear that despite the existence of a distinct Dominion Parks Branch after 1911, few officials paid much heed to its conservation mandate. Making this situation even worse was the fact that the Branch was an infant arm of the mighty Department of the Interior, whose sole purpose was the promotion and regulation of economic development in Western Canada. In short, national parks were creatures of national economic design, and

concessions to those who favoured natural resource conservation were few for decades after.

But such nation-wide generalizations do not always stand up well to scrutiny when applied to events at the local level. Jasper National Park was created during the ferment of the conservation movement, and that happenstance sometimes flavoured policies peculiar to the park. Indeed, when the early in-park policies on resource management are considered, it becomes clear that a strain of ambiguity runs through them. In many instances, that ambiguity is traceable to the influence of the incumbent superintendent on park policy. S. Maynard Rogers, who served as Jasper's superintendent for the better part of twenty years, often tempered the stringency of existing economic development policies with a blend of common sense and personal opinion. Within the limits of his authority, he helped to define a unique Jasper Park perspective on resource development.

Rogers was very much the heir to a policy of natural resource development within the park. Indeed, even as D.B. Dowling put the final touches on his coal basin report of 1910, mining companies were tunneling into the known coal seams and prospectors were combing the hills and streams for iron deposits and placer gold.[12] By the time Rogers arrived in the spring of 1913, the mines and quarries had been in operation for several years. His subsequent influence over these developments was,

perforce, limited.

This early development work was largely confined to the eastern end of Jasper Park. There, beneath the shadow of Roche Miette on the south side of the river, a gang of twenty men from a newly-formed company called the Jasper Park Collieries erected temporary mining works in the spring of 1910. This work was carried out under lease by the authority of the Department of the Interior, as was all resource development within the park. Coal mining privileges were given to developers at an annual rental of one dollar per acre on a maximum of 2,560 acres (1,036.8 hectares).[13] These leases were provided for a term of twenty-one years and were renewable. In addition to the annual rental, the government exacted a royalty of five cents per ton. These lease arrangements were standard government policies, although Dowling was careful to note that because the mining works were in a national park "commercial development will be effected more directly under Government supervision than [in] other areas."[14]

The Jasper Park Collieries company had come into being in 1908. Frank Villeneuve and Alfred Lamoureux, two prospectors who had staked claims up Mountain and Moosehorn creeks that October, succeeded in gaining both Canadian and American backing for further development.[15] The proximity of the coal seams to the Grand Trunk Pacific main line was in itself a considerable attraction to

investors, but it was clearly the GT guarantee to buy the entire output of the mine that clinched the deal and led to formation of the company. Its headquarters were at Duluth, Wisconsin.

The company received the full co-operation of the federal government in establishing its mineworks. Howard Douglas, who was Commissioner of Dominion Parks and directly in charge of Jasper Park pending the appointment of a superintendent, suggested the reason for this when he wrote that "it is my belief that this park [Jasper] will eventually outstrip all others in the Dominion of Canada in importance, and when the natural resources are looked into and developed will become a source of perpetual revenue to the country."[16] In other words, if national parks were to be considered beneficial to the nation, they had to pay their own way. Regulated resource development made that possible in the absence of a viable tourist industry.

Douglas's second trip to the park, in the late winter of 1911, revealed the extent to which the Jasper Park Collieries had developed their lease in just on year. "A tunnel had been run 990 feet," he wrote,

> and was in a solid face of coal. Twenty-five men were employed and development work along different lines is being pushed ahead pending the laying of the steel of the Grand Trunk Pacific to this point. The mouth of the present tunnel is 275 feet above the railway line and it is the intention of the company to drive another tunnel lower down and only a few feet above the track…. The company has built excellent quarters for their employees and I found

> everything in first class condition. They are at present engaged in the construction of a tramway from the tunnel mouth to the railway track and a tipple for loading cars.[17]

Development moved ahead even more quickly after the rails reached the colliery in August of 1911. The Grand Trunk Pacific had decided to substitute this local coal for the fuel it was receiving from Pennsylvania and the Crow's Nest Pass, and use it to power locomotives between Winnipeg and Smithers, British Columbia. The Pocahontas mine, as the Jasper Park works were called (after a Virginia coaltown), produced excellent bituminous coal and, as the Edmonton Bulletin would later report bombastically, "is large enough and has enough coal in sight to itself supply [sic] the Prairie West for all time."[18] By November of 1911 the daily output of the mine was 117 tonnes; one month later it had risen to 250 tonnes, and by the late winter of 1912 the average daily quota exceeded 360 tonnes.[19] This meant employment for well over 200 miners, and it was expected that more than 500 would be employed once the colliery reached full production.[20]

The Pocahontas colliery was not the only resource industry to develop as Jasper became a national park. Just a few kilometers to the west, an Edmonton-based firm was exploiting a thick bed of high-grade limestone. Once again, the fact of development nearly preceded publication of D.B. Dowling's prediction that limestone quarrying

CAPTION:	Coal mine buildings at Pocahontas, Alta; looking north across Athabasca River.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:	This colliery was abandoned in 1921.
DATE:	[pre-1921]
PHOTOGRAPHER:	Unknown
SOURCE:	Glenbow Archives
REFERENCE NUMBER:	NA-2062-4

would probably be profitable within Jasper Park. In 1910 he wrote that "the wide use of cement in the building industry in Alberta has led to the construction of cement works on both branches of the Canadian Pacific railway near the mountains, since the necessary calcareous material is found in very small amounts in the rocks of the plains. The market may at some future time warrant the construction of a similar plant near the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific, since both limestones and shales suitable for cement making are here found…."[21] By the late autumn of 1911, the Department of the Interior already had twenty-three limestone lease applications on file and anticipated more.

Like coal leases, these were let for twenty-one years on a renewable basis, with ground rents and royalties accruing to the government. Howard Douglas was of the opinion that the park's resources could not sustain more than two or three cement plants and he recommended that the Department force successful applicants to build within a specified amount of time or forfeit their claims. "If these applications keep coming in, as they have done in the past two months," he wrote with uncharacteristic humour, "the whole line of railway through the park will be covered from east to west."[22] It seems, however, that most of the leases were held on a speculative basis. Their leaseholders never intended to carry out any development, but rather hoped that a townsite might be

created on their property.

The earliest legitimate limestone operation was begun in 1911 by Holyoak Needham, a Carrot Creek homesteader, and George Brown, a railway engineer who had burned lime in Manitoba and thus brought the needed experience to the project.[23] With additional financing from Edmonton businessmen, they organized the Fitzhugh Lime and Stone Company and put in a spur line to their leasehold near Disaster Point from the GTP main line. It was a modern plant. The two kilns were made of steel rather than the more traditional fieldstone, and were seated on a concrete base. This was a gravity-feed plant, where limestone from the quarry could be dumped in the top of the kilns and the burnt lime wheeled down to the waiting boxcar on the siding. By the beginning of the war, Needham and Brown had managed to burn enough lime to fill a boxcar. That initial shipment was intended for the Macdonald Hotel in Edmonton, which was then under construction.

Although records are scarce, this may have been the only carload of lime ever to issue from the plant. The owners said that they did not operate after the war, as the adjacent tracks of the Grand Trunk Pacific were taken up for use in Europe, thus depriving them of a vital transportation link. Superintendent Rogers, commenting on the situation in 1924, recalled that the lack of building operations during the war was another factor in the demise

of the plant.[24]

No sooner had the Fitzhugh Lime and Stone Company gone under than representatives of the Edmonton Portland Cement Company began development of a quarry. This was a large concern which had built the town of Marlboro around a large lime deposit some miles east of the park on the Canadian Northern line. It began operations in the park by purchasing eight leases belonging to the Hydraulic Lime and Quarries Company. These leases covered about 130 hectares and were situated just 6.4 kilometres east of Jasper.[25] The company planned to excavate the limestone and ship it to Marlboro for processing.

In October of 1916 representatives of the company visited the leasehold to initiate their development plans. They laid out a route for the spur line that was to be built from the Grand Trunk main line, and instructed their workmen to begin construction of a rock crusher and employee quarters. At the same time they located a satisfactory route for the horse-drawn light railway that would be built to carry rock blasted from the face of the limestone mountain to the crushing plant. They had assured the park that the operation would comply with all regulations, but almost immediately one of their actions raised the ire of park officials. The Grand Trunk Pacific, which had agreed to build the spur line for the quarry firm, had let the construction contract without even notifying the park of the intended route.[26]

Aside from sending a chastening letter to the cement company, the Department seems to have taken no action. In fact, the only other recorded comment from a park official about construction of the plant came from Acting Superintendent Alfred Driscoll, who feebly pointed out that “any excavation must be as little objectionable as possible.”[27] Indeed, it would be 1923 before Superintendent Rogers ordered the company to improve the appearance of its eyesore of a plant or face the consequences.[28] “No such outrage will be allowed,” he thundered, “as long as I am in a position to block it as Superintendent of Jasper Park.”[29] Yet his complaints fell on deaf ears, and his superior, who held much the same view of industry in national parks, could only advise him that as long as quarrying was permitted under the law there was no avenue of redress against the insensitivity of such firms. The problem persisted until the plant closed permanently in 1929. Still, Rogers must have felt a certain satisfaction when a main building at the plant site burned to the ground in 1933.

Coal mining and limestone quarrying developed in the park because no regulations prohibited such operations, but lumbering, which has always been considered the third industry of the early park, began for a very different reason. It was an industry, certainly, but one based on sound conservation principles and initiated by the park

itself. As the Great War ended in 1918, the park administration became aware of an extremely serious mistletoe blight infestation that had killed most of the lodgepole pine in stands along the Whirlpool River. It was imperative that this dead timber be removed so that the spread of the disease might be stopped.[30] Timber berths were immediately surveyed and a public competition held in 1919 for removal of all the merchantable timber. James McNeice Austin, an Ontario-based pulp mill operator, was the successful bidder. This was the first and probably the only commercial timber cutting operation in the park that was not intended to supply lumber for mineworks or for personal use.[31]

Cutting began in 1919. In exchange for a stumpage fee, Austin assigned his rights to a Toronto businessman named James C. Gibson, who obtained a contract to supply the railway with ties. He, in turn, sub-contracted the actual cutting out to local men, such as outfitters Jack, Bruce, and Closson Otto.[32] Their first winter camp was about sixteen kilometers upstream from the mouth of the Whirlpool. About 90,000 logs were cut by hand and hauled to the banks of the river, where they awaited the spring freshets that would carry them into the Athabasca and eventually onto railway cars.[33] The logs were caught in a boom that was placed across the Athabasca near the entrance to Jasper Lake, and then raised from the water one at a time aboard a chain-driven ‘jack-ladder.’ During

one spring, the foreman in charge of building the boom miscalculated and the flooding water carried the entire winter's production downstream past Jasper Lake to the point where none could be recovered. It has been estimated that between 1919 and 1923, some 300 men were employed annually in the lumber camps, cut enough timber for 500,000 railway ties.[34]

For unknown reasons, the cutting ceased around 1923. In 1927 the federal government gave Austin's estate a three-year extension of time in which to remove the remainder of the dead timber. When the estate did not comply with this request, the government provided another three-year extension. The estate did renew the licence to harvest timber in 1931, but soon abandoned the lease altogether.[35]

As lime quarrying and timber cutting assumed importance in the growing resource economy of Jasper Park, economic decline slowly began to stifle the local collieries. Coal output did not suffer; in fact, the opposite was true. The Jasper Park Collieries mine at Pocahontas operated at an impressive rate without interruption until after the Great War. In 1916 it output was 327,427 tonnes, and the company felt that a small colliery (called the Miette mine) was warranted directly across the river at Bedson siding. Production rose to almost 500,000 tonnes in the following year and to

554,177 tonnes in 1918.[36] This trend was a direct result of wartime demand for coal. Yet other factors were uniting to bring production to an end at Pocahontas.

Although there has been some suspicion that the rise of militancy in the Western Canadian labour movement after the war contributed to the demise of Pocahontas, there seems to be no evidence whatever of serious trouble at the mine.[37] It has also been suggested that the mine was producing an inferior grade of coal, for which markets could not be found. Strictly speaking, neither view is wholly correct. In fact, the Pocahontas mine actually increased production through 1919 and had major contracts in hand.[38] Yet the fact remains that in May of the following year the mine closed permanently.

The company was quick to place the blame for this drastic action, which threw hundreds of men out of work, squarely upon the federally government.[39] There were three main causes, according to the company's lawyers. One was the government's wartime removal of Grand Trunk Pacific rail within the park, which "entirely changed the situation of our clients and has resulted in a business, which at one time owing to the then conditions showed every prospect of prosperity and success, now becoming absolutely unprofitable and without a future…."[40] Rather than having direct access to the main line, the colliery was obligated to ship its coal to new main line (the old Canadian Northern) via a 25.8 kilometre spur

CAPTION:	Coal cars, Jasper Area, Alta.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:	These cars were drawn along Railroads tracks by mules, which was very unusual for a park mine. At both the Brule Lake and Pocahontas collieries, horses (and possibly mules) were not used after the Great War.
DATE:	c. 1910
PHOTOGRAPHER:	Edgar Spurgeon
SOURCE:	Glenbow Archives
REFERENCE NUMBER:	NA-1679-18

line that led to Snaring Junction. Spur line upkeep and additional shipping costs reduced the mine's profit margin substantially, or so the owners claimed.

Furthermore, the lawyers argued, the Jasper Park Collieries had invested heavily to provide accommodations for tourists who frequented the Miette Hot Springs on Fiddle Creek. Now this business, too, was ruined. Finally, and most importantly, the new management of the Canadian National Railway had decided to obtain better quality coal from other mines after July of 1920. While the tourist argument may have been specious, it does seem that the combination of reduced markets and increased shipping costs ended the production of a mine which had enough reserves to last for decades at the current demand level. The government, after careful consideration of the matter, accepted that its action had contributed significantly to closure of the mine. The result was payment of $100,000 to Jasper Park Collieries as compensation.[41]

The end of the Pocahontas operation left only one colliery in the park. This belonged to the Blue Diamond Coal Company, whose mine was situated near Brule Lake, just inside the park's eastern boundary. William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, who had created the Canadian Northern Railway, opened this colliery in 1916-17 and operated it until 1920, when they sold it to the McIntyre

gold mine and the Timiniskamin silver mine interests.[42] At that time the mine was producing about 725 tonnes per day and employed around 200 men. The new management company, called the Blue Diamond Coal Company, had struck an excellent bargain in buying the mine for $450,000, and during the first year of operation showed a profit of $168,000.[43]

This success did not survive the first year of operation. The rapid decline of the colliery is a remarkable tale of mismanagement. In that first year, the company more than doubled the output of the mine and invested over three-quarters of a million dollars in plant and community improvements. After that the town of Brule may have been considered a model of its type, but the extensive outlay of capital happened to coincide with a serious postwar recession. Demand fell, and the situation was soon aggravated by the actions of the resident mine manager.

During the labour troubles of 1919, which caused at least one strike at Brule,[44] the manager decided to run an open shop in defiance of the union. The local union vice-president managed to convince CNR firemen to boycott Brule coal, which they had never liked because of its high dust content. As a result, after Christmas day of 1923, no further orders were received from the railway. This was a serious blow to the economic viability of the colliery. When the railway did commence purchasing, in 1924, it

demanded that the colliery mix lumpy coal from on seam with the finer coal of two others to produce a better class of steam coal. This caused no end of mining problems and, within four years, the colliery closed permanently. As in the case of Pocahontas, the problems compounded until no avenue of escape remained. A 1930 boundary adjustment excised these mineworks from the park.[45]

The Coal Towns of the Corridor

While the Pocahontas, Miette, and Brule Lake collieries operated, they gave life to three separate communities within Jasper Park. Bedson siding, adjacent to the Miette mine, was never anything more than a 'suburb' of Pocahontas, situated on the opposite side of the Athabasca. Brule Lake and Pocahontas, on the other hand, were larger than the townsite of Jasper for most of their existence and contributed much to the character of the early park. Unfortunately, little is known about the town of Brule, but those who remember it at all say it was very much like its western neighbour, Pocahontas.[46]

The Jasper Park Collieries Limited started Pocahontas around 1910. To hasten development of the mine, the company erected temporary log houses for the accommodation of its workers while the mineworks were being constructed and preliminary excavation of the coal seam began. Like

many mining communities of the time, it was to be a two-tiered town, with the industrial buildings, machinery, and offices at the foot of the hill and the residential section in the purer air up above. A covered staircase, some 200 steps in length, connected the upper and lower parts of the town. But Pocahontas's makeshift character lasted only a short time. In the autumn of 1911, the company began to construct permanent houses, and by the following year the Edson Leader reported that a considerable town had grown up, called Pocahontas, like the mine itself, after a famous Virginia coal mining community.[47]

By 1912 Pocahontas possessed two rows of cookie-cutter homes, each one identical in every respect to many of the others. The only real difference was that some had four rooms while others made do with just three. Forty had been completed and another forty were under construction. The company had put up a large general store, a small hospital, and several office buildings. Unlike the little town of Jasper, Pocahontas could boast some of the latest urban amenities. Water was pumped from a spring south of town to a holding tank in the upper townsite, where water taps were placed outside every two houses.[48] A pail was all the miners needed to ensure an abundant supply of water at home. Electricity could be obtained from the mine powerhouse. Pocahontas was, in

fact, a company town in all respects and to the extent that mining companies adopted a paternalistic attitude toward their employees, the miners enjoyed a more comfortable existence than they might have in many prairie towns of the day.

While young men dominated many mining towns in Western Canada, families seem to have been the rule rather than the exception in Pocahontas. Even prior to the Great War, there were over fifty families in town.[49] This added greatly to the stability of the community. For example, the residents wasted no time arranging for school services for their children. In 1912 some of the miners petitioned the provincial government for construction of the necessary facilities, only to find that Alberta would not do anything for them because Pocahontas was situated within a national park. When the federal government was approached for help, it disavowed all responsibility for education, as that was a provincial matter under the British North America Act. In frustration, the miners seized the initiative, formed a school board, and levied an eight mill school tax with which to build and operate a two-room frame schoolhouse.[50] So concerned were the residents that their children be educated that each morning several children from Bedson crossed the river aboard a tiny boat named the Viola just to attend the school

Because Pocahontas was not an incorporated community,

information about the makeup of its population is scarce and perhaps not altogether reliable. Still, it seems that about half of the residents claimed a Canadian or British background, while most of the other half were Austrian or Italian.[51] Some had been recruited by the Company at Edmonton and other places, while some merely wandered into the mine office looking for work. If a man was able-bodied and willing to work, he would probably have been in luck, for Western Canada suffered a tremendous shortage of labour during the Great War years.

Many had had previous experience in coal mining, which made them even more valuable to the company. This was certainly true of those from Wales and from northern Italy, although some also came from places like Springhill, Nova Scotia.[52] The schooling that many of these men had received was fragmentary at best, and perhaps that partly explains why some many of the British men were given positions of authority. Stanley Barnett, the son of an original Pocahontas resident, recalled that his London-born father’s classical education was the reason behind his employment as storekeeper for the company.[53] Mrs. Thirza Schultz, the daughter of a pit miner, believed that her father’s British background helped to explain his elevation to union representative at the colliery.[54]

Life in the Pocahontas colliery, as in collieries

everywhere, was hard. Perpetual darkness, penetrated only by the dim rays of a Wolf safety lamp, enveloped the workmen throughout their underground shift. The earliest shafts were damp from water seepage, but at least this kept the dust level tolerable and minimized the threat of explosion. The same could not be said of new shafts, where coal dust hung thickly in the air and breathing was difficult. None of the shafts at Pocahontas were spacious, but in monthly reports the district mine inspectors invariably commented on the good quality of shaft construction.[55] Deaths from collapsed tunnels were few in number and more often resulted from carelessness on the part of the miner than from managerial neglect. Even the dread of poisonous gas rarely afflicted Pocahontas miners. True, in 1917-18 there were several fatal poisonings at the mine that eventually brought on a brief miners' strike, but a change in mine management appears to have reduced this hazard significantly.[56] When safety regulations were properly enforced, as was usually the case at Pocahontas, the large exhaust fans provided more than enough ventilation in the shafts. The government requirement of month air movement records, and regular inspections by both the district mine inspector and representatives of the miners themselves, went far toward ensuring mine safety. The Pocahontas mine was not, by any measure, abnormally hazardous.

There is some question about the closeness of the

community that grew up around the mine. Cyndi Smith has argued that no racism was evident in Pocahontas and that pit workers and managers socialized regularly.[57] Certainly some former residents cannot recall anything but a tightly-knit community.[58] But others differ. Stanley Barnett remembered that his British father never associated with any but other residents of British origin.[59] It was not merely a question of language. The radically different customs of the people placed a vast gap between them, while a certain sense of superiority on the part of many Britons merely widened the chasm. For example, the elder Barnett, consumed by a passion for cricket, was frustrated by the lack of enthusiasm he found for the sport among the locals. Separated even more, in some cases, by level of employment, not all residents got along. Thus, like any community, Pocahontas had its factions, its cliques, its internal disagreements.

Notwithstanding such barriers between certain individuals and families, Pocahontas clearly exhibited a true sense of community. This was evident not only in the founding of the school board, or in the rapidity with which regular church services were established, but most obviously in the sporting field. The townspeople organized baseball and hockey teams that competed regularly with teams from Brule, Jasper, Hinton, and the communities of the Coal Branch. And of course every

statutory holiday brought forth volunteer committees that organized picnics and good-natured sporting competitions.

Informal get-togethers were the mainstay of local recreation in this isolated community. Especially popular was the Sunday visit to a friend's house, where many an afternoon after church was spent at horseshoe pitching and when evenings often seemed the perfect time for a few hands of whist or some other card game. Moonshine was always available from the local bootlegger and could enliven the dullest of evenings.[60]

On other occasions, several people or families might rent shaggy horses from Ralph James, a local outfitter and guide, and ride up Fiddle Creek for a day of bathing in the soothing waters of the hot mineral pool there. Then there were those residents who enjoyed dancing and would enlist the musical talents of others or conscript gramophones for an evening of tripping around the floor of the school or community hall. Mrs. Thirza Schultz recalled that her father "would rather dance than eat," and was much in demand as a square-dance caller at Brule.[61] Many of the single men spent their spare time sitting on the steps of Mrs. Wriggley's boarding house, watching the dog fights that they started. A bucketful of cold water was the only way of separating the crazed canines.[62] Other residents preferred quieter pursuits at home. Correspondence was institutionalized in Pocahontas, as it was in all frontier communities, while the mail was

eagerly awaited for the family letters, the overseas magazines, or the hometown newspapers it might deliver.

Not all adults enjoyed their stay at Pocahontas, but to the children it seemed a wonderful place. Wildflowers grew in abundance and could be picked with abandon, while wild animals roamed without hesitation near the community. When Stanley Barnett was young, his parents tethered him to a stake near their house so that he wouldn't wander off and be attacked by the numerous bears that frequented the townsite.[63] Many Pocahontas children learned to swim at the hot springs pool while their parents picnicked on Sunday afternoons. In winter, sledding down the hill from the upper townsite was a favourite pastime, and some fortunate children were able to enlist the assistance of the pit ponies to pull them back to the top.[64] One year, in the dead of winter, some kids poured water on the staircase that connected the upper and lower parts of town and iced it up terribly.[65] But usually their entertainment was tamer, such as hitching a ride in Bob Stone's wagon as he delivered groceries to various houses in town, or ogling and occasionally buying some of the rock candy that stood in jars on the counter of the general store. The experience of Herbert Horne, who was born in Pocahontas during the winter of 1912, is probably unique among the children of the town. He was reputedly the first white child born at the settlement and in his

honour many of the local Indians insisted on parading around his bed, much to the trepidation of his recovering mother.[66]

At first medical services in the community left much to be desired. Although every colliery had to have a small hospital and resident physician by law, when Herbert Horne was about to be born, his relatives could not find the doctor and an Indian midwife assisted at the delivery.[67] The absence of this doctor, whose name has escaped all who knew of him, was not much lamented, as he was allegedly a drunkard who preferred fishing to practicing.[68] Luckily, by the outbreak of the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1918, Pocahontas was served by a new company physician, Dr. Frank Grey, whose reputation was peerless. Whenever a call for assistance came in from down the tracks, Dr. Grey would commandeer a speeder to carry him to the patient as quickly as possible.[69] At neighbouring Cadomin, twenty people died from this flu, and some of those in the Pocahontas cemetery may also have been its victims.

Pocahontas remained a stable community until 1921, when it was suddenly abandoned after the closure of the colliery. It is unclear where the miners and their families went. Some moved to Edmonton to try their hand at business; others moved to mining communities such as Brule and Drumheller. In the summer of 1920 the company arranged for a house-mover to bring all the residences to

the bottom of the hill,[70] presumably to ease their shipment to other centres. Jasper, Hinton, and Edmonton can all claim an affinity to the abandoned town of Pocahontas by virtue of those relocated buildings.

After the disappearance of Pocahontas, and with it the tiny settlement of Bedson across the river, only Brule remained as a resource community within Jasper National Park. Even though it produced coal similar in nature to that of Pocahontas, it continued to find suitable markets until 1928. In its case, mismanagement brought its downfall. The five hundred people who called Brule home left for greener pastures and all the buildings, the golf course, tennis courts, sports grounds, and other improvements that the Blue Diamond Coal Company had put in were abandoned to the elements.

Conclusion

It was mere coincidence that the end of coal mining in the park happened just before the federal government introduced a new National Parks Act that explicitly prohibited natural resource development in all such reserves. Had this major industry in Jasper National Park not died a natural death, however, it would surely have been limited by the provisions of the new act. The act represented a seachange in the philosophy of conservation in Canada. By 1930 it was simply no longer acceptable to

exploit natural resources within national parks, and even the ghost-town of Brule was excised from the park in a boundary adjustment.

This remarkable shift in government opinion remains to be explained properly, yet it seems likely that the government was adjusting its policies to reflect the changed feelings of its constituents. By 1930 the prevalence of the automobile and a developing road system had made Canadians so mobile that it was next to impossible to keep resource development in parks from public view. No matter how well maintained, collieries and other industries were now seen, not as symbols of national progress, but as a considerable blight on the landscape. Not only were mineworks and other facilities unsightly, they also represented a distinctly unappealing way of life. No one came to the mountains to be reminded of toil and a lack of creature comforts. At the same time, urbanization had become so widespread that Canada lost much of its pastoral character, which could only be recaptured in protected reserves like national parks. This longing for the unimpaired countryside (most park visitors were city-dwellers) dictated a prohibition of further resource extraction in the nation’s playgrounds.

Part 2 History/Wilderness Interpretive Management Unit

Jasper Park: A Frontier of Discovery

The Fur Trader as Explorer

The nineteenth century represented the climax of several centuries of intensive European exploration. This longstanding urge to peel back and expose the frontier was an indispensable part of the intellectual equipment of all educated Europeans and, because of it, the world had begun to take its proper shape on Arrowsmith's maps and the character of remote regions became forever impressed on the minds of the curious and the observant. The land that was to become Jasper National Park did not escape their notice.

Throughout much of the nineteenth century, the Jasper area remained the fur trader's domain. Its longstanding reputation as a transportation corridor to and from the fur fields of the western slopes of the Rockies stemmed from the exertions of one man, David Thompson, who first laid out a practical route through these northern mountains in 1810. His achievement differed greatly from

that of the fur traders who came later in that it was the achievement of a surveyor and a geographer rather than of a commercial trader. Like the traders, Thompson worked for a major fur company, but while they merely used the valley of the Athabasca as a conduit, Thompson blazed the path that they all followed. True, many who worked as simple traders had pioneered transportation routes before, but none could claim Thompson's training and range of experience. Thompson was, first and foremost a discoverer.

He had been born in Westminster, England, in 1770. His mother struggled to keep the family together after her husband's death in 1772, but within five years David had been placed in Grey Coat School, a charity institution near Westminster Abbey. There he trained in mathematics for a career in the Royal Navy. Peace intervened, however, and at the age of fourteen Thompson found himself aboard the Prince Rupert, bound for Hudson Bay in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. He remained with this fur trading concern, first in a position of low rank and later as a surveyor and mapmaker, until 1797, when he defected to the rival North West Company. It was while working for the Nor'Westers that Thompson discovered the Athabasca Pass route through the Rockies.[1]

The origins of Thompson's discovery are to be found in the continent-wide struggle between various fur companies around 1800. In British North America, only the

North West Company had the ambition, the skill, and the desire to push the fur trade of the parklands and boreal shield over the mountains and onto the Pacific slope. Neither the Hudson's Bay Company nor the XY Company was similarly equipped to carry out such an undertaking, much as they may have wished to. But from the south came the threat of yet a fourth company with grand territorial designs. This was the powerful New York-based American Fur Company, the brainchild of German immigrant John Jacob Astor, who in 1806-7 conceived a plan to capture the trade at the mouth of the Columbia River and coincidentally deliver the unclaimed territory to President Jefferson.[2] Astor had had dealings with the North West Company and he invited the partners to join him in this venture. They declined, and immediately plotted their own strategy for conquering the west coast. At stake was not just the trade of the area, but its entire political future.

Thompson left Grand Portage at the head of Lake Superior in July, 1810, with orders to forestall an attempt by the American Fur Company to establish a permanent post at the mouth of the Columbia River. He was to cross the mountains via Howse Pass, which he had discovered a decade before, and reach the Pacific as quickly as possible.[3] That this was not simply another trading mission was clear from the parcel of tiny British flags that Thompson was given, with the instructions to

distribute them to all Indian chiefs along the route and to plant them at the forks of rivers. He was also given four canoes of goods with which to establish a permanent trading post without delay and to undersell the Americans.

By September 6th, he and his crew had arrived at White Earth House, on the North Saskatchewan River. He then sent the brigade on ahead to the foot of the mountains, while he rode on horseback to Fort Augustus (later Fort Edmonton) where he left his family for the winter. He then vanished for nearly a month, and Thompson's own journal curiously neglects the period entirely.[4]

His canoemen had, meanwhile, been warned to turn back from the traditional route up the southern branch of the North Saskatchewan River because four tents of hostile Peigans were lying in wait for them. These Indians had no intention of allowing traders to cross the mountains to arm enemy tribes. The brigade waited for Thompson to arrive and give new orders, but when he failed to do so the men turned back and took shelter at the recently abandoned Rocky Mountain House, some 65 kilometres downstream. There they waited eleven days before Alexander Henry – Thompson's subordinate – arrived. Henry knew nothing of Thompson's whereabouts, but presumed him to be up stream. This he believed because the four tents of Peigans had come down to Rocky Mountain House

with Thompson's horse and other articles. To elude the Peigans and reunite the canoemen and their leader, Henry liberally distributed liquor to the Indians until none could stand, let alone pursue them. The brigade then departed under cover of darkness in search of a rendezvous with Thompson. During the next morning, however, the brigade was met by Henry's cousin William, who brought the astonishing news that Thompson was awaiting the brigade on the Brazeau River, the northern branch of the North Saskatchewan, many kilometers away. More astonishingly yet, Thompson now wished to cross the mountains via an almost unknown route through the Athabasca Valley.

Puzzled but obedient, the men headed north through the bush to meet Thompson on horses they purchased from the Indians. On the 28th of October the party was reunited.[5] It consisted of Thompson, twenty-four men, and an equal number of horses. Four men were assigned to the hunt, two became trail blazers, and the rest cared for the horses and undertook routine camp duties. Thomas, an Iroquois, guided the party. With much fallen timber and muskeg before them, and periodic stops to take latitude and longitude readings, they made slow progress. A march of eight to sixteen kilometers a day was usual. At this rate, it was the beginning of December before they reached the Athabasca River.

There were only fifteen centimeters of snow on the

ground, but the temperature had dipped to -32 degrees Fahrenheit. They knew they would not be able to take the horses through the mountains and somewhere near the mouth of the Miette River they stopped to construct log shelters for accommodation while they built sleds and snowshoes. With these arrangements made, they set off again, down the river itself when the ice permitted and otherwise through the woods along the bank. The weather continued cold, and not until early January did they make the eastern slope of the Rockies.

Thompson's French-Canadian canoemen, who had previously consumed every scrap of available meat, now steeled themselves for the starvation they believed awaited them in the mountains. "We are now entering the defiles of the Rocky Mountains by the Athabasca River," Thompson wrote in his journal on January 5th, "the woods of Pine are stunted, full of branches to the ground, and the Aspin, Willow &c not much better."[6] To the brigade crew, the land ahead was barren, desolate, and forbidding.

The fears of the brigademen grew as they were beginning to feel the cold in the shadow of the peaks. Matters worsened still more as one of the Indians mentioned that this pass was known to be the haunt of the mammoth. Thompson did his best to quiet the superstitious men by interrogating the Indians about this supposed mammoth. If it was as big as they claimed, would it not leave tracks and evidence of feeding? Certainly, they replied. And

had any of them ever seen such evidence of the creature? No, they had not. Why then did they believe in it? They could not say, but still they clung to their story. Just two days later the men came across a strange track in the snow. "I measured it;" wrote Thompson,

> four large toes each of four inches in length [and] to each a large claw; the ball of the foot sunk three inches lower than the toes, the hinder part of the foot did not mark well, the length fourteen inches, by eight inches in breadth, walking from north to south, and having passed about six hours [ago] … the Men and the Indians would have it to be a young mammoth and I held it to be the track of a large old grizzled [sic] Bear; yet the shortness of the nails, the ball of the foot, and it's [sic] great size was not that of a Bear, otherwise [it had to be] that of a very large old Bear, his claws worn away; this the Indians would not allow.(7)

The men were terrified by the track and, as Thompson said, "in no humour to follow it."[8]

As they proceeded, the winds from the Pacific warmed the air and the temperature hovered near the freezing mark. They continued to make about sixteen kilometers a day until the snows began in the higher altitudes. Then their advance was slowed by the sled dogs sinking repeatedly and by the wet snow dripping down upon everything from the branches above. Finally, on the 16th of January, they reached the height of land. To Thompson this was most exhilarating, "but to my uneducated men a dreadful sight, they had no scientific object in view, their feelings were of the place they were…."[9] Only at night did these fears lessen, when the men "admired the

brilliancy of the Stars, and as one of them said, he thought he could almost touch them with his hand."[10] Their leader, however, felt only that "a new world was in a manner before me."[11] Their descent from the Athabasca Pass was steep but without incident and on the 26th of January they reached the banks of the Columbia River.

Over the next five months Thompson endured continued hardship on the trail and the desertion of all but three of his men. When he finally reached the mouth of the Columbia, in mid-July of 1811, he found a newly-built post called Fort Astoria. With this discovery, he knew the mission on which the North West Company had sent him to be a failure. Because of this, Thompson's decision to take his men through the unknown Athabasca Pass has been called the action of a coward and a fool; a coward because he would not confront the Peigans, and a fool because he refused to take the Howse Pass route even after the Indians had been diverted. But one is left to wonder whether Thompson cared as much about beating the Americans to the Pacific as he did about the 'scientific object in view' and the 'new world before him.'

The Scientific Quest

In the early nineteenth century, the quest for scientific knowledge almost invariably began after a remote region had been opened by commercial trade. This was a most

sensible sequence of events. In the main, scientists visited new areas only by way of carefully organized expeditions and not because they were adept at or keen on blazing trails through unknown lands or improvising transportation networks across vast unpeopled tracts. David Thompson's discovery of the Athabasca Pass in 1810 and its regular use by fur traders thereafter made scientific exploration of the Jasper area a realistic possibility for the first time. In the two decades after Thompson's discovery, the area was visited by two scientists, Thomas Drummond in the winter of 1825-6 and David Douglas in the spring of 1827.

Scientific knowledge, like all knowledge of the period, tended to be valued by the public only to the extent it was widely known. By this rigid criterion, Thomas Drummond's brief expedition was nearly valueless. Drummond was a young naturalist with the second John Franklin expedition to the arctic.[12] Late in 1825 he split off from the main party at Cumberland House on the North Saskatchewan and attempted to reach the Columbia River. Bad weather confined him to Jasper House and an Indian camp on the Baptiste River, from which he made a number of brief scientific forays in the winter months. In the late winter, he did manage to accompany the spring brigade as far west as the Boat Encampment.

Like the good scientist he was, Drummond carefully

recorded every natural feature, every bird, animal, and plant. The record of his explorations was not published for five years after his return to England, and then only in an obscure scientific journal known as Hooker's Botanical Miscellany, published by William Jackson Hooker, Professor Botany at Glasgow University. There the report has languished to the present day, cloistered amid equally dry scientific reports and jottings, unknown to all but the most inquisitive of botanical students.

Anonymity was not to be the fate of David Douglas, however, if only because of the tragic end that befell the thirty-five year old botanist in Hawaii just seven years after his trip to Jasper House. Douglas, the son of a Scottish stonemason, had demonstrated an aptitude for natural history investigation in childhood and early on came under the tutelage of some of Scotland's most famous gardeners. By 1820, he had attracted the attention of William Hooker by attending his popular lectures and participating in his field trips to the Highlands and northern islands. Hooker later noted that Douglas's "great activity, undaunted courage, singular abstemiousness and energetic zeal, at once pointed him out as an individual eminently calculated to do himself credit as a scientific traveler."[14] It was through Hooker's intervention that Douglas, at the age of twenty-four, found himself collecting fruit trees and other unusual specimens in the eastern United States on behalf of the

Horticultural Society.

The Society, obviously pleased with the work of the young botanist, approached him in 1824 with plans for a plant-collecting expedition to the states of Washington and Oregon. This had been arranged in conjunction with the Hudson's Bay Company which, as was its custom, agreed to provide transportation and other services to the traveler. Douglas made his way to Fort Vancouver by ship around Cape Horn in the summer of 1824 and spent the next two years gathering specimens in the Columbia River valley and along all its tributaries. By early 1827 he had packed his plants for shipment back to Scotland and was making preparations for his departure. On the 20th of March, he left Fort Vancouver for Hudson Bay and England via the fur traders' route up the Columbia and across the Rockies, confessing that "I certainly left with regret a country so exceedingly interesting."[15] On the way home, he did as he had been trained to do: he observed and collected.

The best of the journals kept by scientific explorers in the nineteenth century always managed to intrigue by conveying a sense of wonderment, of awe, at the unusual feature, the bizarre custom, the local splendour. Douglas's prose was seldom much more than commonplace, but when the occasion demanded it, the stonemason's son tried earnestly to rouse his meager descriptive powers to a new

intensity. So it was when his party reached the Boat Encampment on April 27th. "How familiar soever high snowy mountains may have been to us," he wrote, "where in such a case we might have been expected to lose that just notion of their immense altitude, yet on beholding the grand dividing ridge of the continent all that we have seen before disappears from the mind and is forgotten, by the height, the sharp and indescribably rugged peaks, the darkness of the rocks, the glacier and eternal snow."[16] After sufficient reflection and enough awkward English on the glories of the summit, Douglas packed his journals, tin box of seeds, and a shirt or two into a bundle and struck eastward with his companions. The same appalling conditions that had afflicted those who had gone before impeded the progress of the little party. The wet spring snow was one to two metres deep and the trail blocked by much fallen timber. Even though their snowshoes provided little relief, Douglas remained undaunted and continue to scratch the names of the most common native trees avidly in his journal: P[inus] balsamea, P. nigra, P. alba, P. Strobus, and Thuya plicata.[17]

Each morning the party arose at four o'clock to begin their day's journey. The temperature warmed considerably as they progressed eastward, which caused a hard crust to form on the snow each night. This made walking much easier and they often made as much as twenty-four kilometers before establishing a new camp at noon. Douglas

used the warm afternoons to make more detailed observations and to collect specimens. Near the summit, he secured a fine partridge, which he "preserved with great care,"[18] before setting off to climb what he took to be a 5,179 metre peak. In his journal he claimed, more in the spirit of a Romantic than a Rationalist, that

> the sensation I felt is beyond what I can give utterance to. Nothing, as far as the eye could perceive, but mountains such as I was on, and many higher, some rugged beyond and description, striking the mind with horror blended with a sense of the wondrous works of the Almighty. The aerial tints of the snow, the heavenly azure of the solid glaciers, the rainbow-like hues of their thin broken fragments, the huge mossy icicles hanging from the perpendicular rocks with the snow sliding from the steep southern rocks with amazing velocity, producing a crash and grumbling like the shock of an earthquake, the echo of which resounded in the valley for several minutes.(19)

This enormous peak, which he believed to be the highest in the northern latitudes of the continent, he named Mount Brown after a distinguished botanist. Its nearby counterpart, only slightly smaller, received the name Mount Hooker in honour of his Glasgow mentor. For three-quarters of a century his terse comments on these great, mysterious (and mythical) peaks, often shrouded in cloud and fog, would haunt the imaginations of the most adventurous of mountain climbers.

Throughout their eastward trek, Douglas had steadfastly refused to mount the horse that had been provided for him, preferring instead to walk alongside. This, he said, made for better observations. The

temperature continued to rise and the snow melted, which eased their passage greatly but made it impossible for Douglas to continue on foot. He simply could not keep up. On the 3rd of May, for example, the party actually traveled fifty-five kilometers, which caused Douglas to lament that he had been able to spy only one new plant, a flowering anemone.

At a small log hut they called the Rocky Mountain House, they transferred to canoes for the remainder of the journey to Fort Edmonton. That evening they paused overnight at Jasper House, a cluster of three small hovels on the left side of the river, and then swept downstream in the spring freshet at the terrific rate of 150 kilometres a day. Douglas had to be content to observe waterfowl and could collect no specimens. The only real highlight of the remainder of his trip to the Bay was the brief meeting he had with Thomas Drummond at Fort Carlton. Ever the observer, Douglas noted that Franklin's naturalist "had a princely collection."[20]

Douglas's journals on botanical collecting in western North America were on a par with those of Thomas Drummond. That is, they were of extremely limited interest to a general audience and could claim none of those literary attainments that might have broadened their appeal as travel literature. In fact, the only immediate publication that the scientific findings of these two

naturalists found was in a dull volume compiled by William Hooker, entitled Flora Boreali-Americana.[21] But while Drummond's conventional life contributed to anonymity, the spectacular end of Douglas's life led inevitably to public interest in his career.

Douglas had returned to a hero's welcome among the botanists of England. They pressed honours upon him and offered to underwrite publication of his North American journals. But the accolades and attention were too much for the sensitive Douglas, who much preferred the uncomplicated life of observation and collection in the field, and in 1829 he departed England for yet another expedition to North America. He explored Mexico, California and the northern interior of British Columbia for a number of years, before departing for the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) in 1834.

It was while exploring one of the islands that his inquisitiveness got the better of him. He spotted an unusual pit before him, from which came strange snorts and huffs. He ventured closer to investigate and, probably because of his shortsightedness, fell in. It was an islander's pit, dug to trap wild cattle. Sadly, this pit held an enraged wild bull, which gored and trampled Douglas beyond recognition. This sensational tragedy briefly captured the attention of the world's press and for a moment catapulted Douglas's otherwise prosaic career into the limelight. The journals of his wanderings

around the globe would not be published until 1914, but for the moment the reading public was deluged with general accounts of his expeditions and with professional eulogies. His work may not have been of universal interest, nor his writings of broad appeal, yet through the horror of his death Douglas had managed to draw back the curtains a little on some of the most remote corners of the world.

In a world which barely knew of the existence of the Jasper House region and cared less, Douglas's meticulous cataloguing of unknown alpine plants and animals had little impact and seemed to have even less worth. After all, pressing flowers and preserving partridges was hardly the stuff of legend and high adventure. Yet this is the very scientific spadework on which our understanding of the natural world is based. Thus, while Douglas is now best remembered in Western Canada for the fir tree to which he gave his name, perhaps his more important contribution was the groundwork he laid for the further botanical research in the northern Rockies.

Wayfarers of the 1840s

During the 1840s a curious procession of travelers passed through the Jasper House region. In the first half of the decade, only fur traders followed the trail through

Athabasca Pass; the same could be said of most of the last half of the decade. But in the single year of 1846, four vastly different characters converged briefly on Jasper House and its inmates. The first was Father Pierre-Jean de Smet, a Jesuit priest in search of “lost souls”; the next two were Henry Warre and Mervyn Vavasour, military spies in Her Majesty’s Service; and the last was Paul Kane, an artist with a passion for painting Indians.

The missionary was perhaps a unique type of nineteenth century explorer. His alone was a mission dedicated to a change in values rather than study, political conquests, illumination, or whimsy. He ventured into wilderness in the full knowledge that he had changed the people of the frontier forever. Where there was open hostility and chaos, he attempted to build stability. Where there was ignorance, he planted the seeds of education. Where there was immorality, he urged Christian ethics.

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet was one of several Belgian Jesuits working with the plateau tribes of Idaho and western Montana in the mid-1840s. The great problem of those people was the persistent attacks on them made by the more northerly Blackfoot, who claimed the buffalo of the entire eastern slope as their own. In order to halt

the fighting, De Smet undertook a long journey of pacification into the North West, where few missionaries had gone before. His path took him through the Okanagan Valley, and over the mountains via the southerly Whiteman Pass to Rocky Mountain House. His goal was nothing less than "to take possession in the name of Christ of the entire region…."[22]

As De Smet traveled, accompanied only by two Kootenay guides, he performed the rites of baptism, marriage, and death among the Indians he encountered. The nearer he got to Fort Edmonton on the North Saskatchewan, the more excitedly he was welcomed, for these people had already come under the influence of itinerant priests from St. Boniface near the Red River settlement and of those who laboured among the Metis of Lac St. Anne. It was on his return journey to the United States that he paused for over two weeks at Jasper House.

Many of the Indians and mixed bloods who frequented Jasper House were Catholics. They had come to the faith either through their previous residence at Catholic missions like Lac Ste. Anne, where Father Thibault had a mission, or through a brief 1838 visit of two Roman Catholic priests who were en route from St. Boniface to forts Vancouver and Colville. For fifteen days De Smet remained among these people, who continually recited their prayers and asked for the sacrament of baptism.[23]Endnote # should be 23 (22 in original document). This visit happened to coincide with Easter, and the Belgian

priest celebrated a special mass for the Jasper House people. By the time of his departure he had baptized forty-seven people, and formally married seven couples who had been living together in the 'custom of the country.' On his final day at the post, the men of the post honoured the missionary by firing their muskets at a prominent local mountain and by giving it his name. To this day, no one is certain which mountain was involved.

For some sixteen kilometers west of Jasper House, De Smet enjoyed the company of the local men. All but his guides departed in tears, and for the first time in weeks De Smet found himself nearly "alone in one of those wild ravines enclosed by mountains rising like insurmountable barriers."[24] With the early spring runoff and small avalanches of snow and rock making for a miserable journey, the priest's forty-five years and obesity began to tell. He had driven himself hard for so long and was growing tired and ill. As he trekked toward the great divide, he wrote to his family, saying that "my health is no longer what it was. Every time I climb a mountain now, my strength seems to leave me. The rigors of the climate, fasts, sleepless nights, with ever-increasing anxieties, and the dangers and agonizing moments I pass through, are sapping my constitution. Only lately did I miraculously escape the hands of a vile assassin."[25] He began to despair and continually alluded to his expectations of an

early death.

This recurrent depression and thoughts of dying were, it seems, mainly the result of his extraordinary diet. The traders at Rocky Mountain House and at Fort Edmonton had warned De Smet that in his overweight condition he would surely find it difficult to cross the mountains at this time of the year. The priest immediately began a thirty-day fast, which “reduced my flesh, and, finding myself considerably lighter, I bravely set out to journey through snow from sixteen to twenty feet deep.”[26] As the journey continued, the spring runoff began in earnest, and De Smet found himself criss-crossing the swollen river in water up to his shoulders as many as forty times a day. The rest of the journey was then made in soaked garments, and “the cold, together with extreme fatigue, caused my legs to swell; my toe nails came off and the blood coagulated in my boots. Four times I felt my strength failing, and I should have perished in this grim wilderness if the courage and strength of my companions had not sustained me.”[27] Arrival at the Boat Encampment brought great relief, however, as the landscape was already abloom with spring flowers and greening grass. The sight must have cheered De Smet greatly, for he returned to his mission work in the United States and lived nearly another thirty years.

On the westward trek through the mountains, De Smet and his guides had met the Hudson’s Bay Company spring

brigade. It was accompanied by two English gentlemen, Captain Henry J. Warre and Lieutenant Mervyn Vavasour, who claimed to represent that common type of British explorer, the idle, rich adventurer seeking nothing more than amusement. In fact, they were nothing of the sort. Rather, they were British military spies, returning from a journey to the lower Columbia, where their mission was the assessment of British military strength and preparedness in the region.

This incredible assignment had been conceived by the influential governor of the Hudson’s Bay Company, Sir George Simpson, who greatly feared the belligerence and territorial ambitions of President Polk and wished to safeguard British interests in the area. At his request, the British government appointed Warre and Vavasour to undertake the important investigation.

If war was to break out between Great Britain and the United States over the northern territories, any serious engagements would undoubtedly take place in the valley of the lower Columbia River and along the Pacific coast. For that reason, Warre and Vavsour naturally spent most of their time in that area. They had journeyed westward from Montreal with Simpson to the Red River settlement, and then had proceeded overland to the Columbia via a southern pass. On their return journey, however, they followed the fur traders’ route up the Columbia and through the

Athabasca Pass.

Much to their displeasure, the spies had to share the return canoe trip with more than twenty-five retiring Hudson's Bay Company servants, who were heading either back to Great Britain or to the Company's retirement colony at Red River. The journey upstream was difficult for the old men and made worse by their lack of foresight in not bringing sufficient provisions. By the time the Boat Encampment had been made, food had to be rationed. Matters grew worse as the hunt continually failed or yielded only the poorest of animals. "We found ourselves," wrote Warre, "in the unenviable position of being obliged to share our last meal with the hungry men, who[se] strength also began to fail under the excessive exertion, without sufficient nourishment."[28] When the provisions were finally exhausted, Warre and two men started out ahead of the main party for Jasper House, some ninety-six kilometers away. Sixteen kilometers into their trek, they encountered Father De Smet and his small party, who enthusiastically shared their sledloads of pemmican with the starving men.

Thus fortified, Warre and his companions continued their journey and reached Jasper House in just four days. There they found two men, sixteen horses, and presumably enough provisions to allow them to continue their journey downstream to Fort Assiniboine. After twelve months in the wilderness, Warre and Vavasour were understandably

anxious to get home and they left little information about the tiny Hudson's Bay Company post on the Athabasca. They recorded only that it consisted of "mere huts used as depots for provisions for parties en route for the Columbia or the Northern Department, [which] are abandoned in the summer season."[29] Such a statement could have as easily have come from George Simpson or from a voyageur as from two trained military observers. But then these were men in a hurry, to whom Jasper House meant nothing but a good meal and a new canoe in which to leave the wretched mountains that much more quickly. Needless to say, no one ever thought Jasper House had any military significance.

Like Warre and Vavasour, artist Paul Kane received the bounteous assistance that only a man of Sir George Simpson's stature could provide in crossing the vast North West. The two had first met at Lachine, near Montreal, in the spring of 1846. Simpson was taken with the young man's pertinacity and agreed to provide him with passage in exchange for twelve paintings of Indian life.[30] Kane was later to prove Simpson's equal in his ability to travel at break-neck speed via canoe, horseback, snowshoe, and cart brigade across the empty plains and through the mountains. For a man of thirty-five, who had spent years in portraiture and haunting the galleries of New York and of Europe, this was a considerable accomplishment. Cultivation and hardiness rarely went hand in hand to such

an extent in the colonies during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Kane was obsessed with the canvas capture of primitive Indian life, life as it had been before the commercialism of the fur trade put its stamp on native ways, before the missionaries coaxed the Indians out of their paganism. In London, he had seen an exhibition of the work of the renowned American painter of Indians, George Catlin, and had attended his lectures. This meeting infused his own life as an artist with meaning and he mustered all his resources over the next few years for a trip to the North West. In 1845 he got as far as Sault Ste. Marie before being dissuaded from continuing with his meager resources and lack of traveling knowledge and assistance. The patronage of Simpson in the following year, however, made his trip to the plains, the mountains, and the Pacific coast a reality.

By the autumn of 1846 Kane had traveled the North West from the Red River settlement to Rocky Mountain House, and was ready to embark on a trip across the mountains to the Columbia basin. This journey began on the 6th of October when Kane, Chief Trader W.D. Lane of Fort Edmonton, his wife, a young clerk named Charles, a servant called McGillivray, and sixteen other men set out from the post on the North Saskatchewan with sixty-five horses.[31] The track was poor all the way to Fort Assiniboine, where the party exchanged the pack train for

boats. Kane, who had been sketching as they traveled on horseback, remarked that he had never see a view as monotonous as that from the river. But by the first day of November, they had entered Jasper Lake where Kane got his first taste of the severe winds that could howl through the valley with hurricane force. Two cold and damp nights in the bush were all that the young artist could stomach, and on November 3rd he and a guide started for Jasper House in advance of the main party.

They arrived, as Kane said, "cold, wet and famished,"[32] but Colin Fraser, who was in charge of the post, made them welcome with a roaring fire and about twelve kilos of mountain sheep. The rest of the party straggled in to the small log post during the evening and the morning of the next day. However much an improvement Jasper House must have been over camping on the ground, it was most assuredly crowded, as there was only a small room, about 4.5 metres square, for the accommodation of guests. The other room, of the same size, was occupied by Colin Fraser, his wife, and their nine children.

Kane's sojourn at Jasper House lasted but a day and a half, just time for him to do a quick sketch of the little post and its surroundings. As soon as the men had selected thirteen horses from the herds that Fraser maintained, the party struck westward for the height of land. The snow was deep and progress was slow. The

travelers grew worried, as they feared the brigade awaiting them at the Boat Encampment might “give up all hopes of meeting us and might leave. This would have entailed the most fearful hardships upon us, if it did not produce actual destruction, as we should have had to recross the mountains with scarcely any or no provisions.”[33] This apprehension may have quickened their pace but the snow slowed it by just as much, and they sent McGillivray and the guide on ahead to meet the brigade.

Snowshoes soon became the order of the day, and two experienced men broke trail in advance of the main party. On the 11th of November, they made their first winter encampment. This meant that there was so much snow on the ground that it could not be removed to provide a dry base on which to set up camp. Kane was interested to learn that regular men calculated the usual depth of snow by measuring the stumps of trees that had been cut for firewood. Some were 3.6 to 4.5 metres above the ground. In the evening the older voyageurs amused themselves by telling the new hands that the local Indians were a race of giants nine to twelve metres high, which accounted for the trees being cut off at such an unusual height.[34]

In such deep snow, camp was made by packing the snow with snowshoes and then laying five or six extremely long green logs parallel on the surface. Upon this a fire was set for the night and pine boughs were made into beds. Wrapped in blankets, the men slept with their feet toward

the fire. It was rare for the fire to burn through the green logs in one night, although the dropping coals and heat melted a veritable cavern beneath the green wood. Only the length of these logs prevented collapse. Still, accidents could happen. One Iroquois with the party rolled too close to the fire and tumbled almost two metres into the snowy tomb below.

These winters crossings taxed the stamina of even the most experienced men. After the height of land was behind the party, on the 13th of November, Kane was shocked to find that they had to carry all their provisions and equipment across seventeen freezing rivers before attaining the Boat Encampment. Kane plunged in with the rest of them, and found that his troubles were just beginning. Time after time he struggled against the strong current and dodged the ice floes as best he could till the other bank was at hand. But once out of the water, he found his capote and leggings frozen stiff. After four rapid dunkings, he could no longer feel his legs and ran up and down the bank to restore his circulation. Only Mrs. Lane, who was carried across each stream by two strong men, suffered somewhat less.

Their pleasure at reaching the Encampment could not have been greater. Kane found some pork and corn soup boiling in a pot, and he attacked it “with so much avidity, that one of the men, fearing I might take too

much in my present exhausted state, politely walked off with the bowl and its contents."[35] Only in retrospect could this have seemed a small price to pay for the grand sketches obtained on the journey.

Passage of the Goldseekers

Until the 1860s those non-commercial travelers who crossed the northern mountains were, by and large, an altruistic lot, infused with the singular notion of serving a part of the larger society. Seldom did mere self-interest compel them to accept the dangers and hardships that inevitably befell the inexperienced in the Rockies. David Douglas continued his detailed nature observations all the way from the Pacific Ocean to Hudson Bay because he wished to expand the frontiers of botanical knowledge. Father De Smet sought new flocks for the Catholic Church. Warre and Vavasour prepared for a transoceanic war. Paul Kane tried to capture a dying lifestyle in the interests of posterity. And, of course, the best known of the mid-century Rocky Mountain travelers, Dr. James Hector of the Palliser expedition, came to the valley in search of a railway route and broader geographical knowledge.[36] Of all these, only the efforts of Paul Kane might be construed as self-aggrandizing.

In 1862, however, the Athabasca Valley and the

Yellowhead Pass were inundated by several large parties whose motives were transparently self-serving. These were the goldseekers from Canada East and Canada West, or Overlanders as they became known, who dreamed only of vast personal fortunes to be made by panning the creeks of the Cariboo district of British Columbia. Their journey to the goldfields was, to say the least, unusual. Most prospectors were able to take the short overland journey northward from the northern American states, or arrived via ship by way of the Panama Canal or Cape Horn. Few had the wherewithal to cross the entire continent by rail, on horseback, on foot, and on snowshoe in search of the elusive strike that would make them rich.

News of the Cariboo goldstrike spread around the world by wireservice and newspaper until anyone with a trace of ambition knew precisely the location of that remote district of British Columbia and somewhat less exactly the various means of getting there. It was nothing less than a mania, this lust for gold that made established professional men throw away their careers, that saw merchants part with all their assets, that made a mother with three children in tow and at least one pregnant woman cross a forbidding wilderness, all in the hope of easy money and a life of leisure. The dreams of the labouring classes and the downtrodden, those with little or nothing to lose, are more easily understood. Together they assembled and schemed, picked leaders and

bought supplies, consulted maps and set out to cross the continent.

None were foolish enough to attempt the trek through the endless rocks and pine trees of the Canadian Shield north of Lake Superior. Instead, the goldseekers looked to the south. Of course as easterners they were familiar with, or had easy access to, information about the American railroads and steamboats just kilometers away. By these means they would travel as far as St. Paul, Minnesota, and then strike out by oxcart across the prairies to the Red River settlement, some 650 kilometres to the northwest. There they reorganized into parties of twenty to 150. Although no one is certain, it seems likely that they relied to some degree on a small booklet by explorer Henry Youle Hind, called A Sketch of an Overland Route to British Columbia,[37] for information about the best route west from Red River and for practical advice. Hind advised using oxcarts down the Saskatchewan Trail that led to Fort Edmonton, and then horses across the Rockies via the Athabasca Pass. Other newspaper articles of the day argued in favour of the southern Kananaskis (or Vermilion) Pass. But most Overlanders, it seems used these guides only generally and made decisions about their precise track while en route, when they could solicit the knowledgeable opinions of resident fur traders.

By the end of May, 1862, there were more than 200 Overlanders at Red River, reorganizing into troupes and preparing for the long journey westward. Eventually, they formed four main parties. One was led by Thomas and Robert McMicking, brothers and general merchants from St. Catherines, Canada West. A second was under the command of an American doctor named Symington. A third, called the Redgrave Party, was led by a former Toronto Police sergeant named Stephen Redgrave. And finally, three Rennie brothers had organized a party with two other men with London, Canada West. In a fashion surprisingly military, these rag-tag groups made their way across the western parkland to Fort Edmonton during the early summer of 1862.

Most of what we know about the journey through the mountains relates to the McMicking party. By the end of July this group was ready to leave Fort Edmonton. After consultations with the post residents, they had chosen to follow the fur traders' route through the Yellowhead Pass. As a result, they abandoned their Red River carts in favour of a 140-horse pack train. None had ever secured a load to a horse with the familiar western diamond-hitch, but under the tutelage of Andre Cardinal, their guide from Jasper House, all soon learned.[38] Each horse carried between 330 and 550 kilos of provisions and equipment. For most members of the party, their personal belongings consisted of "one good strong suit, from three to six

changes of underwear, a pair of knee-boots and a pair of shoes, rubber coat, a pair of blankets, rifle or shotgun, revolver and bowie knife, together with soap and other toilet accessories as fancy dictated and a few simple drugs or patent medicines as each considered desirable."[39]

The trip into the mountains was wearying and tested the resolve of many a party member. They followed a strict routine that left them exhausted. Everyone arose, without fail, at 2:40 a.m., breakfasted and packed the horses so that a 5 o'clock, start could be had. This reduced the amount of heat that had to be endured by both horses and men. Eight o'clock, or nine at the latest, saw all hands asleep for the night.[40] During the day, their main problem was the unbelievably poor condition of the trail to Jasper House. This trail had never been used extensively, but now that the mountain trading post was closed, it was used most infrequently. Whatever the party members' complaints, they could not say that they had not been warned about the trail. McMicking himself recalled that some HBC officials had "represented the road as nearly impassible [sic]; and foresaw difficulties and dangers which they considered almost insurmountable."[41] Conditions were so bad, in fact, that McMicking had to send a party of men ahead to chop out the brush and fallen timber in order to make the trail passable. On one occasion, he confided to his journal that "we passed over

a portion of the road that language is absolutely inadequate to describe. To say that it was horrible expressed but half the truth."[42] Because of such unanticipated difficulties, they counted themselves lucky to have Andre Cardinal as guide. He had been over the Yellowhead Pass twenty-nine times, and was worth the $50, one oxcart, one hundredweight of flour, and few groceries that he charged.[43]

The approaching mountains tempered complaints about the trail and evoked an outpouring of rhapsodic prose from Thomas McMicking. "We were presented with a view at once sublimely grand and overpowering," he wrote,

> on our left, and immediately overlooking our camp ground, a stupendous pile of rocks rose perpendicularly to a height of about one thousand feet; across the Athabaska and directly opposite to this Mount Lacomb [sic] reared its rocky head to a still greater elevations, and behind us, Mount Mayette [Miette] with its cold and craggy cliffs crowned with eternal snows, towered proudly above the whole.[44)]

Just a few nights later, McMicking witnessed his first mountain thunderstorm, "the recollection of which shall never be effaced from my memory."

> A heavy black cloud, that appeared to hang below the mountain tops, slowly floated across our zenith, completely shutting out the heavens and enveloping us in impenetrable darkness. Presently all the surrounding objects were highly illuminated for an instant, while the liquid fire coursed along the cloud, or darted from peak to peak, to be succeeded the next moment by a still deeper gloom, and followed immediately by deafening peals of thunder, which were re-echoed again and again from all sides of our amphitheatre, producing such a scene of terrible grandeur as I shall not attempt to describe.[(45)]

This was nineteenth century travel writing at its finest.

The evocation of place, the sense of mystery and gloom, the excitement of discovery – all these came from the pen of the articulate McMicking.

But for every moment of pleasure in the mountains, there were many more of fear and loathing. On the 19th of August, they took a trail that McMicking considered one of the worst of the journey. It consisted of nothing more than a narrow rock path on a mountain side, "with a perpendicular wall of rocks on one side, and a steep declivity down to the edge of a precipice several hundred feet high on the other. Here a single blunder, one false step for either man or beast, and no human power could save him from instant destruction."[46] But all survived the ordeal and were greeted with a fine view of Jasper House, "a perfect picture of loneliness and solitude,"[47] in the valley below. It was deserted and so the Overlanders did not stop. They camped farther upstream and reached the portage of the Athabasca on the next morning. There they built crude rafts to ferry themselves and their goods across, while the horses and oxen swam. All that remained now was to follow the Miette to the Fraser River, at which point they could boat to their destination.

Towards the end of August, McMicking's party was forced to abandon two or three oxen each day as the beasts could no longer muster the strength to continue. Pasture

had been lacking for a long time. This sad event foretold the plight that would soon afflict the entire party. One hundred and twenty-five people and a 150-horse train moved slowly, and they had taken too long to reach the western slope. At first they rationed the remaining stocks of pemmican and flour, but by the 23rd of August they had to kill an ox for meat. This lasted a mere day, and on the next day McMicking recorded that "we dined this day upon a dish so delicate and rare that it might have tempted the palate of Epicurus himself; so nice, indeed, was it, that I have some little hesitation in naming it, lest we might be censured for living too luxuriously by the way. It was a roasted skunk, which our guide prepared and served up to us in true Indian style."[48] Luck was with the party again the next day, as they found good grass for the animals and dined well on porcupine and huckleberries. Not a moment too soon, then, did the party reach Tete Jaune Cache, where they met some Shuswaps who gladly exchanged dried salmon and berry cakes for ammunition, shirts, thread, needles, and other articles. Revitalized by this feast, the party split into two groups, one of which rafted down the Fraser while the other cut an overland trail to the North Thompson River and Kamloops.

This threat of starvation notwithstanding, the perils of the mountain journey were only hinted at by the experiences of the McMicking party. The full potential of those dangers can be read in the stories of the parties

who followed McMicking's during that late summer of 1862. Stephen Redgrave's small band was grateful that McMicking had gone ahead, but this did not prevent Redgrave from getting a severe headache from laughing at their constant misfortunes. Unfortunately, he had brought along neither cod liver oil nor pickles, both of which "they say is good for head ache."[49] Some years later, he summarized the horrors of his trip through the Rockies in a letter to the editor of the Toronto Globe:

> …suffice it to say that the roads or trails was [sic] fearful for 350 miles not having been used by the HBC for 7 years previously – consequently all choked up with trees that had fallen – the rivers were all overflowing from the late rains, the swamps were almost impassable -- & half our cattle would be wallowing in the mud together – our provisions ran short and we were reduced to the last extremity on reaching the head of the Frazer [sic] river – where we killed our oxen – some made boats of their Hides -- & some made rafts & canoes -- & traveling down the frozen river for 15 days when we arrived at the Cariboo Gold fields just too late for the summer season.(50)

Richard Alexander, a young man of just eighteen years, embellished the tale of unremitting hunger in his diary of the trip. On the 10th of September the party cooked its last meal,

> hardly a cup of tea full of thin soup made with a bit of beef about the size of your hand [,] a thin piece of cake about the same size. Leader [Redgrave] is looking very bad. We lie by the fire & smoke nearly all day passing the pipe from one to an other, & strange to say I find the talk among the men [who are] nearly starving is [about] what they would like if they were at home….Jones tried to [shoot] the dog today as it was our only hope but he just wounded him slightly on the head & he ran off and hid.(51)

These dying men were later rescued, but nothing so fortunate blessed the five-member Rennie party. They were successful in crossing the mountains, but near Fort George their canoes capsized, effectively stranding them in the wilderness without much hope of survival.[52] The only two members of the party without badly frozen feet and hands were William and Gilbert Rennie, who immediately set out for Fort George. They arrived, starving and frozen, twenty-eight days later, and two Indians were immediately dispatched to attempt a rescue of the other three men. Poor conditions forced them back to Fort George. The bones of the men were found in the spring of 1863.

Some time later the true story of their demise was revealed by a Jamaican prospector named Thomas Giscome.[53] From the local Indians Giscome learned that the three stranded men had been found by Indians some time after the two Rennie brothers had left for Fort George. Two were still alive, but in their crazed state they had killed the third Rennie brother and had eaten all but his legs. They drove off the terrified Indians with revolvers and no one returned to the site until spring. It was reported that

> the bones of the two were found piled in a heap; one skull had been split open by an axe, and many of the other bones showed the marks of teeth. The third [body] was missing, but was afterwards discovered a few hundred yards from the camp. The skull had been cloven by an axe, and the clothes stripped from the body, which was little decomposed.
>
> The interpretation of these signs could hardly be mistaken. The last survivor had killed his fellow-murdered and eaten him, as shown by the gnawed bones so carefully piled in a heap. He had, in turn,

> probably been murdered by Indians, for the principal part of the dead man's property was found in their possession.[54]

Such were the dangers that awaited the inexperienced Overlanders in the mountains. Of those who crossed without serious incident, many never even visited the goldfields, preferring instead to seek other lines of work. More ironic yet, none of those who succeeded in staking claims seem to have made any great fortunes in gold.

Milton and Cheadle: The Travelogue as Literature

By the mid-1800s and English traveler was fast running out of unexplored territories to tour and write about for an enthusiastic home audience. Charles Waterton had amply covered the South American wilderness, and Africa was teeming with literate Britons. The Far East had its Sir James Brooke in Sarawak and Sir Stamford Raffles in Singapore. The Arctic had been done to death by Franklin, Back, and others. Even the wilds of North America were retreating with unseemly haste.

In the United States, railways had penetrated the far west and settlers inevitably followed with their culture and towns, rendering the territory anathema to all who sought the unusual and the unknown. In Canada, the Maritimes, Ontario and Quebec were too reminiscent of a rather unsophisticated European tour, while the colony of British Columbia had a distinctly familiar, if somewhat

lower class, English flavour. All that remained were the unpeopled plains and parklands of the North West, between the tiny settlement of Red River and the western slope of the Rocky Mountains. It was this region that attracted the interest of several articulate, even gifted, writers of travelogues in the 1860s.

For decades historians have treated the works of these writers as pools of facts and nothing more. They have plumbed their pages for descriptions of isolated fur trade communities, for information about lost prairie culture, for sketches of heritage buildings and forgotten landscapes, but they have rarely viewed them as travel literature. When all is said and done, it remains indisputable that little in these works is of historical merit, while much remains that is valuable as a simple tale of adventure, as a source of legend, and as pure literary accomplishment. Lacking the great myths and rituals that impart character to the literature of older nations, we have converted our memories into literary works. Milton and Cheadle, perhaps the best representatives of this genre, took the story of their Rocky Mountain crossing and turned it into an epic of high comedy and breathless adventure. It is not so much what they had to tell us about Jasper House and the Athabasca Valley that matters, but rather the delightful manner in which they use that setting as the backdrop for their tale.

Who were Milton and Cheadle? Viscount Milton, known more familiarly as William Fitzwilliam, was an anaemic English aristocrat of just twenty-three years who craved adventure as a cure for his perpetual boredom. With him he brought Walter Butler Cheadle, just four years his senior, a former oarsman and physician from Cambridge who had served as his tutor and now functioned principally as his companion and general assistant. They landed by steamer at Quebec in the mid-summer of 1862 and crossed half the continent by railway, steamer, stagecoach, and canoe, which brought them to the Red River Settlement. Within a year of their coastal landing, they were at Fort Edmonton, preparing for a trip through the Rockies to Vancouver Island.

Milton and Cheadle's stay at For Edmonton lasted no longer than absolutely necessary. Wherever they went, it seemed that they quickly exhausted the available diversions and were soon bored. While waiting for their horses to rest up, Cheadle wrote that "the time passed monotonously, the life of a Hudson's Bay fort being most uneventful and 'ennuyant'."[55] The most striking incident of their remaining days at the fort was making the acquaintance of Mr. O'Byrne, a wiry Irishman of middle age who convinced them both that he was a fellow from Cambridge University. He said that after studying for the Bar, he had traveled throughout the world before settling

in Red River as a school master. The truth was that he was so universally detested because of his obnoxious habits that he had been hounded out of every community he had visited. But Milton and Cheadle were not aware of this when they consented to let O'Byrne accompany them to British Columbia.

Contrary to the advice of the men at the post, Milton and Cheadle decided to cross the mountains via the Yellowhead Pass. The Overlanders had preceded them, of course, and they determined to follow the goldseekers trail as far as possible and then rely upon the wisdom of their companions. Oblivious to the dangers involved, O'Byrne reveled in the thought of Victoria's sophisticated society and feared only the presence of an Assiniboine among the party, who he was convinced was a well-known cold-blooded killer. This objection was overruled and the party left Fort Edmonton in June. In it were seven people, including the Assiniboine, his wife, and their young son, a half breed guide named Baptiste, and twelve horses.

All space aboard the six pack horses was given over to pemmican and flour, as Milton and Cheadle knew that no provisions could be obtained along the way except by the gun and that there was no reliable way of knowing the duration of the mountain journey. Fifty days was set as the maximum when stocking up on provisions. This liberal estimate – for the journey usually took only a couple of

weeks –- so strained their financial resources that they were bankrupted until another lending institution could be found. Only the generosity of the men at the post allowed O'Byrne to accompany the party, for they unhesitatingly gave him a horse and saddle, around eighty-five kilos of pemmican, and some tea and coffee.

As though inevitable, the trail could not have been in worse shape for these inexperienced travellers. Fallen timber was everywhere and the horses continually sank in muskeg up to their girths. O'Byrne proved utterly useless. "His assistance was limited to good advice," wrote Cheadle, "for he was afraid to approach a horse, and when his help was required to load the animals, he was invariably missing."[56] He also insisted on taking the last position in the pack train and often proceeded so slowly that the rest of the train was soon lost to sight. When that happened, he would dismount, sit on a log, and scream for help, bawling all the while. The men became so disgusted with this behavior that Milton and Cheadle had to ride back to rescue the Irishman. Part of O'Byrne's unbecoming behavior stemmed from his intense fear of grizzlies, although he had never seen one. When the Assiniboine let it be known that bears were nearby, O'Byrne refused to sleep without an axe clutched tightly in his hands.

"Aiwarkaken," the Indians mysteriously cried out as

they entered the magnificent Rockies. Soon the tiny post of Jasper House came into view, although it was not open at the time. Without pausing for more than a brief sheep hunt, the party moved upstream and crossed by raft, nearly drowning in the attempt. Soon they met Mr. Macaulay, the Jasper House trader who was out on a hunting expedition. Milton and Cheadle had lost their guide, Baptiste, who had returned to Fort Edmonton, and Macaulay advised them to engage an Iroquois who would take them as far as Tete Jaune Cache for the price of a horse. Five days later they crossed the height of land.

It was rare, in those days of travail, for Cheadle to rise above the mediocre in his prose. The constant river crossings, cutting of fallen timber, and recurrent disasters left his powers of description impoverished. But on reaching Tete Jaune Cache, having survived many kilometers of near torture, he broke into lyrical prose:

> The situation is grand and striking beyond description. At the bottom of a narrow rocky gorge, whose sides were clothed with dark pines, or, higher still, with light green shrubs, the boiling impetuous Fraser dashed along. On every side the snowy heads of mighty hills crowded round, whilst, immediately behind us, a giant among giants, and immeasurably supreme, rose Robson's Peak. This magnificent mountain is of conical form, glacier-clothed, and rugged. When we first caught sight of it, a shroud of mist partially enveloped the summit, but this presently rolled away, and we saw its upper portion dimmed by a necklace of light feathery clouds, beyond which its pointed apex of ice, glittering in the morning sun, shot up far into the blue heaven above, to a height of probably 10,000 or 15,000 feet. It was a glorious sight, and one which

> the Shushways of the Cache assured us had rarely been seen by human eyes….[57]

It had taken the party thirty-four days to reach this point. Horses had been drowned, O'Byrne had accused the Assiniboine of trying to murder him, much of their provisions were lost in the river, and the little that remained was rapidly running out, their letters of credit had been swept downstream, and tempers unsurprisingly began to flare. Yet this was the good part of the journey; worse awaited them between Cache and Fort Kamloops. Their adventures and repeated disasters, which would have been nearly unbelievable even to the skeptical men at Fort Edmonton, served them well however. Two years later, Dr. Cheadle published an account of the entire trip based on his journals, and entitled it The North-West Passage by Land. Its popularity was immediate and it eventually went through nine editions.

The Search for a Northern Railway Route

Although Milton and Cheadle trekked through this wilderness in the constant hope of adventure and sport hunting, they wrote that their true motive was the discovery of a good railway route across the mountains to British Columbia. While it is indisputable that their thorough account of the region, along with others, prompted later railway builders to investigate the Yellowhead Pass, the suspicion lingered that theirs was

only an impressionistic record of the region and its resources. It remained for Sandford Fleming, chief engineer of the Canadian Pacific Railway, to inspect the route with a professional railway builder's eye.

That journey, which occurred in 1872, was recorded by the Reverend George M. Grant, who accompanied Fleming. With Fleming's enthusiastic endorsement of the Yellowhead as a railway route, a turning point was reached in the exploration of the region. Fleming did not merely intend to travel through the area; he intended to change it irrevocably. With the pounding of each survey stake, with the establishment of each mountain camp, the pristine character of the region diminished. This happened at the same time as the attraction of the North American continent as a field of adventure and exploration passed beyond revival. It was simply too crowded, too civilized, too routine. And, even though Fleming's championship of the Yellowhead route was later ignored by the politicians who picked the final railway route, it clearly foreshadowed the arrival of a new era in the Jasper Park area. It marked, for all time, the shadowy line between an exploration and a settlement frontier. The Jasper Park area was no longer to be seen as an isolated wilderness, but rather as an integral part of Canada.

George Grant, the chronicler of Fleming's expedition, was a Presbyterian clergyman, partisan Tory, and ardent

advocate of transcontinental Canadian union. As such, it was most fitting that he accompany Fleming as secretary on a mission to find the vital mountain link for the national rail line. Other members of the party included John Macoun, a botanist, the photographer Charles Horetzky, Sandford Fleming's sixteen-year old son Frank, a physician named Arthur Moren, and various cooks, packers, and guides. They traveled north through the parklands because they believed that the southern prairies were a wasteland, unsuited to agriculture. They returned firm in the belief that no pass through the Rockies rivaled the Yellowhead as a railway route and that uniting the nation was a question of political will, money, and toil.

They made ready to leave Fort Edmonton for the mountains on the 28th of August, 1872. They moved with some haste, as word had arrived that the Cree and Blackfoot were fighting across the river. The departing Yellowhead party was smaller than the one that had arrived at the fort, because Fleming had decided to send Horetzky and Macoun on a separate trip through the more northerly Peace River country. They left first. Later in the day Fleming, his son Frank, Grant, and Dr. Moren, took their leave and traveled as far as Lac Ste. Anne.

From Lac Ste. Anne the trail worsened and their progress slowed. This poor rate of advance gave Grant the opportunity to record a great deal about the countryside. Everywhere he looked, he saw resources awaiting

exploitation. The timber was dense, tall, and true. Thick coal seams could be found with little effort. Stories of placer gold abounded. Even the fall berries tasted especially good. Only the endless muskeg and windfalls dampened his growing enthusiasm for the potential of the district. But these daily trials would be eliminated by construction of the railway and, by September 9th, Grant and his party were able to rest contented, "under the protection of the Rocky Mountains."[58]

The effect of the mountains upon a man of God, who was also a philosopher, was pronounced. Where others saw a formidable barrier, Grant saw a sublime and uplifting example of God's handiwork. "Everything was imposing," he wrote of his distant impression, "and these too were ours, an inheritance as precious, if not as plentiful in corn and milk, as the vast rich plains they guarded. For mountains elevate the mind, and give an inspiration of courage and dignity to the hardy races who own them, and who breathe their atmosphere."[59] As the party drew nearer and entered the mountains, the clergyman was replaced by the man of the world who had studied at the University of Glasgow and could draw upon an uncommonly sophisticated range of knowledge. To Grant, the mountains were part of the vast Canadian estate, entered through "the magnificent Jasper portals…by a quiet path winding between groves of

trees and rich lawns like an English gentleman's park."[60] Endnote #60 repeated.

Fifteen days out from Fort Edmonton, they arrived at Jasper House which was "all but abandoned by the Hudson's Bay Cy."[60] Endnote #60 repeated. The trade of the Company across the mountains had dwindled to little more than a pittance, and competition from independent traders who had come into the country after 1870 took much of what remained. The two log buildings of Jasper House were already so decrepit that long poles were all that kept them upright. The only regular visitor was an HBC trader who came up from Fort Edmonton once a year to trade with some of the local Indians. It was at this forlorn spot that Fleming had expected to meet some of his survey men who were already in the field. But no trace of them could be found, and so the party continued upstream.

As they neared Pyramid Mountain, convinced that the survey part under Walter Moberly had taken a different trail to Jasper House, Fleming, Grant and the others unexpectedly met a mounted Shuswap bearing a note from Moberly. He said that his party had just found fresh tracks and sent the Indian to find out who the footprints belonged to. But try as they might, they could not converse with the Pacific slope Indian, who knew neither Cree nor French. One of the packers then "tried him in Chinook, a barbarous lingo of one or two hundred words, first introduced by the Hudson's Bay agents, for common use among themselves and the Pacific Indians; and

generally spoken now all through Oregon, B. Columbia, and the north, by whites, Chinese, Indians and all nationalities."[61] On hearing this, the Shuswap's face brightened and he answered that Moberly's party was about eight kilometers back. Fleming fed the Indian and then sent him back to Moberly with a note suggesting that the two parties would probably meet on the following morning.

Fleming's men passed the ruins of Henry House and began their ascent of the Miette River. Here the poor trail began anew, a distinct disappointment after the wide prairies of the Athabasca Valley. But just as their hearts sank over the condition of the track, they rebounded as Walter Moberly rode into sight in advance of his men. Fleming quickly determined that Moberly's provision trains had reached the Boat Encampment and were making for the Jasper Valley before the onset of winter. Moberly himself had taken the Yellowhead Pass route into the mountains. Together the two parties returned up the Miette towards Moberly's camp. At nightfall they made temporary camp on a flat and Fleming's party enjoyed their best meal in mountain memory. To date, they had eaten three meals of glutinous pemmican every day; now Moberly's cook, Tim, prepared

> a variety of delicacies that made up for all other deficiencies; bread light as Parisian rolls, Columbia flour being as different from Red River's as Tim's baking from Terry's [Fleming's cook; delicious Java coffee, sweetened with sugar from the Sandwich Islands, that now supply great part of the Pacific

> coast with sugar; and crisp bacon, almost as great a luxury to us as pemmican to Moberly's men. All the hardships of the afternoon were forgotten as the aroma of the coffee steamed up our nostrils, and when Tim announced that he had oatmeal enough to make porridge for breakfast, our 'luck' in meeting him was declared to be 'wonderful'…."[(62)]

Breakfast proved as good as promised, and after arriving at Moberly's camp Grant recorded that "our difficulties had come to an end, we supposed, for there would be a reasonably good trail now all the way to Kamloops…."[63]

Two months after their departure from Fort Edmonton, the Fleming party was sipping tea in Victoria. They had concluded their transcontinental trek in search of a northern railway route. Firmly implanted in their minds was the undeniable quality of the Yellowhead Pass. The approach to it lay through 1,600 kilometres of fertile, wooded, and mineral-rich parklands; it possessed an uncommonly good grade for a mountain section; and it could undoubtedly be tied to the Pacific coast by a satisfactory route through the lesser ranges. All that was required to change the destiny of this lone land forever, in Grant's words, was "a standing army of engineers, axemen, and brawny labourers…men who will not only give 'a fair day's work for a fair day's wage,' but whose work shall be enobled by the thought that they are in the service of their country and labouring for its consolidation."[64]

Conclusion

For three-quarters of a century, the Jasper Park area had served as an exploration frontier. It beheld the pathfinder David Thompson as he charted a usable track between its peaks for the voyageurs; it witnessed scientists like Douglas and Drummond expanding the frontiers of their discipline; it watched as Pierre-Jean De Smet planted the flag of Christianity and as Paul Kane sketched what he thought were the tattered remnants of paganism; it could testify to the foolhardiness of the rich and famous, like Milton and Cheadle; and it assuredly noted the drastic changes that Fleming's journey would herald. Change is, in fact, the essence of an exploration frontier. Those who visit it, even those whose only goal is to capture a memory of isolation and unsophistication, all contribute to its undoing as a backwater. Those who wrote of their experiences simply hastened the process. Not without cause did the journals of both James Hector and Milton and Cheadle accompany Fleming's party across the great divide. After three-quarters of a century, the quiet solitude of the Jasper area was nearing its inevitable end.

Recreational Exploration in Jasper National Park

The New Leisure Class

Lord Milton, the British aristocrat who trekked across the North West with his valet in the 1860s, belonged to an endangered species. Wealthy lords had never been plentiful, but wealthy lords who chose to pursue adventure in the remotest corners of the earth were scarcer still. By the late nineteenth century, they were all but extinct. In their place, there appeared a new class of adventurers, Argonauts who were either well-to-do members of the emerging professional class or the idle beneficiaries of industrial and other nouveau fortunes. These very proper and somewhat affected individuals were the leading edge of a new leisure class that would make the mountains their second home.

Most were mountaineers. To them, the only worthy attraction of Jasper Park was its alpine character. By the last years of the nineteenth century, high unclimbed peaks had become rarities and the Rockies formed one of the final mountaineering frontiers. The Caucasus and the Himalaya were swarming with climbing expeditions, New Zealand’s behemoths had been conquered, and the Alps were

far too familiar. Thus it was that around 1890 serious climbers began coming to the Canadian Rockies to scale the peaks and savour the pristine character of a virtually unvisited landscape. To them, it was a new Mecca.

Other members of the new leisure class seldom climbed any but the most unintimidating mountains. These people formed nothing like an homogeneous group. If they constituted a group at all, it was only because of their general lack of enthusiasm for mountain climbing as a sport. Some preferred the brief hunt and the trophies it afforded, while others, tired of urban pressures, simply reveled in the soothing outdoors.

However diverse their personal forms of communion with the Rockies, these members of the new leisure class were united in their clamour for wilderness chic. This patrician perspective found expression in the natty clothes they wore on their climbs, in their culinary expectations, in their presumption of nightly entertainment on the trail. These were not tourists as we know them. They were people of position and wealth, who could afford the best and would never flinch at the cost of importing their lifestyle to the remote mountains. As if in exchange for the pleasures of the Rockies, they rarely hesitated to recommend such excursions to their equally well-off friends and acquaintances. In this fashion, word of Jasper Park’s attractions spread far and

wide and gradually turned it from a wildlife preserve to one of the greatest recreational reserves in the world.

The Origins of Mountaineering in the Northern Rockies

Being people of leisure, few mountaineers relished the thought of a jaunt across half of continent on horseback, in an oxcart, stagecoach or canoe, or on foot. It was one thing to use such primitive forms of transportation on brief tours of the wilderness; it was quite another to expect people of breeding (or at least of wealth) merely to travel in such a fashion. But until 1885, these were their only transportation choices west of Winnipeg and east of Vancouver. Perhaps this explains the absence of such characters in the Canadian Rockies prior to construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway to the west coast in 1885. That railway meant not only adequate transportation, but suitable accommodations at the elegant Banff Springs Hotel. Moreover, the company spared no expense publicizing its services and the glories of the Rocky Mountains.[1] Thus it was that in Banff, the first truly accessible alpine community in Canada, mountaineering took root. From there, it spread outward until all of the Rockies had felt the cleats of alpinist’s boots and heard the snap of their carabiners.

The attraction of mountaineering in the Rockies was enhanced greatly when the Canadian Pacific Railway decided

to emulate the European experience by importing Swiss guides in 1899. Until then, local backwoodsmen, outfitters, and packers had been the only people willing to take climbers out into the mountains. With time, however, even these people accumulated enough practical knowledge of the remote mountain regions to qualify as experienced guides to incoming parties. By about 1910, this field was dominated by the Brewster family of Banff and the Otto brothers of Field, British Columbia, although many individuals and smaller firms also competed to guide the annual excursions.

Banff and Field remained the only important alpine guiding centres in the Rockies for nearly two decades because the Canadian Pacific Railway made them accessible. This is not to say, however, that climbers never ventured beyond the boundaries of Rocky Mountains Park and the Yoho Park Reserve. Many now trekked northward along the spine of the Rockies, where very few people had gone in the century before. It was almost an unknown land, whose scenic grandeur was matched only by its lack of natural sympathy for the traveler. What often looked like passes just as often turned out to present insurmountable barriers. Faint Indian trails were all that suggested a way through the dense windfalls. And the rivers could be torrents, especially during the spring runoff. But to experienced climbers and men familiar with the Rockies, there were inconveniences rather than outright checks on

passage, challenges rather than setbacks.

These intrepid climbers had a very specific reason for heading for the north country. As was common among mountaineers, they had scoured published works for information about the remoter regions of the Rockies. In one particularly obscure work, they discovered evidence of two peaks that rivaled the best in the world. Three-quarters of a century earlier a Scottish botanist named David Douglas had described two mountains, which he called Brown and Hooker, as being over 5,000 metres high. The lure of these giants – and of the higher Mount Brown in particular – proved irresistible to experienced climbers. A.P. Coleman, a professor of geology from the University of Toronto, was the first to declare that he would not rest until he had made the first ascent of Brown.

In 1888 Coleman and a small party traveled north from Laggan (Lake Louise) through the wilderness in search of the northern peak. Just a few kilometers short of Athabasca Pass, this trip was curtailed by injury and hunger.[3] (Should be #2) Disquieted but undaunted by this initial failure, Coleman again struck north in 1892, this time along the eastern foothills and up the Brazeau River. His party threaded its way through the mountains, looking for the Whirlpool River that would lead them to Mount Brown. Eventually they came to the Committee's Punch Bowl and cast about for the long-sought mountains. The only view

was of commonplace peaks and Coleman instinctively knew the truth: that Brown and Hooker were frauds. Deciding that one mountain in particular perhaps matched Douglas's description of Mount Brown, they climbed to its summit and measured its altitude with a barometer, only to find that it had undeniably lost more than 2,000 metres in height since 1827.

No one doubted Coleman's measurement of the mountain, but they did wonder whether he had been mistaken in identifying it as Mount Brown. It was difficult to believe that a trained scientist like Douglas could so distort the truth. In 1896 Walter Wilcox, a young Ivy Leaguer from the eastern seaboard who would later make his fortune in mahogany plantations, decided to take up the challenge. The trek up the valley of the Great Divide was difficult, if without incident, but poor weather and low provisions compelled the expedition to turn back after only the merest glimpse of a high peak that might have been Brown.[4]

The observation was vague enough to tantalize those who knew Douglas's work, and in the following year an unassuming professor of chemistry from Scotland, J. Norman Collie, decided to seek the unscaled Mount Hooker to determine its true height.[5] Armed with maps from the rare Palliser journals that recorded Dr. James Hector's explorations of the Athabasca Valley, Collie and his party headed northward in the summer of 1897. After eighteen

days on the trail, they became the first white men on record to see the vast Athabasca Glacier, where they remained for some time, exploring and climbing adjacent peaks. A short time later, they scaled Diadem Peak and from the summit spied Mount Brown, which Collie instantly suspected could not be as high as Douglas had predicted. This revelation came just in time, as they discovered that their provisions were dangerously low. Hunting proved futile and they were reduced to one sardine, two anchovies, and a small quantity of dried meat by the time they had retreated to their base camp near Wilcox Pass, from which they headed home.

Back home in Scotland, Collie reread Douglas's 1827 statement about the northern peaks and noticed, to his amazement, that the young botanist claimed to have scaled Mount Brown in just five hours. This was patent nonsense and Collie knew at once that the legend of a 5,000 metre Mount Brown had at last been laid to rest.

The long search for the elusive Mount Brown may ultimately have proved disappointing, but it had not been in vain. Vast stretches of country had been explored for the first time, altitudes measured, peaks, rivers and passes mapped, trails blazed.

The Irrepressible Mary Schaffer

Mountaineering was a man's game in the late nineteenth

century. Few women had ever considered joining the men on the trail and those who did were instantly ridiculed. Their place was not in the wilderness, but rather in opulent hotel and tea rooms on the civilized edge of the wilderness where they might engage in polite conversation and enjoy the company of similarly refined women. In truth, of course, there was no reason why a woman with fortitude and determination could not overcome the perils of the trail, no reason why a woman of substance could not silence the ridicule through endurance. Mary Schaffer was such a woman.

She had been born to wealth and position in West Chester, Pennsylvania, at the start of the Civil War.[6] Her father, Alfred Sharpless, had made a modest fortune as superintendent of the Schuylkill Navigation Company and held positions of prominence in the community. Her mother brought to the marriage a large inheritance of her own. In this atmosphere of privilege, Mary grew to maturity. In 1889, during a trip from Montreal to Vancouver aboard the new Canadian Pacific Railway, Mary became acquainted with Dr. Charles Schaffer, a wealthy Philadelphia doctor with a special interest in botany. They married shortly after their return to the United States.

For the next decade the Schaffers returned annually to Banff to continue an affectionate amateur study of the region’s flora. The doctor gathered and attempted to

classify the specimens, while Mary made dry pressings and sketched the flowers. Later she became an avid photographer and made prints and lantern slides of the botanical specimens. But this idyllic existence ended abruptly in 1903, when Mary's husband died of a heart attack. In her grief, she decided to carry on and complete his work in the mountains. For the next two years she and a friend named Mollie Adams endured the difficulties and occasional indignities of trail riding and camping, and by 1905 Mary had succeeded in completing and making arrangements for the publication of her husband's work, Alpine Flora of the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

A chance meeting with Dr. James Hector, one of the first white men to explore the Rockies, stirred in Mary a longing to make her own alpine discoveries. She had overcome her initial aversion to the inconveniences of extended trail outings and cast about for new territories to conquer. Mollie Adams, her companion on recent botanical outings, became an enthusiastic supporter of the idea. In the introduction to her earliest book, Mary explained her growing thirst for a more satisfying taste of the wilderness. Since 1893 she had visited the Rockies,

> watched the little chalets grow, watched the pushing of the trails to new points of interest, watched with veiled and envious eyes our secret haunts laid bare to all who came. And they did come, fast and furious! Steam heat and hot and cold water had done

> their work. The little tents on the shores of Lake Louise, with their balsam-bough beds and an atmosphere reeking of health and strength to those weary with the city's life, were banished, and only found again by the determined few who had heard of the recently discovered Moraine Lake, Lakes O'Hara and McArthur, and Ptarmigan and Yoho Valleys. Point by point we fled to them all, each one of them a stronghold at civilization's limits, each one of them a kindergarten of the at-first-despised camping life. In them we learned the secret of comfort, content, and peace on very little of the world's material goods, learned to value at its true worth the great un-lovely silence of the wilderness, and to revel in the emancipation from frills, furbelows, and small follies.(7)

To Mary Schaffer, the quest for wilderness was really a retreat from the excesses of the world in which she had been raised.

Each year, Mary and Mollie ventured farther north of the CPR line. In 1906 they had undertaken an uneventful trip to Pinto Lake; in 1907 they sought the headwaters of the North Saskatchewan River and an isolated lake that the Stoneys called Chaba Imne, or Beaver Lake. Nearly three months after departing Lake Louise, their party left good grazing at Camp Parker and struck northward during the second week of September. They crossed through Nigel Pass and followed the fine, open valley of the Brazeau River until they came to Brazeua Lake.[9] (Should be #8) Snow started to fall, the temperature plummeted, and snow-blindness afflicted several members of the party, and yet they pressed on in search of the mysterious Beaver Lake. But with their passage blocked repeatedly by seemingly impenetrable mountains, and with their foodstuffs running dangerously

low, they finally turned their horses southward in defeat, certain in the knowledge that they would not gaze upon Chaba Imne in 1907.

June of the next year brought a renewal of their search for the distant lake. It had rained a great deal that spring and early summer, and the trail was one long quagmire. Beyond Bow Summit, however, the weather warmed, so much so that they feared high water on the Saskatchewan. Luckily these fears proved groundless and by the end of the month Mary and her companions were again alongside the Brazeau River, searching for the pass that would lead them to the hidden lake. From the heights above Brazeau Lake they spied a gap in the hills to the west that they took to be the Pobokton Pass they were looking for. This proved to be the case, although the endless burnt timber, muskeg, scree slopes, and mud slides dampened their enthusiasm considerably. Schaffer wrote that "now that I have seen it I should never take the Pobokton Pass from start to finish for a pleasure trip; it is a miserable route, and one only to be used to accomplish an end."[9] As they proceeded the trail they had been following grew indistinct and they were forced to pause now and again to reconnoiter for more reliable traces of the customary route. Only days later, when all were exhausted and growing impatient, did one of the packers find the long-sought lake. It lay in a pristine valley, utterly devoid of well-packed trails, tin cans,

and old campsites. “The long quest was over, the object found,” wrote Mary, “and it seemed very beautiful to our partial eyes.”[10]

They camped beside the lake and found that the shoreline was impassable for horses. Yet their determination to see all of the lake was strong, and so the men agreed to build a raft to facilitate their sightseeing. They cut logs and hurriedly lashed them together, and by evening the H.M.S. Chaba was ready for a three-day sail to the upper end of the lake. Only the excitement of being the first to see the entire lake persuaded Mary to undertake this perilous voyage of discovery. “Personally,” she confided, “my sensations towards large bodies of water are similar to those of a cat, and though I begged to rough it, it was not so much to do something uncomfortable as to keep from drowning on a[n] overtaxed raft. With qualms and misgivings next morning, I watched bags, boxes, and bundles carried out and deposited on the upper deck of the Chaba, the last two packages being “M[ollie]” and myself, who were dumped unceremoniously on with the rest of the cargo.”[11] Two six-metre sweeps propelled the little craft forward with great efficiency and by supper time of the same day they seemed to be less than a kilometer from the head of the lake. They camped beneath a fine double-peaked mountain that they named Mount Unwin after their guide and packer,

and called it a day. In the morning they tripped enthusiastically aboard the raft to continue their journey, and enjoyed some of the most spectacular scenery in the Rockies. Their idyll ended with the realization that their food was running out and they hurriedly returned to their base camp.

Several months of good weather remained, and the party decided to head northwest to the Yellowhead Pass and Mount Robson. Mosquitoes and blackflies plagued them continually, but the relatively easy passage partly compensated for this nuisance. They soon reached the Valley of the Athabasca and decided to seek out Swift's cabin, the only permanent habitation in the entire valley. After months on the trail, the sight of a civilized farmstead was eagerly awaited and all talk centred on its owner, American-born Lewis Swift, who had come to the valley in 1892. Then, suddenly, as they reached the top of a knoll, Swift's place lay before them. Mary could hardly contain her delight: "I wonder if three or four log buildings, a little fencing, and a few acres of cultivated land ever caused much more excitement…."[12] Finding no one home, they fired several shots and waited. Eventually they were greeted by Swift himself, who could scarcely believe that there were two women in the party. "Well, well," he mused, "whatever brought them here? Prospecting or timber cruising? No? Now, look here, I've been in this valley thirteen years and they're the first

white women I've seen around these parts. Are you sure they aint prospecting?"[13]

After being royally dined by the Swift family and hearing the latest news, Schaffer's party departed for its last goal – Mount Robson. On the trail they met John Moberly and his family, who were returning from a hunting expedition. Mary noted the meat and hides hanging from several horses, but thought that "it looked far more like the moving of an orphanage than the return from a month's hunting expedition. John, with a small child in front of him, headed the band, two grinning kids on one horse followed, and so on till Mrs. Moberly brought up the rear in a dignified manner, carrying a small infant under one arm. In all, they counted eight, and I wondered how many white mothers would go on such a trip and look so placid on their return."[14] Up the valley of the Miette Mary and her companions traveled, and learned to their dismay that they had never really encountered bad trails before. Their horses cut their feet on the sharp stones, they mired in the mud, and they constantly leaped disconcertingly over fallen timber. Nothing could have been worse. In their discomfort, they barely noticed crossing the Yellowhead Pass. Only along Moose Creek did the path improve until, at last, the majestic Mount Robson stood before them.

Having come this far, Mary and Mollie decided it

would be a shame not to visit historic Tete Jaune Cache, where a railway camp had recently been established. Off through the muskeg and the windfall they went until they reached the tiny tent community. Someone had alerted the villagers to their imminent arrival, and the entire population of the community (consisting of two tents and a log cabin) turned out to see them. Obviously as unprepared for white women as Swift had been, the rough railway men and prospectors glared unceasingly. Mary was so frightened that she was sure her time had come. But soon the frosty stares gave way to shyly hesitant smiles and Mary's party was warmly welcomed with a[n] abundant but crude dinner and some genial conversation. It was as civilized an evening as the Rockies could offer in 1908, and Mary secretly wished that the era of uncouth innocence would never end.

It was just three years before a fifty-year old Mary Shaffer unexpectedly found herself again on the shores of Chaba Imne, or Maligne Lake as it has become better known. This time she had come north not for the thrill of adventure, but on official government business. The very forces of civilization that were conspiring to change her beloved Rockies in 1908 were quickly making inroads into the isolation of the Athabasca Valley and had co-opted her into furthering their goals. Since it would be only a matter of a year or two before regular train service penetrated the valley, the Canadian government had decided

to fashion another Banff National Park from the adjacent wilderness. D.B. Dowling, a government geologist well acquainted with the district, suggested to Chief Park Commissioner Howard Douglas that Mary be engaged to survey Maligne Lake. Douglas was well acquainted with Mary's work. Indeed, in his first report on Jasper National Park in 1910 he relied exclusively upon her report of the 1908 Maligne Lake excursion for information about the park.[15] Such an expedition as Dowling was proposing would provide the government with useful information, while the growing fame of Mrs. Schaffer could be counted on to spread a favourable word about the attractions of the new park. Douglas consented to the plan, and Dowling met with no resistance when he approached Mary to undertake the survey work.

This time, rather than riding a trail horse north from Lake Louise, Mary and her two companions took the train to Edmonton. The so-called hotel rooms in this pretentious upstart of a community, which Mary sarcastically referred to as "one of the most modern up-to-date, wide-awake cities of the northwest"[16] were so lacking in basic amenities that Mary "wished for the day and the hour when the long trail and its comforts were ours."[17] Three days later, they boarded one of the new Grand Trunk Pacific passenger cars, which reeked of disinfectant, and departed for the end of steel at Hinton.

From that ramshackle collection of tents and log buildings, they were carried a little more than a kilometer by farm wagon to the bustling railway construction camp-town of Prairie Creek. Here their trail began.

Past heavily-burdened freight wagons, past a Cree encampment, past abandoned construction camps, past remote stopping houses, past all these signs of a changing frontier they rode. Guided well by veteran outfitter Jack Otto, the little party made quick time. Swift’s place was soon reached, and there they camped for a few days to rest and make ready for the long, difficult trip to Maligne Lake. It was a journey that would be complicated somewhat by the need to pack in two five-metre planks (and an assortment of smaller boards) from which a boat would be constructed at the lakeshore. To the amazement of all, their guide adeptly balanced the long planks on either side of an innocuous mount named Jonas, and they were off to Maligne via Buffalo Prairie. At times it was hard going, for there was still deep snow in the high country despite the fact that mid-June had arrived. Part of the trail had been shoveled clear by an advance guard of Otto’s men some time earlier, and in one particularly bad spot they had left two hand-hewn shovels to assist Jack’s party. Henceforth, the location would be known as Shovel Pass. Soon after this obstacle had been surmounted, the party rode within sight of the lake, and all marveled at

the beauty that only Mary had seen before.

The work began without delay. In torrential rains, the men assembled the boat on the lakeshore. It seemed days before their work was done, before they were able to break a vinegar bottle over her bow and christened her H.M.S. Chaba the Second. Mary broke out the surveying instruments that Dowling had given her, and for the next month reveled in her labour of love. Gradually the contours of the lakeshore took shape on her sketchmap, the mountains assumed their rightful places, and the varying depths of the water were recorded for the first time. And then the time for parting came. Mary could not help but wax nostalgic as they came down from the mountains. "Each day," she wrote, "was a 'farewell' to some spot which for the moment had been our very own. The wedge had been driven in; in another year the secret places would be secret no more."[18]

The Big Game Hunters

Until a permanent superintendent of Jasper National Park was appointed in the spring of 1913, the reserve was subjected to the comings and goings of many illicit big game hunting parties. There were still a few treasured districts that had not been overhunted during the era of the fur trade at Jasper House, and with each the wilderness guides of Banff and Field were well acquainted.

Even after the park was firmly established and hunting prohibited by penalty of law, it served as an important outfitting centre for parties wishing to hunt on its periphery.

The earliest tourist parties to hunt within the confines of the park did so almost incidentally. To them, the challenge of making their way through an uncharted wilderness was usually sufficient adventure. If good hunting was encountered along the way, it was considered something of a bonus. The first such party to venture successfully north from Laggan (Lake Louise) was spearheaded by two young men, Philip Moore and Frederick Hussey, investors in the rapidly growing Brewster guiding firm of Banff.[19] Moore was an heir to the Old Crow whiskey fortune, and Hussey's family had been a leader in the manufacture of crucible steel in the United States. The two had been classmates at Princeton. On their third trip to Banff, in 1904, they decided to undertake a rigorous expedition to the Athabasca River with the aid of Brewster guides. Accompanying them were Halsey Williams, another Princeton acquaintance, and Dr. Stearns, a Detroit-based patent medicine manufacturer.

A guide was sent ahead with eighteen horses in early July. He was to journey as far as Athabasca Falls and then await the arrival of the main party. By the end of the month, they had been reunited and continued to the

mouth of the Miette River, where they established a permanent base camp from which to launch their hunting expeditions. So successful was this two-month expedition that two additional guides and more horses had to be brought up to return Dr. Stearn's trophies to Banff. The remainder of the party trekked through the Yellowhead Pass to the Canoe River and the Boat Encampment, and then boated on the Columbia as far as Donald, British Columbia, before returning to Banff.

No such apparent ease characterized the attempts of Stanley Washburn to complete a similar journey out of Laggan.[20] Intrigued by the featureless nature of northern Rockies maps, Washburn had contacted his old friend Fred Stephens, a mountain packer working out of Lacombe, to lead him north. This was in 1901. Their trip was a disaster. Stephens was a great one for relying on his rifle to put food in the pan and by the time the party had reached the Saskatchewan River, their provisions were exhausted. They camped and hunted sheep, but in the process Washburn twisted his ankle so severely that they had to lay over for two weeks. The delay made further northward travel out of the question, and the party returned ingloriously to Laggan. Undaunted, Washburn financed a second expedition in 1902. This time they managed to reach Wilcox Pass before running out of food, and once again they gave up the attempt to reach the Yellowhead country. It would be 1909 before Washburn

succeeded in his northern quest.

By the time the unlucky Washburn did reach the Yellowhead district, much more was known about it. The surveyors of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway had been working in the area for a couple of years and had re-blazed the old east-west trails that had been used intermittently for nearly a century. Within the next couple of years, the Canadian Northern Railway also penetrated the country, and towns like Jasper, Pocahontas, Brule, and Lucerne arose to provide services to the coal miners, government employees, and railroaders who now made the Athabasca Valley their home. Soon an entire industry developed at Jasper to serve the tourists who had begun to trickle into the new Dominion park. In short, the valley had been 'sophisticated' with remarkable dispatch.

For all that, the Jasper townsite remained an oasis of civilization in the Rocky Mountain wilderness. It was one of these guides – Fred Brewster – that Samuel Prescott Fay of Boston turned for assistance during three unprecedented hunting trips that occurred between 1912 and 1914. Obviously a man of means, Fay hired Brewster for the entire summer season. His personal goal, aside from enjoying some good big game hunting, was to determine the

species and northern limits of sheep north of the Athabasca River, a veritable naturalist's terra incognita.

Brewster first took out Fay out early in August of 1912. The party was small, consisting of Brewster, Fay, and a packer named J. Beaumont Gates. With seven pack horses, they headed for the wild country north of the Smoky River. It was unbelievably rugged country – remote, unpeopled, and seemingly unvisited by others. So bad were the trails, if they could properly be called such, that it took Fay's party two weeks to make just forty kilometers. Poor weather, a lack of supplies, and the failure of the hunt ended the expedition around the end of September.

Unsatisfied with the 1912 hunt, Fay underwrote a second expedition in the following year, again with Brewster as guide. While these plans matured over the winter months, however, Fay underwent a serious operation that left him in no condition to participate in a lengthy hunt through some of the roughest country the Rockies could offer. Instead, Brewster arranged a more restful itinerary that saw them visit Mounts Robson and Bess, and then hunt sheep and caribou along the Great Divide as far south as Laggan.

Over the winter of 1913-14, Fay fully recovered from his operation and again laid plans for an expedition to the north country. But this time he also brought with him a commission from the Biological Survey of the United

States Department of Agriculture entrusting him to collect animal skins and to report on the fauna of the district. This financial support enabled Fay to extend his trip by a couple of months and with the assistance of Brewster, he planned to pack all the way to the Peace River Country. The party moved out in late June, and headed for the half-breed settlement of Grand Cache. From there they went up the Smoky River, beyond what Fay called the 'tin can' district.[21] Here trails were virtually non-existent and Brewster's skills as a guide were sorely taxed. Around mid-August they reached a magnificent peak that they had seen only from a distance during the 1912 trip, and Fay christened it Mount Alexander (later renamed Mount Sir Alexander), in honour of the famous explorer Alexander Mackenzie. At 3,260 metres, it was the highest peak in the Rockies north of Mount Robson. From there the party had planned to head for Pine Pass, but by September it was clear that such an excursion was not possible, so they turned in the direction of Hudson Hope. From there they passed through Pouce Coupe, Grand Prairie, and Edson on their way back to Jasper. With them they carried an abundance of preserved specimens and hides for the Biological Survey. And, after three years of effort, Fay was finally able to conclude that no sheep ranged between the Peace and the headwaters of the Smoky. His party arrived back at Jasper on November 21st, after a record

five months on the trail. It was, and remains, the longest hunting expedition ever launched from Jasper.[22]

The Quest for Mount Robson

Walter D. Wilcox, a veteran mountain climber, once wrote that the history of climbing in the Rockies "may be divided roughly into two periods: first a search for the easiest route through the wilderness, then an invasion of climbers looking for unconquered difficulties."[24] **No number 23 in document. By the end of the first decade of the new century, it was clear that the first period had been concluded. The long and arduous trek northward from Laggan had been virtually abandoned in favour of entry from Edmonton. The railway was not yet ready to receive passengers, but its surveyors, packers, and construction crews had blazed a well-defined trail into the mountains from the east. By following this beaten path, climbers were able to reach their chosen mountains more quickly and at less cost. One peak after another was conquered in rapid succession, but the greatest first ascent of them all remained unattained. Whoever was first to climb Mount Robson would long be remembered in the annals of Canadian mountaineering.

The initial attempt to scale Mount Robson occurred as a fitting inaugural project of the Canadian Alpine Club, which began in 1906. After the myth of Mounts Brown and

Hooker had been laid to rest, Mount Robson had become widely known as the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies. But surprisingly, no one had attempted the first ascent. In August of 1907, with the full backing of the Alpine Club, A.P. Coleman, his brother L.Q. Coleman, and an experienced young climber and clergyman from Victoria named George. B. Kinney set out on one of the last northern Rockies climbing expeditions to begin at Laggan. For forty-one difficult days they marched toward their destination, only to conclude that they had arrived too late in the season to attempt an ascent. They returned to Laggan and planned another attempt for the following year. Although that trip, which began at Edmonton, proved much less arduous and consumed only twenty-one days, the climbers came to within about 350 metres of the summit only to find that bad weather allowed no option but retreat. Again they laid plans for a return visit during the next climbing season.

Early in the spring of 1909, the Reverend George Kinney heard rumours that a group of foreign climbers (headed by champagne magnate A.L. Mumm) were planning an expedition to Robson and he immediately vowed that he, a Canadian, would be the first to ascend the peak. At once he contacted John Yates, who had guided the previous Alpine Club expedition to Robson, notified him of his plans to finance a new expedition, and asked that Yates serve as guide. Upon arrival at Edmonton in mid-June,

Kinney found a telegram from Yates informing him that it was too dangerous to try for the mountain so early in the year, as a late winter had left the trails and passes choked with snow. But Kinney felt he “had gone too far to back out then, and snow or no snow I would make the attempt.”[24] With less than three dollars remaining in his pocket after purchases of three-months’ provisions and three pack horses, Kinney set off for Robson by himself.

He hoped to meet someone along the trail who would agree to climb with him. Near the McLeod River he met an old-timer who had the ambition but none of the energy or skill required. After a while they saw the futility of continuing the relationship and amicably parted company. Kinney pressed on alone. On several occasions he nearly drowned in the spring torrents and came close to losing his provisions. Finally he reached John Moberly’s place, where several Indians and prospectors had holed up to wait out the floods. While waiting with them, he met Donald “Curly” Phillips, a twenty-five year prospector and former Ontario trapper and guide who eventually succumbed to Kinney’s persistent requests to be his companion on the Mount Robson expedition.

With a few extra supplies bought at Swift’s place, Kinney and Phillips set out on their lonely quest. It was a difficult trip. The trail, which was bad at the best of times, had been covered in a half metre of mud by

the spring floods and the unending rainfall. Mosquitoes were everywhere. To make matters worse, the two men quickly depleted the few provisions between them and their hopes of killing fresh meat were thwarted by a bent barrel on Kinney's rifle. Wild strawberries became their staple diet. The trail did not improve as they made Moose Creek, for a fire had swept through the area and left it thigh-deep in fallen burnt timber. Then the rains began again. Rock and mud slides continually blocked their passage. Their relief at reaching the base of Mount Robson was almost palpable.

Their only asset seemed to be Kinney's acquaintance with the mountain. Instead of lingering over the best route to the summit, Kinney immediately led his completely inexperienced companion up a narrow ledge on Robson's north shoulder. At the high point of that side they decided they should made camp, at an altitude of about 2,900 metres. Next morning they headed for the summit via the west side of the peak. The climbing would have been good had it not been for the steepness and hardness of the snow in the couloirs, where they laboriously cut steps one at a time. This consumed all of a day and left them wondering about a less torturous route to the top. This they believed they found the next day, but a wall of rock proved insurmountable. They hurried back down below the snow line and planned a new assault. But morning brought melting snow that came at them in torrents, together with

a driving blizzard. With discouragement etched on their faces, they moved down the mountain.

When the weather cleared, they made yet another attempt to scale the mountain. But after ascending to about 3,000 metres, they decided that the snow was too deep and the snow slides simply too treacherous. By now their provisions were nearly exhausted and Kinney was growing desperate. He urged Phillips to accompany him on one final assault. It was a dreadful climb. Often they climbed nearly vertically for hours on end, the blizzard began anew, sleet cut their faces and nearly blinded them, and the clothing and hair became a frozen mass. Still they pressed on, "only to find an almost insurmountable difficulty. The prevailing winds being from the west and south, the snow, driven by the fierce gales had built out against the wind in fantastic masses of crystal, forming huge cornices all along the crest of the peak."[25] Nonetheless, with great perseverance they continued upward until at last they stood on the very summit of Robson. "In the name of Almighty God," Kinney declared, "by whose strength I have climbed here, I capture this peak, Mt. Robson, for my country and for the Alpine Club of Canada."[26]

The descent was difficult but without incident, and in a few days Kinney and Phillips were back at John Moberly's place. There they encountered the English

climbing party headed by A.L. Mumm, who congratulated them most heartily on their successful ascent of Robson. It was to be the last pleasant remark about the expedition that the reverend gentleman heard in a long time. Members of his climbing fraternity wasted little time in severely castigating him for his foolishness in attempting such a difficult ascent with the poorest of equipment and the assistance of a totally inexperienced helper.[27]

But worse was yet to come. During the winter of 1911-12 Curly Phillips operated a trapline with noted mountaineer Conrad Kain, who pressed Phillips for details about the Robson ascent. In the isolation of the woods, Phillips confessed that he and Kinney had climbed to within a few metres of the summit but gave up in the face of a seemingly unscalable column. Eventually this revelation found its way to Arthur Wheeler, president of the Alpine Club of Canada, who had sole discretion in recognizing first ascents. Perhaps because a man of the cloth was involved, Wheeler said nothing publicly. But privately, he arranged for a Club assault on Mount Robson in 1913. Later, when a photograph of the successful climbing party was printed in the Canadian Alpine Journal, it was carefully labeled "The party who made the first complete ascent of Mount Robson, July 31st, 1913."[28]

Life on the Trail

None of the early expeditions in the Jasper Park area would have been possible without the dedicated assistance of those who chose to guide for a living. A motley group, they came from every conceivable background and were united only by the unalloyed pleasure they took in working with horses in the mountains. They could be gentle or irascible, loquacious or taciturn, entertaining or depressing. And not all succeeded. The small community of climbers, hunters, and others who enjoyed trekking in the wilderness ensured that only the most agreeable and knowledgeable got return business or business by referral. The marginal among them usually ended up by abandoning guiding or by working for another guide in a less prestigious capacity. But whatever their individual fates, as a group the guides proved an indispensable element of every outfit into the wilderness.

Like guides everywhere, those of Jasper Park came from diverse backgrounds. Some first entered the Athabasca Valley as packers for the railway. John Yates and James Shand-Harvey were among them, yet there was little in their earlier experiences to indicate that packing and guiding would be their fate. Yates had been born in England, but moved to a California ranch with his parents when just a youngster.[29] After completing high school, he received a $500 stake from his father and took up homesteading near Lac Ste. Anne with his older brother.

This was in 1906, a time when farming in that northern country paid few dividends, mainly because no railway had yet been built through the area. To supplement their income, the Yates boys worked seasonally as packers for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, which was then engaged in surveying a transcontinental route west of Edmonton. John later became mail carrier for the company between Edmonton and Tete Jaune Cache. It was while carrying mail along the trail that he first met the Coleman party retreating from its attempt to scale Mount Robson in 1907. The climbers had been forced to leave their tired pack horses behind on the return to Edmonton, and Yates generously loaned A.P. Coleman a horse that enabled him to return on time to his teaching position at the University of Toronto chemistry department. Ever grateful for Yates's kindness to strangers, Coleman convinced the young farmer to guide his party on its next planned assault on the mountain. Yates proved so capable that his future as a guide was assured simply by word-of-mouth.

Shand-Harvey came to packing and guiding by a different route and from a very different past. Born on the island of Mauritius to a sugar plantation owner of Scottish descent, Shand-Harvey had been educated at Eton, where his best friend was one of Queen Victoria's grandsons.[30] Like many a young man of wealth, he had toured the continent after his university training was

completed. However, in 1905, at the age of twenty-five, he found himself descending from a Canadian Pacific coach at Strathcona, just across the river from Edmonton. He had decided to turn his back on civilization as he knew it, and strike out on one of the last frontiers, that of western Canada. At first he worked as a surveyor on the old Victoria trail, and as a farmhand, a homesteader, and a freighter, before signing on as a packer with a survey party of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. This experience gave him an intimate knowledge of the trail west of Edmonton, and because of this he was hired by A.L. Mumm's 1909 climbing expedition to lead them to a rendezvous with John Yates at Wolf Creek.[31] He continued to freight between Lac Ste. Anne and Tete Jaune Cache until 1911, when he was approached by Curly Phillips to help outfit a large Alpine Club of Canada-Smithsonian expedition to the Athabasca Valley. He accepted the invitation and unwittingly began a lifetime in guiding.

Even with Shand-Harvey's help, Phillips needed further assistance on this large outfitting contract. He turned to Fred Stephens, who had already led Stanley Washburn's parties into that country several times, to handle the large pack train. Fred seemed a natural for this expedition. He knew the country as well as any man and, since 1910, he had made his home in the Jasper-Yellowhead district, working as a timber-cruiser, prospector, and outfitter. This made him one of the

earliest (if not the earliest) guides to take up permanent residence in the district, and there was a very good reason for this. Stephens was a wanted man. During the winter of 1909-10 he and his wife had separated, and she was granted custody of their young son. Upset as any man could be, Fred kidnapped the boy one night and hid out in the mountains that he knew so well. The police tried to track him, but were no match for the veteran woodsman. Thus he managed to elude the law, but only at the cost of remaining permanently away from settled districts.

The experiences of these men say a great deal about early guiding in the northern Rockies. Most took up guiding and outfitting quite incidentally, usually as a supplement to other money-making ventures. Touring parties, whether made up of climbers or scientists, were still rare and no man could earn much of a living by guiding alone. Most were also ill-prepared to handle the larger parties that came through, and seldom hesitated to share such a commission with others interested in guiding. Rivalry was scarcely apparent at this point, and men like Phillips, Yates, and Stephens formed a closely-knit fraternity. Indeed, it is doubtful that any saw much of a future in the guiding business. Probably most simply considered it a welcome break from their usual routines.

The professionalization of guiding and outfitting began when established firms from the southern Rockies

caught the undeniably attractive scent of money on the northern frontier. By 1910 it was abundantly clear that the construction of two transcontinental railways through the beautiful northern peaks would eventually mean a considerable influx of touring visitors as well as construction crews. To the guiding firms that had already made a name for themselves by handling parties of climbers, scientists, hunters and adventurers out of Banff and Field, it seemed quite logical to expand operations into the Jasper district.

Nineteen eleven was the year in which these firms began their northward odyssey. The Otto brothers, outfitters and guides based at Field, British Columbia, were first to make the move. John, Bruce and Closson Otto were Ontario natives who had been guiding parties in the Rockies and Selkirks since the turn of the century. Sensing an excellent opportunity at Jasper National Park, they sold their Field operation to Banff's guiding family, the Brewsters, and headed for Edmonton, which served as their temporary base. In the spring of 1911 they made an incursion into Jasper Park at the behest of the federal government. Howard Douglas, who had asked Mary Schaffer to survey Maligne Lake, hired the Ottos to clear a trail from the proposed railway line into the Maligne country as well as to guide the Schaffer party. The excellence with which they served Mrs. Schaffer's party made their reputation in the Yellowhead country, and in the years to

come they rarely lacked clients.

The Brewster family of Banff was not long in making its own incursion into the Jasper area. Since 1886 the Brewsters had been in business at the CPR town of Banff, in Rocky Mountains Park, and by the 1890s they were firmly established in the guiding, packing, and outfitting business. Fred Brewster, who had trained as a mining engineer at Queen's University in Kingston, represented the family in the northern park.[32] He was looking for work when, in 1910, he was approached by his brother-in-law, Phillip Moore to form a partnership for various ventures. Fred agreed and soon the two men were freighting ties for the Calgary and Edmonton Railway out of Red Deer and operating a general store. From acquaintances, Fred heard of opportunities along the Grand Trunk Pacific line farther north and in 1911 he and Moore moved their horses to Bickerdike and began freighting and packing for the railway. As the end of steel moved westward, so did they. Work increased to the point where it made sense to bring additional relatives into the business, and eventually Fred Brewster enjoyed considerable renown as a Jasper Park guide.

At the best of times, packing, outfitting, and guiding were precariously seasonal occupations; at the worst of times, they provided no income at all. This applied as much to large firms as to small, although the

independents usually had a more difficult time remaining in business. Consequently, it was common for independents to hire on with firms like those of the Otto brothers or Fred Brewster for special jobs. It was equally common for the firms to take on local half breeds as cooks, trail blazers, hunting guides, and the like, on a temporary basis.[33] This was particularly true of business arrangements in the early years of guiding in the park, when men like the Ottos and Fred Brewster knew little themselves about the country through which they were expected to guide their parties. As time went on, many of these temporary working relationships solidified into something approaching permanent employment.

Life on the trail was predictable, regardless of the reason for an expedition. It was predictable in the sense that every guide had come to expect his full share of treacherous muskeg, fallen timber, food shortages, uncooperative horses, impertinence from clients, the pleasures of communion with the wilderness, and the undeniable thrill of being in charge of some very illustrious and wealthy clients. The degree of equanimity with which a guide handled these various demands was usually a good measure of the degree of success he would enjoy.

Before the First World War, the trails of the Jasper area were really no better than they had been for the previous century. It would be years before the federal government spent enough money on trail building and upkeep

to reduce the fatigue involved in cutting windfall timber or in leading horses around or through long and deep stretches of muskeg. By that time, clients would as likely as not insist on being taken far beyond established trails, so the guide's trail clearing was seldom ever done. The open contempt that some guides felt toward clients who sat and smoked while the guide spent hours clearing a path through the tangled underbrush is not difficult to understand.

Good pack horses were an indispensable part of every guide's life and livelihood. A reliable horse commanded a high price and horses whose personalities clashed too often with that of their owner were swiftly traded or sold. But regardless of the degree to which horse and owner got along, there were always times when the guides became exasperated by the stubbornness a horse could muster. There was little to be gained by beating such a mount, but elaborate cussing was considered excellent therapy by just about everyone. For this reason, few guides enjoyed touring parties that included a minister or women. But cuss as they might, most guides took good care of their equine charges. Camps were invariably made near good pasture and in the blackfly and mosquito season (which seemed endless), most guides would light a smudge fire for their horses before preparation if the evening meal was even considered. Similarly, the burden that a

pack horse carried was regularly checked to make sure it was evenly distributed and not chafing at some point. And no matter how big a hurry the client was in, no good guide would ever push his horses beyond about six hours a day. The relationship between guide and pack horse was always ambivalent, but both seem to recognize that guiding was very much a team effort.

When a guide was not clearing trail or caring for his horses, he was usually cooking. There is probably no other aspect of guiding in Jasper Park that emerges with such clarity. Walter Wilcox, who wrote the definitive turn-of-the-century guide to camping in the Rockies, stated that bacon and beans were still the mainstay of camp fare, but that by 1910 or so more and more clients had gotten into the habit of bringing along dried fruit and vegetables.[34] This gradual shift in the nature of camp food may have come about partly because of the indifference that many veterans of the mountains seemed to exhibit about their meals. Wilcox related a story of a hungry traveler who was invited to share a simple meal with one denizen of the Rockies. “Nothing appeared on the festive board,” he wrote, “but a generous supply of bacon and mustard. The unfortunate guest, being unused to the ways of the country, declared that he did not eat bacon. “Ah, well,’ said his host, ‘I am very sorry. Help yourself to the mustard.’”[35] With a fascinating eye for detail Wilcox also computed the staying power of the

various breakfasts he had enjoyed (?) on the trail. While an oatmeal breakfast would last just two hours, cornmeal was good for three, and bacon and bread could be relied upon for four to five hours of sustenance. But best of all was pork and beans, which easily managed to curb your appetite for six to ten hours.[36]

As time went on, trail meals became ever more elaborate. This happened largely as a result of client insistence. Among Curly Phillip's records, for example, there is a bill of fare for one 1915 trip, which indicates that his clients' staples included flour, cornmeal, rolled oats, sugar, beans, rice, macaroni, potatoes, bacon, dried fruits, almonds, coffee, tea, cocoa, evaporated milk, jam, vegetables, corned beef, ham, 'Klim', butter, soups, pickles, jelly powders, coconut, maple syrup, custard powder, cheeses, and olives.[37] Other clients, like climber J. Norman Collie, insisted that a case of No. 4 Scotch be included among his trail rations.[38] And surely some of the Jasper guides must have had to endure the occasional request such as that received by Banff guide Tom Wilson, who received a letter from a client which stated:

> As to food: -- we want plenty of jam and marmalade (but very little strawberry jam, as Mr. Thompson can't eat it). No butter; no sweet crackers; plenty of lemons; little potted meat, and that either chicken or lamb's tongues, preferably the former, and certainly not ham or corned beef or beef tongues; more coffee than tea; and a number of cans of soup – canned ox-tail or tomato being the best. We will

provide our own chocolate and raisins….[39]

With such culinary delights riding high on every pack horse, it is no wonder that appetites were often excellent. J. Munroe Thorington of Philadelphia, a renowned climber in his day, could not fathom the rapid disappearance of their food on one particular trip into the Rockies. "We came to the conclusion," he wrote, "that it was a dragon, dwelling in Ostheimer's interior – his appetite indicated clearly that he was feeding something beside himself."[40]

Then there was the question of guide-client relations. Many were the clients who valued their guides highly, and would go out with on one else. In fact, close bonds often grew up between these men and they would correspond regularly throughout the year. It was not uncommon for veteran climbers to publish lengthy eulogies to deceased guides in the pages of the various alpine journals, extolling their virtues and shedding light on their more endearing idiosyncrasies. But at times, the relationship soured quickly on the trail. Curly Phillips, who took out many hunting parties, was disgusted with the behaviour of some of his clients. "Some of them," he wrote, "lie in camp all the time and lie good and plenty when they get home. They expect the guides to do the shooting and they go home with the head and the glory."[41] Fred Stephens, who made many a friend on the trail, could not abide climber A.O. Wheeler of the Alpine Club of

Canada. During one particularly nasty exchange over the selection of a campsite, Wheeler turned on Stephens and told him that “I always heard you were a damn good man, but you are not.” Without hesitation, Stephens replied, “Wheeler, I always heard you were a s.o.b. and you are.”[42]

To those whom they considered more friend than client, guides could be the source of endless evening amusement. The stories and homegrown philosophy poured out endlessly around the campfire once the day’s ride was over. “We would sit late into the night, wrote Stanley Washburn of his trips with Fred Stephens, “talking of the game, the trail, philosophy, religion, and in fact any and every mind subject that the mind could think of.”[43] When he didn’t feel like talking, Stephens would pick up his ever-present banjo and sing his favourite song, which ended with this refrain:

> Once I was happy, but look at me now,
> Ten years in State’s Prison for stealing a cow.(44)

Curly Phillips delighted in telling about one client he had, a seriously overweight hunter, and “the first thing I had to hunt for him was a horse big enough.”[45] A twilight game of horseshoes, card games like Pedro and Hearts, sing-songs, and demonstrations of acrobatics filled many an evening.[46] And sometimes, when the talking was all done and sleep could still be kept at bay, it was simply time to sit back, enjoy a pipeful of tobacco, and bask in the silence of the mountains.

Conclusion

It was, in its own way, a grand sort of life. The Rockies spellbound many guides, and they enjoyed every difficult minute on the trail. A good guide could earn somewhere around $3.50 to $5.00 per client per day in the pre-war years, not enough to get rich on but more than adequate for most needs if supplemented by some winter trapping or other occupation. To a greater extent than many of his contemporaries, the guide found independence through his self-employment and genuine pleasure in the control he exercised over his operations and in the satisfaction of his clients.

But even as they established their businesses in the pre-war years, these Jasper Park guides could tell that the frontier was nearly won and that their way of life was eroding. The astute could read the portents in the increasingly dandified trail grub they carried, in the spread of tin cans throughout their once pristine world, and in the slowly diminishing number of extremely wealthy clients to whom they catered. Soon the Great War would thin the guides' ranks, and then the invasion of the automobile would force many of them to reconsider their livelihood. Eventually the exclusivity of national park guiding would disappear, and the guides would no longer enjoy the proprietary interest in the mountains. The

peaks of the Athabasca Valley would become, like so many other things, consumer goods, to be devoured rapidly, with little intimacy, and at minimal cost. For many Jasper people, guiding would change from a vocation to a business. As such, its romance would be forever lost.

Jasper National Park: Establishment and Early Policies

The Philosophies of Canadian National Park Creation

Today it is commonplace for many in our society to think of national parks as natural recreational enclaves in a developed nation, providing physical and intellectual respite from a busy, highly regulated world of business and urban pressures. National parks appear to serve a most useful purpose as a 'safety valve' for the stress of everyday living. Few are those who would advocate the elimination of the national park concept, yet in their more cynical moments, many believe that today's parks permit too much emphasis on commercialism, a catering to the whims of tourists who prefer being pampered by luxury hotels to experiencing the rigors of the outdoors, whose notion of recreation consists of purchasing imported souvenirs from a downtown giftshop rather than hiking up a lonely trail in the woods or descending a demanding ski slope. On the other hand, there are many other Canadians who hold that the central purpose of national parks is not to escape the amenities of modern life, but rather to provide those same attractions in a more sublime, relaxing

setting. They would prefer, in fact, that additional public funds be spent to enhance the comforts and conveniences offered by the parks. This seeming conflict between national park philosophies is longstanding, as evident in the early years of this century as it is today, and goes far toward explaining the origins of national park policy in Canada, its inherent tensions, and its evolution. It is particularly germane to the history of Jasper National Park, which was created at a critical juncture in the development of Canadian national park policies.

In the beginning, national parks were conceived as money-making ventures built around natural attractions with the potential to generate revenues for the national coffers.[1] Rocky Mountains Park (now called Banff National Park) was the first of the Canadian national parks. It was created in 1885 as a small reserve surrounding sulphurous hot springs that were considered medicinal and therefore attractive to throngs of ailing people. Development of these springs as a commercial venture was handled jointly by the federal government and the Canadian Pacific Railway. Regulations were put in place to govern activities in the reserve, but they were intended more as prohibitions of economically counterproductive behavior than as a means of protecting the environment. Only in this manner could the spending of public funds on park development be justified. It was not until around the

turn of the century that this attitude of using national parks to create a stronger national economy was modified significantly.

The challenge to the prevailing orthodoxy was tentative at best, and designed to fit within the existing economic framework of national park development rather than affront it. Nonetheless, it did represent a serious and calculated attempt to broaden the national park concept. Its chief proponents were civil servants who thought that the reservation of scenic natural areas for recreational purposes could have an uplifting effect on the moral and spiritual stature of twentieth-century Canadians, which have been diminished by the pressures of industrialism.[2] Since it was difficult, if not impossible, to couch their philosophy in terms of abstract sociological concepts, these men advocated an expansion of the national mandate to include practical elements such as greater access to remote wilderness regions, increased the protection of non-predatory wildlife species, regulation of watersheds, efficient utilization of known natural resources within parks, and scientific study of renewable resources to maximize their productivity. Much of the impetus for such arguments came from philosophies then popular in the United States, where improvement of one’s surroundings had come to be equated with improvement of one’s mental and physical well-being.

On the surface, then, these appeared to be arguments for more efficient economic development of parks, which they certainly were, but their deeper significance resided in the beneficial social effects of proper national park resource management. Their proponents realized that no change in the national park mandate would be supported by the government if it did not involve the augmentation of revenues, hence the conservative tactics used in introducing new objectives for the emerging park system.

The Creation of Jasper Forest Park

In the twenty years since the creation of Rocky Mountains Park, the federal government had established several other parks in Western Canada. Most were in the mountains, universally treasured for their scenic splendour. Yoho Park, Glacier Park, and Waterton Forest Reserve were all located in the southern reaches of the Canadian Rockies. Prior to the creation of the province of Alberta, in 1905, the federal government significantly enlarged these reserves to forestall future inhibition of park growth once the Dominion lands had been transferred to the authority of the province. Then, in September of 1907, when it was clear that two transcontinental railways would soon be constructed up the Athabasca Valley and through the Yellowhead Pass, the government decided to set up a northern mountain forest reserve that could be turned into

a national park whenever public use justified such a conversion of status. At first there was some thought of calling it the Athabasca Forest Reserve, but ultimately Jasper (after Jasper Hawse, founder of the Jasper House fur trading post) was deemed more evocative of the region's past.

Like the other parks of the day, Jasper was large, encompassing nearly 14,000 square kilometers. Its ostensible purpose was the setting aside of "lands for the preservation of forest trees on the crests and slopes of the Rocky Mountains and for the proper maintenance throughout the year of the volume of water in the rivers and streams that have their source in the mountains and traverse the Province of Alberta."[3] Thus it was to be a vast conservation area in the truest sense of the phrase. By protecting its resources from undue exploitation once the railway passed through the area, the government was safeguarding much of the water supply of the agricultural prairie provinces. At this point, there was no thought of immediate development of the area as a tourist haven such as Rocky Mountains Park to the south.

This attitude changed radically in 1909 when the government became aware that very hot sulphurous springs had been found up Fiddle Creek, a short distance from the intended main line of the railway. Visions of a northern Banff swiftly emerged among those in the Department of the Interior with authority over national parks and forest

reserves. Thus it was that exactly two years after establishment of Jasper Forest Reserve, the northern reserve was first visited by government officials. The men chosen to make the difficult excursion into those isolated mountains were R.H. Campbell, the Superintendent of Forestry, and Howard Douglas, the Chief Commissioner of Dominion Parks. Their intention was "to commence the development and improvement of this region as soon as the advent of the railway will permit, and in order that [they] might be prepared as to the preliminary requirements when the time arrived," they left from Banff by pack train on 1 September 1909.[4] Obviously there was no longer any thought of merely reserving this territory for development as a park; development would now begin at once.

Campbell and Douglas traversed the park from the south as far as Yellowhead Pass, and then headed down the Athabasca Valley toward the eastern boundary. Once that point was reached, they headed directly for the hot springs. No action could have more vividly confirmed the government's plans for Jasper Park. This journey they found to be a trip of some twenty-nine kilometers from their campsite near the pass, but they were gratified to find that the springs were located much closer to the intended railway right-of-way. They found the temperature of the spring water to be 116 degrees Fahrenheit, and

scooped up samples for testing by the chemists at the Dominion Experimental Farm in Ottawa. Douglas subsequently reported that "these springs show a much greater degree of heat than do the famous Banff hot springs, and although the flow of water was not as great as we expected, there is sufficient to answer for all purposes. There will be abundance for the proposed government bath house, sanitarium and any hotel that may desire the use of it."[5] From this statement, there can be no doubt as to the intention of the federal government to create a commercially viable national park in the northern Rockies.

It was with dismay that Douglas and Campbell noted the presence of a number of squatters within the reserve. These were mainly half-breed families who had frequented Jasper House until it closed in 1884, and then chose to remain in the area, hunting, trapping, and farming on a small scale. Within the year, a government negotiator would be sent out from Edmonton to buy out these people and arrange for their removal from the reserve, thus simplifying the administration and control of land use within the reserve. Only one resident among these squatters had bothered to apply for a patent to the land he had settled on, an American immigrant named Lewis Swift, and in time his claim to freehold property within Jasper Park would be upheld, thus thwarting all efforts to remove him from the park.

Just as troubling to Douglas and Campbell, and even more easily eliminated, were the numerous Indians who lived within the forest reserve. The two officials claimed at as soon as word of the government's intention to create Jasper Forest Reserve reached these people, they had undertaken one final slaughter of local big game. This hunt was reputed to have been a great success, but to his relief Douglas found a continuing abundance of game animals. To prevent further illegal depredations within the park, Douglas and Campbell arranged for the Royal North West Mounted Police to escort all Indians from the park permanently and then engaged Lewis Swift and two other men as permanent game and fire guardians. With these preliminary matters taken care of, Douglas confidently predicted that "this park will eventually outstrip all others in the Dominion of Canada in importance, and when the natural resources are looked into and developed will become a source of perpetual revenue to the country."[6]

As laid out in 1907, Jasper Park was a leviathan, vast in territorial extent and extremely difficult for just three game guardians to patrol effectively. The park reached from the front range of the Rockies on the east to the Yellowhead Pass on the west, and from beyond Mount Alberta on the south to the fifty-second base line on the north. In other words, it took in more or less the

entire watershed of the Athabasca River. In the interest of more efficient administration, the Dominion Forest Reserves and Parks Act of 1911 reduced the size of the park to about 1,600 square kilometers, enclosed within a narrow band of some 30 kilometres that straddled the route of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway from the eastern front range to just beyond the continental divide. This radical circumcision eliminated some of the most scenic parts of the original park, such as Maligne Lake and the upper Athabasca and Sunwapta rivers, and left much that was of only secondary value as a tourist attraction. The decision instantaneously sparked an intense controversy over appropriate boundaries for Jasper Park.

While the events of 1911 are unclear, by the following year a serious disagreement about Jasper's boundaries had surfaced within the Department of the Interior. The two main antagonists were Superintendent of Forestry Robert Campbell and the newly-appointed Commission of Dominion Parks, J.B. Harkin. This squabble over territory was in reality a struggle for power within the Department. It came down to a question of who would maintain control of the greatest extent of territory, for apparently all that was excluded from Jasper Park remained a forest reserve under Campbell's jurisdiction.[7] Campbell was quick to concede that Jasper had been too severely emasculated by the 1911 legislation, but he refused to acknowledge the Athabasca watershed as a suitable frame of

reference for the setting of park boundaries. Harkin persisted in his claim that the 1911 boundary reduction had eliminated the most scenic parts of the entire region ("the park is so narrow that it is only a joke") and he produced correspondence from representatives of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, the Canadian Northern Railway, and the Alpine Club of Canada that said much the same thing. "Both the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern Railway will soon be pouring tourists into Jasper Park," he wrote to his superior, "and it would appear to be the duty of the Department [of the Interior] to provide the Parks [with] machinery at once for opening up the beauty spots and thus helping to promote the tourist traffic which is one of the best paying businesses that any district can have."[8] Using a tactic that he would refine continually over the years, he then produced reams of statistics showing that the economic benefits of tourist traffic to the country were considerable. In conclusion, he stated his firm belief that enlargement of the park would in no sense endanger Campbell's forests, as park guardians would maintain vigilance equal to that of any forest ranger.

The matter seems to have remained in abeyance until 1913, by which time considerable natural resource development had already begun within Jasper Park and more was pending. The immediate impetus to action seems to

have come from the need to make a decision about five applications for water power development privileges within the original boundaries of Jasper Park.[9] Harkin's position had broadened by this time, and now he argued that destruction of extremely valuable scenic features would most assuredly take place if adequate park regulations were not in place to govern resource development. Destruction of such features would only lead to a reduction of government revenues (surely an undesirable development) and, once destroyed, those features could never be recovered. Harkin was a persuasive man, and in 1914 an order-in-council reset the boundaries of the park so that they included some 11,000 square kilometers and most of the scenic features the Commissioner of Parks had championed so vigorously as future tourist attractions.[10]

Early Park Development

There can be no doubt that nearly all initial efforts of the Jasper Park administration were directed at enhancing tourism opportunities within the new reserve. As soon as an administrative townsite called Fitzhugh (later Jasper) was selected that was compatible with the divisional point needs of the railway near the junction of the Miette and Athabasca rivers, the federal government appointed its first park superintendent, Byron Burton of Edmonton. For

reasons that are unclear, he was quickly replaced by S. Maynard Rogers, who arrived in Fitzhugh in March of 1913.

Rogers was a native of Plymouth, England, where he had been born in about 1869.[11] The events of his formative years are unknown, but he did serve in the Boer War in South Africa, where he attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel. At the time of his appointment as superintendent of Jasper Park, he was resident in Ottawa, possibly working for the government in another capacity. Shortly after his move to Jasper, he volunteered for service in the Great Was with the 9th Battalion (101st Edmonton Fusiliers), and served in England as commanding officer of several training brigades between 1915 and 1916. In the autumn of 1918 he returned to Jasper, where he remained superintendent until 1927, when he again left for eastern Canada. During his residence at Jasper, he was a staunch supporter of the Anglican Church and a leader of the local Masonic Lodge. In 1932 the death of the incumbent superintendent of Jasper led to his reappointment to the position, which he held until his retirement in 1934.

Rogers brought an inflexible set of principles and an autocratic manner to the position of park superintendent. An avid sportsman, he was convinced that all national parks should remain as natural as possible, and he tried valiantly to ensure that Jasper remained unviolated by urban amenities like sidewalks and the cacophonous

rumblings of automobiles.[12] Most early residents of Jasper retained vivid memories of him as “something of a martinet, a military disciplinarian.”[13] Seldom did he pause to consider the limits of his authority as superintendent. His unshaken convictions about proper behavior extended just as surely to the townspeople as to the tourists under his supervision. For example, at three or four o’clock every summer morning, without fail, Rogers could be seen picking mushrooms on the boulevards. When some of the locals decided to vent their displeasure at Roger’s arbitrariness by picking the mushrooms before him, he did not hesitate to order them to stop.[14] Similarly, if Rogers spotted a garbage can lid during his mushroom picking that wasn’t on straight, he would march up to the door of the offender householder and demand that the matter be corrected at once. Even his wife was not immune to his imperious ways. Rogers raised chickens in a coop beside the administration building and thought nothing of potting curious cats with a shotgun. Like many others, his wife’s favourite cat failed to escape his retributive system of justice.[15] He even advocated and tried to enforce a system of class segregation in Jasper, firm in the belief that the mainly British park employees and the largely ethnic railroaders should not mix. To the extent possible, Rogers tried to use the leasehold system of landholding to confine all railroaders to the east end

of town, near the outfitters' stables and corrals, while government employees occupied the higher western ground.[16]

However domineering Rogers may have been in his administration of the townsite and its early residents, he was wholly dedicated to satisfying the needs and expectations of the first park tourists. Realizing that word of mouth meant a great deal in terms of increasing visits by tourists, Rogers spared no expense and no effort in putting J.B. Harkin's arguments put into practice. Roger's first major initiative as superintendent was the extension of the identification of all the park's scenic attractions and the provision of better access to them that had been started by his predecessors.

Under the supervision of acting administrators, several important trails and primitive roads had already been cleared. In 1911 a pack trail was laid out from the coal mining town of Pocahontas to the Miette hot springs, where it was believed the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway would soon build the luxurious Chateau Miette as the focal point for commercial development. The government had even reserved and surveyed an area for the townsite that was expected to grow up around the springs.[17] During the summer season of 1913, additional trails were located between Jasper and Pyramid Lake, and from the Athabasca River to Medicine Lake via the Maligne Canyon.[18] The government also saw to it that ferry service was resumed across the Athabasca River to permit tourist access from

the GTP main line and the Maligne Canyon trail. Some effort had also been made to identify the most notable scenic attractions of the park. Presumably this work was done by the game guardians whose patrols took them to various remote regions of the park. In his report of 1911, acting superintendent J.W. McLaggan noted that "during the past year some very fine canyons, lakes and waterfalls have been discovered which, with the hot springs, sulphur springs and other attractions known to exist, stamp Jasper Park already as one of the greatest of the Canadian Parks. And since it is as yet almost entirely unexplored, and since its known scenic features combine mountains, lakes, rivers and waterfalls, intermingled in such a way that its beauty is beyond the power of the pen to describe, its future possibilities seem limitless."[19]

As Rogers assumed control of the park in the spring of 1913, he set his own development priorities. Since his handful of game guardians had few tourists to supervise and even fewer poachers to apprehend, Rogers instructed them to cut pack trails to all scenic spots that they encountered during their patrols.[20] This provided access to such locations as Summit Lake on the great divide, Punch Bowl Falls, and the sport fishing havens of Jack and Caledonia lakes. After a tour of inspection, the superintendent was dissatisfied with the

existing trail to the hot springs and ordered construction of a much shorter route with better grades that could be more easily traveled by invalids. Then, with the assistance of the Royal North West Mounted Police, Rogers's wardens embarked on a clean-up campaign of all abandoned railway construction sites in the park, most of which were clearly visible from the main line of the railways. These former camps were found to be "in a dangerous and shocking condition,"[21] that demanded immediate remedy. There was considerable opposition from local railway workers to the cleanup suggestion but, as always, Rogers refused to be intimated. Several rapid convictions, presumably under the parks regulations, "impressed these people with the necessity of complying with the demand…."[22]

During his first year in office, Rogers also laid the groundwork for the development of better tourist accommodations in the park by making arrangements with the Survey-General's office for the laying out of 150 cottage lots at Pyramid and Patricia lakes. In addition, he put forward a recommendation for the construction of rustic but comfortable 'refuge bungalows' at eight kilometer intervals along all major trails, which would provide shelter to tourists and incidentally popularize "the outdoor life which will do so much to upbuild [sic] a healthy and virile race."[23]

Wildlife was always considered an asset in national

parks, and in his first year of administration Rogers instituted a well-defined wildlife policy for the park. His personal inspection tour had revealed an abundance of big game and birds within the park, which he attributed to the close supervision afforded these species by the patrolling wardens. He was most pleased with the natural increase in species such as bighorn sheep, white- and black-tailed deer, beaver, and mink. He informed his superiors at Ottawa of his belief that additional food for waterfowl in the form of wild rice plantings in the major lakes would greatly enhance their numbers, and he pleaded for the importation of attractive species like grouse and pheasants. The last major element of this comprehensive wildlife policy was a deliberate effort to eliminate predators such as wolves and coyotes. To ensure the success of the programme, which would become part of the wardens' duties, Rogers recommended that his men be allowed to retain the bounty normally paid and to sell the hides.

This was an extremely ambitious programme of activities for a first year in office, and like nothing else it demonstrated Rogers's commitment to ensuring the success of Jasper National Park. Certainly much of the force behind his administration came from his strength of character, but it would be equally fair to say that much derived from his personal view of the value of national

parks. Parks, he said,

> possess vast potentialities for the betterment of the Canadian people in body, mind, and resultant energy and activity, and each year, as their attractions become better known, they will undoubtedly draw increasingly larger numbers to share in the benefits of the out-of-door life. These will return to "pass on the good word" that, in the parks, a cottage site may be obtained for a small annual rental as to place it within the reach of the humblest citizen. In this connection, there would appear to be a wonderful field offered to this country, with its increasing wealth and progress, to assist some of our suffering poor to have an opportunity of being restored to health, by freeing them, for a short time at least, from the sordid and unsanitary surroundings in which they live, which leads ofttimes not only to ill health, but to its attendant evils of vice and crime….Jasper park has many such attractive points where a reasonable altitude, perfect water, pine clad hills, and a delightful climate would restore to health and activity many who would otherwise pass quickly over the Divide, and every life thus saved and restored to health means an added asset to Canada.[24]

It was a classic statement of the latest principles behind the movement for additional national parks throughout North America. Nothing less than the spiritual and physical rejuvenation of the citizenry motivated national park advocates like Rogers.

The Park During the Great War

The Great War had a profound effect on all Canadian national parks. Foremost, it meant the introduction of a severe system of retrenchment that reduced appropriations to their lowest levels ever. National parks could scarcely be considered a high priority in wartime, and little more than maintenance work was possible due to the restriction

of funds. And it meant also that many national parks became the sites of temporary alien internment camps. These were isolation camps which held persons who had originated from any one of the Central Powers. Ostensibly, they were interned for security reasons until the war was over. But in Jasper Park, as elsewhere, more prosaic matters far removed from the great overseas conflict continued to beg for resolution. The most contentious local issue in Jasper during the war years was certainly the squabble over the revised park boundary.

These disparate events of the war years presented a significant challenge to the administrative skills of the acting superintendent, Alfred (Fred) Driscoll. Driscoll, a land surveyor and former partner in the surveying firm of Driscoll and Knight of Edmonton, replaced Rogers in the autumn of 1914. He was immediately faced with a situation in which his superiors at Ottawa would authorize only absolutely necessary works. Driscoll appears to have managed well enough within his caretaker status. He turned his meager appropriation to maximum benefit by concentrating on the construction and improvement of trails throughout the park. In 1916, for example, an important trail was cut from Medicine Lake to attractive Maligne Lake, with the hopes that in time it would “be incorporated into the proposed main motor road from Jasper to Lake Louise.”[25] During the same season, the Pyramid

Lake trail was widened and repaired, and a new diversion was built from the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway at Cottonwood Creek to provide access to the cemetery and the old tote road to Lewis Swift's place. In all, about fifty kilometers of new trails were established in a single year. At the same time, roads adjacent to the townsite were carefully maintained so as to create a favourable impression among visiting tourists.

Nineteen seventeen brought a continuation of this caretaker approach to administration. Driscoll reported that no work had been undertaken at the Miette hot springs, despite considerable public interest in better facilities, and that the only significant project of the season was construction of a carriage trail from the townsite to Mount Edith Cavell. This peak, just west of Jasper, had been named to commemorate the martyrdom of an English nurse at the hands of the German troops in Belgium.[26] The acting superintendent showed considerable foresight and initiative in the same year when he recommended that a good motor road could easily be made along the railway grade that had been abandoned on the park's east end due to wartime need for the rails. It was a suggestion much appreciated by his superior, J.B. Harkin, who wrote to Sir James Lougheed, a former Albertan and Leader of the Conservative Party in the Senate, that "Jasper Park has been handicapped in that it had no motor road providing connection between it and the different

towns and cities of the West…. It would appear that if Jasper Park was provided with a highway connecting it with the Provincial System it would likely be advantageous to the development of the park."[27] Undoubtedly Harkin was hoping to receive a sympathetic hearing that might lead Lougheed to press the Alberta government into funding construction of such a highway. But nothing would be done about this idea for years.

The most extraordinary event of the war years in Jasper Park was unquestionably the establishment of the alien internment camp. When the war broke out, Canada turned its back on many of the immigrants who were unfortunate to have come from one of [the] provinces that made up the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Immediately an alarmed public, and somewhat later the federal government, branded them a menace, the enemy within the nation. They were classified as 'enemy aliens' and subjected to a rigid system of registration and regular reporting to the police authorities. Those who failed to check in at the appointed times were rounded up and summarily shipped to one of the internment camps the Department of Militia and Defence had established, where they could expect to work on various projects that contributed to the betterment of the country and for which appropriations were not available during wartime.

Little is known about the Jasper camp. It was

probably established late in the summer of 1915, and consisted of several bunkhouses (each of which held fifty men), kitchen, hospital, washhouse, latrines, cookhouse, quartermaster's stores, orderly room, troop bunkhouse, sergeant's quarters, guardroom, troop mess, officers mess, and an internees' messhall.[28] By 1917 the camp held about 200 men, who had been brought in from Brandon "as it was thought that the cost of their internment could be largely offset by their employment on roads and other necessary work within the park."[29] These men were Austrians for the most part, and were guarded by troops from the 19th Alberta Dragoons.[30] They were so well behaved, however, that the government decided to release them on parole to work for the railways and in the local collieries, always under the supervision of the Royal North West Mounted Police.

At least some of the local residents viewed the internees with a distinct lack of hostility. During a hunger strike which the internees staged over the poor camp rations, two little Jasper girls got so worried about the men starving that they smuggled them a plate of freshly made doughnuts. The guards did not interfere in any way.[31] The only recorded incident of concern came when two internees escaped one night. The next day, martial law was declared in Jasper, which was quite unnecessary as the men were caught farther down the railway tracks in a couple of days.[32]

A less exciting, but nonetheless important, issue that occupied Driscoll during much of his administration of the park was a dispute over the boundary changes that were made in 1914. That revision, which gave back to the park most of the territory it had lost in 1911, stirred bitter feelings among many of the local guides and outfitters. Prior to his departure overseas, Superintendent Rogers had recommended to his superiors that hunting privileges be granted in the new areas of the park for one season only, so that local guides could honour the commitments they had already made to various incoming parties.[33] But this did not satisfy the guides. They argued strenuously that the new boundaries were so remote from their base of operations at Jasper that no hunting party could reach the country beyond the park in a reasonable amount of time.[34] In response, the Branch consistently reminded the offended businessmen that national parks had nothing whatever to do with facilitating wild game hunting. Some officials went even farther and pointed out the indirect benefit to the hunting guides of game overflow from within the protected park area to the adjacent hunting grounds.[35] Despite continued pressure to amend the boundaries again, the government took no action other than the erection of painted cloth boundary markers around the park’s periphery.

The Warden Service

The expansion of Jasper's boundaries in 1914 created serious problems for the limited warden service that had been staffed since 1910. There were fewer than half a dozen wardens, each of whom was expected to patrol regularly on horseback throughout some 2,000 square kilometers each. Until the new boundaries were marked, the wardens could not confidently apprehend those they believed to be poaching within the park. Moreover, the tremendous distance of some areas of the park from Jasper townsite subjected the wardens to ever greater dangers, in that help would be long in coming in the event of accidental injury or severe illness. If anything, the warden's lot became much more difficult after 1914.

Douglas and Campbell had laid the basis for the warden service during their 1909 inspection of the park when they hired Lewis Swift and a couple of other men as combined game guardians and fire rangers. There had been some apprehension that the Indians who were removed from the park would continue their depredations upon local game, and of course the railway construction crews and belching locomotives along the line started many a fire through accident and carelessness. In the following year, for reasons unknown, one of the wardens had left the service.[36] Of the two who remained, Swift continued to

work out of his farm house, while the other was housed in a shack at Mile 113 on the Grand Trunk Pacific Line, where the government had also erected stables big enough for four horses. By 1914, just prior to the boundary extension, the park boasted six wardens.[37] Before his departure for overseas, Superintendent Rogers had recommended expansion of the warden service to ten men, each of whom would be responsible for the patrolling of about 260 square kilometers, “which is the utmost area that a warden could be expected to supervise for fire and game protection.”[38] But, like everything else, this recommendation was ignored in the quest for wartime retrenchment. Thus it was an impoverished warden service that had to contend with the vastly enlarged park of the war years.

The life of the early wardens appears to have been rather monotonous, if agreeable. One of the earliest Jasper Park warden’s diaries to survive, that of Lewis Swift for 1910, sheds considerable light on the warden’s lot at a time when the park boundaries remained vast. Although Campbell and Douglas had offered the game warden position to Swift in the fall of 1909, it was the third week of January in 1910 before Swift met Acting Park Superintendent McLaggan and announced that he was accepting it.[39] McLaggan appears to have given him the most basic of instructions: to patrol the park wherever

the killing of game was likely to occur and to prevent violations of the new park regulations.

When Swift was not at home, which was infrequent, he was indeed patrolling the park, either on foot or by horse. Undoubtedly the inclement winter weather had much to do with the brevity of his patrols and the small area they encompassed. Indeed, during the remaining week of January, he appears never to have gone farther in any direction than Henry House. In the first week of February, however, he discovered that a Grand Trunk Pacific work crew was busily demolishing one of the last remaining buildings at the Jasper House site and, as he wrote, "making it my duty to tell Supt. McLaggan I decide [sic] to go to Edmonton."[40] Three days later he was at Wolf Creek, the end of steel, where he was able to catch a freight into Edmonton. Whether because or in spite of this hasty decision, McLaggan decided to accompany Swift back to the park where they commenced sealing guns. Henceforth Swift's patrols would be more regular and comprehensive.

The area that Swift patrolled was reasonably well-defined. The ruins of Henry House, the mouth of the Miette River, and the engineer's camp at Cabin Creek were favourite western destinations, while an occasional trip as far as the railway camp at Tete Jaune Cache was not unknown. On the east the railway construction camp at Prairie Creek was visited once in a while. Swift seemed

to make no long journeys either north or south of the Athabasca River, and when the ice went out in the spring, he put his canoe on the river for some of his duties. In the main, he kept an eye on the activities of the railway crews who were then cutting the right-of-way up the valley. Sealing guns and posting park notices consumed much of his workday, and visits to check up on the abandoned Moberly and Finlay farms the rest. He usually noted sightings of game, but if he every kept more detailed records of these sightings, they have not survived. Sunday was invariably a day of rest at home.

If Swift's patrol area seems small, and his duties not particularly onerous, it was because there was little activity within Jasper Park for a warden to keep an eye on. In 1910 tourist parties were still extremely rare, and the railway construction crews more or less confined their activities to the valley of the Athabasca. If Swift seems to have spent an inordinate amount of his patrol time observing and protecting the wild game of the park, it was because wildlife was considered a principal attraction in a national park. In their haste to escape city life, early visitors to the Rockies wanted more than sublime landscape. They wanted glimpses of its denizens at the very least, and mounted heads to take home at the other extreme. Wildlife in any form became identified with the national parks, and particularly of an interlude

in the mountains. Moreover, the government believed that through effective game protection, local wildlife stocks would multiply and overflow the park boundaries, thus providing excellent hunting just outside the park. Of course Jasper would remain the chief outfitting centre for such expeditions. For these reasons, Swift spent much of his time sealing rifles and posting notices about the park's game regulations. And most assuredly his frequent trips to railway construction camps were not token gestures; transient crews tended to be the greatest single source of fires in the early parks, which remained the bane of wildlife conservation efforts. In short, the range of Swift's duties suggests a deep concern with preservation of the park's scenery and wildlife resources for the influx of tourists that everyone knew would come as soon as the railway offered passenger service through the northern Rockies. In most ways, then, the duties of the early wardens were preventative rather than retributive in nature. It was a characteristic of the warden service that would endure.

In 1916, despite the wartime policy of retrenchment, the warden service had expanded to nine permanent and two temporary (probably seasonal) fire and game guardians.[41] Each had been assigned to a specific patrol district with orders to construct primitive log cabins and stables as permanent patrol shelters that might also be used by tourist parties when on the trail. Fire and game patrols

continued as the mainstay of their responsibilities, although trail building had come to take up all slack time. Of course there was a definite limit to the fire-fighting abilities of a single warden, and to increase the effectiveness of these early fire patrols, the government authorized installation of a telephone system among the warden cabins and park headquarters at Jasper to the Yellowhead Pass, to Errington (Mile 70) on the Canadian Northern Railway, to Pocahontas and Medicine Lake, and to the top of Mount Fitzhugh.[42] A special warden patrol was required just to keep the line in service, but the superintendent had no hesitation in commending the telephone system as a benefit that far exceeded the costs of installation. Undoubtedly, it also served well as an emergency communications system, in the event of accident in the bush. Even with this splendid system in place, the warden service was finding it difficult to maintain surveillance of the huge park and again in 1919 Ottawa authorized a further expansion of the warden service from twelve to fourteen permanent men.[43]

Fires were not common in the early years of the park, and when the wardens were not building tourist and patrol trails they were maintaining a close watch on local game stocks. In that era, animals and birds were routinely divided into “good” and “bad” species, mainly according to

whether or not they were predatory. It was after the Great War that Superintendent Rogers's vendetta against predatory creatures came into its own. In 1920, for example, Rogers reported the general belief of the wardens that an 'invasion' of timber wolves from the north country was imminent, owing to the depletion of game in that district through hunting. Accordingly, wardens were brought in from outlying areas to hunt and trap the predators. Rogers was pleased to report that two timber wolves, thirty-two coyotes, two wolverines, twenty—four weasels, and numerous crows, hawks and pack-rats had been killed.[44]

At the same time, Rogers commented on the problems that the warden service was having with its telephone service. The terrific winds in the valley dropped a great deal of timber on the overhead lines and continually disrupted service. In the Jasper-Maligne Canyon extension, pack-rats had ruined service by gnawing through the insulation on all the wires inside the Canyon cabin. In the Jack Lake and Maligne Lake area, heavy snowfall proved the bane of the system. All Rogers could do was hope that his superiors would soon authorize the purchase of a "system of wireless telephony."[45]

During the 1920s the warden service was little different than it had been during Swift's tenure. Certainly, the fire patrols were rendered more effective by the occasional use of aerial reconnaissance after 1922

and by continual upgrading of the telephone system. But for the most part, the park wardens continued to lead a solitary and monotonous life in the backcountry.[46] At a monthly salary of about $95, wardens had become permanent inmates of their cabins, with a horse as their only companion. Each district cabin was situated between forty to eighty kilometers from headquarters at Jasper, and from these tiny log shelters the wardens undertook regular patrols along a circuitous route of some 120 kilometres. At intervals of perhaps twenty-five kilometers, each warden was expected to build small shelters in which emergency food, clothing, blankets, and fire-fighting equipment was kept. In summer they patrolled on horseback; in winter, snowshoes or skis were used. About once a month, they made a trip into town for supplies and instructions.

For those wardens stationed in districts through which tourist and hunting parties passed regularly, it was not a bad life. But to those located in the real backcountry, it could be both lonely and dangerous. In the early winter of 1929 a backcountry warden was killed by a grizzly. At other times, even the most routine activities could turn potentially deadly. Frank Wells, who was stationed at Sunwapta Falls after 1925, could not forget the time he was crossing a railway bridge on horseback, when the horse slipped through a gap in the

bridge and broke his leg. This was bad enough, but Wells could hear a train approaching and had to act fast. Without hesitation, he shot the horse and cut off the trapped leg so that he could push his mount off the bridge and into the river. This he managed to do just as the train roared past.[47] Ed MacDonald, who worked as a warden in the Rocky River District in 1921, recalled that as he went out to saddle his horse in the dark early one morning, he nearly made the serious error of putting a halter on a grizzly.[48] Obviously, even the familiar could be fraught with danger.

This was a way of life that would endure even after the park was cut up by automobile roads and provided with wireless communications. Certainly such innovations greatly increased the speed with which a warden could respond to problems or be rescued from a dangerous situation, but to those who still rode their packhorses through the deep backcountry, life changed more slowly. There, where primitive park conditions prevailed, modern technology could provide few significant improvements.

The Administration and the Park Residents

While the warden service cared for the remote areas of the park in the early years, the Jasper townsite office was the main source of contact between the park administration and those who resided in, or worked adjacent to, the park.

Relations between the two were not always cordial, chiefly because many residents resented what they perceived as government interference with their way of life. To them, the voluminous regulations by which the park was governed meant the inhibition of business and the curtailment of individual freedom. There was little acknowledgement of the need for such rules even though Jasper was a government townsite within a national park. By the same token, it must be remembered that we are speaking about an era in which government intervention in any aspect of everyday life was extremely limited. Some conflict between the administration and local residents was to be expected.

This conflict could be detected on many levels. Certainly the petty carpings of Superintendent Rogers about crooked garbage can lids and 'illicit' mushroom picking on the boulevards represented the most trivial of antagonisms. His early efforts to segregate the town occupationally were probably not appreciated by all concerned either. But these were minor matters in the broader scheme of things, discriminatory certainly, but not outside the realm of everyday experience for most residents.

More serious, in the eyes of many who earned a living in or near the park, was the casualness with which the administration sometimes indirectly encouraged 'outsiders' to undertake work within Jasper Park. In 1922, for

example, outfitters Fred Brewster, J.W. Brewster and Ralph James complained to J.B. Harkin at Ottawa that Superintendent Rogers had hired Fred Stephens to pack in certain trail parties into the Sunwapta Valley district during the previous season. The basis of their complaint was that Stephens, who resided at Lacombe, contributed in no way to the revenues of the park and yet received preferential treatment in the awarding of valuable contracts.[49] Harkin looked into the matter, and found that despite Stephens's place of residence, he was better acquainted with the Sunwapta area than his three detractors. Superintendent Rogers also vouched for Stephens's ability as a guide and his attitude of frugality, and claimed that the Brewsters had actually been unwilling to undertake the work, while James was not equipped to do so. So the issue was stalemated, with the other guides feeling aggrieved and the administration remaining defensive.

A somewhat different conflict arose in 1927, when the government decided to extend Jasper's southern boundary to include the Columbia icefields district. This beautiful area of the Rockies had become the subject of considerable interest as a result of the work of the Interprovincial Boundary Commission that established the border between Alberta and British Columbia. An order-in-council[50] incorporated some 2,500 square kilometers south of the

Sunwapta Pass into the park and provoked an immediate outcry from the guides and outfitters of Banff, who had taken hunting parties into the district for years.[51] Additional fuel was added to the controversy when Premier Brownlee of Alberta accused the federal government of making a 'land-grab' just prior to conclusion of agreement on the transfer of natural resources from the Crown to the province.[52] Again the Department of the Interior defended its position, conceding only a one-year extension of hunting privileges in the district so as not to injure any business arrangements already made between the aggrieved Banff guides and incoming hunting parties.

Perhaps one of the best illustrations of the seemingly endless disagreement between the administration and private interests came in 1936. A.C. Wilby, newly arrived from England, had bought out Lewis Swift's freehold claim within the park and proceeded to spend more than $100,000 developing a 'dude ranch' on the site. Wilby's running battle with the dictates of Superintendent A.C. Wright is surely a minor classic in the history of government-public relations in the national parks system. Relations soured shortly after Wilby's arrival. Wright wrote to Wilby to complain about a fence the latter was erecting near the highway. The superintendent emphasized the importance of proper construction of such a visible fence, and advised Wilby to submit detailed plans for approval. Wilby replied that he had no plans drawn up for

the fence in question, but would be glad to have an inspection done by the resident park engineer. Had he left the matter there, perhaps it could have been resolved amicably, but Wilby could not resist raising another problem he was having:

> There is another serious matter about which I am in some trepidation. We have lately been troubled considerably with mice in our cook shack and as I understand it is against the Park rules and regulations to keep a cat, we have purchased a couple of mouse traps. [They are] of the ordinary pattern which can be purchased in the local hardware store. As I have neither plans, elevations or section drawings of these and as my surveyors and draftsmen have left, I am not able to submit them for your approval.
>
> I am in a quandary as to (1) whether it is a punishable offence to trap mice within the Park boundaries and (2) whether before doing so one has to have the approval of Ottawa regarding the brand of cheese to be used in setting the traps.
>
> Please let me have an early reply regarding this matter before the mice have full possession of the cook shack and our food supply as we do not wish to starve to death.(53)

Superintendent Wright was obviously not amused by this jibe and immediately stopped all fence construction pending design approval. Wilby had no choice. He complied with the request for plans, and submitted them to Wright with a note saying that "I should be glad if this approval could be obtained with less than the usual delay as I have only some forty summers to live."[54]

It was precisely because of such conflicts of interest that the federal government had granted permission to the townspeople for the establishment of a local board of trade in the spring of 1924.[54] The idea of

such a representative body of local residents had been tried in Banff three years earlier and it seemed to take some of the biting edge off government-public relations. In 1927 the businessmen-dominated board of trade was replaced by a body known as the Jasper Advisory Council, which was elected from the citizens at large. Interest soon flagged, however, and the Council was disbanded in 1933, leaving only the Chamber of Commerce to speak on behalf of all park citizens. As might be expected, the interests of local businessmen received most consideration. Not until 1956 would the broader-based Advisory Council be re-established in Jasper National Park.

Conclusion

Disputes between the park administration and its residents arose for one simple reason: confusion about the purpose of national parks. From the beginning the federal government had sent out conflicting signals about appropriate uses for parks such as Jasper. At first officials in the Parks Branch permitted all sorts of natural resource development within their reserves, in seeming contradiction of their concern for the attractiveness of the local environment. They shifted park boundaries in what certainly appeared to be an arbitrary fashion, dictated more by political whim than an

ethic of resource conservation. They permitted the establishment and growth of townsites within the park and then circumscribed the activities of their residents. It was a murky melange of policies that confronted those private citizens with a vested interest in the park, and attempts to discuss problems with park officials seldom clarified the situation.

The federal government never intended to create such confusion in the minds of those most affected by park creation and policies. If bewilderment often characterized the feelings of park residents, it was largely because government policy on national parks was an evolving creature, subject to sudden advances, equally speedy reversals, and occasionally direct political interference. The national parks administration had grown out of a bureaucratic leviathan, the Department of the Interior, whose principal purpose was not the conservation of resources but their commercial exploitation. It took years, even decades, for a small group of dedicated conservationists within the Dominion Parks Branch to shrug off the commercialism that characterized their mother department and establish a unique set of principles that would guide national park development well into the 1960s, when they would be reinforced even more strongly. Those principles, which took the preservation of natural resource integrity as their point of departure, were embodied in the National Parks Act of 1930.

Jasper: The Evolution of an All-Season Resort

From Wilderness to Destination

"The story of the Invader of Silence can be read in the ubiquitous tomato and condensed-milk cans seen at intervals on the trail, while here and there tent and tepee-poles marked a good camping ground."[1]

This was Mary Schaffer, writing of the Brazeau River district in 1907. To the lifelong botanist and lover of unspoiled nature, the best days in the Rockies were already over. Legions of mountaineers and hunters, led north from Lake Louise by well-intentioned guides who were simply trying to earn a living with their litter and their campfires. Schaffer's harshness as a critic was no doubt matched by the insensitivity of those she criticized, but the magnitude of the impairment of the land had scarcely begun.

Within three years of her writing, the federal government would allow an extensive colliery and company town to develop at the foot of Roche Miette. Within four, there would be trails criss-crossing the valleys of the Athabasca, the Maligne, and the Fiddle, and a railway right-of-way cut all the way to the Yellowhead Pass and

beyond. Within five, the first passenger trains would be belching smoke into the air and clinkers onto the tracks, setting fire after fire for the new park warden service to extinguish. But above all else, within less than six years of Schaffer's writing, tourists would be coming to Jasper National Park for all the attractions it had to offer. In the years to come, the services developed to meet the recreational needs of these people would ultimately change the landscape of the park much more than any traffic on the backcountry trails could ever do. Mary Schaffer had seen merely the tip of an iceberg of change.

The Canadian government had always intended that Jasper National Park should become a tourist haven. Official interest in developing attractions for the visitors that two transcontinental trains would inevitably bring started with the news of a hot sulphur spring near Fiddle Creek. To those familiar with the short history of the national parks, it took little imagination to envision another Banff in the tiny pool of thermal mineral water. The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway shared that vision, and announced to the government that it would soon begin construction of the Chateau Miette near the hot springs. Bessie Pullen-Berry, one of the earliest tourists to visit the park by railway, said in 1912 that she had spoken with the GTP publicity director, Mr. Lett, who informed her that "he had traversed the country and had chosen a site for the large hotel shortly to be erected close to the hot

springs…. Mr. Lett had just received a jar of water coming from the lake [sic] destined to supply the proposed hotel, back from the analyst at Montreal, who pronounced it of the purest quality."[2] Obligingly, the government laid out a complete townsite with the Chateau as its focal point, improved the wretched trail that led to the springs from the railway, and awaited construction of the magnificent hotel.

With the concurrence of both the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern railways, the government had also surveyed the townsite of Fitzhugh (Jasper after 1913) to serve as a divisional point where trains could be serviced and assembled and where the train crews could reside. It was not an attractive townsite, being boulder strewn and covered by stunted trees, but it did suit the needs of the railways that paralleled the Athabasca River.

It was clear, however, that incoming tourists, who were usually people of some affluence, would require more congenial surroundings, away from the desolate divisional point site and the unsophistication that was said to characterize railroaders and their families. Temporary visitors would, it was hoped, be able to put up at the Chateau Miette near the springs. For those who would undoubtedly desire seasonal residence in the park, the government decided to lay our suitable cottage lots along the shorelines of attractive nearby lakes. In October of

1913 surveyor Hugh Matheson, who had just finished his work on the Jasper townsite, set out for Patricia and Pyramid lakes to create cottage subdivisions. Superintendent S. Maynard Rogers was sure that the good fishing and boating at the lakes, as well as their proximity to the railway station at Jasper, would ensure the popularity of these subdivisions.[3] Because these cottage lots would be leased rather than sold, the government would be able to insist on a high standard of construction and thereby maintain the attractiveness of the area.

All did not go as planned. The start of the Great War in August of 1914 seems to have stalled the Grand Trunk Pacific's plans for construction of the Chateau Miette. Then the wartime collapse of both railways, which was followed by their consolidation as Canadian National Railways, most assuredly dealt the death-blow. For years the Miette hot springs would remain a shallow pool, flanked by rough logs, and used mainly by the coal miners from Pocahontas. As for the cottage subdivisions, the early interest shown in them did not result in any leaseholds being granted. Superintendent Rogers reported that in 1914 most of the 150 available lots at the two lakes had already been applied for,[4] but as late as 1922 only one had actually been leased.[5] While it is impossible to know the cause of this poor demand, it is

likely that the uncertainties of wartime and the harsh economic conditions that followed were of some consequence.

Despite these setbacks, some development of tourist trade in Jasper did occur prior to the 1920s. The number of visitors is not known, but the superintendent's annual reports for the war years make it plain that quite a few tourists came in by train to enjoy the good fishing at Pyramid, Jack, and other lakes to which trails had been cut. Others, utterly convinced of the restorative properties of hot mineral water, made the difficult trek along Fiddle Creek to bath in the pool. In 1917 alone, more than forty invalids were camped at the site, "putting up with the hardships for the sake of the benefit to be derived."[6] In the coming years, reports of miraculous cures for conditions such as rheumatism would become commonplace.

In his report for 1917, the acting superintendent captured the general nature of the park's wartime experience with tourists. Those who came were drawn mainly from the large cities of Canadian and the United States, and "were fairly numerous and well satisfied with their visit." But, he was quick to add, "the tourist of means demands his well appointed hotel and it is to be hoped that ere long the erection of one which will meet the needs of this class of visitor may be possible."[7] In short, the administration sensed that without proper

accommodations, many affluent tourists would not return to Jasper Park. And, without the monies that such people left behind, justification for expansion of services in the park would be that much more difficult.

It was 1915 before the administration first had any reason to feel optimistic about improved tourist accommodations in the park. R.C.W. Lett, publicity director for the Grand Trunk Pacific, pressed his company to provide accommodations at Jasper in order to capture some of the trade of visitors returning east from the World's Fair at San Francisco.[8] An investigator named Tilley was sent out to Jasper and, with the assistance of local outfitter Fred Brewster, determined that the eastern shore of Horseshoe Lake would be a suitable site for some temporary accommodations. Time was of the essence in the construction of these facilities, and the government, desperate to make the park as success, indicated it would be lenient in enforcing its regulations about suitable accommodations. To increase its appeal, the lake was quickly renamed Lac Beauvert, and Tilley arranged for Robert Kenneth of the Edmonton Tent and Mattress Company to provide eight canvas tents as shelters and to manage the site. Fred Brewster agreed to prepare a camp up the GTP tracks to which incoming tourists could be taken by train for a pack trip to Mount Robson.[9] For such a hastily conceived operation, Tent City proved a

considerable success. In 1916 alone it registered 260 guests.[10] This was unquestionably the reason why, contrary to other accounts, Tent City remained in operation during successive summers.[11]

It is from the opening of this primitive resort on the shore of Horseshoe Lake that the true development of Jasper Park as a tourist destination can be dated. In 1919 a log kitchen and dining room were built at the Tent City site that would, within just two more years, expand to include eight log cabins. Then, in 1923, the railway opened the first unit of the main building, widely advertised as the largest log building in the world. These seemingly unpretentious buildings, complete with rough-hewn wood carvings by Pocohontas guide Ralph James, rapidly became the best known feature of the park. Gone forever was the earlier vision of an imposing hotel -- like the Canadian Pacific's baronial Banff Springs -- dominating a Fiddle Creek resort townsite in Jasper Park. In its place stood the rustic Jasper Park Lodge, symbol of a more informal way of life, symbol of the striking contrast between austere Banff to the south and this new, more intimate northern resort. The only similarity in what was being sold was the price.

The Expansion of Tourist Facilities

Whether or not anyone realized it at the time,

construction of the Jasper Park Lodge had provided the park with a recreational ambiance that would prevail for over a decade. The rustic Lodge, offering individual cottages of four to twenty-three rooms, exuded a distinctive feeling of informal sophistication. These were not weekend cabins for the masses, nor were they ever intended to be. Rather, they formed a resort of restrained elegance, to which the weary wealthy could retreat for a weekend of trail riding, sport fishing, or lounging in front of the massive stone fireplace in the main building. It was a most suitable resort for the postwar era, a resort that spoke of fiscal conservatism and social sobriety.

The Lodge expanded rapidly during the early 1920s, and with each modification some of its reserve lifted. In 1922 the Hotel Department of the CNR, which was operating the Lodge, laid out a nine-hole golf course for the pleasure of its patrons. Three years later, the course was redesigned and expanded to eighteen holes under the direction of renowned golf professional Stanley Thompson. Trainloads of soil were imported for the greens, and the construction work occupied fifty teams of horses and two hundred local men for the better part of 1924-5.[12] The first annual Totem Pole Tournament was held at the club in 1926, and in the next year it served as the site of Dominion Championship. Superintendent Rogers, an avid golfer who just happened to be given free green privileges

by the Lodge, did all he could to facilitate these developments.

Further improvements to the Lodge came in rapid succession. In 1926 the railway added a heated swimming pool to its attractions. In 1927 a power house and laundry building were constructed to provide on-site amenities for the guests. In 1929 a golfhouse and a greenhouse were put up, and in 1930 an infirmary was opened for the benefit of Lodge patrons. At the same time, more cottages were added, bringing the capacity of the Lodge to 400 guests. Unquestionably, the Lodge was Jasper's finest facility.

Faced with this telling example of what came of attending to the needs of carriage trade, the park administration decided to turn its attention (and its more meager budget) to the achievement of the same goal. Sensibly, the government spent much of its time on the development of a publicity programme designed to advertise the attractions of the park to the touring public. To some degree, this required a certain sleight of hand, since the 'attractions' of the park were largely scenic in nature. Organized diversions were few and far between, aside from the trail-riding and hunting parties conducted by local guides. Nonetheless, it would appear that scenic attractions were more than enough to lure many affluent city dwellers into the northern Rockies in the 1920s.

As early as 1917 the government had compiled its first "Description of and Guide to Jasper Park." Three thousand copies had been printed, and by 1920 Park Commissioner J.B. Harkin was reporting that "this guide has been of great value and is in constant demand…."[13] Copies were sold through retail distributors at fifty cents each, and aboard the CNR trains at sixty cents. Whenever a suitable opportunity presented itself, the government distributed this slim guide lavishly, in the hope that word of the park's attractions would spread far and wide. In June of 1920, for example, the Parks Branch provided 200 free copies of the guide to members of the Imperial Press Union, who were touring Canada by rail. An internal departmental memorandum summed up the government's hopes. Such a distribution, it said, "will do an incalculable amount of good. All of these gentlemen come from overseas and there is no doubt that the information in this book will be used as the basis of newspaper articles through the Empire.[14]

By 1922 the government was considering a new, expanded version of the guidebook for Jasper.[15] It was to be prepared by J.B. Harkin's secretary, Mabel B. Williams, who would go on to provide many of the publicity booklets for Canadian national parks over the next two or three decades. Photographs would be provided by Calgary photographer William J. Oliver, who had taken a series of excellent views on an extended trail-ride with Supervising

Park Warden Langford in 1922. As soon as news of these plans leaked out of the Parks Branch, the government found that the CNR was most interested in assisting. In May of 1923 Harkin received a polite letter from H.R. Charlton of the railway, who enclosed "a copy of a publication issued by the Great Northern Railway on Glacier National Park, which I think will interest you especially in view of the fact that the scenery is almost a duplication of [that of] Jasper Park…."[16] Similarly, the well-known Pocahontas guide, woodcarver and poet laureate, Ralph James, sent along a nine-stanza poem about Pyramid Mountain for inclusion in the guidebook, although only on condition that he receive full credit, re-publication rights, and royalties.[17] Williams replied that unfortunately the work was too far advanced to permit use of his poem.

For reasons unknown it would take years for the new guidebook to be finished. Meanwhile, the government decided upon a specific marketing strategy for the booklet. "I would point out," one official wrote, "that the class we are chiefly seeking to attract through it [the guidebook] is the wealthy traveler who remains two or three months in the park and spends anywhere from $1,000 to $5,000."[18] Publication of 10,000 copies was planned, with free distribution to all American libraries and to prominent English and Continental clubs. Of course individual requests for the booklet provided an additional

outlet for the information. Presumably the railway, which had shown an early interest in the guide, took its share of copies for distribution as well. Finally, the guidebook was sent to major metropolitan newspapers for review. Most reviewers were complementary. The Brantford Expositor, for example, wrote that "the brochure is a credit to the department of the interior [sic] and to those responsible for its appearance."[19] Through the pages of such journals, news of the attractions of Jasper received ever wider dissemination.

The Parks Branch did have another guidebook to the park during the late 1920s, one designed to be given away to tourists of lesser means. It was entitled "Jasper Trails," and provided "concise information regarding what can be done by visitors to Jasper Park."[20] In 1929 Commissioner Harkin sought permission to publish 25,000 copies, which gives an indication of the mass audience at whom it was directed. It is not clear when the first edition of this guide was published, but for years after the park's establishment it was considered one of the superintendent's responsibilities to reply directly to all enquiries for park information.[21]

It is exceedingly difficult to arrive at a generalized profile of Jasper Park visitors in the 1920s, but a few basic assumptions point out that it was far from being a resort for everyone. The Jasper Park Lodge catered only to the upper crust; that much seems beyond

dispute. But the park's other visitors, while certainly not as wealthy as the Lodge patrons, could not have been too poorly off either. After all, just getting to the park required a return train ticket well into the 1930s due to the condition of the road (if that is the word for it) from Edmonton. Then there was the question of accommodations and meals while in the park. And of course it also cost money to visit any of the better attractions of the park. Few were the pleasures of the outdoors that could be had within walking distance of a moderately-priced Jasper hotel such as the Athabasca. And, finally, it made little sense to go to all this trouble for a couple of days in the park. At least a week or more was probably considered de rigeur, at a time when few people had regular vacations from work. In short, Jasper remained the playground of the affluent and of the reasonably affluent throughout the 1920s.

Recreation, that nebulous term that carries connotations of refreshment of body and spirit, comprised only a few diversions in the 1920s. Outside of the Lodge golf course and swimming pool, the attractions of the park were chiefly scenic and sporting. Trail riding rapidly emerged as one of the most popular activities for visitors. For years, of course, trail riding had been an indirect consequence of the hunting trips and mountain climbing expeditions organized by local guides and

outfitters, but rarely had these businessmen considered it a recreational activity in itself. To those whose interests did not lie in the direction of hunting and climbing, however, the ride itself held considerable attraction.

Fred Brewster seems to have been the first local guide to realize the tourist potential of the trail ride. The regular train-horse excursion to Mount Robson for Jasper Park Lodge guests may have been the start of riding simply for pleasure, but Brewster quickly turned the activity into a major recreational pastime for park visitors. By 1925 riding had become so popular at Jasper that a local 'squadron' of the trail Riders of the Canadian Rockies was formed, with Brewster as its 'commander.' The Trail Riders had originated with the creative minds of the Canadian Pacific Railway publicity department in 1924, as a tourist diversion at Banff. Membership at Jasper, as at Banff, was conditional upon a rider having made packtrain trips through the Rockies of not less than eighty kilometers. To encourage continuing participation, the club awarded buttons at specific milestones reached by each rider, and those few who had ridden between 4,000 and 8,000 kilometres became eligible for the coveted gold and enamel button.[22]

In an obvious effort to assist the promotion of trail riding, the government prepared a list of park trails to be incorporated into the Jasper guidebook in 1925.[23]

Commissioner Harkin instructed Superintendent Rogers to compile a list of all trails in the park, and to provide the length, location, starting point, and terminus of each. Harkin stressed that only 'tourist trails' were to be included in the list; that is, trails that were maintained regularly by the warden service. As was only natural, the seasonal exposure of local guides to varying park trails resulted in the regular use of a few over all others. In Fred Brewster's case, he gradually decided on two trails for most tourist parties.[24] One went through the Maligne Lake area to Brazeau Lake, on to Camp Parker, and then down to the Columbia Icefield, while the other covered the northern Snake River country, and followed the Smoky River to Mount Robson and then Valley of a Thousand Falls.

Sport fishing was another early recreational pastime in Jasper. From the very beginning of park administration, Superintendent Rogers had instructed his wardens to provide him with reports on the fishing potential of various lakes in the area. The consensus was Jack, Caledonia, and Pyramid lakes provided excellent rainbow trout fishing, with an occasional Dolly Varden providing superior angling in some of the local streams. Trails were cut to each lake as soon as possible to provide visitor access, and by 1916 the park boasted 230 kilometres of trails to such points.[25] To enhance

fishing conditions even more, the local administration brought in fry from Banff fish hatchery. In 1917 several lakes were stocked with 34,000 fry and fingerlings, and in 1919 an additional 84,000 fry (land-locked salmon, Atlantic salmon, and cut-throat trout) were deposited in Pyramid, Patricia, Beauvert, Annette, and Edith lakes.[26] Only those lakes closest to the townsite were stocked, a reflection, perhaps, of the general immobility of the 1920s tourist at Jasper. Despite the inclusion of some bizarre species, this stocking effort seems to have paid off handsomely. After 1932 Jasper possessed its own fish hatchery, located in the basement of the Administration Building and supplied with eggs and fry from the more established Banff hatchery.[27]

It was in the early 1920s, too, that the summer cottage movement that had taken root in Canada around the turn of the century, finally reached Jasper Park in earnest. Construction of the exclusive Jasper Park Lodge certainly gave the park legitimacy as a resort, but it was Agnes Laut's plan to create an artists' colony on the shores of Lake Edith that sparked greater interest in summer cottages. Laut was a well-known writer of the day, a popular historian and Canadian expatriate from New York state, who had visited Jasper Park and thought it the perfect place for those of artistic temperament. Unquestionably the unusual concept provided Jasper with a more enticing cachet than it could ever hope to achieve

through the tedium of standard government promotion.

Laut must have been a convincing salesperson, for the scheme was almost immediately approved at the ministerial level in Ottawa. "It was considered," one memorandum stated, "that an artists' colony composed for the most part of authors and writers [sic] such as Miss Laut had in mind would be of great value to the Jasper Park and for this reason the Department was prepared to go to the extent of allowing this area as reserved for this purpose."[28] In December of 1920 it was decided that an area not greater than four hectares might be reserved at the north end of Lake Edith for such a summer cottage development. Four cottages were indeed erected within the colony over the next year, and by 1932 a total of fourteen lots had been leased, although none of them by authors or artists.[29] The creation of this subdivision also seems to have renewed interest in the cottage development planned earlier for Pyramid Lake. In 1922 the first application for a leasehold there was granted, and seven more lots were disposed of by 1928.[30]

There was a certain element of the tourist population that sought a greater degree of outdoor adventure in place of the rather urbane comfort of a lake-front cottage. Most wanted to pack into a good fishing lake in the company of an experienced guide and enjoy their angling along with some scenic solitude. Ever since Mary

Schaffer's 1908 trip to Maligne Lake, that distant waterhole had been revered for its beauty and its isolation, but it remained virtually unknown to all but a few Jasper guides. By the early 1920s, however, Canadian National Railways became interested in upgrading the trails and in constructing bungalow camps for tourists at both Medicine Lake and at Maligne. Curly Phillips, a local guide, went out of his way to provide the railway with some sound (and free) advice in exchange for the chance to secure an exclusive water transportation franchise at the lake. "Maligne Lake is your one great attraction on that whole scheme," he told Walter Pratt, the general manager of CNR Hotels,

> and it is necessary that the water transportation be of the very best. Its [sic] going to be an uphill proposition to get people around over that route on horses as it is about as monotonous a trip so far as the trail is concerned as anything you can imagine as it is nearly all burned or as they call it here 'brule' and from jasper to the lake is all in a low valley with no scenery worth mentioning. And to the average tourist riding a horse is a refined torture.[31]

In this, as in many business ventures, delay could prove costly. Apparently the railway failed to act, and within a couple of years, Fred Brewster had constructed the first chalet at Maligne. There he installed Phillips as manager, with special responsibility for carrying tourists to the head of the lake in a 7.3 metre power boat.[32] Then, in 1928 Curly obtained a lease from the government that permitted him to operate boats on the lake on an

exclusive basis. In 1929 he constructed a substantial boathouse there, which still stands. Brewster also hired the first female guides in Jasper Park, Mona and Agnes Harrigan, who conducted parties through the Maligne district beginning in 1928. With opening of the Maligne country to tourists, the definition of mountain recreation broadened considerably.

Automobiles in the Park

Throughout the 1920s Jasper Park remained a fairly exclusive resort, largely because it was inaccessible except at considerable cost and because it catered only reluctantly to the needs of tourists with limited means at their disposal. This changed quickly in the 1930s, as the automobile found mass acceptance, as a satisfactory road was built into the park from Edmonton, and as the onset of a serious economic depression fostered a greater interest in temporary escape from the harsh realities of the everyday world. For the first time, the government led the way in providing additional services.

The automobile gained rapid acceptance in Alberta during the 1920s. In 1913, when Jasper Park welcomed its first resident superintendent, the entire province could claim only 3,773 cars; by 1916 the figure had more than doubled to 9,707, and by 1919 there were 34,000 cars on the roads.[33] But then Henry Ford began manufacturing his

vehicles on an assembly line that hastened production and reduced costs, making cars even more affordable to the ordinary citizen. By 1926 more than 29,000 Albertans were operating their own autos.[34]

Some of these new motorists resided at Jasper, and occasionally the number of local autos would be increased when tourists shipped their cars in by rail so that they could enjoy a short but stylish motorized outing on the park's few passable roads. Public demand persuaded the administration to improve some park roads enough to allow the passage of cars. The Maligne Canyon road, upgraded in 1920, was one of the first. Slowly the townsite, too, began to adapt to this new presence. By 1922 the Otto brothers, of local guiding and outfitting renown, sold their pack horses to Jack Brewster and opened the first auto garage and dealership in town.[35] (It was a General Motors franchise.) By May of 1928 the administration had marked all the streets with proper signs,[36] and then began oiling the streets to keep the dust down.[37] Even though there was next to nowhere to go, Jasper Park had been motorized.

Naturally, this province-wide infatuation with the auto spawned a broadly-based movement for better roads. In the Alberta capital, the Edmonton Automobile and Good Roads Association led the way in clamouring for improvement of the pathetic road to jasper Park. This was not simply a matter of commerce (although it would be

foolish to deny that financial considerations were involved); recreational touring in automobiles had become a favoured pastime among many Albertans. The Association did succeed in pressuring the governments into doing some work on the road in the 1920s, but it still remained impassable in all but the finest weather and even then was an abominable route. Its wretched condition tended to discourage, rather than foster, westward touring.

Improvement of the roadway proceeded little by little, year after year, until its condition was considered reasonable for automobile traffic. This was in the early 1930s. During the 1932 season, for example, just over five per cent of all park visitors drove in from the east over what people had taken to callings, rather grandiloquently, the Edmonton-Jasper highway.[38] By 1933 it was clear to park officials that considerable revenue could be derived from licencing each car that entered the park, and thus an east gate was erected on the boundary. In its first year of operation, it tagged more than 700 cars with metal buffalo-shaped plates that attached with wire to the radiator and granted camping privileges within the park.[39]

Bob Richardson and his wife became the first east gate keepers. Bob moved out alone in May of 1933 and lived in a tent while men from the warden service built a small log house in which the gatekeeper was to live. It

was simply furnished, with just a camp cot, a small cookstove, and a homemade table and bench. To the front, Bob added a small office. Nearby stood the gate, a locked wooden bar lay across the roadway and effectively prevented access to the park. Motorists had to stop, pay a two dollar fee for camping privileges, and then register and tag their vehicles. On the return trip, they were required to sign out in the register book. In general, the life of the gatekeeper was placid. On most summer days, Bob saw only about five cars come through. But Saturday nights were different. Then, the miners from Hinton rode into Jasper for the weekly dance, and rode out again during the wee hours. Bob rarely got any sleep. "I never got my pants off at weekends," he recalled.[40]

In 1933 Bob's family joined him at the gate. Although they enjoyed it, life at the small gatehouse had its less attractive side. For a refrigerator, Mrs. Richardson used a cooler of heavy timbers placed under the bridge on Baby Creek. All their water came from the same source. Clothes ironing was done with sad-irons heated on the tiny cookstove. Life at the isolated gatehouse occasionally had its frightening side, too. Mrs. Richardson recalled the many hobos who hitch-hiked into the park during the depression and invariably stopped at their door, looking for a handout:

> We never refused anyone but we were always glad when they moved on, especially if our case was accumulating. I remember one queer character who

> told us, in all seriousness, that he cut his toenails on a Friday to cure his toothache and he added 'It works!" We were sure glad when he picked up his pack and left.[41]

This steady influx of motorists meant that the administration had to so something about better park accommodations. At first, of course, there were no serviced campgrounds in Jasper, so most motorists pulled over at Lake Annette. There the facilities consisted of two toilets and a standpipe that provided drinking water.[42] This site was closed in 1935, when proper public campgrounds were opened by the government at Patricia Lake and at Cottonwood Creek. Tents were still needed for accommodation, but for a fee of just one dollar per month, a range of excellent facilities were available, including equipped kitchen shelters, toilets, water and sewer services, and electrical wiring. Far from the main park road, the Patricia Lake campground was poorly patronized for years and came into its own only in the 1950s, after the government had granted a bungalow camp concession at the site.

One important effect of automobiles on the development of Jasper Park was the way in which they extended the touring 'reach' of visitors. That both the administration and town entrepreneurs understood this trend, and responded to it, was evident in the improvement of facilities at the Miette hot springs and the development of the Columbia Icefield as a tourist

destination. The former work was accomplished largely through the employment of local people on relief, while the latter was the initiative of local businessmen.

Unemployment was a serious concern in Jasper during the 1930s, chiefly because the railway had laid off so many local men. Reduced appropriations forced the park administration to reduce its staff as well. For many of the unemployed, the only alternative was to go on relief, which meant working at various sorts of manual labour in exchange for about thirty-five cents an hour and assured room and board in one of several 'relief camps' throughout the park. Most of the work done by the men was mere maintenance of roads, bridges, and the like, but as the depression lingered and more men became unemployed, the government cast about for bigger, more labour-intensive projects. Improvement of the Miette hot springs, which had long been a goal of the administration, became a relief project in about 1933.[43]

For years the government had considered the hot springs a colossal eyesore. In 1918, Warden Davies wrote that "the camp has the appearance of an ill kept Gypsy camp," with no sanitary facilities and litter scattered everywhere.[44] For the most part, the springs were used by Pocahontas miners and their families until the colliery closed in 1921, and then patronage of the three shallow pools was limited to miners from Cadomin and the occasional invalid in search of a miraculous cure.

Apparently the government had a caretaker at the site, but it seems that development was not undertaken pending a final announcement of the intentions of the Canadian National Railway. As late as 1929 rumours were current that the CNR still planned to erect a 'chalet' of sorts near the springs.[45] Improvements were made to the Pocahontas-Springs road in 1929-30 in anticipation of hotel construction,[46] but presumably the railway's plans were another victim of the depression.

By 1933 officials at Ottawa were seriously concerned with deteriorating conditions at Miette. "I shudder to think of what would happen," the Dominion Parks comptroller wrote to superintendent Rogers, "if any person should take some pictures or send out to the newspapers reports of the condition of the Hot Springs….If these places cannot be maintained in a thoroughly clean, orderly, and sanitary condition, then we must immediately close them."[47] Obviously matters had reached the point of acute embarrassment, and it was no doubt with a sense of relief that the government injected improvement monies into the 1936 budget to create work for the unemployed of Jasper at the springs. New construction added a forty by sixteen metre pool, a caretaker's building and laundry, a plunge pool, a shower room, and lounges to the site at the cost of some $60.000.[48] Within a year and a half of initiating this project, the springs opened to the

public, and rapidly became one of the park's premier attractions.[49]

The Columbia Icefield swiftly became the other major touring attraction in Jasper. This awesome natural feature had been included in the park by the 1927 boundary change and was already a popular stop on the regular packtrain routes by the time of the depression. By 1935 the park superintendent, A.C. Wright, often had to reply to motorists' enquiries about the possibility of driving to the icefields. The best he could suggest at that time was that if they drove as far as possible south from Jasper townsite and then packed in, they would be able to reach the icefield in about two days.[50] Obviously the road south did not go far beyond Athabasca Falls.

It is difficult to say if development occurred at the base of the glacier before Mr. and Mrs. Slark built their temporary tearoom around 1935. At first they served guests in a tent, but with in a year a permanent teahouse had been erected.[51] Packhorses, as well as a horsedrawn democrat, were available for those who wished to tour the Icefield. This means of getting around lasted until 1948, when the Brewsters of Banff introduced a home-made oversnow vehicle that they had previously used at their Sunshine ski resort.[52] It was affectionately called "Sunshine Susie." Later, the Otto brothers brought in a large Model A Ford truck which they equipped with tracks at the rear and skis at the front. Tourists sat on a

flatbed of seats that replaced the box of the truck. Still later, the Brewsters operated an early Bombardier enclosed snowmobile, and expanded their fleet to include five machines by 1951. When the toe of the glacier had retreated to the point where vehicles could no longer ascend it, the federal government constructed a road along the moraine to the south. This was in the mid-1950s.

Such a flurry of activity at the icefields was more than justified by the imminent completion of a highway between Jasper and Banff, another federal relief project that ended in 1939. During the 1937 season alone, nearly 2,700 cars had entered Jasper through the east gate,[53] and it was clear that when the new north-south highway opened in 1940 many new tourists could be expected. There can be little doubt that many Edmontonians and others were already driving south to see the renowned icefields, especially since two agencies within Jasper were competing to provide them with information about local attractions. The first had been opened in 1935, and was an initiative of the Chamber of Commerce and the Trailmen's Association. The Otto brothers had provided rent-free space in their garage and T.C. Yong, a retired railroader and local history buff, volunteered his services as host.[54] Creation of this office seems to have grown out of local disenchantment with the manner in which the federal government advertised the park. Jasper businessmen, who depended on tourists for much of their revenue, felt that

in its advertising the government emphasized the attractions of the Jasper Park Lodge to their detriment.[55] At first the government did nothing, but upon sufficient reflection, it decided in 1939 to open its own tourism information office in the front of the Administration Building.

The Growth of Winter Recreation

It was the private sector, rather than the government, that turned Jasper Park into an all-season resort. While the administration poured all its efforts and monies into creating employment and maintaining park facilities during the depression years, local businessmen struggled to stabilize their income by bringing in new visitors. They found at least part of the solution to their problem in the provision of recreational facilities that turned Jasper into a resort that could be enjoyed year round.

Skiing became the big attraction. The sport had secured a foothold in Jasper during the early 1920s when a handful of young men imported skis for a variety of reasons. New Zealand-born park warden Peter Withers tried them on his winter patrols in the Maligne Canyon district.[56] Vern and Doug Jeffery, the sons of a local merchant, had returned from school at Revelstoke, British Columbia, with pairs of skis in their possession. Naturally enough, the trio skied together. Then, in 1924

or '25, they were joined by Joe Weis, a Swiss immigrant who was completely familiar with skiing and all that it entailed. Their exploits were confined mainly to the Jasper area until 1930, when they, in the company of Frank Burstrom, gained international attention by skiing from Jasper to Banff in temperatures that sometimes hit fifty degrees below zero Fahrenheit.[57]

Local interest in both cross-country skiing and ski touring grew quickly. Soon a cross-country ski club was formed, and it is said that by 1924 it already had forty members.[58] By 1926 enough people were involved to warrant the clearing of runs near Patricia Lake and at Pyramid Lake, and the organization of annual cross-country races. One year later there was considerable skiing done in the Tonquin Valley. Interest in downhill skiing matured less rapidly. It was not until 1932 that Joe Weiss, who had early recognized the potential for downhill skiing, convinced others to assist with the construction of two floored tents on Whistler Mountain that would permit late winter and early spring skiing above the timber line. With some funding from the park administration, and with the assistance of a professional skier, a good downhill run was laid out on the Lone Pine site. In 1937 a trail was cut to top of the Whistlers, and plans were laid to construct a cabin later.

It was in the late 1930s that local businessmen

became seriously involved in the promotion of skiing. During the winter of 1937-8 Fred Brewster became the leading force behind the Jasper Park Ski Club, formed two years earlier to promote downhill skiing. Under his direction, an 11.2 kilometre cross-country race became the highlight of the first annual Jasper Ski Carnival. Soon an annual downhill competition was being held between skiers from Banff and Jasper on Mount Edith Cavell. Brewster also helped to popularize ski touring on the Columbia Icefield. With the help of such attractions, work of Jasper's ski potential slowly seeped out into the wider world. In the late winter of 1938, for example, the park played host to all manner of skiers.[59] There was a delegation from the Ontario Ski Zone Committee which was trying to gauge what the park had to offer eastern skiers; there was a touring party from the Edmonton Alpine Club, which spent some time skiing through the Tonquin Valley; there were several local groups touring in Shovel Pass and on Signal Mountain; and there was a couple representing the Shanghai Ski and Winter Sports Club who had come to Jasper with specific intention of testing the skiing facilities.

By early 1939 the local newspaper was asking the question, is Jasper "to become a winter as well as a summer playground?"[60] The answer was to come from a committee of representatives from the business community,

concerned citizens, the park administration, and the railway which had invited a ski expert to come in an appraise Jasper's skiing potential. The professional was greatly enthused about the park's potential, and recommended expansion of existing facilities as the best means of attracting tourists. But he went farther, and advised the committee to prepare also for those visitors who enjoyed toboganning, bobsledding, skating, and other winter sports. The consensus seems to have been that he was quite right in his appraisal that "Jasper Park has a great future as a winter resort."[61]

These plans, made on the eve of the Second World War, were all but forgotten while the international conflict lasted. It was 1944 before the local ski club revived and development of Whistler Mountain recommenced. Additional runs were cleared, a clubhouse was built, and an access road from the townsite was put in. For about the next six years this remained the pre-eminent ski hill in the park, but around 1952 local businessman George Ross began to open up the Marmot Basin. He brought in an 18-passenger snowmobile to carry the skiers in, and hauled 250 people during his first winter.[62] By the next winter, he and some new partners had purchased additional snowmobiles and were taking 250 skiers in every weekend. Until a proper ski chalet could be financed, an old army Quonset hut served as a refuge. Then a few of the wardens constructed a lumber hut using timber from the park's Whirlpool Valley

sawmill. This shelter, called the Marten Hut, was used until a T-bar and chalet were built in the 1960s.

The growing list of attractions at Jasper had a decided effect on tourist traffic. Figures for the 1941 season show that, despite the war, visitors were arriving in record numbers. The east gate registered 16,019 tourists, the gate on the Jasper-Banff Highway an astonishing 30,248, and the railway 5,339 more.[63] Because the automobile had taken the place of the railway in no uncertain terms, campground use was up dramatically. The townspeople, for the first time ever, had begun to think that the world had finally discovered their paradise in the mountains. And, given these gate statistics, it is difficult not to believe that a fair number of Jasper visitors would have agreed, however reluctantly, with one of the loftiest assessments of the park ever made by a CNR publicist, a man who obviously took his job to heart:

> Here desire is satisfied -- if not uniquely, at least grandly. Rock-ribbed formations of the earth have thrust up and built for themselves mighty structures -- castles in the sky, as if to dwarf the proudest efforts of man and yet to console him by sheer beauty of form -- cooling their crests in perpetual snow as if enclosed by loving arms, lakes -- pure and brilliant in colour as precious gems -- lie unguarded by the heights. And as if to have nothing lacking, glaciers and canyons present their lure. Forested valleys, tree-clad slopes and alpine meadows with animal and bird life.
>
> Nature writes her music and plies her brush with such a lavish hand here that he who dares to imitate is foredoomed to failure. The pen, the brush, the lute nor the camera can catch the magic of Jasper. That magic is only for the hearts and the souls of men and women who have been to Jasper and found it.

> But found, it will remain like the fire of the sun in the diamond, imprisoned, but a joy and beauty forever.[64]

Endnote Abbreviations

CSP	Canada. Sessional Papers
GAIA	Glenbow-Alberta Institute and Archives
GSC	Geological Survey of Canada
Interior Report	Canada. Sessional Papers, Department of the Interior, Annual Report
JNP	Jasper National Park (Historical Files)
JYHS	Jasper-Yellowhead Historical Society
PABC	Provincial Archives of British Columbia
PAC	Public Archives of Canada
PMAA	Provincial Archives of Alberta

Endnotes

Part 1 Yellowhead Interpretive Management Unit

Transportation in the Yellowhead Corridor

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[1] Henry J. Moberly, “The First Trail to Jasper House,: The Beaver, March 1924, p. 215.

[2] Disagreement over the date of Jasper House’s establishment is longstanding. The consensus, however, is that 1813 is probably correct. Certainly the post on Brule Lake was there when Gabriel Franchere passed by in 1814.

[3] Ross Cox, The Columbia River, edited by Edgar J. Stewart and Jane R. Stewart (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), p. 289.

[4] E.E. Rich, The Hudson’s Bay Company (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1960), Volume 2, p. 364.

[5] Gabriel Franchere, A Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America, edited by M.M. Quaife (New York: Citadel Press, 1968), p. 229.

[7] Cox, op. cit., p. 289.

[8] Frederick Merk (editor), Fur Trade and Empire Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1968), p. 30.

[9] Ibid., p. 32.

[10] JYHS, George T. Allan File, “Journal of a Voyage From Norway House to Fort Vancouver, Columbia,” 1831.

[11] David Douglas, Journal Kept by David Douglas During His Travels in North America, 1823-1827 (New York: Antiquarian Press, 1959), p. 262.

[12] David Smyth, “Tete Jaune,” Alberta History, Winter

1984, p. 4.

[13] Merk, op. cit., p. 147.

[14] Paul Kane, Wanderings of an Artist (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishing, 1968 edition), p. 103.

[15] Father Robert McGuinness, "Missionary Journey of Father De Smet," Alberta Historical Review, 15: 2 (Spring 1967), p. 18.

[16] Moberly, op. cit., p. 215.

[17] Henry J. Moberly, When Fur Was King (Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1929), p. 52.

[18] W. Moberly, The Rocks and Rivers of British Columbia (London: H. Blacklock, 1885), p. 88.

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[22] Pierre Burton, The National Dream: The Great Railway, 1871-1881 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970), p. 152.

[23] This account closely follows F.A. Talbot, The Making of a Great Canadian Railway (Toronto: Musson, 1912, pp. 161-202.

[24] Ibid.

[25] James G. MacGregor, Pack Saddles to Tete Jaune Cache (Toronto: McClelland and Steward, 1962), pp. 77-8.

[26] Talbot, op. cit., p. 169.

[27] PAC, RG 30, Vol. 7507, File 588-1, and RG 43, Vol. 624, File 19926.

[28] Howard O'Hagan, "Roundhouse Below the Mountain," CN

Magazine, 34: 12 (January 1949), p. 22.

[29] JNP, “Jasper Townsite,” Transcript of an interview with A.C. Webb, c. 1955-6.

[30] PMAA, 70.190, National Parks Branch, Engineering and Construction Service, Box 6, File J60-17, R.S. Stronach to J.B. Harkin, 11 July 1918.

[31] Ibid.

[32] CSP, Interior Report for 1915, “Report of the Superintendent of Jasper Park,” 1 April 1914, p. 62.

[33] PAC, RG 84, Vol. 12, File J62-4, “Mileages of Roads and Standard Trails,” c. December 1924.

[34] Interior Report for 1918, “Report of the Acting Superintendent of Jasper Park,” p. 53.

[35] PMAA, 77.22, Charles Grant Papers, Box 16, “Synopsis of Yellowhead Highway History”

[36] Ibid.

[37] James G. MacGregor, Overland by the Yellowhead (Saskatoon: Western Producer Books, 1974), pp. 234-5.

[38] Ibid., Box 15, John Blue to Patrick Collins, 13 July 1927.

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[40] JYHS, Highway File.

[41] JYHS, jasper National Park File, Mrs. E. Richardson, “The East Gate – Jasper National Park, Summers 1932 to 1936.

[42] PAC, RG 40, Vol. 14, File J193, S.M. Rogers to J.B. Harkin, 9 October 1920.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid., Rogers to Harkin, 22 September 1921.

[45] Ibid., Baker to Rogers, 8 March 1928.

[46] Ibid., Knight to R.H. Ayre, 13 December 1928.

[47] Ibid., Koch to R.H. Knight, 28 March 1930.

[48] Edmonton Journal, 2 June 1932.

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[51] PAC, RG 84, Vol. 14, File J193, Rogers to Canadian Airways Ltd., 28 April 1934.

[52] Ibid., A.C. Wright to H.C. Ingram, 20 September 1934.

[53] PAC, RG 84, Vol. 14, File J193-2, clipping from the Edmonton Journal, 25 November 1940.

[54] Ibid., J. Smart to Matthew Skibinsky, 22 February 1947.

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Settlement in the Yellowhead Corridor

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[7] Henry J. Moberly, When Fur Was King (London and Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1929), p. 107.

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[9] David Smyth, "Tete Jaune," Alberta History, Winter 1984, pp. 1-7.

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[11] Simpson, cited in Theodore J. Karamanski, "The Iroquois and the Fur Trade of the Far West," The Beaver, Outfit 312: 4 (Spring 1982), p. 10.

[12] Nicks, op. cit., p. 91.

[13] Ibid., p. 92.

[14] Ross, quoted in Karamanski, op. cit., p. 10.

[15] Nicks, op. cit., p. 94.

[16] Father Robert McGuinniss, "Missionary Journey of Father De Smet," Alberta Historical Review, 15: 2 (Spring 1967), p. 19.

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[18] Ibid., p. 370.

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[20] Gainer, op. cit., p. 21.

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[22] JYHS, Moberlys File, "Report on Ewan Moberly Buildings."

[23] Gainer, op. cit., p. 81.

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