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Enmity and alliance: Park Service-concessioner relations in Glacier National Park 1892-1961

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ENMITY AND ALLIANCE:

PARK SERVICE-CONCESSIONER RELATIONS
IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, 1892-1961

By

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CONCESSIONS

Concession facilities and the need for them have always been an undeniable element in each of our nation's twenty-nine national parks. Even the earliest visitors to these areas found that eager businessmen had often preceded them, established themselves in strategic locations and awaited the opportunity to offer their goods and services. Realizing that the visiting public would require overnight stopping places, these men engaged themselves in the construction of hotels, cabins, chalets and tent camps. They drew their privilege from the Organic Act which created Yellowstone, our first national park, on March 1, 1872. This Act authorized the Secretary of the Interior to

Grant leases for building purposes for a term not exceeding ten years of small parcels of land at such places as shall require the erection of buildings for the accommodation of visitors....

Thus, the precedent of public service in a national park through private enterprise received its mandate well before throngs of tourists began inspecting the interior of our first national park.

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The actual large-scale hotel business in Yellowstone, as with any new and expensive endeavor, was slow to materialize but quick to mature. The establishment of the Park and the subsequent appeal it had for the American public made commercially-minded individuals begin to recognize its economic merits. Here, they speculated, was a rare opportunity to exploit the Government for its grant of plots of land under the guise of improving the Park while catering to the needs of the public. In this way private businessmen found themselves serving the needs of the Park visitor by utilizing the concession clause of Yellowstone's Organic Act. It fell to these entrepreneurs to furnish transportation, erect buildings for public housing and to provide other public services.

Similarly, it became the duty of Park officials to formulate a viable concessioner policy. Congress created no other national parks between 1872 and 1890. The responsibility for fashioning a scheme for concession management which could be employed in the succeeding national parks rested upon Yellowstone's administrators. Therefore, for eighteen years, the Park existed as a model for businessmen as well as conservationists.

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Park officials took the most feasible course open to them: the recruitment of private capital on terms that would allow a reasonable profit for the investors. To insure greater stability of investment and operation, Congress, in 1907, amended the previous authority to permit the issuance of concession leases for periods not to exceed twenty years. This measure helped attract some investors who were, at first, reluctant to construct any buildings more expensive than the crude cabins which characterized the Park's earliest accommodations. The original ten year lease period was, for most, far too short a time to attract a permanent hotel industry. Stephen Mather, while Assistant Secretary of Interior, further enticed investors by granting enlarged leases of 4,400 acres in Yellowstone in tracts of approximately one square mile at each of the Park's scenic points of interest.4

Ultimately, the businessmen came. They came in such numbers as to bewilder both tourist and Park administrator. Companies and individuals availed themselves of the government leases and land and operated under a system of pure competition. It had been the thought of Interior Department planners that if responsible parties could be given exclusive control of these scenic areas they would, at least from motives of self-interest, operate in an ethical manner.

4Chittenden, p. 113.
But self-interest proved the undoing of many of these concessioners. Yellowstone was long unfortunate in the men who sought to do business there. On more than one occasion conditions in the Park compelled the Government to undertake investigations into the methods by which they sought to ruin each other.\(^5\) Hotel companies and representatives of various transportation concerns competed against each other for the trade of the visiting tourist who often did not have the time to compare prices and secure the lowest rates. Some entrepreneurs who participated in the business of travelling "canvas hotels" attracted tourists merely because they possessed newer tents than their rivals. Too often, however, their service was not always of the same quality as their equipment. In the case of the independent stage lines the operator who owned the most modern coaches or besieged the incoming tourist with the most appealing verbal advertisements usually captured the trade. Unfortunately, this same operator would often, in times of reduced visitation or inclement weather, render unreliable service. Subsequently, early visitors to Yellowstone were hampered by the dual evils of apathy and overzealousness by the competing concessioners. Plainly, more strict guidelines were needed.

\(^5\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 118.}\)
By the time Stephen Mather arrived in Washington in 1917 to begin his duties as Director of the newly-formed National Park Service, the administration of Yellowstone had proved itself to be unsatisfactory. And as the administration of the Park suffered from ineptitude, so, too, did the concession businesses suffer from want of direction and supervision.

Director Mather devoted considerable attention to the correction of Yellowstone's concession problem. Cooperation between hotels and transportation companies was a rarity. To support so many concessions, rates had to be higher or service poorer than necessary. The multiplicity of businesses called for more land, buildings, managers and labor. It involved all the wastes of competition in a business that lent itself to a natural monopoly. In spite of opposition from some hotel representatives and their financial backers, Mather's consolidation program proceeded apace. The Yellowstone concession system had attained monopoly status by 1924 with the exception of the general stores and other minor concerns.

Other national parks soon attempted some form of regulated monopoly following the course eventually taken in

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Yellowstone. As Congress added new areas to the system, administrators became more discriminating in their selection of concessioners. Each park tried to secure, from among the private bidders, a single agency for the operation of all public service conveniences. Gone were the days when businessmen converged freehand on Yellowstone and other early parks in the pursuit of quick profit. Gone also was the attached novelty of horse-drawn passenger surreys and tent camps.

What remains are the inherent burdens of concession operations, and there are many. Unlike the private operator outside a park who can determine the kind and amount of accommodations he may wish to supply, the Park concessioner is bound, under his contract, to meet the needs of the public at all times of the season inclusive of both slack and peak periods. Nearly all park businesses are subject to seasonal fluctuations in volume of business. Many have only two months' operating time while being burdened with heavy carrying charges throughout the remainder of the year. Furthermore, many parks exist in regions far from sources of supplies such as food, maintenance and competent help.

There are other major difficulties. The length of concession contracts has been a continual source of anxiety to concessioners. The useful life of substantial structures, such as hotels, is normally more than the ten year period indicated
in the original act establishing Yellowstone. Congress allowed for slightly greater stability by extending this period to twenty years in 1907.\(^8\) In truth, this gesture did little to alleviate the risks of an already speculative enterprise. Even a twenty year lease is not of sufficient length for the construction and maintenance of large inns. Not until 1958 did Congress extend the term of leases to thirty years.\(^9\) The most recent grants have usually been with an accompanying assurance of renewal as a matter of fairness, in order to attract the most responsible concessioner and to insure that the proprietors would receive a reasonable return on their investment.

Yet, profit motive is, perhaps, the least attractive incentive for luring private businessmen into a national park. Horace Albright, Director of the National Park Service from 1929 to 1933, once declared that there was not enough profit in any park to entice experienced men into a commitment. Throughout the 1920's Albright, as Assistant Director of the Park Service, extended unfailing effort in generating enthusiasm for the parks among wealthy businessmen. "I don't want you to think that I'm trying to get the parks into the hands of Wall Street," he wrote to Director Mather, "but I think it is a fine thing to get such men

\(^{8}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 615.\)

\(^{9}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 615.\)
spending their wealth in these areas."^{10} Few individuals, however, possess sufficient capital reserves to vie for a park franchise. Each concession constitutes a public utility and, as such, should not realize an excessive profit. Since cabins, chalets and hotels are situated on Federal lands, the Park Service reserves the right to set prices for their goods and services. Normally, price ceilings and rate schedules have been devised so that the concessioner receives his investment plus a slight return. This profit is only large enough to make up for unprofitable years while still giving the agent an encouragement for efficient management by allowing him to earn enough money for improvements and expansion.\textsuperscript{11}

The aspiring entrepreneur, then, may well find the way to success strewn with troubling Federal edicts. When added to the hazards of the business, the partnership consumated between the Park Service and a park concessioner often commences on a tenuous note. The need to strike a harmonious balance is a compelling criteria leading to the


\textsuperscript{11}The Yosemite Park and Curry Company, one of the most profitable concessioners in that Park, reported earnings of 7 per cent in 1948, which was considered a good tourist year. In 1953, another good year for national park concessions, the average rate of return for 171 concessioners was 6.8 per cent with assets at 26 million dollars and gross income from all sources at 32 million dollars. In either year, the profit percentage was not considered excessive when the hazards of the business are borne in mind.
success of that partnership.\textsuperscript{12}

As Glacier began its history as a national park in 1910 its administrators were ready to apply the lessons learned in Yellowstone. An uppermost thought to those in the Interior Department hierarchy was the profound identification of its parks and the public facilities therein. To the pioneer leaders of the Park Service, the existence of one was often indissolubly linked to the other. At the outset, Glacier administrators perceived stability. Stability connoted permanence and permanence was a vital ingredient to any concession operation. Homogeniety, it was hoped, would symbolize the relationship between Park officials and Park operators.

Like other national parks, Glacier used the lure of an appealing franchise in an endeavor to secure its principle concessioner, the Great Northern Railway. Happily, no other major agents needed to be actively recruited. In the McDonald Valley, settled prior to the creation of the Park, a number of proprietors already abounded before administrators arrived to regulate them. Though other parks have contrived various schemes for providing overnight accommodations, the system of controlled monopoly in Glacier, historically, has been effective. Between

1914 and 1961 the Glacier Park Hotel Company, a subsidiary of the Great Northern, enjoyed such a monopoly.

The union of the Park Service and the Great Northern was perfected easily enough. Sweeping approbations marked the first two decades of the partnership while the remaining years were characterized by more watchful custodianship. The ground swells of dissidence and the ground swells of alliance both sprang from the paired but contradictory notions of monopolistic private enterprise in a national park.

The capital difficulty of procuring and keeping a concessioner, like the Great Northern, lay with the obligations it assumed when it began its operations in Glacier. As a rail company the Great Northern was prudently financed and soundly operated. After 1893 when its rails had been flung over the northern Rockies, it posed a serious challenge to all rivals. To these credits was added the additional fact that the railroad also served a national park. The Great Northern was chiefly more concerned with the number of rail passengers that the Park could stimulate than they were for the number of hotel and chalet guests, though certainly the success or failure of the hotel company was, in some measure, a parameter of general railroad prosperity. The Great Northern saw in the Park's hotels a reflection of their own development. Thus, the Park Service in Glacier dealt with a powerful railroad which, in manner and in fact, rose through the struggling years
of infancy to a time when subsidiary companies like the Glacier Park Hotel Company were no longer a firm imperative to railroad solvency.

Tourist travel and the demand for accommodations altered sharply between 1910 and 1961. A number of stopping places appeared, evolved and eventually gave way to those which proved the most durable and efficient while still being in keeping with the public demand. The obligations of the concession contracts evolved in a corresponding manner. The Park Service adhered to the Yellowstone precept of granting a lease for the accommodations, moving gingerly at first, though with more efficacy in later years. Decisions calling for an increasingly wider involvement on the part of the company were not easily accepted by the Great Northern. Because of this, the railroad, which had been welcomed as a timely public servant in 1914, was denounced in uncomplimentary terms on various occasions on later dates. With rising demands for changes in the character of the Park's accommodations, it became impossible to dismiss the problem to simple terms of railroad promotion.

Yet, the Great Northern was not altogether culpably remiss. Their dealings in the Park were actually mildly charitable. They left a truly enduring mark in Glacier. Even in times of laxity the railroad was a profound
influential agent, if only because of its lingering legacy. National Parks, however, are not administered by legacy and visitors not always satisfied with bygone eras dimly recalled.
CHAPTER I

THE MCDONALD VALLEY 1892-1930

THE GENESIS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

Quite apart from the other areas of Glacier Park, the McDonald Valley and the hotel proprietors therein were uniquely variant. While describing what the McDonald Valley was, it is simpler to describe what it was not. The proprietor's propensity for small-scale service, their lack of investment capital, their landowner peculiarities and their fierce independent qualities shaped a far different situation for Park managers than that which they faced on the Park's east side. Here were individuals who acted and reacted not from corporate pride or industrial haughtiness but from a pioneering autonomy. They were neither unassertive nor unmotivated although, indeed, it was their inability to keep pace with an awakening national park and its attendant problems which kept them from the larger hotel concession picture.

The Park concession chronicle began in the Valley years before the area became a national preserve. Because of this, those who settled there and engaged in the hotel business maintained a preferential right to remain. This disturbing
legacy of land ownership was abridged slightly in a countervailing manner by the valuable service of visitor accommodation which the landowners rendered. The simple amenities of the family cottages there endured for many years as the Park's only mentionable overnight facilities on the west side. Nevertheless, their activities shaped a definite attitude among the Park's managers concerning who would be awarded the Park's chief concession franchise. The extent of public service rendered in the Valley was largely microcosmic and grew even more so after the establishment of the Park in 1910 when shortsightedness became incompatible with overall Park concession objectives.

The true genesis of hotel accommodations in the Valley actually predated the year 1910 by sixteen years. With the coming of the Great Northern Railway to the Flathead Valley late in 1891, a vast area adjacent to its tracks opened for settlement and exploration. Among the line camps and rail stops established by the Railroad was the town of Belton, located twenty-three miles northeast of Kalispell, Montana. Though the town itself was little more than a boxcar used as a depot and a station master residence, it was a regularly-scheduled stop for Great Northern trains and, as such, it became a significant, although unpretentious, center for the development of the nearby McDonald Valley where, by 1892,
homesteaders were already filing claims to the land surrounding Lake McDonald.\(^1\) Although visitors and sightseers to this scenic area found ample captivation in the Valley's attractions, there was little in the way of housing and shelter for them.

The development of overnight accommodations for visitors at Belton and the McDonald Valley did not begin in earnest until 1894. Prior to this, rail passengers (there was no road serving the Valley) sought shelter at the foot of Lake McDonald, three miles from Belton, where two homesteaders, Charlie Howe and Milo Apgar, had built several cabins which they rented to guests. Others followed their example so that between 1892 and 1910 local Valley residents provided the mainstay of visitor housing. Most were homesteaders who erected a residence and an additional cabin to rent to summer tourists or friends from the Flathead Valley. These earliest structures were usually built with little capital by settlers who functioned as part-time homesteaders and part-time proprietor. Within a year of the arrival of the railroad to Belton there had been erected approximately fifteen of these cabins capable of housing small numbers of summer vacationers, most of which were at the foot of Lake McDonald

\(^1\)Interview, Mrs. Gonhilde Henderson, West Glacier, Montana, 31 August 1971.
at an area known as Apgar. On the strength of the popularity of these facilities came concerned businessmen willing to engage in actual hotel construction.

During the winter of 1892-1893, Edward E. Dow built the first hotel in the town of Belton. Located near the Great Northern's depot in order to enjoy the advantages of the railroad's passenger traffic, the first hotel was of log design and ran only a few seasons when it was torn down in favor of a larger, two-story frame building containing more guest rooms. For a time it became the focal point for local residents and vacationers who arrived and departed by train. In addition to his guest rooms, Dow also maintained a small store, dining room, post office and stage line from Belton to Apgar. The atmosphere at Dow's hotel was decidedly casual and guests learned that first-class treatment was hardly commonplace. Passengers wishing to stay at Belton carried their own hand luggage from the train along the cindered right-of-way to the hotel. Those arriving at night found only a lighted kerosene lamp in the window to greet them.

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2Leona Harrington, *History of Apgar* (unpublished collection of letters from early residents compiled by the students of the West Glacier Elementary School, West Glacier, Montana, 1950) p. 47, Glacier National Park Historical Collection. For purposes of brevity, all citations pertaining to this collection will hereafter be abbreviated GNPHC.
Said one guest, "There was no one about, but the register was open with a note on it saying which rooms were unoccupied."  

Following Dow were others who became involved in the tourist business, the most colorful of whom was George E. Snyder. Snyder appeared in the Valley in 1895 and homesteaded land at the head of Lake McDonald. Because there was no road along the ten mile long lake, Snyder purchased a steamboat and began a launch service from Apgar to the head of the lake. There he cleared a site and constructed the Valley's second hotel, a two-story frame building of native, rough-cut lumber. 

Simultaneous with the development of Snyder's stopping place was the cabin resort of Frank Geduhn at the head of the lake near the McDonald Creek inlet. Like Snyder, Geduhn came to the Valley in 1895 and worked for Milo Apgar as a cabin builder. The same year he moved up the lake and homesteaded a parcel of land upon which he constructed summer cabins to rent to vacationers. By adding structures when finances permitted, Geduhn had a "going concern" of eight sleeping cabins by 1889. A year later, realizing the potential of his resort, Geduhn added a two-story log hotel.

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3 Harrington, p. 1.
4 Great Falls Tribune, 17 August 1940.
comprising five sleeping rooms to his growing row of cabins.\textsuperscript{6}

With the completion of the Geduhn Hotel in 1900, overnight accommodations in the McDonald Valley reached a temporary plateau. Ed Dow's hotel was at the Belton townsite while Frank Geduhn and George Snyder operated similar lodgings at the head of the lake. There were other smaller cabin camps around the lake which, when considered with the three hotels, represented a satisfactory array of public housing. This situation remained stable until 1906 when John E. Lewis entered the Valley.

Lewis was a man of considerable business finesse. His commercial activities revolved around his several fur trading outlets in Kalispell and Columbia Falls and included the ownership of the first hotel in Columbia Falls. Lewis also speculated in land sales--an avocation which led him into the McDonald Valley. His activities there yielded him large tracts of land around the lake, the most significant purchase being the homestead and hotel belonging to George Snyder in 1906. Upon the sale of his hotel to Lewis, Snyder removed to Belton, purchased land on the north side of the Flathead River and built another "log hostel."\textsuperscript{7}

\textsuperscript{6}Interview, Mr. James Hindle, Lake McDonald, Montana, 21 August 1971.

\textsuperscript{7}Great Falls Tribune, 9 December 1934.
Meanwhile, Lewis busied himself with plans for the original Snyder hotel. In the years following his purchase he added several guest cabins to the main hotel and was well on the way to becoming the Valley's most dominant proprietor by the time Congress elected to pass the legislation creating Glacier National Park.®

Prior to 1910, hotel business functions in the McDonald Valley were placid, routine and far from what might be termed business-oriented. Competition between hotel owners was rarely necessary since each hotel or cabin camp hosted the same families or friends each season. The majority of their clientele came from the Flathead Valley with the balance of the house count comprised of eastern vacationers arriving by train at Belton. Still, free enterprise dictated a way of life in the years preceding the establishment of the Park.

The popularity of the McDonald Valley and the subsequent developments there were certain measures of the area's value to local entrepreneurs and landowners. Throughout the early 1900's preservationists and natural resource conservationists found other merits in the wilderness surrounding the Valley.

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®Harrington, p. 54. For construction materials, Lewis cut spruce and fir logs and ridge poles at Avalanche Basin and at Sperry Glacier Basin. He floated many of these logs down Snyder Creek in the spring when the water was high. Timber harvesting by the Valley proprietors was permissible at this time because the land in the McDonald Valley was part of the Blackfoot (Flathead) Forest Reserve. Privileges and Permits timber permits, file 901, GNPHC.
They lobbied tirelessly for the formation of a national park where regulations would preserve the region intact and restrict uncontrolled development. Through the prolonged agitation of state legislators, Great Northern representatives and other Park advocates, Congress passed the bill creating Glacier National Park on May 11, 1910, thereby establishing a million acre reservation to be used as, "...a pleasure ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the public." 9

Clearly, this act forecast difficulties for future administrators. With the exception of private land claims which predated 1910, all land within the Park became property of the Department of the Interior. As specified by Glacier's Organic Act, any persons having property claims in the Park were entitled to "full use and enjoyment of his land." Any further attempts to secure non-patented land constituted an act of trespass. The act also empowered the Secretary of the Interior to eliminate these private inholdings by acquiring title to them at times when the owners wished to sell and Federal money was available for purchase. 10

10Ibid., p. 157.
With the land withdrawn from further settlement, those businessmen already established in the McDonald Valley assumed the sole responsibility for providing accommodations for the soon-to-be-abundant tourists. But the Organic Act had signaled an end to unbridled operations by Lewis, Snyder, Geduhn and others in the Valley. All commercial enterprises inside the Park now came under the supervision of the superintendent and were subject to approval, rate ceilings, and permit. The freehand mood ended abruptly.

Such was the situation in August of 1910 when William R. Logan came to Belton to assume the position of Glacier's first superintendent. In his two years at that post Logan fashioned a plan that allowed pre-existing businessmen to operate at the service of the public and under the restriction of the Government while still enjoying adequate profit for themselves. At first, Logan automatically issued concession permits for existing boat and stage lines, hotels, cabin resorts, and saddle horse enterprises and set the rates charged so that they could be adjusted to visitation figures later. He scaled the rates "so that the poor man and his family can visit the Park without feeling that he is being robbed and the rich man can spend his money as lavishly as he wishes to."¹¹ Logan also pledged

to observe the Valley operators to insure that they "steady
down and offer reliable service." 12

Along with supervising existing businesses, in 1911
Logan witnessed the construction of a new chalet complex just
outside the Park at Belton. This particular facility had the
financial backing of the Great Northern Railway and was the
forerunner of similar undertakings by the Great Northern
on the east side of the Park. It was the first major project
of its kind in the Park assumed by the Railroad, and sym-
bolically it appeared in the McDonald Valley, the birthplace
of Glacier's concession business.

Of heavy frame construction and of Swiss-style architec-
ture, the complex featured a hotel, dormitory and two separate
chalet cabins. The wealth of the Great Northern was manifest
in the Belton Chalets for it had conveniences unlike those of
other stopping places in the Valley. There were acetylene
lights and running water throughout, in addition to a modern
central heating plant. In all, the chalets could care for
approximately one hundred guests. It represented the most
spacious and sophisticated facility on the Park's west side
in the summer of 1911. 13

12 Letter from W.R. Logan to Secretary W.L. Fisher, July 2,
1911, Priviledges and Permits, file 901, GNPHC.

13 Daily Inter Lake, 30 June 1911. Though the Belton Chalets
were not actually located inside the Park, they were considered
as part of Glacier's housing and house counts were kept in Park
Service records.
The Railroad's reasons for building the Belton Chalets were based partly on service and comfort for their rail passengers and partly for the need to promote the new national park. To this end, designers included a studio chalet in the facility with a large skylight affording panoramic views of the McDonald Valley. For several summers the Belton Chalets served as a "summer colony" for prominent artists and photographers brought to Glacier as part of the Railroad's national park advertising program.\(^{14}\) It was here that the Great Northern gained the foothold to the Park's hotel business and reaped the initial benefits associated with national park travel.

In spite of this new addition, Superintendent Logan lamented in 1911, "One of our chief troubles to date has been that the accommodations have not been sufficient." This was because tourist travel "far exceeded our expectations."\(^{15}\) At the end of the 1911 season Logan delivered on address at the first National Parks Conference held in Yellowstone Park. In his address, entitled "A National Park in the Formative Stages," he outlined the progress

\(^{14}\)Ibid.

\(^{15}\)Letter, W.R. Logan to C.S. Ucker, 2 August 1911. Special Reports of the Superintendent's Activities, 1911-1913, GNPHC.
achieved in Glacier that summer. His mention of public accommodations was brief but less than token. He vowed to "inaugurate and establish a definite and well-defined policy with respect to the handling of concessioners doing business within the confines of the Park." With this in mind, Logan attempted to cement cordial relationships between his administration and the Valley's landowner-proprietors. A number of beneficial measures arose from this resolve which aided in channeling the efforts of the cabin and hotel operators into useful public service. Logan even had visions of Government intervention into the concession business when he wrote to a friend, "I also desire to build a number of Swiss chalets which could be rented to tourists who prefer to run their own cuisine."

Logan's intentions had been genuine but their implementation proved more difficult for those who followed him. In its second year as a national park, 6,257 visitors came to

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16William R. Logan, "A National Park in the Formative Stages," file 114, p. 11, GNPHC.


18Ibid., p. 27. Logan did not live to see this wish fulfilled. He died in February, 1912. It is unlikely, however, that Federal money would have been forthcoming for his proposal since most of the national park's appropriations were for maintenance and protection only.
explore Glacier with more than half entering at Belton and staying in cabins or hotels in the McDonald Valley. This appearance of large numbers of people in the Park after its creation ended small-scale innkeeping and precipitated occasional conflict between operators and Park officials over concessioner responsibilities.

One such example involved George Snyder, owner of the passenger launch on Lake McDonald and proprietor of a small hotel on the north side of the Flathead River. This particular stopping place fronted on a newly-constructed Government road from Belton to Apgar. With such a favorable location on the main route of travel, Snyder proceeded to open a saloon in one of the cabins adjacent to his hotel.

In March of 1912 he applied to the Kalispell county clerk for a saloon license. In a Park only two years old there was no precedent for either approval or denial of this business for Acting Superintendent Henry Hutchings to refer to. He wrote to Chief Clerk of the Department of the Interior, Clement Uker, asking if he should appear to oppose it. Uker replied that for administrative reasons it would be "highly desireable that saloons be not maintained on patented lands within the limits and bounds of the Park."

He advised Hutchings to appear before the county commissioners to oppose the issuance.\textsuperscript{20}

Thus affronted, Snyder filed a petition for the saloon at his hotel with twenty signatures of approval. However, the law stated that the signers of a petition for any saloon must be freeholders of the township in which the saloon was to be operated. Upon examination of the residency of those who had signed Snyder's petition, Hutchings discovered that only three were actually residents of the Belton township. His investigation rendered the petition invalid.\textsuperscript{21} As a follow-up to his discovery, he wrote to the Kalispell County Commissioners explaining that, "Snyder is not the proper person to enter into the saloon business. It would be degrading to the community to have a saloon run by Snyder at that place...."\textsuperscript{22}

Hutchings was not alone in his opposition to Snyder's saloon. Ed Dow, who ran the hotel and store across the river from Snyder's hotel, also viewed his intentions with disfavor. He was more verbal in his opposition, telling

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{20}Telegram, C. C. Uker to Acting Superintendent H. H. Hutchings, 12 March 1912, \textit{Saloons}, file 208-08, GNPHC.

\textsuperscript{21}Letter, H. H. Hutchings to Secretary of the Interior (unnamed), 18 March 1912, \textit{Saloons}, file 208-08, GNPHC.

\textsuperscript{22}Letter, Board of Flathead County Commissioners from H. H. Hutchings, 18 March 1912, \textit{Saloons}, file 208-08, GNPHC.
\end{footnotesize}
Kalispell Judge C.W. Pomeroy, "You know as well as everyone else that it would be a bad thing to have on the road where all the ladies have to pass. You know that Snyder would be drunk all the time. I think you had better see the commissioners and not have the license granted." As if this were not sufficient protest, Dow quickly circulated his own petition opposing Snyder's saloon. In doing so, he committed the same error that had nullified Snyder's earlier petition: An examination of Dow's petition by the county commissioners revealed that, of the twenty signers, only Dow was a freeholder of the township.

Superintendent R.H. Chapman, who inherited the Snyder problem from Hutchings in June of 1912, attempted an alternate prohibitive measure. He requested the advice of the Great Northern's legal department in order to "start a suit of a different nature." The Railroad's attorneys found and directed attention to a section in the Montana Penal Code forbidding the sale of liquor "...within five miles of a logging camp, sawmill, stone quarry or sheep shearing camp." Since Park Service crews were just beginning to construct a sawmill at Fish Creek for the purpose of producing lumber for

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24 Letter, Great Northern Legal Department to R.H. Chapman, 15 June 1912, Saloons, file 208-08, GNPHC.
the new Park headquarters, the attorneys recommended that "the sawmill be started as quickly as convenient and in case Snyder starts a saloon, prosecution could be had under this section."25 Ironically enough, the Great Northern's legal staff and Park officials somehow overlooked the fact that the Fish Creek sawmill was more than five miles from Snyder's proposed saloon site. This meant that there was no way of attacking the license. In the meantime, Snyder had obtained the support of "two of the best attorneys in Kalispell to protect his interests." Ultimately, he received the saloon license in the summer of 1912.26

The saloon ran for one year but the commissioners prevented Snyder from renewing his license in 1914 "...on the grounds that he ran a disreputable place which was the scene of one murder."27 Nevertheless, Snyder persisted in having the license renewed and tried to have it filed under the name of a friend. Not eager to pursue the conflict over the saloon that his predecessors had, Glacier's new superintendent, James Galen, prepared and submitted an elaborate protest to the county commissioners urging that the license not be

25Ibid.

26Letter, R.H. Chapman to P.N. Bernard, Secretary of Kalispell Chamber of Commerce, 18 June 1912, Saloons, file 208-08, GNPHC.

27Cablegram, James Galen to Secretary of the Interior (unnamed), 8 July 1914, Saloons, file 208-08, GNPHC.

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recognized. In addition, Galen wrote to several McDonald Valley residents and admonished them to lodge their complaints as well. This time Snyder's saloon license was not granted, though he continued to run his hotel near the Flathead River.

This entire incident left Park administrators in a very thoughtful mood concerning the caliber of people doing business in the Park. They could not deny the need for these businessmen if the public was to be housed and transported comfortably. Neither could they disregard their activities which occasionally fostered ill-feeling and disrespect. Of increasing importance to Glacier's officials was the continual demand for overnight accommodations, particularly in the McDonald Valley where 5,540 visitors had entered in 1913 by way of the Belton entrance.  

It was travel figures like this that caused Park authorities to welcome an application from John Lewis to cut timber near his hotel for construction of a larger hotel at that site. Beginning in November of 1913 Lewis cut thirty cords of "shake bolts" and nearly 5,000 board feet of dead cedar for building materials. He was determined not to be outdone by the entire Great Northern organization of hotel builders who at this time, were vigorously putting up chalets and hotels across the Continental Divide on the east side of the Park. He

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28Annual Report of the Superintendent of Glacier Park, 1913, GNPHC. Attendance at the four principle hotels was: Lewis-1,119; Geduhn's-750; Dow's-1,130; Belton Chalets-3,538.
claimed that his new hotel would be "far superior" to the Great Northern's by eliminating much of the waste of space in useless corridors and hallways. To insure this claim, Mr. Lewis contracted a large Spokane, Washington architectural firm, permitted them unlimited costs and instructed them that he wanted "something worthy of the Park."  

The construction of the hotel was a remarkable accomplishment considering the remote location of the site. The architectural superintendent arrived in October to supervise a "small army of workmen" that Lewis had brought from Columbia Falls. They finished excavating and pouring concrete for the basement walls before heavy winter snows began. The log work was done completely by hand. Workmen freighted fixtures, furnishings and other materials across the ice of Lake McDonald throughout the winter and by boat in the spring. Lewis completed his hotel in just ten months. The three-story building contained a total of 100 rooms with steam heat, electric lighting and running water. Lewis reserved the main floor and lobby as a showplace, having learned from previous experience that "a large portion of tourists who visit the Park desire first-class service and are willing to pay a high price for it...." Thus, the eight two-room suites which comprised the main floor had

29Daily Inter Lake, 18 June 1914.
"...furnishings as elegant and rich as money can buy." 30
Elsewhere, there was a passenger elevator which could take
guests to a roof garden overlooking the lake. There was
hickory furniture which had been freighted by rail from the
East and animal skins and trophy heads from Lewis' fur
trading business in Columbia Falls adorned the walls. To
staff his new hotel, Lewis hired only professional people
which included "an experienced hotel clerk with a corps of
bell boys." 31

The official opening of Lewis' Glacier Hotel on 14 June
1914 was the largest social event that had occurred in the
Valley. Lewis invited commercial clubs of Kalispell and
Columbia Falls to participate, engaged the Elk's State Band
for entertainment and sent complimentary invitations to lake
residents and rapt Park rangers, who had followed the con-
struction carefully. The Kalispell Daily Inter Lake recounted:

Lewis planned a big celebration to take place
at his hotel lasting two days and nights.
Plenty of novelty amusements were included:
50 ft. high dive, bronco busting, roping
contests, packing contests by Park guides,
men's and ladies' foot races, swimming,
boating and canoe contests as well as evening
fireworks displays...there will be special
excursion rates on trains, boats and stages. 32

30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
Of all the proprietors in the McDonald Valley, John Lewis had proved himself to be the most pragmatic, the most enterprising. His new Glacier Hotel stressed atmosphere and comfort and, as such, represented a departure from the mere utility characteristic of other stopping places. His obvious intent was to cater to the increasing number of rail passengers and vacationers arriving at Belton. This, however, did not mean that he had divorced himself from the local clientele that had helped sustain his hotel business in the previous years. The Glacier Hotel continued to be a gathering place and the center for social activities around the Lake with Lewis renting his clubhouse for weekend dances, sewing bees and temperance meetings.  

To further augment his income in the Valley, Lewis began selling plots of land north of his hotel from his homestead upon which he built cottages for families who desired summer homes on the Lake. In 1916, he and Diamond Apgar formed a corporation, the Glacier Park Land Company, and began selling their patented land to these property seekers. The sale of

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33Henderson, loc. cit. The Lewis Hotel gained such quick popularity that it caused Frank Geduhn to sell his Park Hotel and guest cabins to three of his most regular patrons: C.F. Lutes, James Conlon, and B.E. Ladow. Included in the sale were 150 acres of land for a reputed price of thirty-four thousand dollars. Though the hotel ceased to operate, these three continued to run the guest cabins. Daily Inter Lake, 10 November 1913.
the "villa sites" greatly disturbed Park officials. However enthusiastic they were about Lewis' recent contribution to the Valley's accommodations, they could not endorse his land sales. They foresaw the difficulty of future patented land acquisitions by the Government if Lewis and Apgar persisted in multiplying the number of landowners through private land sales. The problem of dealing with Valley proprietors such as Lewis and Apgar was typical of the quandary facing Park administrators attempting to implement a viable concessioner policy. It was their wish to eliminate such people as landowners while continuing to encourage them in their valuable concession capacity. Glacier's officials were finding the McDonald Valley endlessly productive of such dichotomies.

At the beginning of the 1920's there occurred further complications with the Park Service and the Valley proprietors; this time involving the ubiquitous George Snyder again. In conjunction with his hotel near the Flathead River, he applied for a permit to operate two "fishing and pleasure" boats for his guests on the river and on McDonald Creek. Because Superintendent Walter Payne felt that Snyder's presence in these waters would not interfere with the Lake McDonald boat concession of Frank Kelly, he granted it, believing that the nature of the permit would limit Snyder's activities to fishing

34Letter, Superintendent Walter Payne from George Snyder, 21 May 1918, Snyder Concession, file 111, GNPHC.
and pleasure and not actual fee transportation of people and
supplies on the Lake.\textsuperscript{35} He stipulated that the boats were
to be used only by his hotel guests and were to be confined
"to the collection and return of parties on the Flathead
River and McDonald Creek."\textsuperscript{36}

Trouble began the next year when Snyder used his boats
to transport tourists to the Lewis Hotel at the head of the
Lake. Not only was this in violation of his permit, but he
was using the Government boat dock at Apgar while boarding
his passengers. The Superintendent politely notified him
of this fact and informed him that he must cease using the
dock and operating on the Lake.\textsuperscript{37} Snyder paid scant attention
to the warning. With no recourse, Superintendent Payne ordered
his rangers to impound the two boats, which they kept in cus-
tody during the Autumn of 1919 under the premise that they had
been operated without a proper permit. Snyder immediately
brought suit against Payne for unlawful seizure, but due to
a number of delays in securing council and witnesses, the
trial was not held until the Spring of 1920. In that trial,

\textsuperscript{35}Letter, Walter Payne to George Snyder, 30 June 1918,
Snyder Concession, file 111, GNPHC. For this permit, Snyder
paid the customary concession fee of twenty-five dollars.

\textsuperscript{36}Letter, Walter Payne to Director of the National Park
Service (unnamed), 24 May 1918, Snyder Concession, file 111,
GNPHC.

\textsuperscript{37}Letter, Walter Payne to George Snyder, 2 June 1919,
Snyder Concession, file 111, GNPHC.
to the dismay of Glacier's administrative staff, a United States Judge found in favor of Snyder. 38

Armed with this court decision, Snyder proceeded to go "right down the line." In the Spring of 1921, he purchased a touring car and declared that he was going to compete with the stage concessioners between Belton and Apgar. He arranged for additional immunity from interference by Park rangers when he became deputized to carry mail between these two points. Ordinarily, Snyder would have been liable for arrest and punishment for carrying paying passengers in his auto because he travelled on Government roads and did not have a transport permit. Instead, Glacier's new superintendent, J. Ross Eakin, was understandably apprehensive about impounding Snyder's touring car, especially in view of the court decision and suit levied against Payne two years earlier. In bewilderment, he appealed to the Director of the National Park Service, Stephan Mather, and wrote, "Altogether it is such a broad question and will have such far reaching effects on other parks as well as Glacier, that I shall take no action in this particular case until advised by you." 39 To which Mather

38 Though Payne appealed the case, he eventually paid a fine of five hundred dollars in damages plus costs.

39 Letter, Superintendent J.R. Eakin to Director Stephen Mather, 23 May 1921, Snyder Concession, file 111, GNPHC.
could only reply, "I do not believe that you should attempt to prevent Mr. Snyder from operating...particularly in view of the fact that he may be carrying United States mail."\(^{40}\)

Thus, Snyder continued in his illicit auto transport business, which was causing growing anxiety at Park headquarters and prompted Assistant Superintendent Henry Hutchings to confess to a friend, "We have had a great deal of trouble along these lines, and the time has come when we cannot fool any longer."\(^{41}\)

It was not until September 20, 1923 that the Park Service finally had a concrete case against Snyder. On that date his touring car collided with a Government team and wagon on the north approach to the bridge over the Flathead River. When Henry Hutchings and a deputy sheriff apprehended Snyder and a companion later he "asked Mr. Snyder to go with us but he was in such an intoxicated condition that he did not understand what we meant until (we) told him that he was under arrest."\(^{42}\)

At his trial in Kalispell, Snyder testified that he "was only running to charge his battery at the time of the

\(^{40}\)Letter, Stephen Mather to J.R. Eakin, 28 May 1921, Snyder Concession, file 111, GNPHC.

\(^{41}\)Letter, H. Hutchings to Guy S. Helphrey, 5 July 1922, Snyder Concession, file 111, GNPHC.

\(^{42}\)Affidavit given for U.S. Commissioner, William H. Lindsay signed by Swetnam and Hutchings, 4 October 1923, Snyder Concession, file 111, GNPHC.
accident and could not stop." Hearing such fallacious testimony, rangers representing the Park at the trial countered with a firm rebuttal calculated at eliminating George Snyder from the Park forever. Superintendent Eakin stated, "The facts of the matter are that Snyder was so intoxicated that I doubt if he knows what really happened." He continued, "Snyder's driving has been so reckless that residents of this community (Belton) are afraid to go on the roads when he is loose with a car and it seems to us highly desirable to keep him out of the Park if possible." The court granted this wish when they found Snyder guilty of reckless driving and illegal transportation of liquor. He received a fine of five hundred dollars and a term of six months in jail. After serving his sentence, Snyder did not return to Glacier in any business capacity. He abandoned his boat line and sold his inholdings to the Government.45

The remainder of the decade of the 1920's passed with fewer incidents of concessioner antagonism in the McDonald

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43Letter, J.R. Eakin to U.S. District Attorney, J.J. Slattery, 7 December 1923, Snyder Concession, file 111, GNP HC.

44Letter, J.R. Eakin to W.H. Meigs, Assistant U.S. District Attorney, 17 October 1923, Snyder Concession, file 111, GNP HC.

45The Park Service used Snyder's hotel as a bunkhouse and mess hall until 1926 when Park crews tore all the buildings down and burned them to make way for other utility buildings in the headquarters area.
Valley. Instead, driven by a need to care for the growing numbers of tourists, Park officials and the Valley's utility operators worked to solve a common dilemma. The rapport between the two reflected a renewed harmony. Lewis' Glacier Hotel continued to be, in Superintendent Eakin's estimation "...one of the most popular hotels in the country" whose presence overshadowed the smaller cabin camps in the Valley. Midway through the decade he wrote further praise for all of Glacier's concessioners: "The operators of the public utilities in the Park handled visitors very efficiently during the past (1925) season. All hotels and chalets were crowded to capacity...."47

What caused these capacity crowds more than any other factor during the 1920's was the increase in automobile

46 Department of the Interior, Report of the Director of the National Park Service, 1921 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1921), p. 241. So popular was the Lewis Hotel that the Glacier Park Hotel Company had operated the Belton Chalets only sparingly in the preceding years. Finally, on August 6, 1930, Hotel Company manager, A.J. Binder, declared that the chalets would be closed for the remainder of the season. This he did because tourists did not generally stay long at Belton but wished to proceed to the Lewis Hotel where there were more scenic attractions. Also, Binder had been disappointed when proposed roads to Belton had not been completed in time to bring more patrons to the Chalets in the 1930 season. Great Falls Tribune, 7 August 1930.

travellers. In the 1923 season, the total travel for the Park showed a healthy increase of 35.36 per cent over the previous year, but more startling was the 70.11 per cent increase in auto traffic.\(^8\) These percentages substantiated what many superintendents had steadfastly recommended: There must be a road through the center of the Park joining the sections separated by the Continental Divide.

A survey of a transmountain road in Glacier had been made by Park Service engineers in 1918 under an allotment from the general Park appropriation but no action had been taken.\(^9\) They investigated several routes and concluded that a crossing at Logan Pass would be the most scenic and economical. The report of the proposed road did not neglect service to the established hotels or chalets and stressed that the road must begin on the west side and connect the foot of Lake


\(^9\)An earlier road from Columbia Falls to Belton had preceded this transmountain road and allowed visitors to make more "protracted and practical sojourns" into the McDonald Valley. Built in 1911, by the joint effort of the Forest Service, Flathead County Commissioners and the Flathead County Auto Club, the road followed the "tote road" used by the Great Northern when it built into the Flathead Valley from Belton. Although not a Park road in itself, it gave many Flathead Valley residents the opportunity to visit the new Park. These people, in turn, clamored for a transmountain road over the Continental Divide. Daily Inter Lake, 1 February, 1911.
McDonald with Lewis' Glacier Hotel. Three years after this survey, the Park's sundry civil bill carried an appropriation item which allowed for the commencement of construction on the transmountain road. Superintendent Eakin's foremost recommendation to the Director of the Park Service that year was for such a highway. He said: "Glacier Park will never enjoy the travel that its hotel developments and attractions entitle it to until it has a road connection between the east and west sides of the Park...."

Accordingly, the Government awarded contracts for the only highway to penetrate the interior of the Park—a highway which greatly altered the entire complexion of Glacier's concession picture. By 1921 there was a road connection from Belton to the Lewis Hotel. By 1926 traffic was open to Logan Pass. Though the number of auto tourists was not yet as proportionately great as in other national parks, since there was still no through route in the Park, projected visitations upon completion of the road marked a new era for administrators and concessioners to adjust to.

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50 History of Road Construction and Maintenance, unpublished manuscript, GNPHC, p. 7.


52 Road Construction, loc. cit.
To begin, the automobile brought a tourist with different needs than those who had previously frequented the Park. Many came with families, shunned large hotels and sought out free public campgrounds. Superintendent Eakin identified this new trend in his 1924 annual report when he predicted, "The completion of the transmountain road will bring to Glacier a flood of motor campers." He urged the rapid development of automobile campgrounds and established two campgrounds in the McDonald Valley to ease the pressure on the Valley's landowner-proprietors and to provide an outlet for those vacationers who had little regard for the stilted atmosphere and high prices of the hotels and chalets on the Park's east side.

However, the real problem of public service was the lack of low-priced rental cottages and cabin resorts. In addition to bringing the "motor camper," the automobile also brought large numbers of middle-class Americans who wanted neither campgrounds nor first-class hotels but reasonably-priced family cabins catering to the motorist vacationer. "This feature is becoming more and more popular," Glacier's authorities forecast, "and will have to be given serious consid-

eration in the future development of hotel and camp accommodations."\textsuperscript{54} They encouraged private landowners to erect additional cabins at their resorts and by the Spring of 1926, five new cottages had been completed at Apgar, bringing the total to thirteen new lodgings in the Valley in anticipation of the tourist season.\textsuperscript{55}

Making matters more complex were the ambitious road building programs in and near the Park during the 1920's. Coincidental with the transmountain road through Glacier was the construction of the Theodore Roosevelt Highway (U.S. Highway 2) which paralleled the Great Northern's main line around the southern boundary of the Park. While the Roosevelt Highway was not a Park road, its completion in July of 1930 was an event of no little impact to Glacier. In the years preceding this highway, there was virtually no east-west auto traffic over the Continental Divide in the vicinity of the Park. This situation forced auto travellers to ship their cars by train between Glacier Park Station on the east side and Belton at the West entrance. The Roosevelt


\textsuperscript{55}Great Falls Tribune, 9 June 1926. The construction of tourist cottages in the Valley became particularly contagious during the early twenties. Among others, the Park Cabin Resort (formerly Geduhn's) continued to operate as did Kelly's Camp (eight housekeeping cabins) on the Lake's west shore, the Apgar Cabins, Greenwalt Camp (eight cottages), Camp Houston and the Gold Brother's Bungalow.
Highway, which finally joined these two points, eliminated this practice but added to the congestion of motor-borne vacationers entering Glacier.

By the end of the 1930 season, housing in Glacier had become acute. This was most pronounced in the McDonald Valley where hotel and cabin development had been carried out in the absence of the Glacier Park Hotel Company, the Great Northern subsidiary which dominated development on the east side. It was more than apparent that the innkeepers there, if left unto themselves, would be unable to keep pace with the rising tourist traffic, a fact of increasing distress to Park officials. After the tourist season, when travel had subsided and Superintendent Eakin had time to prepare some recommendations, he wrote in his annual report to the Director of the Park Service that, "Moderately-priced housekeeping cabins and lodges...are Glacier's most pressing need at this time. The lack of overnight cabins will very adversely affect our automobile travel, and there was during this year a strong demand for them."

Before the decade of the twenties ended there occurred a final event which resulted in the sale of the Lewis Hotel to the Government. Discussions concerning this sale had been

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pending for several years although they had been "somewhat desultory and not very connected." But in August of 1929 a forest fire swept through the Apgar-Belton area and, before it could be controlled, destroyed fifty thousand acres of timber in the Park including the scenic stands of cedar and hemlock at the foot of Lake McDonald. Though the fire did not damage the Lewis buildings, the Superintendent alerted Director Horace Albright that, "...Lewis might be considerably easier to deal with now than was the case last year before the fire." Eakin suspected that the "fire threw somewhat of a scare into him (Lewis)" and that, "he is now rather anxious to get out."

Also implicit in Lewis' decision to sell was the completion of the new Roosevelt Highway and the pressure it would certainly place upon his hotel through the influx of tourists. He estimated that an additional 100 rooms would need to be added but felt that he was not in a position to undertake

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57 Letter, W.P. Kenney, Vice President, Great Northern Railway, to Director Horace Albright, 11 February 1929, Glacier Park Company (Buildings), file 900-01, GNPHC.

58 Donald G. Robinson, Through the Years in Glacier National Park (Glacier Natural History Association, Inc., West Glacier, Montana, May, 1960), pp. 74-75. During this fire, the Hotel Company reopened the Belton Chalets to provide quarters and meals for the hundreds of firefighters engaged in suppression efforts.

59 Letter, Director Horace Albright to W.P. Kenney, 9 January 1930, Glacier Park Company (Buildings), file 900-01, GNPHC.
extensive renovation operations. In truth, however, the announcement of the sale came about as a result of mutual collaboration by the Park Service and the Great Northern Railroad. The provisions of this agreement stated that the Hotel Company could propose to build a "fine hotel" on the lake shore next to Lewis' hotel if he did not sell to the Government at the appraised price of $225,000.00. Superintendent Eakin illustrated the consequences of this threat when he said, "It can be pointed out to him (Lewis) that the Great Northern handles all bookings for the Park, and he could not hope to get very much patronage."  

By January of 1930, Lewis consented to sell his improvements and land totalling 285 acres for the appraised price. Still, the appraised sum was more than the Government could immediately expend and, as a result, they entered into an unusual agreement with the Great Northern in which the Railroad

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60 The Missoulian, 2 March 1930.

61 Letter, J.R. Eakin to Director of the National Park Service (unnamed), 11 February 1930, Dakota and Great Northern Townsite Company, file 610, GNPHC.

62 Letter, W.P. Kenney to Director Albright, 31 May 1929, Dakota and Great Northern Townsite Company, file 610, GNPHC.
pledged half the purchase price. A matching amount would be paid to the Railroad by the Interior Department as soon as funds were available and titles could be abstracted, at which time all land and buildings would become property of the United States. In return for this gesture, the Great Northern's subsidiary, the Hotel Company, would be given a twenty-year lease for the operation of the hotel in conjunction with its east side operations. The two parties finalized the transaction in March of 1930. Park Service crews removed snow from the road between Belton and the Lewis place so that a work force for the Hotel Company could begin inventory and arrangements to operate the hotel for the coming season. That summer, Lewis' Glacier Hotel ran under a new management and a new name: the Lake McDonald Hotel.

Glacier's administrators were jubilant over the Lewis purchase. Operation of a public utility under this arrangement was unique from a National Park Service point of view in that private operators ran Government-owned buildings.

63 As part of the agreement the Railroad assumed title to the purchased property in the name of the Dakota and Great Northern Townsite Company, a Minnesota-based corporation designated as the purchasing agent "because of mortgage conditions on the railroad...." The ultimate settlement was the company to pay the full purchase price to John Lewis for which it would later receive a 50 per cent reimbursement from the Park Service and the twenty-year lease. In the interim, the title to the hotel buildings and land ran from the Townsite Company to the Hotel Company, which assumed temporary possession. Dakota and Great Northern Townsite Company, File 610, GNPHC.
The Service's motives in the deal were threefold: The Government acquired title to 285 acres of land consistent with their policy of removing privately held land within the parks. It had also strengthened the operations of its principle concessioner, the Glacier Park Hotel Company, by extending its activities into the McDonald Valley, which had for so long been stigmatized by untrenched private landowner-proprietorship. This, too, was pursuant to a Park Service policy of having a single concession agent operate all the major public utilities in a park. Finally, the Government closed the Lewis purchase before 1935, the year that marked the expiration date of the Hotel Company's existing twenty-year contract for its east side businesses. This meant that the operation of the Lake McDonald Hotel could be included in the provisions of a new twenty-year contract if the Company wished to renew in 1935. The net effect of the transaction was that the Hotel Company had been enticed into a stronger commitment as a concessioner and this, Park officials realized, was extremely important to its concession management program.

From 1892 to 1930 a nascent hotel business in the McDonald Valley evolved into an undeniably necessary public service in a new national park. The creation of this Park meant enforced guidelines for all operators and, as Superintendent Logan had
observed, the need for a "definite and well-defined policy" for handling these operators. Logan's successors determined to bring the capital and influence of the Glacier Park Hotel Company into the McDonald Valley and arranged for the adroit transfer of the Lewis Hotel to the Company in 1930. The services offered by the Valley's first concessioners faded gradually under the rising spectre of the Great Northern's east side activities.

Furthermore, the rude, homespun comforts there were ill-suited to an era and area which was rapidly becoming popular with a demanding mobile public. In conjunction with this, one additional fact became clear. The association of the Park Service and the Park's concessioners owed its existence and continued association to the rate of Park visitation. The philosophy of Park planners hinged upon quick adjustment on the part of both to the whims of the travelling public. The thinking among Park Service authorities was that the rise in visitation should be attended by a nearly proportional rise in visitor accommodations. The pleasure of spending a night in a national park would not be denied the visiting public.

Above all, the events in the McDonald Valley served to point up the need for a conscientious, forceful and well-financed concession agent, one which would respond willingly
to the public need with little coercion from Park Service trustees. It was the inability to do this that made the McDonald Valley pioneer innkeepers such valuable points of departure. They were stimulating influences largely because they left their franchisers disappointed. Although they came closer to being identified with the first hotel keepers in Yellowstone, they were not unprincipled freebooters in search of quick profit followed by an equally quick withdrawal. They became, in short, smaller portions of a larger whole. That larger whole was the indomitable Glacier Park Hotel Company.
CHAPTER II

A CLIMATE OF CLEMENCY,
THE GREAT NORTHERN'S BUILDING YEARS 1910-1920

One year after the creation of Glacier Park, Louis Hill, President of the Great Northern Railroad, summarized the role of his railway in the Park's development this way:

...we do not wish to go into the hotel business; we wish to get out of it and confine ourselves strictly to the business of getting people there just as soon as we can, but it is difficult to get capital interested in this kind of pioneer work. With the cooperation and assistance of the government, we hope within two or three years to get financial people interested in the Park and then we can get out and attend to railroading.¹

It was with sure and inevitable steps, however, that Hill found it impossible to exclude the development of public housing in Glacier from his railroading activities. For within Hill's memory was a statement made by his father and former president of the Great Northern, James J. Hill, who had persistently contended, "The value of a railway is its capacity to earn money."²

adjacent to the Great Northern's main line in 1910 gave Louis Hill the opportunity to earn this money through increased passenger fares, while, at the same time, placing his rail line on an equal basis with the Canadian Pacific Railroad to the north and the Northern Pacific Railroad to the south—both competing lines for all through traffic to and from the West coast. To do so meant a contradiction of his resolution to refrain from the hotel business; a contradiction that Hill was willing to make as witnessed by the fact that, in December of 1911, he announced his semi-official retirement as president in order to devote full attention to making Glacier Park, "The Playground of the Northwest." He said, explaining his decision, "The work is so important that I am loath to intrust the development to anybody but myself." With this declaration, Hill committed himself and his railroad to a hotel business that lasted, not the two or three years as earlier predicted, but fully fifty years, during which time the Great Northern gave to Glacier the housing that it needed, the advertisement and notoriety that it demanded.

At first, the Great Northern behaved in a manner reminiscent of Yellowstone's first concessioners. They chose to

and passenger and freight revenues rather than on Government resources. He sought no land grants, asked for no subsidy or guarantee of interest on bonds from the Government.

3Daily Inter Lake, 22 December 1911.
experiment with inexpensive "movable canvas hotels" and cautiously to assess the popularity of the new Park. In 1911, W.J. Hillogoss, an outfitter and saddle horse operator backed with capital from the Great Northern, penetrated the valleys on the Park's east side and established a series of tent camps. They extended from Midvale, a railroad stop similar to Belton, north to Lake McDermott (Swiftcurrent). There were six of these camps joined with trails constructed by railroad crews that enabled several horse parties to tour the Park simultaneously. Each camp consisted of twenty wooden tent houses and one kitchen-dining hall staffed by a cook and waiter.  

Even as the 1911 season came to a close and the tent camps were being brought to Midvale for winter storage, Great Northern officials were carefully examining visitor counts and rail passenger revenues. They concluded that their exploratory attempt at housing their rail passengers in Glacier had been successful. "We handled 4,000 people in Glacier this year," said Hill, "and when the short time the Park has been created is considered, and the further fact that, as yet, the Great Northern, in its advertising

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4Daily Inter Lake, 31 July 1911. The camp locations were: Midvale, Two Medicine, Cut Bank, the Narrows of St. Mary Lake, Gunsight Lake and Glacier Basin (Sperry Camp).
matter, has urged no people to visit that region, we consider the record exceptionally good."

Superintendent William Logan also noted the abundance of rail passengers and remarked, "Travel is commencing in earnest--every coach coming over is loaded to the guards.""^6

The railroad's development program covered a span of time between 1911 and 1917. This construction period was as intense as it was brief. Apart from the substantial increase in passenger revenue, which was the Great Northern's foremost and recurrent motive for the development of Glacier, the railroad encouraged Americans to visit the Park much earlier than was ever anticipated. Moreover, it improved the visitor facilities with a thoroughness that could never have been accomplished by a myriad of smaller, less well financially-endowed entrepreneurs such as those who populated the McDonald Valley. The intransigence and eccentricities of these land-owner proprietors, notably the redoubtable George Snyder, beleaguered Park administrators with troublesome managerial problems. The Great Northern, however, did not have this sovereignty because it did not own land within the Park. Given these and other merits, the Interior Department


welcomed the Great Northern as a concessioner which they hoped would be both conscientious and manageable.

So it was that the Great Northern, enthusiastic about the possibility of developing a scenic and recreational area near its main line, began applying for and receiving concession permits to construct a system of hotels and chalets that would house Glacier's visitors for the next five decades. Giving impetus to the construction campaign was Louis Hill, who visited the Park constantly during these years, accompanied by dignitaries and railroad planning officers, and who personally selected the sites for each chalet and hotel.

By 1912, Hill had secured a special Act of Congress giving the railroad the right to purchase 160 acres of land on the Blackfoot Indian Reservation just outside the Park at Midvale (East Glacier). Upon this tract of land the Great Northern began construction of a hotel that replaced Mr. Hilligoss' tents near the depot. Hill ordered the design of the building to be patterned after the log forestry building at the 1912 Portland Exposition. His two architects, Thomas D. McMahon and S.L. Bartlett, both

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of Chicago, studied the building's architecture and arranged to have Douglas fir logs of identical dimensions cut and shipped to Montana. By April of 1912, fifty car loads of these logs had arrived in Midvale from Oregon and Washington. The largest of these, those that formed the interior support pillars of the lobby, were of such immensity (fifteen tons each, fifty-two feet long and nearly six feet in diameter) that often only two could be placed on one flat car.8

The main section of this hotel, housing the lobby, sixty-one guest rooms and dining rooms, opened on June 15, 1913. An annex, built in the Winter of 1913-1914, added 110 rooms and gave the complex a total capacity of 400 guests.9

Tourists who arrived at Midvale during the construction of the Glacier Park Hotel found shelter in tent camps and were fed in a community dining hall with construction crews.

8Daily Inter Lake, 15 April 1912.

9The Glacier Park Hotel, serving as the entrance of the Park for rail visitors from the East, featured a music room, grill and dining room, plunge pool, emergency hospital, laundry, fire station, store house, steam heating and telephone service. The hotel cost more than $500,000 and was built by the E.G. Evensta Construction Company of Minneapolis. It took a force of approximately 75 laborers a short one and one-half years to complete the two units with a peak employment of 150 carpenters and masons in the Spring of 1912. Daily Inter Lake, 15 April 1912. For an excellent description of the Great Northern's hotels and chalets and the facilities therein, see John Willy's, "A Week in Glacier National Park," The Hotel Monthly, August, 1915, p. 51.
Nevertheless, their desire to see the Park did not abate and they quickly filled the log chalet groups that the railroad built to replace the temporary tent camps in the Park’s interior. In early Spring of 1912, the Great Northern started erecting permanent Swiss chalets at Two Medicine Lake, Cut Bank Creek, St. Mary Lake at its eastern end and at the Upper Narrows, the latter taking place of Mr. Hilligoss’ tent camp at the Lower Narrows, at Gunsight Lake and McDermott Lake. One year later, while the Glacier Park Hotel was receiving its first guests, workers hurried to finish the structures at these chalet groups, where ease of access and unpredictable weather created primitive working conditions. At Going-To-The-Sun Chalets at the Upper Narrows of St. Mary Lake, all logs had to be cut at the upper end of the lake, rafted to the chalet site and lifted up a cliff face to the construction campsite. Other materials came by wagon from Midvale or Browning and were taken up the lake by boat in the summer or over the ice in the winter.

10 Superintendent’s Annual Report, 1912, Acting Superintendent R.H. Chapman, GNPHC. Camp attendance in 1912 was: Two Medicine-389; Cut Bank-364; St. Mary-500; Narrows Camp-319; McDermott-258; Gunsight-674; Sperry Camp (temporary tent camp)-641.

Certain it was that, upon completion, these chalets enjoyed a popularity that even the most inveterate optimists among the Great Northern's planners had never envisioned. Moreover, they could ignore the profit-loss statements for the operations of the Great Northern's camps, which revealed a loss of $6,906.00 in 1912 and $8,713.00 in 1913. This they could do because railroad executives were not blinded by the real benefits of the Glacier development campaign, particularly when they could refer to yearly revenue increases of nearly $200,000.00 in sleeping and parlor fares.\(^{12}\) These profits made the loss at Glacier's camps seem inconsequential. Therefore, optimism continued and construction proceeded, based on the theory that further expenditures in Glacier would yield additional increases in passenger train fares.

While the Great Northern expanded its holdings in the Park between 1911 and 1917, Park administrators at Belton watched with inward contentment. Here was an operator unlike the numerous small innkeepers doing business in the McDonald Valley. Above all, they agreed, here was a concessioner with capital, ambition and enthusiasm—virtues which McDonald Valley operators did not always possess. Glacier's officials, then, during this decade, employed a policy of unwritten

\(^{12}\) Twenty-fourth Annual Report of the Great Northern Railroad, 1912, p. 28.
solicitude toward the Great Northern and hindered them infrequently with specifications, permit deadlines and other concessioner requirements. Or, as R.B. Marshall, Chief Geographer of the Geological Survey said, "I believe that the Government, in order to confer upon its people full and early enjoyment of the privileges of Glacier Park, may, with propriety, accept the assistance of the Great Northern Railroad."13

But before the Great Northern became too intractable as a concessioner there was a hearing conducted in February of 1913 in Glacier to formulate a definite plan of work for the coming years. The railroad sent representatives who diplomatically dominated the proceedings with promises of ethical development for the future while Glacier's representatives postured in a rather passive manner borne not of complacency but of reconciliation with a railroad that was willing to develop the Park to stimulate their rail travel. Park officials stressed only a modicum of supervision, regular communications, and mutual understanding for the needs of the Park. Predictably, though not unfortunately, the Great Northern secured approval for the majority of their proposed activities, including road and trail construction, liquor sales to patrons, room rates,

13Proceedings of the National Park Conference, 1911, p. 115.
timber sales, and sewage and sanitation measures. The decision to permit the railroad to proceed with their east side improvements came, in part, because of a lack of Government funds for similar developments. The refusal of President Taft to sign the Sundry Civil Bill in 1913, which included the annual appropriations for the national parks, created serious handicaps for Glacier's improvement projects. This curtailment gave Glacier's staff further justification for the mandate given to the railroad. It was a case of an impoverished Interior Department issuing a blank check to a wealthy railroad for the pioneer development of a national park. Secretary Clement Uker illustrated the permissiveness of his department in these early years when he said, "The way I see it is that the Great Northern had gone in here and erected these chalets and it is up to us to accommodate travel to them. All I want to do is move as expeditiously, harmoniously and as rapidly as possible."

As a sequel to the 1913 hearing, and as a mild custodial measure, Uker instructed Superintendent James Galen to embark upon an extensive inspection tour of all the Great Northern's camps on the east side. Galen's instructions indicated that

14Daily Inter Lake, 14 March 1913.
15Hearing on Glacier Park Matters, 5 February 1913, file 900-05, GNPHC.
he was to ascertain the number of rooms, character of sleeping accommodations, descriptions and dimensions of the buildings and sanitary conditions, with special emphasis that, "if you find that at any one or more camps the sleeping quarters consist simply of buildings of one room and that it is necessary for men and women, strangers to each other, to occupy such quarters, you will so report." Galen found no such buildings. Nor could he find any other flagrant inconsistencies that required prompt correction, as indicated in his commendable report.\textsuperscript{16}

\begin{quote}
Descriptions of Great Northern's Glacier Park Camps--1913
\end{quote}

\textbf{SPERRY CAMP}

- 2 store buildings.
- 1 cook house--dining room, kitchen, 4 sleeping rooms.
- 1 dormitory (two-story)--24 sleeping rooms.

Total capacity at Sperry was 152 with overflow sleeping quarters provided in Kenyon house tents of two and four room sleeping compartments. These tents, used while the dormitory at Sperry was being constructed in 1913, were also in use at the other camps while permanent buildings were being built.

\textbf{TWO MEDICINE CAMP}

- 5 log buildings, Swiss chalet type:
  - 1 cook house--dining room, kitchen, store room, three compartment sleeping rooms.
  - 2 log sleeping cabins.
  - 1 log cabin of 6 sleeping rooms (two-story).
  - 1 dormitory (two-story)--20 sleeping rooms and 2 lounging rooms.
  - 1 dining hall (two-story)--dining room, kitchen, store room, 7 sleeping rooms.
  - 1 laundry

Total capacity at Two Medicine Camp: 146.

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Ibid.}
ST. MARY'S CAMP

9 log buildings, Swiss chalet type:
1 cook house--dining room, kitchen, store room.
1 dining hall--dining room, 3 sleeping rooms, 2 bedrooms, kitchen, pantry, meat room.
1 store and recreation building--recreation room, store room, 2 sleeping rooms, basement store room.
1 large dormitory (two-story, double compartment)--20 sleeping rooms, lounging room, 2 store rooms.
1 small dormitory (two-story)--6 sleeping rooms, lounging room.
3 one-room chalets.
1 laundry.

Total capacity at St. Mary's Camp: 152.

GUNSIGHT CAMP

2 log buildings, Swiss chalet type:
1 dining room, kitchen, 2 sleeping rooms.
1 dormitory (two-story)--living room, 9 sleeping rooms, 2 store rooms.

Total capacity at Gunsight Camp: 74.

MANY GLACIER CAMP

11 log buildings, Swiss chalet type:
1 dining hall--dining room, kitchen, store room, 3 sleeping rooms.
4 one-room chalets.
1 one-room studio.
2 small chalets (two-story)--2 lounging rooms, 5 sleeping rooms.
1 large chalet (two-story)--2 lounging rooms, 8 sleeping rooms.
1 chalet (two-story)--6 sleeping rooms, lounging room.
1 laundry.

Total capacity at Many Glacier Camp: 119.

GOING-TO-THE-SUN CAMP

7 log buildings, Swiss chalet type:
5 one-room chalets.
1 dining hall--dining room, kitchen, 2 store rooms.
1 chalet (two-story)--2 lounging rooms, 4 sleeping rooms.

Total capacity at Going-To-The-Sun Camp: 38.
CUT BANK CAMP

4 log buildings, Swiss chalet type:
1 dining hall--dining room, tinned store room, kitchen, extension with 4 sleeping rooms.
1 chalet (two-story)--6 sleeping rooms, lounging room.
2 one-room chalets.

Total capacity at Cut Bank Camp: 42.

Superintendent Galen was not alone in his approval of the Great Northern's housing projects. Joining him were several thousand tourists who had stayed at the camps in the 1913 season. Only those turned away by camp managers because of overcrowding found reason to complain. "We did a business this year that exceeded all expectations," exclaimed Louis Hill. "The tourists came in a greater number than we were able to accommodate. We had 1700 beds this year and next season we will have 2200 beds which will be increased to 2500 beds by 1915."17

Satisfied that the Great Northern was conducting a valuable public service that should be encouraged, Superintendent Galen granted further permits for the addition of the final units to the camp system: the Many Glacier Hotel and the Granite Park Chalet. Once again, with E.G. Evensta as contractor, Great Northern crews, supplemented

17Daily Inter Lake, 22 September 1913.
with local laborers, engaged in the task of constructing a large hotel; and once again Louis Hill appealed to nearly every department of Great Northern to lend assistance and materials. The Many Glacier Hotel, a four and five story building of Swiss architecture, had a basement of native stone with woodwork throughout, including furniture, of native wood. The only prefinished wood articles brought to the construction site were the window sashes and door frames. Other materials came to the site on freight wagons that left every morning from Midvale for the five day round trip to Many Glacier, after having been loaded with equipment and food from incoming trains.\(^{18}\)

Lumber used in the construction came from the forest east of the hotel. So intense was the timber harvesting in this area in 1914 and 1915, that the construction engineers brought a sawmill into the Valley to produce large quantities of cut lumber. Timber cutting crews placed the logs in piles to be seasoned in temporary kilns and scaled by Park rangers to determine the amount of board feet. In all, Great Northern crews purchased and cut more than two million board feet of timber in the Valley between 1914 and 1915.\(^{19}\)

\(^{18}\)McGillis, p. 11.

\(^{19}\)Timber Sales to Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 901, GNPHC.
The completed structure had a total of 178 rooms. One guest, visiting just after the hotel opened in August of 1915, made this appraisal: "The rooms are furnished in rustic style to give the forest and camp atmosphere; but there is something more than rustic to them for the guests, inasmuch as every room has hot and cold running water, telephone, steam heat and practically every convenience of the modern, first-class hotel." As indeed it did, for the Great Northern had expended over $500,000.00 in making the facility the epitome of ostentatiousness in Glacier Park. Visitor comfort was, of course, paramount and included in the conveniences were a menu printer device, tailor shop, barber shop and hospital. Unseen by the guests, though no less essential to their comfort, were other features of the hotel. The kitchen contained appliances ranging from knife cleaners and butter cutters to egg boilers and ice choppers—all electrically driven. There were fire extinguishers and hose apparatus and a 60,000 gallon gravity pressure water system. The laundry had three industrial washers, a 100 inch ironer and could handle 6,000 pieces of laundry per day. Elsewhere, decorative appointments and expensive physical plant equipment made the Many Glacier Hotel a fitting counterpart to the Glacier Park Hotel at Midvale.21

21 Ibid., pp. 51-53.
Construction at Granite Park Chalets was a more difficult proposition. Its location near the 7,000 foot level of Swiftcurrent Pass was above the timber line, making the design of a log structure impossible. Therefore, a completely native stone building was the only solution. In the Spring of 1914, railroad stone quarrying crews located a tent camp at the chalet site that sheltered workers and the few tourists who passed through the area. This small crew worked on the chalet in periods of favorable weather throughout the year 1914-1915. Activity reached a peak just prior to the beginning of the 1915 season when sixty-horse pack strings made daily trips from Many Glacier Hotel carrying cement, nails, sand, articles of furniture and food provisions. By August, the work force had left, leaving behind a seventeen-room chalet and a six-room dormitory—the last of the Great Northern's chalet groups to be built in Glacier.\(^{22}\)

While laborers toiled on the last of these facilities, Great Northern executives in Minneapolis were busy organizing the Glacier Hotel Company, which took over the ownership

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\(^{22}\)Ibid., p. 55. Granite Park Chalets, like John Lewis' hotel on Lake McDonald, was not built as an exclusive alpine hunting lodge for Louis Hill. He did, however, have a cabin, "the Hill Chalet," erected at St. Mary Lake on the peninsula opposite the Going-to-the-Sun Chalet. The cabin became a summer residence, place of solitude and headquarters, during his frequent visits to Glacier.
and operation of the camps and hotels in the Park in 1914. The company, with a capital stock of $1,500,000.00, was a Minnesota-based firm and a subsidiary of the Great Northern.23

Although the railroad added other minor improvements to its hotel and chalet sites during 1914 and 1915, consisting largely of miscellaneous buildings, ice and store houses and generator plants, the completion of Many Glacier Hotel and Granite Park Chalets marked an end to the Great Northern's building activities in Glacier. Even the railroad's 1915 Annual Report acknowledged this with a cryptic note of finality: "The Glacier Park Hotel Company, during the year, practically completed its plan of development."24

The latter years of this decade were also years of strengthening for the Department of Interior, for it was in 1916 that the National Park Service came into existence to assume the responsibility for the collective administration of all the national parks. Prior to 1916, each park


24 Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Great Northern Railroad, 1915, p. Attendance at the camps in 1915 follows: Many Glacier-6,115; Granite Park-270; Two Medicine-335; Cut Bank-218; Gunsight-1,1018; St. Mary-986; Going-to-the Sun-2,814; Sperry-639. Superintendent's Annual Report, 1915, Superintendent S.F. Ralston, GNPHC.
he took office, was to involve the Government in the busi­nesses in the parks. Speaking of Yellowstone and Glacier, he declared that both had been "somewhat exploited" and that the Government should take a leading role in adver­tising the parks, which had, heretofore, been accomplished by the railroads (Great Northern and Northern Pacific). He even suggested that, in Yellowstone, the Government be made a partner with the Yellowstone Park Company and that the profits be shared.28

Quite naturally, Mather's recommendations met with little enthusiasm among Glacier's concession operators. The threat of direct Government intervention and expanded vigilance passed in comparative quietude in Glacier, but not before the Park Service had negotiated a twenty-year contract with the Glacier Park Hotel Company on March 28, 1917. The essential ingredients of the contract bound the newly-formed Hotel Company to the establishment, maintenance and continuance of the present facilities, in addition to a responsibility for erecting any further accommodations that the Director deemed necessary. First of its kind in Glacier, the long term contract meant that the Hotel Company, which had been basking in an atmosphere of permissiveness, now found itself subject to the edicts of the Director and the

28Ibid.
regulations pertaining to the protection and management of the Park. In this sense, the contract was purportedly a tool by which the Government could channel the energy of the Great Northern into a course of wise park management. For example, "no structure of importance" could be built by public operators until prior approval of the Park Service landscape engineer had been secured, both as to design and location.  

There were other provisions and binding clauses which had been calculated to insure that the Company's development in Glacier would be in the best interests of the public. But so, too, were there numerous provisions that lent a tone of leniency to the agreement. Hotel personnel had permission to mine coal, stone and sand, manufacture brick and concrete, install hydro-electric plants and lay wires for the transmission of current. Other sections gave the Company the right to maintain ten acre vegetable gardens, to graze sheep, beef cattle and horses and to seine whitefish from St. Mary Lake. Therefore, both parties to this contract felt they had earned a victory, and justifiably so. The Park Service had now firmly recruited the Hotel Company as the

Park's largest, most important concessioner. The Hotel Company also had reason to be pleased, for they continued their development along much the same lines as they had in previous years. Above all, the Company noted that, with the promise of a twenty-year operating period ahead, they had reasonably sound assurance of a continued return on their current hotel investment. Furthermore, as a rule, the Park covertly tolerated loose interpretations of the contract, thereby sustaining their earlier attitude of sanction. The Interior Department's tolerance toward the Great Northern during this decade was no better exemplified than in their timber sales to the Great Northern. Building materials for the railroad's construction program came largely from native Park timber. The railway began in 1910 cutting trees in the Park that had been pre-selected by Park rangers, but quickly protested that this procedure seriously delayed their building schedules. The Interior Department conceded this as a reasonable complaint and allowed the Great Northern the privilege of purchasing the Park timber for random cutting. The railroad paid a fee of $3.00/M board feet.

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30 Contracts, Glacier Park Hotel Company 1917-1960, file 900-02, GNPHC.

31 Letter from Acting Superintendent Hutchings to Secretary Franklin Lane, 13 April 1912, Timber Sales to GPHC, file 901, GNPHC.
A mild mandate at the onset, the timber permits and arbitrary harvesting practice netted the railroad's construction acres 169,986 board feet of timber between 1911 and 1912. Mild though the mandate was, the Great Northern grasp it more firmly in the following years. During the Winter of 1912-1913, the railroad assailed the Superintendent with further proposals for new chalets. Faced with the zeal of the railroad's building program, the Department of Interior consulted with the Forest Service for advice on timber prices on a large volume basis, wishing to exact a just price based on conditions of harvest and quality of timber. This they did because the railroad had served notice early in 1913 that they could not pay the current fee of $3.00/M board feet. Attorneys for the Great Northern pointed out that, during the construction of similar buildings in Yellowstone Park, no charges had been made for timber. They argued that the parks are "similarly situated and the buildings about to be constructed are about the same distance from the railroad as the buildings in Yellowstone are, and it seems to us that we ought to be

32 Total board feet at the camps was: Two Medicine-11,330; Cut Bank-21,895; St. Mary-34,185; Narrows Camp No. 1-59,691; Narrows Camp No. 2-16,590; McDermott-26,295. Timber Sales to GPHC, file 901, GNPHC.
put on the same footing as the Yellowstone...."^\textsuperscript{33} Louis Hill tactfully added, "It is our intention to build some additional camps as we desire to have 1200 beds in the Park this year, which will be about half the number of beds in Yellowstone Park, and I hope...we will not be delayed in obtaining (timber harvesting) permits...."^\textsuperscript{34}

High officials in the Interior Department yielded. Rather than delay Glacier's principle concessioner over timber price arguments, they granted further permits to the railroad at a reduced rate of $0.50/M board feet. This corresponded to the rate for timber sales in the nearby Blackfoot (Lewis and Clark) Forest.\textsuperscript{35} In so doing, the Government displayed a tolerance towards the Great Northern and a disdain for the conservation of Glacier's natural resources. The Interior Department was as willing to please as the Great Northern was eager to build. If it meant sacrificing Glacier's timber to gain much-needed public housing, Government officials did so, reconciling the substitution of intangible resource management policies for tangibles in the form of shelter for the public.

\textsuperscript{33}Letter, J.H. Carroll, General Attorney GNRR to Secretary Franklin Lane, 13 September 1913, Timber Sales to GPHC, file 901, GNPHC.

\textsuperscript{34}Letter from L.W. Hill to Superintendent J.L. Galen, 20 January 1913, Timber Sales to GPHC, file 901, GNPHC.

\textsuperscript{35}Telegram from J.M. Cathcart, General Manager GPHC, to Secretary Franklin Lane, 8 May 1913, Timber Sales to GPHC, file 901, GNPHC.
The Great Northern availed themselves of the lowered timber prices and besieged Park headquarters with requests for timber cutting permits at Going-To-The-Sun Camp, St. Mary Camp, McDermott Camp, and Red Eagle Basin.\(^{36}\) The contagion of timber harvesting continued into 1914. That year had no sooner arrived than the Superintendent received a request for a permit to cut one million board feet of timber in the vicinity of the McDermott Chalet Group for the construction of the Many Glacier Hotel. Only when the crews completed work on this hotel did the timber harvesting cease.\(^{37}\)

Less harmful than the Great Northern's timber harvesting were the other activities carried out by the railroad during this decade. Not all their endeavors centered upon

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\(^{36}\) Letter from L.C. Laylin, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, to Superintendent J.L. Galen, 15 September 1913, Timber Sales to GPHC, file 901, GNPHC. The railroad deferred work at Red Eagle Basin in 1913. Subsequently, no structures appeared at that site in this decade. The permit for construction at McDermott Chalet Group was for the rebuilding of several chalets that had been destroyed by a snowslide occurring in the Spring of 1913, for which the Great Northern sustained a loss of "fully $10,000.00." Telegram from J.M. Cathcart to Superintendent J.L. Galen, 29 April 1913, Timber Sales to GPHC, file 901, GNPHC.

\(^{37}\) During the five years of the Great Northern's most intense building in Glacier, timber cutting crews probably accounted for more than four million board feet of Park timber. Letter from Superintendent J.L. Galen to J.A. Shoemaker, General Manager of GPHC, 21 August 1914, Timber Sales to GPHC, file 901, GNPHC.
the actual construction of fixed dwellings, though the shelter and comfort of the hotel patron were always a consideration. During this period, the railroad established the first telephone communication system on the east side of the Park; they placed tour and rental boats in service on Swiftcurrent, St. Mary and Two Medicine Lakes; they worked in close conjunction with saddle horse concessioners, whose touring parties stayed at Great Northern chalets and travelled over trails maintained by Great Northern employees.38

Of all the peripheral activities of the Great Northern in this period, none was more significant than the efforts expended to construct and maintain a road system that would give access to the chalet and hotel sites. Throughout the decade, the condition of the road system on the east side had an undeniable bearing on camp construction and subsequent visitation. Early in the decade, Louis Hill realized that wagon roads would be needed to supercede the trails that served Mr. Hilligoss' tent camps. In 1911, he ordered a

38The Interior Department permitted the Great Northern to construct a telephone system on the east side that connected all the camps with the hotel and depot at Midvale. These lines aggregated 73 miles by 1912. The following year, the railroad placed the "St. Mary", a launch of 75-passenger capacity, into service on St. Mary Lake that gave boat transportation from St. Mary Chalet to the Going-To-The-Sun Chalet. Superintendent's Annual Reports, 1912, 1913, GNPHC.
wagon road built from Midvale north to McDermott Lake, a distance of 57 miles, with spur roads giving access to the camps at Cut Bank, Two Medicine and St. Mary. Hill pressed 800 men and 400 horse teams into service on the final sections during the spring so the road would be completed before the 1912 season.\textsuperscript{39} This road lay entirely on Blackfoot Indian Reservation land bordering the Park, except for those sections entering the valleys and giving ingress to the chalet groups. The Government reimbursed the railroad with construction contracts whenever the roads lay on national park land.

Immediately after the completion of this road, Glacier's first transport company formed under the management of W.A. Brewster. Brewster, with three horse-drawn stages, operated over the new road and gave the initial passenger service to the railroad's interior camps. The trip from the railroad at Midvale to McDermott Camp normally took two days, with an overnight stop at St. Mary Camp.\textsuperscript{40}

Hill continued to devote attention to road construction in the ensuing years. He appeared often in the Park, directing

\textsuperscript{39}\textit{Daily Inter Lake}, 15 May 1915.

\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Robinson, Through the Years}, p. 66. For a descriptive account of stage travel in the Park at this time, see "A Stage Coach Trip Through Glacier National Park," by Hilda St. George, \textit{Overland Monthly}, vol. 63, ser. 2, June, 1914, pp. 598-603.
changes here, authorizing expenditures there, and, in general, supervising progress so that, by 1914, motorized traffic was open to McDermott Lake. Improvements such as this meant more refined methods of transportation and the Brewster stages soon gave way to a newly-arrived competitor, The Glacier Park Transport Company. This company, owned by Rowe Emery and backed by the White Motor Company, became the Park's sole transport concessioner when they signed a contract with the Department of Interior in June of 1914. The advent of the automobile on Glacier's east side roads made it possible, in good weather, for tourists to leave Midvale at eight A.M. and, "after a very delightful ride of four and one-half to five hours, eat lunch at Many Glacier Camp, make one of the side trips in the afternoon or even return to Glacier Park (Midvale) the same day."^42

Unfortunately, road conditions were not always conducive to a "very delightful" ride. Rain and snow frequently destroyed dependable connections and transport schedules and made for a journey that was not without its hardships. When it rained, a Great Northern advertising agent later recalled, "it was all an automobile could do in those days to get ten passengers

^41Ibid., p. 67.

^42Letter from Superintendent Galen to Secretary Lane, 23 July 1914. Priviledges and Permits, file 901, GNPHC.
from Glacier Park Hotel to St. Mary and back in one day."\textsuperscript{43} Eight and ten horse teams had to be kept at impassable points on the road to retrieve busses and touring cars from the mud. During construction of Many Glacier Hotel, for example, only large freight wagons could negotiate the snow slides and mud sinks while shipping materials and supplies to the hotel site. At one juncture, hoping to avoid some of the worst sections, Great Northern crews unloaded the heavy steam boilers for the hotel from railway cars at Browning, yet despite these precautions, one of the wagons carrying a boiler, "bogged down in the mud somewhere along the road and its location was completely unknown for five or six weeks."\textsuperscript{44}

Naturally, such road conditions were a major deterrent of hotel and chalet patrons. Each spring the railroad put crews and horse teams to work on the road system, but it was nearly impossible to place them in travelling condition by the beginning of the season. This malady persisted until 1917, when an increase in Government appropriations, stemming from the establishment of the National Park Service, made road improvements possible under Government supervision on both sides of the Park. Gradually, the Park Service assumed

\textsuperscript{43}McGillis, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{44}Ibid., p. 11.
larger responsibility for road maintenance on the east side—a responsibility hitherto assumed entirely by the railway. Government crews installed culverts, and bridges, eliminated curves, realigned grades and filled river bottoms and lowlands. By the end of the 1917 season, the road had been completely rebuilt with Government funds. The resulting improvements acted favorably in the stimulation of travel. In fact, the hotel at Many Glacier became so overcrowded that the railroad authorized the expenditure of $136,000.00 by the Hotel Company to add a four-story, 80-room annex to the main lobby. This addition, built during the 1917 season, was open for occupancy the following year. Still the vacationers came. Compilations of travel figures by Superintendent Walter Payne revealed that the average length of time spent in the Park by visitors in 1917 was longer than the average of any preceding year. He further observed, "Visitors made a practice of going from one hotel to another on one side of the Park, then crossing the mountains on the railroad or on the trails through any of several passes and visiting resorts on the opposite side."

45Superintendent's Annual Report, 1917, Superintendent Walter Payne, GNPHC.
46Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Great Northern Railroad, 1917, p. 11.
47Superintendent's Annual Report, 1917, Superintendent Walter Payne. Travel during 1917 was 15,050 compared with 12,839 in 1916. GNPHC.
It was well that Glacier's concessioners relished the prosperity of the 1917 season, for the following year, when America entered the war against the Central Powers in Europe, these concessioners operated in the face of certain loss due to decreased travel. Government officials, in general, discouraged travel for pleasure and reduced Glacier's tourist season from four months to three. The Great Northern was more stringent in their restrictions. Their most harmful cutback, insofar as the Hotel Company was concerned, was the elimination of train service by the "Glacier Park Limited," the passenger train that served the east and west Park entrances (Midvale and Belton) with two daily stops. [A further consequence of the war was the withdrawal of Glacier Park's advertising by the Great Northern's nationwide publicity bureaus.]

Nonetheless, the Hotel Company remained undaunted throughout the 1918 season and operated all the chalets and hotels, with the exception of Sperry Chalet and St. Mary Chalet, where needed repairs and previous lack of visitors warranted closure. When the season came to a close, Glacier's concession managers compiled and submitted their relatively meager house counts to the Superintendent. In the case of the Hotel Company, the reports showed 35,544 meals and 15,700 lodgings furnished to the public; a substantial decrease from the previous
year. The 1918 season reminded Hotel Company and railroad executives of the attendant hazards of their concession business and reinforced the realization that, as rail travel diminished, so, too, did hotel patronage.

But faith renewed in 1919 and 1920, as tourists made up for the travel restrictions of 1918, and hotel managers cared for an onrush of guests that, again, seemed to have no end. Superintendent Payne and his staff watched intently and then somewhat alarmingly as the facilities filled with eager patrons. Almost certain that this trend would continue, Payne began making some well-founded predictions. In 1919, he warned, "If travel to Glacier Park increases in the next few years at the rate which it increased this past season, more adequate accommodations must be provided both in the way of hotel and transportation facilities. On several occasions the sudden influx of large numbers of tourists was more than the present facilities of some of the camps was prepared to care for."49

Payne's forecast found a not-too-receptive audience in the Great Northern's corporate chiefs, who had already

48 Superintendent's Annual Report, 1918, Superintendent Walter Payne. Attendance at the Company's hotels and chalets in 1918: Glacier Park Hotel-4,506; Going-To-The-Sun Camp-1,243; Many Glacier Hotel-4,049; Cut Bank-146. GNPHC.

49 Superintendent's Annual Report, 1919, Superintendent Walter Payne. GNPHC.
authorized, during this decade, several million dollars for the establishment of the present hotel and chalet system. The prospect of carrying further building projects into the 1920's was not a pleasing one. Yet, the obligations of the Hotel Company's recent contract required that the concessioner provide such facilities as the Director considered necessary. And Director Mather showed no hesitancy in asserting this authority. He joined Payne in recommending that more accommodations be planned for. Specifically, he suggested a "large hotel" for the Belly River area with the possibility of "hotels of a somewhat smaller capacity" at Logan Pass, Bowman and Kintla Lakes. Mather said, in 1920, "I visited the Park about the middle of August and found the hotels taxed to full capacity, and the chalets that I visited had nearly as many guests as accommodations could be provided for." Focusing on the problem at Going-To-The-Sun Chalets, he continued by saying:

The travel for the past two years has, at times severely taxed the capacity of Going-To-The-Sun Chalets and Granite Park Chalets and, within the next year or two, it will be necessary to convert the former chalet into a hotel...Going-To-The-Sun Chalets...

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will always constitute a popular resort. The travel to this hostelry will increase enormously, and it is safe to predict that eventually a hotel of 500 guests capacity could be operated at Going-To-The-Sun with great success.51

Thus, did the Company's building decade come to a close--with an inauspicious harbinger of more extensive building to come, but at least with certain assurance that the Company's existing hotels and chalets would not suffer from vacant dining rooms and unsigned guest registers.

51Ibid. Travel increased 18.4 per cent during the 1920 season.
CHAPTER III

THE TURNING POINT 1920-1940

The 1920's, perhaps more than any other period, were the Golden Years for the Glacier Park Hotel Company. They were brief, high-keyed years marked by revenue increases in the columns of the Company's ledgers. As predicted, Park visitation continued to soar and with it the house counts at the Company's tourist facilities. Guests who had anticipated only short visits found themselves altering their plans so they could remain for weeks. Pre-season bookings were often completed months in advance of the beginning of the season in June.

Not surprisingly, the overwhelming majority of Company patrons during this era came to Glacier via Great Northern passenger trains. The railway that James J. Hill had built transported tourists to a national park playground that his son, Louis, had helped create and develop. "I taught people how they could slide across the National backbone with their eyes shut," the former railroad baron boasted. "And I am teaching the people that; if in passing, they will open their eyes and scratch the nation's backbone they will experience the thrill of their lives," replied Louis, who at this time was not only Chairman of the Board of Great Northern Directors...
but President of the Glacier Park Hotel Company as well.¹

Louis Hill, always the astute guiding spirit of Glacier’s development and promotion during these years, knew perfectly that he could not bring the American people to the mountains until he had taken the mountains to them. Mindful of this challenge and aware that the promotion of the Park would yield handsome rail passenger profits, he channeled the productivity of the Great Northern’s advertising departments into extensive Glacier Park publicity campaigns. It was this department that produced the "See America First" slogan and emblazoned their coach cars with attractive scenarios of Glacier snow fields, mountain peaks and floral displays. Hill sent delegations of Blackfoot Indians, under the promotional name of the Glacier Park Tribe, in special trains to numerous American cities to foster an interest in the region from which they came. Influential men of wealth, Senators and writers of renown came to the Park on charter trains and were given all-expense paid tours. Books such as James Williard Schultz’s, Signposts of Adventure, Blackfoot Tales of Glacier National Park, and Frank Linderman’s, Kootenai Why Stories, appeared as a request of the Great Northern. Tenting To-Night by Mary Roberts Rinehart and Holtz and Bemis’, Glacier National Park--Its

Trails and Treasures had Great Northern sponsorship and each contained many covert advertisements of overnight facilities for would-be Glacier visitors.\(^2\)

Furthermore, Hill was a member of nearly all the geographical societies in the United States. He personally led many society excursions to the summits of several of Glacier's peaks. They, in turn, helped him map and plan standard hiking and walking tours in the Park for the benefit of his hotel clientele. So that they might gather material which their audience now began to clamor for, Hill also gave free train visas to many travelogue lecturers who desired to visit the Park. He even organized a lecture bureau of his own and, before long, countless high schools, lodges, colleges, YMCA's, civic clubs and commercial organizations received the word of a heretofore unheralded national park.\(^3\)

The results were extremely gratifying. In the Spring of 1925, there were remarks such as this from Rowe Emery, President of the Glacier Park Transportation Company: "This looks like the year we have been waiting for in the tourist business. In Glacier Park alone I have added to my bus line enough cars


\(^3\)Steele, op. cit., p.473. Many of the Great Northern's advertising schemes were born in the preceding decade, yet the most favorable results did not occur until the 1920's.
to care for 250 more passengers daily than were carried last year." He expressed no false hope, for during the summer months of 1925, fifty-two special charter trains carried 8,000 passengers to Glacier, in addition to the regular rail traffic.4

As a rule, during this as in the previous decade, a great many guests who patronized the Company's hotels and chalets exclusively, did so using the Great Northern's all-expense Park tours. These tours could be arranged for at any Great Northern ticket office in the nation or by mail from the Company's headquarters in Minneapolis. They entitled the bearer to a four to six day stopover in Glacier and included the cost of bus transportation, launch transportation where specified, meals and lodging. They varied in cost and character of accommodations and all could be altered to fit the travelling itinerary of each passenger. At each Park entrance, Belton and Glacier Park Station, the railway honored all one way and round trip tickets for stopovers in Glacier not exceeding ten days. With but few exceptions, tour charges and hotel rates were based on the American Plan with a fixed charge per day for room and meals. Because these years were characterized by close cooperation between the Hotel Company, the Glacier Park Transportation Company

4Great Falls Tribune, June 15, 1925.
and the Park Saddle Horse Company, tourists frequently availed themselves of the numerous Park tours handled jointly by these three companies. Railway agents gave tour members a letter of credit upon entering the Park (more often a stamp affixed to the passenger's train ticket) and sent cumulative bills to them after departure.  

The Hotel Company, now thrust inextricably into the arena of full scale, all-encompassing public service in Glacier, also engaged in the business of passenger launches on several of the Park's lakes. In the previous decade (1912 and 1913), the Great Northern had placed two motor launches in service on St. Mary Lake to transport supplies and passengers from St. Mary Chalets to Going-To-The-Sun Chalets. In 1920, the Company added a forty-foot passenger launch on Two Medicine Lake and in 1928 built a seventy-

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5 *Glacier National Park, Great Northern Railway Travel Circular no. 30-26 (St. Paul, Minnesota: McGill & Warner Company, 1926), p. 8. Rates at the Company's facilities as well as those fixed by other Park concessioners had to be submitted to the Secretary of the Interior each year for approval. (Information on early-day rates at the Company's various units can be found in the Great Northern travel brochures, New Hotels and Tours: Glacier National Park, 1915, and *Glacier National Park: Hotels and Tours*, n.d. circa, 1921.*

6 *Robinson, op. cit.,* p. 68.
three foot, 250 passenger launch which it placed in operation on Waterton Lake. At Swiftcurrent, Two Medicine and St. Mary Lakes, there were also row boats available on a rental basis for hotel and chalet guests.

One significant concession feature to emerge during the 1920's was the inauguration of the High Mountain Camps through the Glacier Park Saddle Horse Company in 1925. All three of these camps--Red Eagle Lake, Crossley Lake, Waterton Lake (Goathaunt)--and a fourth added in 1926 at Fifty Mountain, could be reached only by trail. At each camp there were wooden-floored silk tents capable of housing a total of twenty-four travellers offering such spartan conveniences as wood stoves, wash basin, two single iron beds with mattresses, blankets and sheets. In a central location to the sleeping tents was a larger canvas tent used for cooking, dining and lounging purposes. The Saddle Company operated primarily on five-day, all-expense camping tours originating and terminating at Many Glacier or Glacier Park Hotel. There were also five to fifteen day tours, one to six day tours, and two separate ten day tours. There was the triangle trip, the "Inside Trail" and the always popular "North Circle Trip"

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7 Ibid., p. 69.
8 GNRR Travel Circular no. 30-26, op. cit., p. 8, and interview, Jim Hindle, 21 August 1971, Lake McDonald, Montana.
all terminating each day after a ten to eighteen mile trip at a tent camp, chalet or hotel, earning for Glacier the sobriquet of "Saddle Horse Park" within a few short years. 9

When used as connective points to the more extensive tours, the four High Mountain Camps, the two hotels and the six chalet groups represented a wide variety of accommodations available to the Park visitor. Coincidentally, the Saddle Horse Company reached its economic apogee during this decade as well. At its peak, the Company owned over one thousand horses, was the largest outfitter of its kind in the world and transported ten thousand visitors each year over Park trails. 10 To a minor degree, the High Mountain Camps helped alleviate some of the crowding at the Hotel Company's facilities.

For those not engaging enough, of course, there were always the salubrious surroundings of the Many Glacier and Glacier Park hotels where, in all things, both great and small, managers tried to emulate the comforts of large metropolitan hotels of the East. The private baths,

9Ibid.

10Robinson, p. 65. W. N. Noffsinger, a Kalispell attorney, consolidated a number of independent saddle horse operators into the Park Saddle Horse Company in 1915. It became the official saddle horse concessioner in Glacier when they received a concession contract from the Department of the Interior the same year. George Noffsinger became President of the Company when his father died in 1924 and, under his direction, the Company established the High Mountain Camps the following year.
"cuisine and service of high order," plunge pools, sun parlors and nightly dancing seemed to suit the needs of the most exacting patron. The attitude of many eastern vacationers who toured the Park in these years was that the best hotels were the biggest ones and he was unhappy until he had both. In this sense, the two Company hotels were adequate replicas.

Another concession to both benefit and grow while giving service to the summer train loads of tourists was the Glacier Park Transportation Company, still under the supervision of Rowe Emery and still financed by the White Motor Company. ¹¹ The constant improvement of roads on Glacier's east side through Federal, State, County and Blackfoot Reservation funds established arteries that no longer threatened the comfort and dispositions of bus passengers. The maintenance of more reliable bus schedules had become imperative since the vast number of fares were tightly-scheduled rail passengers who disembarked at Midvale or Belton to begin extended tours of the Park. By 1929, the Transport Company's busses kept a schedule of two hours and forty minutes from Midvale

¹¹In 1927, Rowe Emery sold the Transportation Company to a California newspaper publisher, Howard H. Hayes, who also had Government transport concessions in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. In Glacier, he enlarged the fleet of busses and touring cars and changed the name to Glacier Park Transport Company. (Robinson, p. 67).
to Many Glacier including a half-hour stop at St. Mary Chalets for Going-To-The-Sun Chalets transfer. As many as nine busses made the trip each day to the neighboring Canadian Lakes Park and the new Prince of Wales Hotel, covering the 105 miles in five hours. The Transport Company maintained a growth rate commensurate to that of the trend-setting Hotel Company throughout this decade. Near the close of the decade, Fred A. Noble, speaking as General Manager of the Company, enumerated an inventory of 61 eleven-passenger busses, 16 seven-passenger touring cars and 6 two-ton trucks. In total, his company employed approximately eighty drivers who headquartered at Midvale where there were dormitories, three garages, a machine and paint shop, mess hall, and office buildings.\footnote{Great Falls Tribune, 25 February 1930.}

Excepting one isolated, albeit noteworthy, event of concessioner antagonism, the relations between the Park administration and the Hotel Company representatives remained congenial in the 1920's. More accurately, Glacier's government officials interpreted the Company's wide-ranging activities as not just economically motivated but benevolently conceived. In essence, the two dealt in a state of administrative symbiosis—a kinship which had originated in the previous decade and which now had carried over into the 1920's.
Exemplary of this, and beginning in 1922, a nature guide service began in Glacier under joint sponsorship of the National Park Service and the University of Montana, which sent trained lecturers to conduct the service that included interpretive talks and displays explaining the natural features of the Park. Suggesting that the lectures could only be made a success with the cooperation of the Hotel authorities, Superintendent J. Ross Eakin urged the Company to designate a section at the hotels and chalets for the lectures, set definite times and made scheduled announcements. Hotel managers concurred, realizing that this would be an excellent means of keeping the visitor in the Park for a longer period of time, because, as one visitor noted, "I have observed that most visitors do not ride horseback and a little encouragement would at once interest them and add greatly to the pleasure of their visit. A great many tourists are timid about leaving the hotel, either afraid of the altitude, getting lost, or seeing nothing of interest ahead, the consequence is they either leave the hotel immediately or sit around until the next bus arrives." The Company, quick to perceive that


14 Letter to Superintendent J.R. Eakin from Dr. H.L. Nietert, 12 April 1922, Nature Guide Service, file 131, GNPHC.
an informed clientele generally remained longer, soon supplied lecture and display facilities for the nature guides. Publications and films describing Glacier's attraction appeared at Many Glacier Hotel, Going-To-The-Sun Chalets and Lewis' Glacier Hotel in the McDonald Valley. By 1929, the nature guides had become incorporated into the Park Service organization as Ranger Naturalists who continued to work closely with hotel employees for the benefit of the public.\textsuperscript{15}

The apparent harmony of the decade notwithstanding, there did occur an incident that strained relations between the Park Service and the Hotel Company. It involved the deteriorated condition of the sawmill which had been used during the construction of the Many Glacier Hotel in 1914 and 1915, but which had been operated as late as 1918 (primarily for the purpose of cutting firewood for the hotel's numerous fireplaces).\textsuperscript{16} After 1919, the sawmill lay idle. By 1922, it had become apparent to Park rangers and Hotel managers that the mill, the sprawling piles of slash lumber and the nearby shacks had become unsightly and an obvious safety hazard. "I should be very glad to hear of your plans concerning the elimination of the sawmill and the rest of the shacks around

\textsuperscript{15}Buchholtz, p. 48.

\textsuperscript{16}Letter to Superintendent Walter Payne from H.A. Noble, 8 February 1918, Many Glacier Sawmill File, GNPHC. The Company paid a rental fee of $10.00 per year to the Government for the lease of the two acres of land on which the mill stood.
it," stated Superintendent Eakin to General Manager Noble. Though Noble was in agreement about the appearance of the mill and rightly aware that the old buildings and the cut timber constituted a fire menace to the nearby hotel, he nonchalantly replied, "There is nothing that need be done at this particular time." As the months passed and the guests criticized, however, there were collective discussions attempting to reach a solution, but the matter remained an open issue until May of 1924 when Superintendent Eakin, while on a routine inspection tour of the Park's east side, determined that the sawmill site and its surroundings must be removed and cleaned up promptly adding, "...it is impossible for tourists to come or go without passing through groups of firewood piles." Still, the Company took no action.

One year later, the crusading Director of the National Park Service, Stephen Mather, visited Glacier during the height of a tour of western national parks. Mather, who had been following the sawmill issue with concern, proceeded

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17 Letter to H.A. Noble from Superintendent J.R. Eakin, 1 September 1922, Many Glacier Sawmill File, GNPHC.

18 Letter to W.P. Kenney from H.A. Noble, 13 September 1922, Many Glacier Sawmill File, GNPHC.

19 Letter to H.A. Noble from Superintendent J.R. Eakin, 28 May 1924, Many Glacier Sawmill File, GNPHC.
directly to Many Glacier and resolved the problem with abrupt expertise. On August 10, with the aid of a crew of Glacier's trail maintenance men, he personally placed and ignited thirteen charges of TNT at the sawmill, thus quickly eliminating the mill as a source of contention. The next day he departed for Yellowstone Park in search of new foes in his "fight against corruption, commercialism and destructive private interests in the national parks."

Shortly thereafter, Company President Louis Hill arrived in Glacier with a cadre of Great Northern lawyers and began to question Park Service employees about the dynamiting. For a moment it seemed possible that Hill would try to establish that the elimination of the sawmill was actually a deliberate destruction of his property and a civil suit could be justified on that basis. But Park rangers remained mute and the contest, along with the sawmill, faded. Important to Louis Hill, the Great Northern and the Hotel Company was that the wrath of one Stephen Mather had been felt and that the veneer of reticence among national park policy makers had begun to vanish.

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20 Great Falls Tribune, 11 August 1925.


22 Letter to Director Mather from Superintendent Charles J. Kraebel, 3 October 1925, Many Glacier Sawmill File, GNPHC.
The strengthening of the National Park Service was most apparent in 1929. At a National Parks Utility Operators Conference that year, a requirement emerged compelling all concessioners to submit a five year building and expansion plan to the Secretary of Interior beginning in March of 1930. Government authorities emphasized the need for all utility operators in the parks to submit these five year plans so that the Park Service and the operators, working together, could provide the public with the best possible facilities for enjoying the parks. Submission of such a program was important in connection with the preparation of the Government budgets for development work. When served with this requirement, along with the suggestion to build moderately-priced cabin camps to care for the ever increasing auto travelers in Glacier, Company officials hedged momentarily, then responded with a rebuttal claiming that it would be impossible for them to issue even a tentative building plan until the Government finished with their own projects, namely the transmountain road, which was nearing completion. Manager Binder tried to soothe the proponents of the five year plan

saying, "With the exception of a peak day or two, there has [sic] been ample facilities in Glacier Park at all times. I truely [sic] believe that with the opening of the Roose­velt Highway (U.S. 2) in mid-season, our facilities will be ample for the coming season." The purchase of the Lewis Hotel in the McDonald Valley, called "the best investment for the price that the Great Northern had ever made," apparently bolstered Binder's optimism and gave further hope that the Hotel Company's facilities would be able to handle another season's tourist rush.

There was even a brief hint of improved cooperation when, in 1930, W.P. Kenney, Vice President of the Great Northern, succeeded Louis Hill as President of the Hotel Company.

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24 Letter to Director Horace Albright from A.J. Binder, 29 April 1930, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

25 Letter to Director Albright from Superintendent Eakin, 12 May 1930, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

26 Three years earlier, in 1927, the Company expanded their service to the Northern section of the Park by constructing a third Swiss hotel, the Prince of Wales Hotel, on the Canadian end of Waterton Lake in Canada's Waterton Lakes National Park. Though located on Canadian soil, the railroad maintained ownership and operation. Completed in 1928, the five-story Prince of Wales, with a capacity of 150, joined Many Glacier and Glacier Park Hotels as the Company's third and final "deluxe hostel." Because of its location in the Canadian Province of Alberta, financial and conditional records were not kept by the National Park Service as it was not within the boundaries of the Park and not counted as part of the Park's accommodation units. Remarks concerning the existence, operation and history of this particular hotel have been deleted from this study. (Robinson, p. 62.)
Prior to this it had been foregone and commonly unspoken that
with Hill at the helm of the Company that he had established
and overseen for nearly twenty years, "very little along
desireable [sic] lines could be accomplished." Superintendent
Eakin felt that with Kenney as President of the Company, the
Park could progress and develop along more logical and cer­
tainly less selfish lines.27 Such was not to be the case.

Economically, the 1930's brought sharp contrasts to the
prosperity of the preceding decade. A new, and particularly
harmful in view of the Hotel Company, travel trend was develop­
ing. Furthermore, the nationwide Depression curtailed many
pleasure visits to Glacier and other national parks. In the
aftermath of the 1929 stock market crash, Americans began to
discover that they could no longer afford all-expense tours
of the Park sponsored by the railway. More realistically,
anything short of an abbreviated stay at one of the chalet
sites was out of the question for most vacationers. Indeed,
there was a new and growing concern for the ability of Glacier's
tourist facilities to supply the wants of a mobile, motor-borne
vacationer. The winds of progress were now blowing strongly
enough to mask the whistles of the Great Northern's passenger trains. During the 1930's, families in Model A's began to

27Letter to Director Albright from Superintendent Eakin,
23 June 1930, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company,
file 900-05, GNPHC.
supplant an opulent pullman car set. These tourists, arriving in Glacier, motored past facilities such as Many Glacier Hotel or Going-To-The-Sun Chalets in search of more humble, less expensive cabin camps or even one of the new government campgrounds. In areas outside the Park as well, auto cabin camps adjacent to the entrance highways began attracting a majority of the travelling public. "As you know, all of the cabin camps located near the Park did a 'land office' business the past summer," reported Superintendent E.T. Scoyen in 1933. "All these people who are operating these camps have stated that they were up to capacity nearly every night of the season."28 He relayed this information to the manager of the Hotel Company, A.J. Binder, strongly emphasizing the great demand for this type of tourist accommodation and urging that the Company begin immediate plans for a building program of this sort in Glacier.

The deadline date for submittal of the utility operator's five year plans approached and passed in Glacier with no response from the Glacier Park Hotel Company. Great Northern officials and Hotel Company managers also felt the winds of progress, although they were undecided about the directions they took and what changes they would bring. A.J. Binder

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28 Letter to A.J. Binder from Superintendent E.T. Scoyen, 28 February 1933, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHC.
summarized the climate of non-conviction at the home offices in Minneapolis this way: "We are of the opinion that this is the year [1930] when we will have to carefully observe the trend of traffic and decide on our plans for the location of auto camps, improvements of existing chalets, etc."²⁹ But Park administrators at Belton and auto tourists passing through the Park entrances could not wait. Expediency was the watchword when Park Service Director Horace Albright, whose patience, like that of his predecessor, Stephen Mather, had begun to wear thin, issued this ultimatum while writing to Superintendent Scoyen, "I can see that the time is coming when we will have to have a showdown with the Glacier Park Hotel Company, and we will have it this summer. That Company is the only one that did not make a satisfactory reply to our request for a five year building plan."³⁰ Continuing, he stated that the Company's attitude indicated that it was "still determined to do as it pleases in Glacier National Park." He promised the Interior Department's Bureau of the Budget that if the Hotel Company did not comply with the installation of satisfactory facilities, their franchise

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²⁹Letter to Albright from Binder, 29 April 1930, op. cit.
³⁰Letter to Superintendent J.R. Eakin from Director Albright, 18 June 1930, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
would be given to "some other party that will." The gauntlet was down. With unaccustomed force, the Park Service had begun to eclipse the position of leadership that the Great Northern had held in Glacier for twenty years. Henceforth, the symbiosis of earlier years was to become increasingly tenuous.

Seeking to experiment with the auto cabins and hoping to preserve good feelings and their concession contract, the Company embarked on a token building project in the Many Glacier Valley in 1931 and installed several low cost auto cabins at Swiftcurrent, one mile from the Many Glacier Hotel. Quite obviously, the features of these auto cabins had none of the grandiose embellishments common to the hotel and chalet system. No bellhops greeted and no dance music beckoned. Since the cabin camp at Swiftcurrent marked the first construction attempted by the Company since the completion of the Many Glacier Hotel addition in 1917, the Park Service took a keen interest in their design, location, safety features and aesthetic appearance. The "blank check" attitude of earlier Park administrators, notably characterized by the 1913 conference between Superintendent Galen and railroad representatives, was not again to occur. The Park Service, now a much more watchful custodian, sent its chief landscape

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31 *Great Falls Tribune*, 23 June 1931.
architect, Thomas C. Vint, to Glacier to confer with Hotel Company engineers concerning the location and design of the Swiftcurrent camp. Joining them in the discussions were Superintendent Scoyen, Charles Randalls, Park Engineer, Howard Hayes, President of the Transport Company, and many area rangers.32

Unfortunately, 1931 was a hard year for Park concession operators. The malaise of the Depression began to afflict Glacier's businessmen to its fullest. That year overall Park travel decreased 13.6 per cent while rail travel decreased 28 per cent from the 1930 season.33 All of which made for a season that was "...rather discouraging to Park operators" in the words of Director Albright. Though the director appraised the service of the concessioners as a "high grade of service," he went on to warn that, "It is highly probable, however, that any of them will find revenues in excess of expenses this year...."34 Therefore, the Park Service's hard line policy regarding concessioners tempered slightly during the next two years because of the devastation wrought by the

32Ibid. Landscape and architectural planners grouped the buildings in circles, eight cabins to a circle, so that they would resemble an Indian tepee encampment and, thus, preserve an Old West atmosphere within the Park.


34Ibid., p. 50.
Depression. By 1932, Director Albright was expressing "serious concern" over the lack of patronage at the hotels and transport lines operating in the national parks. Due to the decline in long distance rail travel, the concessioners "suffered severe losses" so that several of them were in "dire financial straits."

The Hotel Company in Glacier was among them. The closure of St. Mary Chalets and Cut Bank Chalets at the peak of the 1932 season exemplified the struggle that the Company was having. Company spokesmen stated that these chalets were no longer important from a

35Department of the Interior, Report of the Director of the National Park Service, 1932 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1932), p. 115. If 1931 had been a bad year, 1932 was even worse. Travel to Glacier fell another 16 per cent in 1932 while rail arrivals decreased by 32 per cent.

36As of June of 1932, the Glacier Park Hotel Company's holdings in Glacier Park consisted of the following:
- Belton Chalets
- Two Medicine Chalet Group
- Cut Bank Chalet Group
- St. Mary Chalet Group
- Going-To-The-Sun Chalet Group
- The Narrows Chalet Group (part of GTS Chalets)
- McDermott (Many Glacier) Chalet Group
- Granite Park Chalet Group
- Sperry Chalet Group
- Many Glacier Hotel
- Lake McDonald Hotel
- Glacier Park Hotel
- Many Glacier Auto Tourist Camp (Swiftcurrent)

37Telegram to Director Albright from Superintendent Scoyen, 21 July 1932, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
public service standpoint as there was practically no business at these two points. They gave assurance that the closure would not affect the operation of their other facilities. As further justification, they bemoaned that business "as a whole" was off 63 per cent in 1932. Taken collectively, all of Glacier's concession operators reported transactions that totalled only half that of the previous season.

Finally, after appeals from many of the nation's park utility operators, Director Albright authorized several policy changes for the concessions, effective December 15, 1932. Though numerous operators took advantage of these special privileges, the Glacier Park Hotel Company was not one of them. In many lodges and hotels in the national parks, European plan rates replaced American plan rates. Cafeteria service sometimes supplanted regular meal service in many units. Some operators offered special group or club rates for large parties visiting the Parks and made reductions for

38As early as 1928, the Glacier Park Transport Company had discontinued bus service to Cut Bank Chalets located approximately six miles off the main Blackfoot Highway that connected Midvale with Many Glacier Hotel. So few visitors desired to stay at the Cut Bank Chalet Group that it became financially prohibitive to list it on their schedule of stops. This left the chalets open only to patronage from private car travelers and saddle horse parties, though the Park Saddle Horse Company also, experiencing financial difficulties common to this period, found it had to reduce trail trips to the chalets. Similarly, the St. Mary Chalets also registered fewer guests after being by-passed as a regularly-scheduled stop by the Transport Company.

39Telegram, 21 July 1932, op. cit.
extended stays and for off season periods. Yet, the Hotel Company in Glacier clung steadfastly to its expensive camp program, and deferred any changes in types of service offered until better times arrived.

Meanwhile, Glacier's Superintendent E.T. Scoyen, besieged with complaints from Park visitors about the lack of auto cabin camps, renewed his admonitory appeals to the Hotel Company and reminded, "If you do not start this type of development yourself, you will only give encouragement to the building of large number of these camps near the Park which will give you aggressive and costly competition in the future." Though Scoyen did not suggest that the Company go into this development on a large scale in view of the depressed economic conditions, he did state very firmly that he "would like to see not less than twenty cabins ready at Many Glacier by the opening of the Park season." This was in February of 1933. In March the Company still had not responded and Scoyen exerted further pressure. He told Director Albright, "I do know that if the Glacier Park Hotel Company does not get these cabins ready for the 1933 season, it is going to cause us a considerable loss


41 Letter to A.J. Binder from Superintendent E.T. Scoyen, 28 February 1933, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHEC.
of prestige with some of our best friends and will do nothing to change the already bitter feeling against the [Company] which exists in practically all local communities."^42 Scoyen was correct.

Animosity towards the Great Northern and the Hotel Company in particular was apparent in at least one large city near the Park. One W.C. Whipps voiced what was seemingly a universal contention in 1932 when he wrote a sharply-worded polemic in the Kalispell Times. He attacked the "grasping maws" of the Great Northern Railroad which had turned the Park into a resort area which only the wealthy could afford to roam. "I'm telling you," he warned his readers, "that you'd better take along your swallow-tail or at least your tuxedo if you expect to stop at any of these classy hotels."

He furthered his tirade with this recommendation:

...large, fine hotels are too classy as well as too large for the average American traveler seeking only outing (and) recreation. In Glacier Park particularly, there should be erected at once, at every camp, good, substantial, permanent buildings of one, two, three, and four rooms for just the 'forgotten man' which he may occupy with his family or party.... There should also be constructed at each camp a building for a restaurant or cafeteria where meals at a reasonable

^42 Letter to Director Albright from Superintendent E.T. Scoyen, 15 March 1933, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHC.
price may be obtained. Do this and let the Great Northern have its wild animals, its conventional meals and its millionaires. Whipp's words, mingled with those of others in the throes of the Depression, substantiated what some Park officials had already suspected: the American populace, in this period particularly, wished not for crisply-clad cocktail waiters and golf courses while visiting the national parks. Other parks in the system had already awakened to this new trend. Clearly, the "forgotten man" had to be catered to.

Nonetheless, the repeated Government requests and public criticism fell upon deaf ears and the Great Northern remained disturbingly tardy. They expressed familiar catchwords that had issued forth previously noting that Depression effects and marginal capital availability precluded any building in Glacier. What was most distressing to the Railroad was the decline of rail passengers to Glacier and the increase of auto travellers. Obviously, they later admitted, the need for a different type of tourist housing was there, however, the demand came from a clientele that arrived in Glacier by means of private automobiles. This was anathema to the Railroad. The Great Northern had assumed that rail-borne Park visitors would sustain their elaborate hotel and chalet complex and it was this philosophy that was implicit in

43Kalispell Times, 6 October 1932.
nearly every activity that they engaged in. To ask the Railroad to construct cabin camps to shelter auto tourists was, in the minds of the Minneapolis magnates, counter to all their labors in Glacier over the past twenty-three years. Still, there was the compelling reminder that the Company was bound to furnish all services which the public demanded and with the completion of the transmountain road in 1933 the strident pleas from a more mobile vacationer could not be ignored.

The opening of the transmountain road on July 11, 1933 was an event of no small moment in Glacier's history. For the first time automobile travellers could cross the Continental Divide at Logan Pass on an inter-Park highway, hereafter referred to as the Going-To-The-Sun Highway, that joined the East and West sides. The Park's utility operators quickly felt the obvious effects of this three million dollar engineering feat and began to prepare themselves for an increase of auto patrons. For their part, Glacier's administrators, noting the earlier success of campgrounds in the McDonald Valley, accelerated the development of free automobile campgrounds. One year after the completion of the Going-To-The-Sun Highway, the Government had five major campgrounds and seven minor ones available to the public.44

44Great Falls Tribune, 6 June 1934. Hundreds of CCC laborers, deployed throughout the Park during the 1930's,
Quietly, reluctantly, the Glacier Park Hotel Company acquiesced. They contracted the Superior Building Company of Columbia Falls, Montana to add 27 two and three room cabins to the Swiftcurrent auto cabins during the 1933 season. Surprisingly, Great Northern President Kenney was very enthusiastic about the success of the cabins at Swiftcurrent, which enjoyed an impressive amount of patronage when completed. The demand for the moderately-priced cabins was continuous. Pleased by the acceptance of these facilities, though still cautious of large-scale investments, the Company added eighteen more cabins to the flourishing clusters of buildings at Swiftcurrent. These were ready for occupancy by June 1, 1934. In the two years that followed, members of the Hotel Company's planning staff discovered that the attendance at the Swiftcurrent Cabins, while gratifying in itself, did not seriously reduce patronage at the nearby Many Glacier Hotel and the adjacent Many Glacier

aided immeasurably in the construction of these campgrounds so that, although the Hotel Company preferred inactivity, CCC members worked industriously to create many needed public service conveniences.

45 Letter to Superintendent E.T. Scoyen from A.J. Binder, 17 May 1933, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHC.

46 Letter to Superintendent E.T. Scoyen from A.A. Aszmann, 9 February 1934, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHC.
Chalets as had been feared earlier. Periodic checks during the next two seasons at the three dissimilar facilities, representing the Company's most expansive holdings in the Park, showed no disproportionate guest registration. Furthermore, the extremely depressed conditions in the Park between 1929 and 1933 showed gradual recovery in 1934 and 1935. There was a slight increase of rail travel to Glacier because of the installation of air conditioning and reduced rates for Western travellers. This also created a greater demand for bus service through the Park. For the first time in six years, the Glacier Park Transport Company kept a crew of mechanics working to repair busses at Midvale all winter. President of the Company, Howard H. Hayes, invested $120,000.00 in eighteen new, specially designed motor coaches which began plying the Going-To-The-Sun Highway in 1936. Once again, the busses diligently met incoming passenger trains and ferried Park visitors through the Park on familiar tours reminiscent of the 1920's.

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47 The average revenue gains for utility operators in the nation's parks in 1935 were 25 per cent above profit figures for 1934. Even so, the 1935 profit increase was still only half that of the business transacted in 1929. In view of continued Depression burdens, the Government, through the National Recovery Administration exempted the operators of public utilities from compliance with NRA codes governing hours of labor and wages of employees. Department of the Interior, Reports of the Director of the National Park Service, 1934-1935 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1934, 1935), pp. 202, 216.

48 Great Falls Tribune, 9 July 1936.
Elsewhere, the Hotel Company's facilities, including the once experimental cabin camp at Swiftcurrent, reported reservations for the 1936 season that were 70 per cent in excess of the 1935 season.49

Thus, midway through the 1936 season it appeared that the most severe economic doldrums had been surpassed. However, in August, an electrical storm passed over the exceptionally dry Park and started a remote fire on Heaven's Peak in the McDonald Valley. Though thought to be under control ten days later, the fire spread rapidly and unexpectedly. It swept over the seven thousand foot Swiftcurrent Pass, narrowly missing Granite Park Chalets and began advancing down the Many Glacier Valley. "Words cannot do justice to the confusion that prevailed as the fire swept into this most heavily populated center of the Park," reported one

49Great Falls Tribune, 6 May 1936. At the beginning of the 1935 season, the Hotel Company began operating under a new twenty year contract quietly negotiated with the Interior Department and effective January 1, 1935. While operating under the previous contract the Glacier Park Company had built up payables to the Great Northern Railroad of nearly two million dollars representing advances by the Railroad to meet the periodic losses suffered by the Company during the preceding twenty years of construction and development, together with interest on such advances. Under the Interstate Commerce regulations a Railroad could not set up as a receiver a company which it was not reasonably certain of realizing a profit on. The Great Northern did not intend to build up such payables under the new contract as it did under the former and proposed to write off each year as losses the cash advances which they made to the Company to meet operating losses. (Contracts, Glacier Park Hotel Company, 1917-1960, file 900-02, GNPHC.
ranger. "No fire since the 1929 holocaust was more terrifying or dramatic when in progress." The managers of the Many Glacier Hotel evacuated about one hundred guests and gave them rooms at Going-To-The-Sun Chalets and St. Mary Chalets. Hotel employees, CCC crews, and Park suppression teams soaked the rambling wooden structure with "all available hoses" and many noted later that only the slate stone roof saved the hotel from total destruction. Other structures were not so fortunate. The conflagration burned boat houses, ice houses, horse corrals, the remnants of the controversial sawmill and "numerous other improvements scattered for use and convenience" near the hotel. Among these improvements were the Swiftcurrent Auto Cabins, of which all but twelve were destroyed. The Park Service also lost a ranger station, a new museum and a small cottage camp for employees. Additionally, the Company sustained costly losses to the Many Glacier Chalets, which, being constructed entirely of cured and highly flammable logs, offered the only fuel for the fire on the south slope of Altyn Peak. With the loss of all six of these buildings, an era of small chalets

51 Great Falls Tribune, 2 September 1936.
52 Daily Inter Lake, 1 September 1936.
in the Valley came to an end.\textsuperscript{53}

The fire and destruction that accompanied it did not immediately deter hotel visitors. "Many, mostly Easterners, entered the Valley and registered at the hotel to view the destruction wrought by a large forest fire."\textsuperscript{54} Ultimately, however, business dropped off noticeably in the Many Glacier Valley following the Heaven's Peak fire of 1936. A scarred landscape and the stark brick chimneys and stone foundations of the once quaint Many Glacier Chalets repelled the visiting public. Obviously disappointed about losing patronage and the investment at the new Swiftcurrent Auto Cabins, the Hotel Company returned to their conciliatory thinking. In other areas of the Park they displayed a familiar hesitancy when they delayed a building and renovation program at Apgar and Two Medicine until the Government completed their own minor improvements to public campgrounds, sewage and water systems at these points. Explaining the Company's disinclination for construction following the Heaven's Peak fire, W. P. Kenney said, "...it was not our intention to change our policy in connection with the cabins and more modern developments. We are, however, like all railroad companies and many other large industries, anything but flush in a

\textsuperscript{53}Great Falls Tribune, 12 September 1936.

\textsuperscript{54}D'Evelyn, \textit{loc. cit.}
financial way and we are trying to postpone anything that can be postponed without detriment and investments that require expenditure of considerable sums." Nevertheless, the Park Service was not noticeably sympathetic.

A year later, Director A.B. Cammerer entered the now very perplexing stalemate. Writing to W.P. Kenney, he credited the Company's hotel and chalet service, "but," he said, "the accommodations have lacked facilities such as cafeterias and cabins...which are usually found now-a-days in areas such as the cabin camps for which your Company has the concession to operate." For example, Glacier's Master Plans envisioned, during the 1938 season, additional cabins and landscaping at Lake McDonald Hotel, the commencement of cabin developments at Two Medicine as well as the development of "cabins, stores and cafeterias and other necessary or desireable [sic] commercial activities."

55 Letter to Director A.B. Cammerer from W.P. Kenney, 19 April 1938, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 900-05, GNPHC. An audit in Glacier in 1935 had revealed that facilities for the accommodations of visitors to Glacier Park represented an investment of over two million dollars. More than three quarters of the total amount was contained in facilities owned by the Glacier Park Hotel Company. News Press Release 1935, History General, file 101, GNPHC.

56 Letter to W.P. Kenney from Director Cammerer, 2 April 1938, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

57 Letter to W.P. Kenney from Superintendent Scoyen, 2 December 1937, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHC.
By 1939, the incoming mail at Park headquarters consisted of numerous complaints from the general public stating that the Company's hotels and chalets were the only facilities available inside the Park boundaries. The public found support in their criticism when a business efficiency firm, hired by the Hotel Company, arrived at the same conclusion—prices for the Company's accommodations in Glacier were too high and the types of services too limited.  

Still, the Company was oblivious and meetings between their representatives and the Park Service revealed more excuses for delinquency by the Railroad. Solicitude was not a common virtue among Great Northern officers, particularly in this period when the railroad faced revenue losses with disturbing regularity. Therefore, peripheral activities through the Glacier Park Hotel Company received scant priority. Since non-investment and non-commitment had become the entrenched attitude in Minneapolis, Glacier's officials were not startled when Hotel spokesmen suggested that they be allowed to postpone a Government proposed cabin development at Roes Creek in the St. Mary Valley "for several years." They reasoned, justifiably, that any cabins there would be in direct competition with Going-To-The-Sun Chalets, only

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58 Letter to Director Cammerer from Thomas J. Allen (Reg. Dir.), 7 November 1939, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
four miles distant. Naturally, motorists along the Going-To-The-Sun Road would have preferred the newer and cheaper lodging at Roes Creek over the weathered and expensive facility at Going-To-The-Sun Chalets, thereby hastening the demise of that chalet group. Such a request may well have been tolerated and even granted in earlier years, but the Railroad's influence in Glacier had started to wane substantially. Once more, as Horace Albright had done in 1930, Director Cammerer reminded the Hotel Company that their contract required them to furnish any services which the Interior Department judged necessary for the convenience of the public and, under a strict legal interpretation, that contract could be cancelled if the Company refused to acknowledge it.\footnote{Ibid.} This purported threat was veiled by reality, however. Even Director Cammerer realized the futility, the near impossibility of finding a single, endowed concession agent to replace the Hotel Company if the Department chose to revoke the current franchise. Thus, given the choice between cancellation of the contract and further coercion, Cammerer selected the latter. Meanwhile, the thirties lumbered ahead, now prosperous, now dragging through years of economic upset. In good years and in bad, sometimes even more so during times of general prosperity,
the sense of frustration accompanying progress pervaded the thinking in Minneapolis. Throughout the decade the Hotel Company relied heavily upon their chalet system to recreate the lost wellbeing of the 1920's.

In 1934, for example, the Company announced that they would reopen the St. Mary Chalets for an art school of approximately twenty-five to fifty students under the direction of Winold Reiss of New York, a noted landscape artist. Because the chalets were distant from the main Blackfoot Highway and not served by the Transport Company busses or launch service, Company directors felt "it will be better to have these chalets occupied by an art school or summer school than to let them stand idle."\(^60\)

The Company attempted a similar experiment at Cut Bank Chalets in 1937, hoping to keep the chalet system operative. They concluded an agreement with George Noffsinger, President of the Saddle Horse Company, who pledged to operate the chalets as a dude ranch since the principle patronage there was from horse parties, vehicle traffic having dropped off measurably. It was the thought of the Hotel Company that, if the experiment was favorable and business increased,

\(^60\)Letter to Superintendent E.T. Scoyen from A.A. Aszmann, 4 April 1934, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 900-U5, GNP HC.
Mr. Noffsinger might be approached with a proposal to take over the chalets and run them himself. At present, the only way the Company felt they could keep the chalets open was to operate them in conjunction with the Saddle Horse Company and George Noffsinger, who would advertise his summer base ranch as being at Cut Bank Chalets. Noffsinger gave the Company an "equitable portion" of the weekly rate assessed the patrons and also paid them a small sum for the usage of the buildings and equipment at the chalet site.

He continued with the Government-approved 1937 saddle horse trips in connection with other facilities run by the Hotel Company. This he did throughout the 1937 season though with hardly phenomenal results. The following spring, Noffsinger wrote the Company that he would only be willing to proceed with the experimental dude ranch provided he be released from the rental fee. Though Company manager A.A. Aszmann was eager to see some kind of attendance at this site, he correctly admitted, "I don't see how we can let out our facilities without some reimbursement for their use." Yet, neither could he suggest to his superiors that the

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61 Letter to Superintendent Scoyen from A.A. Aszmann, 4 February 1938, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Hotel Company, file 900-05, GNP HC.

62 Ibid.
Company operated the chalets strictly for the shrinking number of trail riders and hikers that visited the Cut Bank Valley because, as Noffsinger had discovered, there was simply no volume of business with that type of patron. Thus, the abortive dude ranch did not reappear in 1938 and the Company again requested the Superintendent that they be allowed to close the chalets for the summer. The Cut Bank Chalets never reopened. The boarded-up buildings became the first to feel the full effect of the progress associated with the mobility of a modern travelling public.63

Late in 1939, F.J. Gavin succeeded W.P. Kenney as President of the Great Northern Railway. Gavin, more diplomatically disposed toward his relations with the Government and more concerned with the railroad's holdings in Glacier, appealed to the Great Northern's Board of Directors that year and received sufficient funds for the construction of two cabin camps at both Apgar and Roes Creek. He informed Glacier's administrators that it was the intention of the Railroad that cabin camps be located on each side

63 Also in 1938, Superintendent Scoyen, under request of Mr. Aszmann, authorized the dismantling of two chalet buildings ("artist's chalet" and "Louis Hill House") across St. Mary Lake from the Going-To-The-Sun Chalets because the buildings had become too costly for the Company to operate. The Government provided the labor and incorporated the work into Glacier's CCC Building Removal projects. Letter to Scoyen from A.A. Aszmann, 13 October 1938, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHC.
of the Park. Finally, here was a long-awaited signal of activity that coincided with Glacier's Master Plans.

Thus, on the eve of the 1940's, the sometimes rarified concessioner relations appeared ready to be resolved. Indeed, it would take the far-reaching effects of a world war to guarantee joint cooperation and stabilize plans for the accommodation of Park visitors. Beginning with the destruction of the Many Glacier sawmill by Stephen Mather in 1925, the Glacier Park Hotel Company began to lose its influential position in the Park. Their role in the development of the Park was felt even less during the Depression years when the Park Service, by issuing ultimatums and coercive policy measures in the form of Master Plans of development and five year building and expansion programs, showed that it had transcended from adolescence to maturity and in so doing had acquired a hard line policy regarding commercial businesses in the national parks. On two occasions in Glacier (1930 and 1939) the Park Service had threatened the Hotel Company with a revocation of their franchise in order that their policy of installing moderately-priced auto cabins, a peculiar imperative during the thirties, could be realized.

As always, the catalyst for the abrupt changes characteristic to these two decades was the average Park visitor.
His mood, budget, personality and mode of travel challenged the resourcefulness of planners in both Belton and Minneapolis. The uncertainties of travel trends was most evident in the thirties when there were peaks and declivities not just from year to year but within each season as well. When contrasted with the relatively stable and consistent years of the twenties, the thirties were years of difficult adjustment—years when the Hotel Company preferred ignorance to reaction. When A.B. Crammerer prepared his annual report to the Secretary of the Interior in 1938, he identified an all-important evolution in the national parks which the Hotel Company had been slow to recognize. In particular, it outlined the situation in Glacier Park. He said:

Studies of the concession service of the past year compared with that of 10 years ago show an interesting trend. Before the 1929 Depression, substantially all profits of the Park operators were earned from furnishing sight-seeing transportation and first-class American Plan hotel accommodations. Revenue from other sources was immaterial, there being practically no cafeteria, coffee shop or grill services. Today the profit-producing facilities are the low-priced cabin accommodations and cafeteria. Although the transportation and first-class hotel accommodations still furnish the greater portion of the operator's revenues, they are less self-supporting than the newer types of accommodations. 

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Unlike the early 1900's and the 1920's when the Railroad worked industriously for the benefit of the public and themselves, the Great Northern, in the 1930's displayed a narrow sense of perception. While emphasizing "quiet dignity without undue conventionality" at their establishments, they blindly pursued a lockstep scheme of service to affluent, rail-borne vacationers. But circumstances pressed harshly against any rebirth of the prosperous 1920's. The unrelenting evolution obviated a return to those halcyon, all too brief days.
CHAPTER IV
WAR AND POST-WAR YEARS, 1940-1950
THE ROAD BECOMES ROCKY

At the outset of the year 1940, Great Northern President Gavin discovered that he had been premature to announce the start of cabin camps at Apgar and Roes Creek. Complications arose over limited funds for two full-scale developments in Glacier, thus forcing Gavin to notify Superintendent Libbey, in 1940, that he proposed, instead, to concentrate the Glacier Park Hotel Company's efforts on the new unit at Roes Creek and completion of additions to the Swiftcurrent complex, while postponing any construction in the McDonald Valley until the following season. Gavin's inability to fulfill his earlier promise did not disappoint Superintendent Libbey, who was never in favor with the Apgar development. His superiors in Washington, however, saw defeat. Seeing no other solution for the Railroad, Acting Director Demaray admitted, "It would be better to do the Roes Creek unit well than to attempt to divide funds into partial development of the two areas."¹

¹Letter from Acting Director A. E. Demaray to A. A. Aszmann, 11 January 1940, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
There was ample reason for the Service's eagerness to have cabin camps at Swiftcurrent, Roes Creek and Apgar. At each of these sites, the Government had begun to build campgrounds to compliment the proposed cabins. At Roes Creek and Apgar, Federal work crews had already installed electricity and water and sewage pipelines in preparation for the cabins. The Park Service also pressured the Company to proceed with an energetic program of building general stores and cafeterias at the east and west entrances to the Park. Such stores and coffee shops were to be in conjunction with the guest cabins at Swiftcurrent and Roes Creek. The prevailing conditions during the 1930's elicited many complaints from visitors who were unable to obtain modest meals at reasonable prices, for nowhere in the Park could they dine except at scheduled hours at the Company's hotels and chalets.

The Hotel Company completed the Roes Creek cabin development on June 15, 1940. The complex, called the East Glacier Auto Cabins, was the first multiple-use unit in Glacier to cater exclusively to motor vacationers. It consisted of a combination store, cafe, lobby and registration building and

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2 Memorandum for Regional Director NPS from Superintendent D.S. Libbey, 7 November 1939, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
nineteen double tourists cabins. There were thirty-eight rooms with a capacity of seventy guests.\(^3\) The work force that had been staffing the now neglected St. Mary Chalets at the foot of the lake summarily boarded up the buildings there and moved to the Roes Creek cabins to begin preparations for the 1940 season.\(^4\) Still, along with Swiftcurrent and Apgar, Roes Creek was one of the three areas in the Park where visitor services were in serious shortage. An additional thirty-eight rooms at Roes Creek did not constitute a revolution in Glacier's public housing, much less an appreciable advance in shelter for auto tourists. At Swiftcurrent, for example, the manager of the Many Glacier Hotel in the years 1939 and 1940 frequently took in tourists for hotel rooms at rates approximating the cost of cabin rooms when the Swiftcurrent Auto Cabins were filled.\(^5\) Therefore, only months after the Roes Creek opening, Glacier's public service-minded rangers doggedly suggested that the Great Northern authorize the installation of forty additional

\(^3\)Superintendent's Annual Report, 1941, D.S. Libbey, file 207-01.4, GNPHC.

\(^4\)Letter from A.A. Aszmann to Superintendent Libbey, 2 May 1940, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC. Aszmann indicated that the St. Mary Chalets would be reopened only in the case of overflow from the cabin camp at Roes Creek.

\(^5\)Letter from Superintendent Libbey to A.A. Aszmann, 13 June 1940, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
rooms at Swiftcurrent and eighty at Roes Creek.\(^6\)

Meanwhile, the Hotel Company's chalets suffered the oversight and attrition that came from the diversion of funds during the construction of the auto camps. The once regal Going-To-The-Sun Chalets had become obsolete by Park Service standards in 1941 despite its distinction of being "the most spectacular and exclusive development of any in the Park."\(^7\) The appearance of the new East Glacier Auto Cabin Camp just three miles to the east of it magnified the contrasts between yesteryear rusticity and modern overnight accommodations. Furthermore, the Park Service felt that "under no conditions" should there be any attempt at minor modernization of the existing chalet structures other than complete rebuilding. Recommendations for Lake McDonald Hotel were duplicate. It did not appear advisable to Park rangers and engineers to try token modernization of obsolete physical plants except as were necessary for immediate safe operation.\(^8\)

So it was that, in August of 1941, Great Northern representatives met with Park Service landscape architects and planners to decide upon a scheme for further building programs

\(^{6}\)Ibid.

\(^{7}\)Letter from D.S. Libbey to F.J. Gavin, 1 August 1941, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

\(^{8}\)Ibid.
in Glacier. At the meeting, Park Service personnel grasped the initiative in characteristic style. Superintendent Libbey pointed out that the volume of usage and unmistakable travel trends in Glacier fashioned a housing situation for auto travellers which was "acute" and which caused his staff to be the recipients of unfavorable comment by the visiting public. Libbey produced travel figures showing that "for the last two years, 95% of our visitors coming to Glacier Park travel by automobile and the situation regarding automobile visitors having to leave the Park because of inadequate cabin accommodations and facilities...is not an overstatement of the situation."

Libbey concluded with a stern recommendation that the regional Park Service architect begin to "prepare some rather detailed plans" for the treatment of the Two Medicine, Going-To-The-Sun and Lake McDonald areas for submittal to the Glacier Park Hotel Company. Plainly, stress was again being applied to the still indolent Hotel Company. Superintendent Libbey wrote to his superiors in Washington after the meeting, "It is apparent that the Great Northern officials are now alert to the fact that they must make additions and spend appreciable sums in the immediate future."

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9Letter from Superintendent Libbey to N.B. Drury, 1 August 1941, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

10Ibid.
The Great Northern did permit the Company to submit estimates for cabin camp projects to the Interior Department, though they amounted to less than an "appreciable sum" and were rejected. Great Northern executives forbade large expenditures by its subsidiary company chiefly because of the burgeoning drain of the war effort. The first, though certainly not the last, note of wartime adjustment came from Great Northern President Gavin, who, in August 1941, responded to the Park Service's pleas for construction activity this way: "We are having so much difficulty now getting material and labor for handling business in connection with national defense that it seems hardly a proper time to be talking about additional facilities in the Park."\(^{11}\)

In sum, his statement was symptomatic of the Railroad's position throughout the war years.

Ironically, the outlay of funds was a universal obstacle and it was Superintendent Libbey who showed hesitancy in sanctioning the renovation of Lake McDonald Hotel, the only Government-owned hotel in the Park. After a joint inspection of that hotel early in 1942, Great Northern and Park Service architects arrived at a figure of $158,400.00 for remodeling costs which were to be borne by the Government. To this

\(^{11}\)Letter from F.J. Gavin to Superintendent Libbey, 5 August 1941, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
Libbey flatly protested. "The delapidated [sic] condition of the Lake McDonald Hotel is such that I am utterly opposed to the spending of such an appreciable sum to remodel...."\(^{12}\)

The ultimate fate of the Lake McDonald Hotel had been a moot question since its purchase by the Government in 1930. President Gavin, of the Great Northern, had originally proposed that the old Lewis structure be abandoned because of excessive costs in renovation which would have to be spent by the Government.\(^{13}\) The natural alternative to abandonment, however, was the proposed cabin camp complex at Apgar for which the Hotel Company would bear the greater portion of the construction costs. The Secretary of the Interior, Newton Drury, was in favor of disposing of the Hotel so that the Hotel Company would be compelled to devote their energies to the installation of the large complex at Apgar. "In such a facility," Drury predicted, "no discrimination would be made between the auto or rail tourists nor the one who stays a month or takes but one meal."\(^{14}\) From an engineering and public service standpoint, the proposal was a sensible one.

\(^{12}\)Letter from Superintendent Libbey to N.B. Drury, 2 February 1942, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

\(^{13}\)Letter from F.J. Gavin to A.E. Demaray, 12 November 1941, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

\(^{14}\)Letter from N.B. Drury to F.J. Gavin, 5 December 1941, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
The National Park Service believed that the trend of service in the parks was in the direction of one large unit furnishing all types of service rather than two or more units furnishing all types of service. Bright Angel Lodge on the South Rim of Grand Canyon and Camp Curry at Yosemite National Parks were contemporary examples. The operators of facilities at Crater Lake and Yellowstone were also moving in that direction. In 1941 and early in 1942, it appeared that Glacier was also progressing along these lines as attested by the recent establishment of camps at Swiftcurrent and Roes Creek. Only in the McDonald Valley, where development of any kind had been nil since the completion of John Lewis' Glacier Hotel in 1914, was there no evidence of this trend.

The site for a sophisticated, all-encompassing auto complex at Apgar had its favorable points. There was an easy topography and gravelly soil underneath. In addition to having a view that was the "best on the entire lakeshore" utilities like electricity and water lines had already been installed at several points. In spite of the advantages, there were also difficulties, the most persistent being the acquisition of land. For the complex to be located where it "most logically belongs," about thirty shore lots had to be purchased by the Government and, as most veteran Glacier

\[15\text{Ibid.}\]
officials were aware, Apgar's residents, many descendants of early homesteaders, clung to their patented inholdings with manorial fervor. 16

More significant than the difficulty of acquiring the needed private land were the efforts of Superintendent Libbey to save the Hotel in spite of its structural defects. Like the Hotel Company managers, Libbey was not altogether content with the proposed Apgar complex. He expressed his views in a carefully prepared, cogent rebuttal to Interior Secretary Drury in February of 1942. He set forth considerable objections to the centralized developments and argued that such a camp at Apgar would contribute to greater concentration and congestion. He reminded Drury that the present Lake McDonald Hotel was the base for serving Sperry Chalets area; that hiking and saddle horse trips to Sperry and Going-To-The-Sun Chalets on the east side terminated and originated at the Hotel. Its removal, then, would have made it impossible for trail trips from the McDonald Valley to be integrated with trails serving other visitor-use areas of the Park. While objecting to the emulation of developments in other national parks, Libbey showed both individuality and concern for Glacier. He said:

16Letter from F.J. Gavin to A.E. Demaray, 12 November 1941, op. cit.
I cannot feel that Glacier National Park should necessarily follow prevailing practices in other parks which tend toward excessive visitor concentration in a limited number of areas. It has been a fact that one of the most frequent statements received from Park visitors who have also been to Yellowstone Park is that they want to get away from large concentrations of visitors and the crowds that prevail around the hotels and cabin camps existing adjacent to each other.\textsuperscript{17}

Between Libbey's objections and the landowner's refusal to relinquish the needed land, the auto cabin camp at Apgar was not pursued and the Lake McDonald Hotel spared from the neglect which very nearly ended its colorful existence.

Then, in 1942, a larger menace arose which threatened the solvency of virtually all of Glacier's concessioners. In war, no less than in peace, the national parks and recreation areas continued as havens of refuge for those able to visit them. Even though the demands of war sharply precluded use of the parks by civilian population, the National Park Service proceeded in its trusteeship capacity. Numerous national parks became areas where armed forces personnel went for training exercises or recreation. Far from large centers of population, Glacier experienced no such artificial activity. Instead, the Park endured inevitable travel losses associated

\textsuperscript{17}Memorandum from Superintendent Libbey to N.B. Drury, 24 February 1942, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
with the restrictions placed on the purchase of automobiles, tires and gasoline. Among those Americans who were able to travel, the tendency was for them to journey to one place rather than to make extensive trips to many parks, remaining only a brief time at any one of them.\(^\text{18}\)

Because of the war, all resources, material and spiritual, had to be mobilized for victory thus altering the immediate programs for the national parks, private concession operators and the Government. Most notably, the Park Service's attitude underwent a mellow adjustment with regard to the trouble-plagued concessioners. In Glacier the first month of 1942 saw the Hotel Company's managers guardedly optimistic though admitting that the prospect for a good season was "none too bright," especially for auto tourists. They informed Superintendent Libbey that it might be necessary to operate all their facilities with reduced crews, but held hope that all of their structures would be open during the coming summer. They prepared as for a normal season and awaited incoming guest reservations.\(^\text{19}\)


\(^{19}\)Letter from A.A. Aszmann to Superintendent Libbey, 13 January 1942, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
Spring approached bringing more doubt for a profitable season. In March, Company manager Aszmann wrote to Superintendent Libbey explaining his plight. "I have no advance reservations for party or organized business before June 21," he reported. "Also, at this time there are no individual reservations." Based on this predicted lack of patronage, Aszmann asked the Director if the Company could operate on a limited season from June 20 to September 8 in 1942. This shortened season, which Drury granted, meant that the hotels and chalets could operate at a large savings for the Company.

Two months later, still fearing a bad season, the Company received permission to cease all operations at Belton and Cut Bank Chalets, where business even in good times was marginal, adding that "business now looks very doubtful for the season."

Similarly, George Noffsinger, President of the Park Saddle Horse Company, asked that he not be obliged to operate his four high mountain camps in 1942. The anxiety that Park

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20 Letter from A.A. Aszmann to Superintendent Libbey, 10 March 1942, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

21 Ibid. Great Falls Tribune, 28 March 1942.

22 Letter from A.A. Aszmann to Superintendent Libbey, 28 May 1942, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

23 Letter from Superintendent Libbey to A.A. Aszmann, 10 June 1942, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
operators held found manifestation in travel figures. In 1941, overall visitation fell a mild 18 per cent. In 1942, it continued to decline another 36 per cent.²⁴

Still, the distressing economic dilemma of the Glacier Park Hotel Company was not fully appreciated by Superintendent Libbey or Washington authorities until A.O. Jenks, Vice-President of the Great Northern, wrote Libbey with this startling request in December of 1942:

Due to conditions brought about by the war, the lack of help and the fact that there will probably be no tourist travel next year, we thought it best not to figure on opening Glacier Park hotels this coming season (1943).²⁵

There then followed another notification from the Minneapolis home offices to the effect that the Great Northern would curtail all advertisements of all its holdings in Glacier Park until such time as the facilities could reopen.

This presented the Interior Department with a peculiar problem concerning the Company's contract with the Government. On February 2, 1943, the Company officially applied for an amendment to their contract which would permit suspension by

²⁴Superintendent's Annual Reports, 1941-1942, file 207-01.4. In 1942, only 38,800 people were able to vacation in the Park. GNPHC.

²⁵Letter from A.O. Jenks to Superintendent Libbey, 29 December 1942, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
the Secretary of Interior of any and all provisions of the contract during a war emergency. Secretary Drury referred the matter to the Solicitor of the Department who reported that such action could not be taken unless it could be clearly shown "to be in the best interests of the United States." 26 However, he said the services required to be furnished under the existing contract could be curtailed through administrative action by the Secretary without any amendment to the contract. To this Drury agreed. By April of 1943, the pending shutdown of the Company's facilities had become official. Only at East Glacier Cabin Camp was there "emergency service" for automobile travellers during July and August. 27 Thus, in 1943, the Glacier Park Hotel Company existed only as an entity on paper, as a result of a perfunctory administrative mandate. Secretary Drury took no action toward amending the Company's concession contract and did not waive or reduce the fees and annual payments due therein. Insurance, taxes, officers' salaries, bonds, caretakers' wages, and maintenance expenses went on though the Company's plants in Glacier spent their first

26 Letter from H.A. Tolson, Acting Director, to Jenks, 3 April 1943, Contracts, Glacier Park Company, 1917-1960, file 900-02, GNPHC.

27 Schedule of Emergency Service-Glacier Park Hotel Company, 1943, file 900-05, GNPHC.
summer without visitors in their history.

Even fewer tourists than had been projected came to the Park during 1943. The total volume of travel that summer plummeted another 70 per cent on its way to an unprecedented nadir. For their part, the Park Service staff kept Glacier open throughout the war for the few visitors who found it possible to come to the Park in the summer months for rest and recreation. A slightly reduced roster of rangers performed normal protection activities and maintenance of Federal property. In Glacier and other national parks, the Service tried to make minor adjustments to save the concessioners, yet there was no real substitute for tourist business.

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28 By articles of amendment filed on May 27, 1943 with the Secretary of State of Minnesota, the name of the Glacier Park Hotel Company became changed to the Glacier Park Company. The Company's holdings in Glacier as of June 1943 consisted of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glacier Park Hotel</td>
<td>306 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake McDonald Hotel</td>
<td>135 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many Glacier Hotel</td>
<td>404 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Medicine Chalet</td>
<td>58 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut Bank Chalets</td>
<td>18 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Mary Chalets</td>
<td>60 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going-To-The-Sun Chalets</td>
<td>120 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sperry Chalets</td>
<td>45 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granite Park Chalets</td>
<td>35 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belton Chalets</td>
<td>72 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiftcurrent Auto Cabins</td>
<td>130 rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Glacier Auto Cabins</td>
<td>70 rooms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

The war years were, perhaps, an opportune time for the Company to dispose of at least one of its antiquated chalet groups which they had for so long tried to revive. During the Summer of 1943, manager Aszmann wrote to Superintendent Libbey, "In view of the fact that the St. Mary Chalets no longer serve any purpose, and because of the operation of the East Glacier Cabins, and also that the buildings have deteriorated to such an extent that the cost of placing them in operating condition would be prohibitive, it is the desire of the Company to have your approval to dismantle all of the buildings in this group." In other areas of Glacier the wartime cessation of business took its toll of concession operators. George Noffsinger, in February of 1943, formally requested that Secretary Drury terminate the contract for his Saddle Horse Company. His four high mountain camps at Red Eagle Lake, Crossly Lake, Fifty Mountain and Goathaunt, had not been in operation since the previous year and his saddle horse parties had dwindled to only a handful of loyal local residents. Noting this, and personally aware that Noffsinger's financial affairs were "in a considerable tangle,"

30 Letter from A.A. Aszmann to Superintendent Libbey, 18 August 1943, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHC.

31 Donald H. Robinson, p. 65.
Superintendent Libbey recommended that Drury take action to suspend the contract. Drury deferred any official measures until 1945 when he approved the termination. In the interim, Noffsinger had prematurely disposed of all his equipment and had sold most of his horses, thereby ending a colorful thirty-year concession enterprise.32

Drury also took similar action with the Glacier Park Transport Company, though only as a temporary expedient. During the war, the Office of Defense Transportation ordered all transportation concessioners to cease normal sight-seeing tours.33 In Glacier, only direct bus service between rail terminals and the hotels was undertaken, at first. But with the announcement of hotel and chalet closure late in 1942, the Transport Company foresaw the loss of their principle source of revenue, the rail-borne hotel patron. Any effort to maintain bus service in the Park subsequent to this closure late in 1942, was futile in the opinion of President Howard Hayes of the Transport Company who stated, "No bus transportation service whatever need be available in Glacier."34 Yet, the final decision rested with Park Service

32Daily Inter Lake, 10 November 1945. Superintendent's Annual Report, 1944, file 207-01.4, GNPHC.


34Letter from Secretary Drury to Superintendent Libbey, 23 April 1943, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
officials as to whether the Company would be held to their contract. Using administrative prerogative again, in April 1943, Secretary Drury informed Glacier's Superintendent that he had reached a decision not to ask the Yellowstone Transport Company to furnish even a minimum of bus service in that park and that he might make a similar decision in the case of Glacier. Drury had withheld this decision until notified of summer rail schedules for the Great Northern's main passenger train, the Empire Builder. He had only five days to wait. On April 28, the Railroad alerted Glacier's ranger staff that, because of the compelling need for troop transport, Empire Builder trains one and two (east and west bound) would not stop at either Belton or Glacier Park Station during the summer.35 Subsequently, Drury rendered prompt judgment to cease bus service in Glacier by the Transport Company saying, "It doesn't seem that there will be a reasonable demand for such bus service and to require such service would place an unreasonable financial or operating burden on the Park operator."36

35 Telegram from A.J. Dickson (Great Northern General Passenger Manager) to Superintendent Libbey, 28 April 1943, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

36 Memorandum from Drury to Superintendent Libbey, 30 April 1943, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company,
So it was that the 1944 season, when it arrived, marked the lowest ebb for concession operations in Glacier Park. Records revealed yet another disappointing travel year with a decrease in general travel of 52.4 per cent over the 1943 summer. At no other time in Glacier's history was there so little activity. The Office of Defense Transportation and the National Park Service, hoping to reduce the national consumption of fuel, adhered strictly to a policy of not encouraging visitors to the national parks. Accommodations were the simplest, compatible with the responsibility of providing for the public comfort. The East Glacier Auto Cabin Camp in Glacier was the only public facility available. The Company staffed it in July and August only to insure their contractual status in the Park. Elsewhere, small horse parties from nearby dude ranches entered the Park, though only at sporadic intervals. Hikers were nearly nonexistent during the war years. The caretaker at Lake McDonald Hotel reported that only two hikers sought shelter.

file 900-05, GNP HC. Drury did, however, request that the Transport Company be aware that they might have to be mobilized to carry fire fighters at approved Government rates during the 1943 fire season.

37 Superintendent's Annual Report, 1944, file 207-01.4, GNP HC.

38 Great Falls Tribune, 30 April 1944.
at that facility in 1944. At St. Mary Lake, Fred Stone, contractor for the Great Northern, completed razing and salvaging operations at St. Mary Chalets by February of 1944. Workers set fire to the piles of non usable lumber and demolition debris previously placed on the thick ice offshore and the landmark was no more. Only Park Rangers followed fairly normal Park operations. They opened roads and trails in the spring in accordance with accepted schedules. They also maintained the usual campgrounds, communication systems and protective measures. Because of travel restrictions, the Superintendent arranged for only the two main Park entrances at the east and west ends of the Going-To-The-Sun Highway to be manned.

1945 arrived and for the third season the Glacier Park Company's facilities remained closed with the exception of the East Glacier Auto Cabins. This season, however, there was a preview of renewed activity when travel counts rose 32.4 per cent above the record low marked in 1944. Still,

39 Letter from A.A. Aszmann to Superintendent J.W. Emmert, 3 March 1945, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

40 Great Falls Tribune, 3 February 1944.

41 Letter from Superintendent Emmert to Aszmann, 24 February 1945, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

42 Superintendent's Annual Report, 1945, file 207-01.4, GNPHC.
throughout the 1945 calendar year, the National Park Service refrained from any activities that promoted travel to the parks. But by November of that year, such promotion was scarcely necessary as Service planners searched instead for schemes to meet the immediate needs of millions of Americans being released from war service. Rather than promotion of the parks, travel predictions dictated the need for affecting a more even distribution of visitor impact.

The growth of travel in all the national parks after VE Day suggested multiple post-war responsibilities facing the Service and the utility operators. Past experience and current indications pointed to an instantaneous resumption of Park visitation that had been interrupted in 1941. Glacier's Superintendent J.W. Emmert warned Company manager Aszmann that, "Indications for travel in all national parks since VE Day are that next summer will bring the largest number of visitors to the Park than we have ever had." Emmert, who had assumed the post of superintendent only a year before, was naturally quite eager to establish a firm collaboration with the Company so an early understanding as to how the demands for accommodations could be met. He

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43Letter from Superintendent Emmert to Aszmann, 30 August 1945, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
spared no time in suggesting that they begin planning for the rehabilitation of their public service sites so they could be placed in good condition for the 1946 season.44 A month later, the Company responded by announcing that all their hotels and chalets would be functioning with the exception of St. Mary, Cut Bank and Going-To-The-Sun Chalets complexes. At Cut Bank and Going-To-The-Sun, spokesmen stated that it would be impossible to make the proper repairs to safely accommodate visitors.45

Agents of the Great Northern, in their correspondence with the Interior Department's staff, began to have a more liberalized disposition toward hotel visitors than in pre-war years, particularly in the area of rigid formalisms and dining room dress codes. This yielded to informality in keeping with the wishes of the casual motorized legions roaming the Park. "When the hotels were opened," one Great Northern ticket agent recalled, "the patronage came mainly from points east of Chicago and there was a desire among the majority of the guests—the tired businessmen and their socially-conscious wives to spend most of their time in their

44 Letter from Superintendent Emmert to Aszmann, 30 August 1945, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

45 Letter from Aszmann to Drury, 29 December 1945, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
rooms or in the lobby or to make just brief bus trips to the outlying chalets, invariably to return in time for dinner and make another ritual of the eating interlude." 46 While logs and rough-hewn native lumber afforded an undoubted bucolic charm, there was universal agreement that materials of a more enduring nature would be used in any rebuilding programs "with ornate effects that should prove attractive and comfortable." Late in 1945, Railroad and Government engineers exchanged plans for architectural redesigning in the Park. These exchanges were a resumption of the long dormant effort to get the Company to conform to Glacier's master plans. Communications between the Minneapolis and Washington offices during the war about the role of the Glacier Park Company had been scant. What correspondence there was was carried out in a note of rapprochement. Three full years of complete inoperation in the Park helped as a prolonged reprieve for the beleaguered Company. Between 1942 and 1945, there was a welcome respite from the persistent governmental urgings to build more visitor facilities. Outwardly, the detente that formed between the Company and the Park Service bridged the impasse that had surfaced during the pre-war years. The slack years of the early forties

46 Whitefish Pilot, 3 August 1945.
caused public servants and private operators alike to forego the dispute surrounding the Company's responsibilities in the Park. If any harm was done during the war, it was the physical harm rendered to the hotels and chalets that came from disuse. If there was any benefit realized because of the war, it was the improved relationships between the Company and Park administrators.

The war concluded, the Glacier Park Hotel turned to the task of reopening their closed facilities. Early in 1946, advance crews sent to Glacier by the Company relayed reports that confirmed earlier fears. At some of the chalet sites, the forlorn clusters of buildings required large sums of capital for refitting, renovation, refurnishing, and modernization. The situation at Going-To-The-Sun Chalets, termed "irreparable and an eyesore" in 1946, was bleak. Porch railings had disappeared and gaping holes punctuated stairs, walkways and sun decks. Retaining walls were tilted and badly cracked. Unbroken windows were few and fewer still were guest rooms where pack rats had not invaded. Some roofs had collapsed entirely from heavy snows, others were shorn of shingles and ceiling rafters from the severe winds so peculiar to the St. Mary Valley.47

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47Glacial Gossip, 7 June 1949, GNPHC. Great Falls Tribune, 7 November 1948.
Elsewhere in the Park, Company officials found it difficult to condone the retention of other housing units. One among them was the Belton Chalets. Since 1930, the Chalets had been opened only periodically and then on a limited seasonal basis. In 1946, the Company stated that they had "no plans for further utilization of the property and it is of no service to the operations of this Company." On May 15, 1946, the Great Northern solicited bids for the sale of the Belton Chalets. Even Superintendent Emmert was in concurrence with this measure. He supported the disposal of the chalet group in writing to his superiors emphasizing that it was in the best interests of the Service that the operations of the chalets not "be tied up any further with the operations of the Company and under the supervision of the Park Service." The Company did not deem the chalet essential, because it catered to auto travellers outside the Park on U.S. 2. The character of buildings, type of accommodations afforded and lack of room to expand as a modern auto hostelry seemed sufficient reasons for no longer including it into the business of the Company. By June, the Railroad had secured a

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48Letter from V.P. Turnburke to Drury, 22 June 1946, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

49Ibid.

50Memorandum from Superintendent Emmert to Regional Director of NPS, 2 July 1946, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHC.
buyer. William A. Murrill, a resident of Belton intending to run the chalets as a local summer hotel, purchased the buildings and land for $25,550.00. This brought to four the number of facilities no longer operated by the Glacier Park Company in the Spring of 1946. Added to the Belton, St. Mary and Going-To-The-Sun Chalets were the four high mountain tent camps formerly run by George Noffsinger.

While the idea of pastoral Swiss chalets languished, the auto cabin camps flourished. So voluminous were advance reservations for them after the war, that the Company planners determined a fixed limit of time spent at each unit of the Company's holdings as early as May, 1946. At all the hotels and cabin camps, managers, hoping to force the public to become more mobile, allowed patrons to remain only three days.52

On June 15, 1946, the Company opened the doors of its three hotels, three chalets and two cabin camps as thousands of tourists, freed from the wartime controls on travel, descended upon the Park. Fortunately, during this first post-war season, visitors to the national parks were sympathetic to the difficulties under which the Service and

51 Letter from Turnburke to Drury, loc. cit.

52 Letter from Lawrence Merriam to Drury, 8 May 1946, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC. This was amended later in the summer to a five day limit of stay.
concessioners endeavored to care for them and most accepted, cheerfully, the inconveniences of the period of reconversion. In Glacier, Superintendent Emmert noted that the Park "went through the 1946 season with a minimum of criticism of overcrowding from vacationers. There were comparatively few cases of people having to sleep in cars as compared with the problems in other recreation areas." Tourists in the post-war Summer of 1946 travelled fast and far and the limited period of stay in Glacier caused even further movement. Visitors did stop long enough in the Park, however, to boost the Company's gross revenue 33.89 per cent and the Transport Company's profits by 130.35 per cent. Lake McDonald Hotel and the East Glacier Cabin Camp were filled every day during July and August. The Glacier Park and Many Glacier Hotels were filled only to approximately 50 per cent of capacity in July and 25 per cent in August, "so there was no time when some types of accommodations were not available." Patronage at Sperry and Granite Park Chalets was less than half that of the 1941 totals at the beginning of the season but press releases encouraged trail use in

53 Hungry Horse News, 14 March 1947. Superintendent Emmert was anxious to cooperate with nearby communities to insure that all available hotel rooms and cabin camps were kept full during the summer months. He arranged a system whereby all entrance stations would have current vacancy information available.

54 Superintendent's Annual Report, 1946, file 207-01.4, GNPHC.
their vicinities, resulting in normal use by the close of the season. Launches and busses were once again running on familiar schedules and negotiations were underway to locate a saddle horse concessioner to fill the void left by George Noffsinger.\footnote{Ibid.} By the spring of the following year reservations received by late May were running ahead of the 1946 figures. The Company had 5,106 reservations compared to 4,550 for the preceding spring. This did not include bookings for private cabins in the McDonald Valley and in communities bordering the Park where Superintendent Emmert anticipated that private enterprises would increase their cabin, camping and housing facilities by 10 per cent.\footnote{Hungry Horse News, 6 June 1947. The Glacier Park Company was able to accommodate a maximum of 5,000 persons per day in their facilities. On private lands within the Park or on the perimeter were 498 cabins capable of housing 1,730 persons. The increase in accommodations over the 1946 season was approximately 250. [Great Falls Tribune, 25 March 1947].}

Thus, the immediate post-war period, particularly the year 1946, was one of untold changes. At the beginning of the year, the nation was actively at war and public use of Glacier and other parks reduced to a minimum through regulations of the Office of Defense Transportation and no facilities were in use beyond those designated for emergency use.
At the close of the year, the resumption of full-scale activity had been affected and thoroughly carried through. The change was not merely a matter of commencing a normal season's operations; new regulations and post-war conditions introduced many problems over those of the last full year of business.

The Glacier Park Company marked the latter half of the decade of the 1940's with a slight consolidation of their holdings in the Park. Much repair and rehabilitation took place, better hotel personnel were available. Fire sprinkler systems quickly appeared in the Company's two largest hotels at the request of Government fire marshalls. The Company was careful, however, not to extend themselves unreasonably because of the approaching expiration date of their twenty year concession franchise, so their activities during these years were actually quite innocuous. The Great Northern authorized the Company to make only short range investments prior to negotiations insuring another twenty year operating period. The Park Service felt otherwise. Though with much milder admonition, Superintendent Emmert diligently reminded Company officers that their own figures showed that the public "in general would rather stay in cabin camps than in the large hotels."57 His energies

57Superintendent's Annual Report, 1946, loc. cit.
focused again on the establishment of the cabin camp in the McDonald Valley, preferably at Apgar, similar in design and capacity to those at Swiftcurrent and Roes Creek. The popularity, indeed, the overcrowding at these two cabin complexes caused them to be the only units in the Park to still enforce the nightly limit of stay through 1949. On the strength of the popularity and consistent attractions of these cabin camps, Emmert pressed more vigorously though vainly for the removal of the old Lake McDonald Hotel, in spite of the efforts of his predecessor (Libbey) to save it. Late in 1949 he wrote to the regional Park Service Director: "It is my idea that we should advise Mr. Jeffries (General Manager of the Glacier Park Company) that the Park Service believes the Lake McDonald Hotel has about served its usefulness and that a new housing unit should be installed at the West side of the Park...." His request was pondered in the regional offices, then dismissed.

While free from serious coercion by either local or regional Service administrators, the Company extended con-

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58 Memorandum from Superintendent Emmert to Regional Director, 10 January 1949, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNP HC. This decision came about as a result of a fire safety inspection of the Hotel during the Summer of 1948 by Park safety engineers. A.A. Aszmann, General Manager of the Company since 1934, retired on January 1, 1947. The Assistant Manager since 1940, J.S. Jeffries, succeeded him. (See Great Falls Tribune, 2 January 1947).
sideration to the overall program of permanently abandoning some of its chalet groups. The first, St. Mary Chalets, had been razed in 1944; Belton Chalets sold in 1946; and in 1947 Company field representatives critically reviewed the conditions at Going-To-The-Sun and Cut Bank Chalets. The two groups, held in condemnation since the end of the war, stood only as memorabilia and financial debits. At Cut Bank, the existing structures were in such poor condition that only complete reconstruction could restore them. The comparative mediocrity of the site, its relative inaccessibility and the high maintenance and operating costs made firm skeptics of the Company inspectors who made prompt decision to abandon both chalet groups. Again, under the direction of Fred Stone, Great Northern work crews salvaged, dismantled and burned the Swiss-style encampments during the Winter of 1948-49. By June of 1949, both sites had been cleared and returned to their natural state.  

At the same time the Glacier Park Company was earnestly trying to dispose of unwanted housing units and consolidate their holdings, Interior Secretary Krug was busy appointing an advisory group of consultants whose objective it was to

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59 Memorandum from Drury to Assistant Secretary of Interior, 9 March 1948, Glacier Park Hotel Company-Buildings, file 900-01, GNPHC. Great Falls Tribune, 12 June 1949.
"determine what the millions of visitors to the Park have a right to expect with regard to location and design of structures, extent and range of accommodations and rates." Nationally, there was public criticism of concession operators sufficient to cause concern in Washington. It was Krug's intention that the advisory group, comprised of dispassionate, non-Governmental individuals, would seek out, discover and report any "irradicable shortcomings" in the current concession system in the parks. Their findings, submitted over the next two years, keyed more to expansion than to consolidation in the national parks where capital funds for hotels, restaurants, resorts and transport concerns already totalled an estimated 29 million dollars.

Finally, in 1949, at a four day investigation of the needs of the parks by the House Committee of Public Lands, Director Newton Drury testified that the concessioners needed to expend several million dollars "at once" to modernize and expand facilities "for entertaining visitors to the national parks." He selected twenty parks where

60 National Parks Magazine, January-March 1947, vol. 21, no. 88, p. 3.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
twenty million dollars would have to be spent by the con-
cession operators and $8,339,000.00 by the Government for
utilities such as power, water, sewage and communication
units.\textsuperscript{63}

This inspired another round of administrative discon-
sonance. Expectedly, concession holders found Drury's
recommendations wanting. The overall effect was to make
many more despondent than ever. Certainly it had been
shown that with the services they sought to offer, pros-
perity did not always follow investment. For those who
doubted, there were convincing profit-loss statements
offered gratuitously by ailing concession companies. Even
among the most successful, like the operator in Mount Rain-
ier National Park, there were losses of $17,684.00 between
the years 1939 and 1949.\textsuperscript{64} Others, such as the Utah Parks
Company, operator in Zion, Bryce Canyon and the North Rim
of Grand Canyon National Parks, reported less bountiful
figures. In the same period they lost $1,001,380.00.\textsuperscript{65}
But the Glacier Park Company probably had more reason to
be disgruntled than its compatriot concessioners. During

\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Great Falls Tribune}, 26 July 1949.
\textsuperscript{64} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Ibid.}
the decade of the 1940's, it lost $1,406,298.00. Thus, a familiar impasse had begun to reemerge by the close of the decade. Whether the Great Northern Railway, regardless of its financial reserves, could continue to support the unprofitable existence of its subsidiary company in Glacier would be decided before two more disappointing seasons had passed.

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66Ibid. Losses of the Company during the three year period of 1948-1950 totalled $360,567.00. The greatest portion of this total occurred outside the Park at the Glacier Park Hotel, where the Company lost $269,643.00 in the same period. The annual depreciation figure for the Company's holdings in the Park amounted to $74,000.00 in the late 1940's. (Memorandum from Regional Director Howard W. Baker to Drury, Contracts, Glacier Park Hotel Company, 1917-1960, file 900-02, GNPHC.)
CHAPTER V

THE COMPANY STEPS DOWN, 1950-1961

Although it took the full decade of the 1950's, the Great Northern eventually extricated itself from all concession affairs in Glacier Park. If the Railroad had any thoughts of preserving their investment, they chose to ignore them. Resigned to the melancholy fact that the one-time hotel experiment had evolved unavoidably into a troublesome subsidiary, they followed the only reasonable solution. The decision was made and as the Glacier Park Company moved into the decade, only a polite and painless course needed to be charted.

Instead of forthright withdrawal, the Railroad applied the principle of gradualism. Electing to operate on one year contracts rather than renewing the customary twenty year franchise, the Company coasted leisurely toward a moment in the future when their holdings could be sold. Their refusal to become entrapped by rigid Federal guidelines certified the degree of unfaithfulness that the Railroad displayed for the Park. Only a timely rehabilitation campaign on their part near the close of the decade allowed them to withdraw from the Park with some semblance of mutual good feeling.
The Railroad's disparaging attitude toward their involvement in Glacier was easily attributable to further decreases in rail travel.\(^1\) The generative force behind their accommodation system was the promotion of rail passenger travel from the East. The corollary that meant success to the Glacier Park Company was to be found in abundant rail vacationers delivered regularly to the Park entrances. Few had been in recent years. Therefore, the Company, which had formerly catered to a favorite class of travelers, faced certain adjustment. The shifting winds of travel hastened change and the Company found itself in keen competition with the automobile vacationer as well as with the Park Service over the obligations of their franchise.

It was in this decade that the Railroad began seriously to evaluate the premise upon which it had originally entangled itself in the concession business. Unquestionably, this premise had been imperative in the days of the youthful

\(^1\)The Montana Highway Commission cooperated with the National Park Service in the Summer of 1951 to conduct a tourist survey which showed a total of 483,923 passenger car arrivals compared to 8,527 rail passenger visitors. The percentage of visitors using accommodations in and near the Park were: Auto cabins or motels-59.2 per cent; Hotels-14.4 per cent; Camping-14.6 per cent. (GNP Tourist Survey, Montana State Highway Planning Survey, Helena, Montana: Naegele Printing Company, 1951).
optimism of Louis Hill when the Railroad was the principle means by which most travellers reached the Park. Now, however, there were skeptics. Few on the Great Northern's Board of Directors could arouse even a passing interest in national park business. There were no missionary zealots desirous of propelling large hotels and chalets to dignity as resorts for wealthy vacationers. Instead, attrition and modern travel trends, which had signaled an end to Going-To-The-Sun, Cut Bank, Belton and St. Mary Chalets, now began to gnaw at the remainder of the Company's holdings.

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2Hill died on April 27, 1948 when nearing his seventy-sixth birthday. Though he retired as Chairman of the Board of Directors in 1926, he remained to serve as Director and member of the Executive Committee until the time of his death. The mission implanted in Glacier, the Glacier Park Company, he continued to oversee, though only in an advisory capacity and not with the unabated vitality of earlier years. Stewart H. Holbrook, James J. Hill. A Great Life in Brief (New York, N.Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), p. 201.

3The Great Northern disposed of three other housing units during this decade because of unprofitable returns and high maintenance costs. In March of 1954 the Great Northern donated Granite Park and Sperry Chalets to the Park Service and was relieved of the obligation to operate them under their contract. Two years later, the Service contracted B. Ross Luding of Martin City, Montana to a five year franchise for the operations of the two chalets. (Buildings 1956-General Glacier Park Company, file C-58, GNPHC. See also, Hungry Horse News, 25 May 1956.) Company managers also consented to the removal of two large chalet structures at the Two Medicine complex in September of 1955. Both buildings had been closed for several years, being considered no longer adequate or safe for public use. Park rangers burned the last of these buildings in 1956, leaving only one chalet structure standing to be used as a Company Camp store. (Hungry Horse News, 1 June 1956 and 6 June 1956.)
To illustrate, Railroad executives had only to point to Glacier's visitation figures. In 1950, the Park's fortieth season and a record travel year, 485,950 people passed through the Park entrances. Of this total, only 9,072 arrived by rail while 465,545 came via automobile.\(^4\) Auto travel, indeed, was booming--and not without effect.\(^5\) There was more than coincidence in the fact that as auto travel rose, rail visitation fell. Naturally, observers in Minneapolis were distressed. Even the Park Service, in this decade, began to realize that the Great Northern was decidedly less effusive; that it was not strong in will or determined in purpose. Once firmly fixed, this viewpoint permeated the thinking of decision makers in the local, regional and national Park Service offices. Again, as in past years, the Great Northern and the Park Service experienced a peculiar schism between enmity and alliance. Further obstructions were on the way, too. If there had been any doubt, after the Service began gaining momentum prior to the war, that its agents were learning to utilize that momentum with headlong unanimity, the events of the post-war years dispelled it.

\(^{4}\)Great Falls Tribune, 27 May 1951.

\(^{5}\)See "NP's in Danger," Holiday, July, 1954, p. 33.
In the opinion of Government administrators, the entire national concession picture during the 1940's was found to be woefully inadequate. Regionally, Service directors analyzed the needs for visitor accommodations in Glacier and, in 1950, outlined a program which required the Glacier Park Company to carry out a six year building project that would necessitate an investment of "only a little over a million dollars each year." The plan placed specific emphasis on the erection of cabin camps at Apgar, in addition to expansion of all existing hotels. The Regional Director suggested a housing increase for 2,838 guests, costing a total of $7,960,000.00 based on the assumption that the hotels would have 77 per cent occupancy and the cabin camps 90 per cent occupancy. The Great Northern's Board of Directors greeted this proposal with scant enthusiasm. Two decades of tireless Park Service coercion had inured Railroad officials and, as one Interior Department employee noted, "The silence from Minneapolis was not promising."\(^6\)

Yet, even silence would have been preferred over the

\(^6\)Letter to F.J. Gavin from Newton Drury, 5 May 1950, Contracts-Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC. See also, GNRR Annual Report, 1951, p. 16.

\(^7\)Telegram to Newton Drury from Jack Closky, 11 January 1950, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
next dispatch that Director Drury received from Great Northern President F.J. Gavin in February of 1950. "We have been giving a great deal of consideration to the question of renewal of our operating contract which expires December 31, 1951," he began. At length, he described the situation of the Railroad and the moribund Glacier Park Company. With the coming of the automobile in such great numbers, he lamented, the whole picture of transportation to and from the Park had changed and train arrivals in the past year declined to such an extent that less than 2 percent of the total visitors came to the Park by train. Still further, he explained that he did not see how the railway could authorize the expenditure of nearly eight million dollars for the maintenance and expansion of the Company's facilities. In his opinion, this money should be invested in modernizing the Railroad's rolling stock and reducing operating costs to meet the constantly rising costs of labor and material. Facing the prospect of a heavy investment in Glacier and recognizing the continuous operating losses, the President declined to extend the Company's contract beyond the 1951 expiration date.\(^8\)

\(^8\)Letter to Newton Drury from F.J. Gavin, 27 February 1950, Contracts Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC. See also, GNRR Annual Report, 1951, p. 16.
In Washington, as well as in Glacier, the implications were both obvious and ominous: the Park Service was perilously close to losing the only principle concessioner in the Park. Planners and financial specialists began to review the Company's audit records, house counts and profit-loss ledger to confirm the Company's grounds for declination. Many on Glacier's staff had been given to believe, through discussions with hotel personnel, that the Railroad planned on continuing their operations. There had been recent installations of fire sprinklers, oil burners, and other major repairs at some sites. Not surprisingly, then, Park officials were startled and confused. "Mr. Emmert and I," wrote Regional Director Howard Baker, "are both very much surprised at this decision and find it hard to believe that some solution cannot be worked out whereby the Glacier Park Company would continue as a concessioner in Glacier."^9

Over everything, more than ever, hung the knowledge that if the Great Northern withdrew, the Park Service would be hard-pressed to find a suitable replacement. Consequently, the Service reacted vigorously. Throughout the Spring and Summer of 1951, attempts to keep the Great Northern as a concession agent precluded many other administrative duties.

^9Letter to Newton Drury from Howard G. Baker, 22 March 1951, Contracts-Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC.
The Interior Department tried to prod the sleepy Company into further commitment, inciting initiative which simply was not there. Under the circumstances, the Railroad was the more likely to want no part of any more entanglement. Subsequent meetings between the two parties yielded little. The Railroad remained adamant, insisting that they were primarily a rail company and that the operation of hotels and chalets no longer coincided with their overall objectives. However, they stressed that they did not wish to "embarrass" the Park Service and, therefore, would possibly be willing to conclude an agreement to operate the units on a one year basis until arrangements could be made for another party to take over the property. Still, the deadlock persisted through the summer. Braced for a barrage of Park Service platitudes, the Railroad was showing itself able and willing to resist Federal blandishments, if not outright coercion. The categorical "yes" that the Service sought in response to its requests for expansion and firm commitment was now only a nagging "maybe."

The scene of confrontations shifted from Glacier to Washington, but local Montana interest groups followed the developments with keen interest. Dan Whetstone, editor for

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10Letter to Howard Baker from J.W. Emmert, 30 March 1951, Contracts-Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC.
the Cut Bank Pioneer Press, reenacted one meeting between Interior Secretary Oscar Chapman and Great Northern President John Budd (successor to F.J. Gavin) with Budd commanding, "Accept our proposal for one year at a stretch or run it yourself." Whetstone was sympathetic to the Railroad and defended the Great Northern's convictions. "Today," he wrote, "the Cads and Packards and smaller jobs flash along the highways in the paradisal mountain land, pause a night or so at one of the hotels or chalets and then go on the Canadian or Pacific Coast resorts leaving little in the Glacier Park Company strong boxes."11

By September, Secretary Chapman saw no other course. He accepted the Railroad's one year plan and affixed his signature to the new franchise set to expire one year later on December 31, 1952. For the Park Service it was a Pyrrhic victory. Because of the short-term nature of the new contract, the Service did not now have any consummate, long-range control over the Company and, therefore, could only suggest that they prepare for the addition of more visitor facilities.

Though uncomfortable over these developments in Glacier, Chief of Concessions Management, Benjamin F. Dickson, pressed on with more urgings. Early in 1952, he revised the former

11Cut Bank Pioneer Press, 8 June 1951.
rehabilitation cost figure downward so it would "not involve too much of a capital expenditure" for the Company but which called for facilities offering 960 additional rooms to the Company's hotels, chalets and cabin camps.\textsuperscript{12} Cautiously, hopefully, Dickson sent the proposal to the Company's offices in Minneapolis. Meanwhile, the Railroad was doing things which seemed to have an authentic ring of a desire to soften the dispute. Months later came an unexpected reply. Spokesmen for the Company returned a grandiose plan directed at producing needed revenue and solving the accommodation shortages that had existed in the Park since the end of the war. The plan included repairs to Many Glacier and Lake McDonald Hotels, Rising Sun Auto Camp, and even possible construction of a lodge at Logan Pass. The improvements in the McDonald Valley alone visualized housing for three hundred guests and auto units of variable prices.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{12}Memorandum to Howard Baker from Benjamin F. Dickson, 6 February 1952, Contracts-Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC. Cost estimates for these improvements would have totalled $3,145,000.00, or nearly as much as the total valuation of the Company ($3,560,612.74) in 1952. File No. 6445, 1952, Flathead County Clerk and Recorder.

\textsuperscript{13}Letter to Howard Baker from J.W. Emmert, 24 October 1952, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
Privately, Superintendent Emmert and his colleagues suspected that this proposal was, perhaps, more than the Company would ultimately care to pursue. Their suspicions were affirmed at the close of the 1952 fiscal year. In December, the Secretary received word from the Great Northern stating that their Board of Directors had given "careful consideration" to the Company's upcoming renovation and concluded that only the remodeling of Many Glacier Hotel, at a cost of only $300,000.00 would be undertaken in 1953.14 Unhappy at this turn of mind, the Secretary registered his disapproval of the innocuous expenditure. The Service's special interest was in the expansion of facilities to take care of the ever-increasing numbers of visitors. "Doing this is in our mutual interest," he reminded Railroad President J.G. Pool (successor to John Budd) and chided him for the plan to "redecorate and redesign the fireplaces at Many Glacier."15 Park Service Director Conrad Wirth also joined in criticizing the Railroad. He pointed out that the new expenditure did nothing toward putting the Company on a sounder financial basis. But having only feeble powers of constraint and coercion, Wirth was helpless to force the

14 Letter to Conrad Wirth from J.G. Pool, 1 December 1952, Contracts-Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC.
15 Ibid.
Company to build. Rather than give his approval, he rejected the proposal on the grounds that it was "insufficient." But the Railroad had bought some time. The course was being charted, though not altogether painlessly.

The relationship between the Railroad and the Service, as it existed in 1953, could only lead to more acute disharmony. Nothing stood in greater contention than the Railroad's unwillingness to invest in their sinking subsidiary. The Service could not sanction the furtherance of complete concessioner autonomy in the Park. To instill the needed stability and cooperativeness, they fervently wished for a long-term concession franchise instead of meaningless and unmanageable one year extensions of the former twenty year contract. In February of 1953, it seemed that they would have neither. That month, Great Northern President Budd invoked a now perennial threat which had fearful undertones. He said, regarding the impasse, "The only conclusions we can reach is that the operation of the facilities in the Park should now be turned over to someone else and that we should withdraw after the 1953 season."

16 Telegram from Conrad Wirth to J.G. Pool, 28 December 1952, Contracts-Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC.

17 Letter to Conrad Wirth from John Budd, 12 February 1953, Contracts-Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC.
Again, almost monotonously, Director Wirth was thrust into a perplexing dilemma. Writing to President Budd, he insisted that a twenty year agreement could be worked out though he added that, "I can assure you that we do not favor additional one year extensions either." By midsummer of 1953, all possibilities for keeping the Great Northern as a concessioner had apparently been explored. Director Wirth contemplated the approaching expiration date (December 31, 1953) cheerlessly. "The people in the National Park Service...who have worked with you," he wrote to President Budd, "cannot help but join me in feeling sad over the fact that indications are that in the not too distant future the Great Northern will no longer be our partner in the development and care of Glacier National Park." 

Wirth, however, was premature. On the eve of the December expiration date, President Budd unexpectedly reversed his steadfast position and announced to Director Wirth that the Railroad would agree to one final one year extension for 1954 before it concluded its operations. Though he objected to the idea of a one year contract, Wirth gave his approval to the 1954 franchise. Another delay had been purchased.

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18 Letter to John Budd from Conrad Wirth, 23 March 1954, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

19 Letter to John Budd from Conrad Wirth, 10 August 1953, Contracts-Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC.
The year that followed was, again, keyed to diplomacy. Early in 1954, the Park Service regional offices renewed the search for a possible agent to negotiate with the Railroad for the purchase of the Company. The search was futile. Unable to locate a single concessioner for the operation of the entire collection of visitor facilities, the Service attempted to splinter the units and offer them piecemeal. This, too, resulted in disappointment. Unhappily, Wirth turned once more to the Great Northern and tried to reopen discussions for a twenty year contract. This time, diplomacy yielded results. For one thing, there were some strange and hopeful stirrings in Minneapolis. On July 9, Railroad and Service representatives met again and commenced discussions for a new long-term contract. It was soon apparent that "with some give and take" it would be possible to work out an agreement favorable to both parties. Although Railroad representatives insisted that they could not obligate the Great Northern contractually to any building program, informally they gave the Director reason to believe that "some reconstruction would be undertaken on the Glacier Park Company's plants."20

20 Memorandum to Howard W. Baker from Conrad Wirth, 28 July 1954, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
Director Wirth pondered the details of the contract which, if signed, would allow the Company to possess one of the most liberal concession franchises in Service history. But even more to the point was the threat of embarrassment if the Company continued operating under short-term contracts or, worse yet, if the Company withdrew from Glacier altogether at the time when the high-keyed expansionism of the Federally-funded Mission 66 was proceeding apace. On November 8, Director Wirth and President Budd signed the new contract. The provisions agreed to and the litany broken, the Great Northern emerged with an extraordinarily lenient franchise in hand. Both parties realized that they were forestalling the inevitable; that in the near future the Great Northern would remove itself from all concession duties in the Park. Yet, for the moment, there appeared to be stability.

21Mission 66 was a visionary Park Service development program launched on July 1, 1956. Its goal was to have the national parks staffed and equipped to handle the projected eight million visitors by 1966, the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service. Begun in Glacier in July of 1957, Mission 66 envisioned improvements to roads, trails, improvements to camping sites and parking lots, installation of visitor centers, etc. In Glacier alone, the ten year appropriations totalled $9,641,000.00, with $5,151,000.00 for roads and trails and $4,510,000.00 scheduled for government buildings and utilities. (See Great Falls Tribune, 8 April 1957 and November 6, 1955. See also Lon Garrison, "Mission 66," National Parks Magazine, July-September, 1955, pp. 107-108.)
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The contract was, for the Park Service, largely sacrificial. It gave the Railroad the option of terminating the agreement at the end of any calendar year upon six months notification. Furthermore, the contract was assignable, meaning that the Railroad could transfer the franchise to another party for improvements subject to approval of the Director. This final clause was vitally necessary to the Glacier Park Company. Even before the contract was finalized, the Great Northern's Board of Directors were actively discussing ways to consolidate the Company's holdings, place it on a relatively sound financial basis and dispose it to another concession company. They realized that a concession company which could not find itself could hardly ask others to. So they set about to find themselves, if only for the moment. The initial phase of this scheme began in 1955 with the purchase of the Glacier Park Transport Company.

Late in 1955, the President of the Transport Company, Howard H. Hays, announced the sale of the entire stock of his company to the Glacier Park Company, which then assumed the responsibility for providing all future bus and taxi service in the Park. Obviously, this strengthened the Railroad's subsidiary at a time when strengthening should not

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22 Contracts-Glacier Park Company, file 900-02, GNPHC, Contract 14-10-0100-345, executed November 8, 1954. (See also GNRR Annual Report, 1954, p. 16.)
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have been a motivating criteria, although, in fact, it was since the Railroad's new goal was to fashion the Glacier Park Company anew so that it consisted of a complete array of visitor services. In this way, the Company could be offered for sale boasting a more well-rounded scope of visitor facilities.\\footnote{Further biographical details about Howard H. Hays and remarks about early day activities of the Glacier Park Transport Company can be found in the November 1, 1955 issue of Great Falls Tribune.}

Keeping to this goal, the Great Northern began the second phase of their rebuilding program. Unwilling to await fate's offerings for their obsolete holdings, the Railroad seized the initiative and determined to embark upon a rehabilitation campaign unprecedented in spending and energy; one which exceeded even Park Service expectations. In 1956, President Budd convinced the Railway's Board of Directors that it would be asking too much for the Service to look forward with pleasure to the time when they would have to aid in the disposal of a scattered, unkempt assemblage of hotels, chalets and cabin camps. There were, even at this late date, still favorable ties between the Service and the Railroad. They had been strained and buffeted over the reach of time, though never dissolved. The year 1956 was a year of more cordial relationships; it
was the year of restoration of the Company's facilities and it was the year of the arrival of the Knutson Hotel Corporation of Minneapolis.

On October 26, 1956, Donald Knutson and his associates conducted a formal meeting with the Director in Washington to discuss plans for improving accommodations in Glacier. Knutson, a man described by Wirth as "an aggressive manager having great vision and energy," unveiled an impressive three year development plan in which the Great Northern pledged to spend, through the Knutson Corporation, three million dollars in the Park. Wirth, perhaps inwardly overjoyed, approved the entire plan. Afterward, he expressed great confidence in the Corporation and gave Knutson firm assurance that there would be no objections of the program from Washington.²⁴

Knutson returned to Minneapolis with this promise and, two weeks later, the complete operation and management of the Glacier Park Company, by prior agreement with the Railroad, transferred to the Knutson Hotel Company. The transferral involved no sale or lease of property and the Great Northern remained the sole source of revenue for the pending

²⁴ Memorandum from Howard W. Baker to J.W. Emmert, 31 October 1956, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
renovation. The Knutson Corporation furnished management services for a fixed fee and a share in any increase in net earnings.\textsuperscript{25}

Apart from the outward concern for the physical plants in Glacier, there was obvious strategy behind the Railroad's revival campaign. Prudence dictated that structures long established should not be disposed of for light or transient causes. However outdated the buildings, whatever their shortcomings as a profit-producing utility, they still carried a quaint and nostalgic attraction upon which no price could be placed. More importantly, the Great Northern hoped that the hotels, once restored and reconditioned, would be more appealing to prospective buyers. This philosophy, then, guided the activities of the Railroad and the Knutson Corporation until the close of the decade. For a great many Montanans who read press releases and listened to radio announcements telling of the rebirth of the hotel and cabin camp system in the Park, Great Northern's efforts seemed founded on benevolence and concern for public service. The reality of the gesture, of course, was that the Railroad sought not to reinstate themselves in a preeminent hotel business. Rather, the aim was to future removal, not to

\textsuperscript{25}See \textit{Great Falls Tribune}, 8 February 1957, p. 26 and 4 November 1956, p. 4.
future entrenchment.26

Though full-scale revamping did not begin until 1957, there were minor repairs at Rising Sun and Swiftcurrent Auto Cabins during the 1956 season. That summer, patronage at the Company's units increased with train arrivals the highest since 1953. There was a noticeable rise in tour party business and the house count exceeded any since pre-war days.27

The following spring, even before the winter snows had receded, workmen for the Knutson firm arrived to begin the

26Knutson did, however, secure the approval for a rate increase for the coming years from the Secretary of Interior to become effective in 1957. Over the past ten years the national average of rate increases for concessioners was 80 per cent, yet in a similar period the Secretary had allowed the Glacier Park Company to increase their rates by only 40 per cent. Knutson alerted Director Conrad Wirth in 1956 that the Company must be granted a rate increase because the Great Northern had become "real uneasy" and the stockholders were giving the Railroad "lots of trouble" about continuing losses. (Letter to Conrad Wirth from Don Knutson, 8 November 1956, Buildings General-1956, file C-58, GNPHC.) The Company's net losses in 1956 amounted to $319,346.08, which included a loss of $85,372.87 at Glacier Park Hotel. The overall total loss included charges of $367,847.06 for repairs and maintenance. The Company's balance sheet as of December 31, 1956 carried total gross assets in excess of $3,900,000.00, but after deducting the accrued depreciation, the total net assets represented an actual book value of only $1,648,000.00. "These assets have failed to produce a return upon the original investment," reminded the Company's General Manager. (Letter to Superintendent J.W. Emmert from William O. Derrough, 5 March 1957, Buildings General-1956, file C-58, GNPHC.)

27GNRR Annual Report, 1956, p. 11.
largest refurbishing and remodeling project of its kind in the Park in over thirty years. The focus was on Many Glacier and Glacier Park Hotels which were destined to become first-class convention centers. At Glacier Park Hotel, interior designers created a convention hall with a capacity of three hundred. One hundred rooms were refinished and redecorated at a cost of $287,000.00. Special suites alone cost over $69,000.00. There were additions of gift and coffee shops, cocktail lounges and recreation areas featuring golf courses, croquet, tennis and badminton courts.²⁸

Twenty-six miles to the north, at Many Glacier Hotel, work crews engaged in a number of similar improvements. $24,000.00 went into the redecorating of one hundred rooms and the construction of a convention hall with a capacity of two hundred. Elsewhere, Lake McDonald Hotel and Rising Sun Auto Camp received shipments of new furniture while painters and decorators made changes in the interior appointments of the rooms and lobbies.²⁹

Periodically, Don Knutson toured the Park overseeing the progress. He changed the name of Roes Creek Auto Cabin Camp (formerly East Glacier Auto Cabin Camp) to Rising Sun Auto Camp and the name of the Glacier Park Hotel to Glacier Park

²⁸Great Falls Tribune, 19 April 1957, p. 29.
²⁹Ibid.
Lodge. He also wrote several guest editorials in local newspapers exhorting natives to visit the Park and patronize his facilities and, as further incentive, advertised "Montana Special" package rates for Montanans who chose to avail themselves of the Company's services.

His associates in Minneapolis were not idle either. Corporate personnel inaugurated a playhouse program presenting Broadway actors in theater productions and a "full schedule of entertainment events each day." Square dance schools, outdoor jazz festivals and golf tournaments highlighted daily activities and transformed the hotels into a recreational mecca. During the 1957 season, Don Knutson proclaimed, "This season the Park is really new--not only because of the $7,000,000.00 worth of refurbishing--but also because of the vast activities program that offers more fun per square minute than a circus."

Through the summer, the public relations staff grew and advertising expenses, borne exclusively by the Knutson Corporation, rose to inordinate proportions as newspapers, radio releases and billboards

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30 Hungry Horse News, 31 May 1957.
31 Billings Times, 13 June 1957. See also Glendive Montana Ranger, 7 August 1957 and Hungry Horse News, 28 June 1957.
32 Park County News, 16 May 1957. See also Great Falls Tribune, 26 April 1957 and Hungry Horse News, 19 July 1957.
33 Great Falls Tribune, 7 August 1957, p. 6.
poured forth the news of the "new look" facilities in Glacier. The Hotel Company of the new dispensation, it was hoped, would be transformed not merely by the infusion of modern fixtures, but also by a sweeping reformation of visitor services.

Not a few of the observant Park Service officials in Glacier who raptly watched the fast paced activity detected high-level commercialism.\(^{34}\) One suggested that the Knutson Corporation's funds be spent not on billboards or dramatic talent, but on accommodations with lower rates and modest comforts. Another felt that the Corporation was trying to "operate too much of the wrong kind of accommodations at the price out of reach of the average visitor."\(^{35}\) Still others believed that the aggressive promotion to increase business was directly contradictory to the spirit of Mission 66, which sought relief from overcrowded and overpriced accommodations in the national parks. To these individuals it was plain that the Corporation was influenced more by promotional considerations than by any sense of propriety or understanding of the purpose of private

\(^{34}\)Paul Shepard, Jr., "Something Amiss In the National Parks," *National Parks Magazine*, October-December, 1953, p. 150.

\(^{35}\)Memorandum to Howard Baker from Regional Chief of Interior Department (unnamed), 22 July 1957, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
enterprise in the Park. Aside from these objections, however, Service officials in Washington, notably Director Wirth, were less critical. His approval had been given, his promise would be kept. More locally, the editor of the Hungry Horse News, Mel Ruder, defended the Corporation's activities on different grounds. He said, "Glacier isn't acquiring quite the Las Vegas plus Banff touch, but the outlook is for something more than nice elderly people sitting on the porch."36 And so the work continued.

The prospect for the 1958 season, predicted Don Knutson, was for even more remodeling, in accordance with the three year, three million dollar plan presented to Wirth in 1956. Soon after the last guests departed in September, Knutson returned a work force of fifty men to the Park to continue with the schedule of labor throughout the winter. "By the beginning of the 1958 season," he stated, "we'll be far into a program designed to make Glacier Park Lodge the finest resort and convention hotel in the West."37 By April, after sixteen months of feverish activity, the Great Northern had invested $1,600,000.00 into the Company's facilities. Don Knutson beamed confidently as his Corporation moved into its

36 Park County News, op. cit.
37 Great Falls Tribune, 7 September 1957.
second year of managing the hotels, camps and bus services. Doleful mention of earlier, leaner years became passe. "We expect the busiest season in history this year," he reported.\(^{38}\)

Until 1958, the most noticeable improvements had been on the Park's east side. On the west side, in the McDonald Valley, there were still differing opinions concerning the feasibility of restoring the old Lake McDonald Hotel. Universally, Park Service people felt that the Hotel should be abandoned in favor of the creation of a new facility at Apgar. Upon learning that Mr. Knutson would be directing the Company's affairs, Regional Director Howard W. Baker recognized the opportunity to renew the struggle for the development at Apgar. He wrote to Superintendent Emmert, "This looks like a good chance for us to do all we can to convince Mr. Knutson and the Great Northern that they should develop at Apgar rather than at Lake McDonald."\(^{39}\) Baker proposed that the Service and the Knutson firm jointly embark upon a construction project at that site. This, he explained, would put the Company in a position of importance on the west side as well as on the east side. Conversely, Railroad planners maintained,

\(^{38}\)Tavern Talk, 26 April 1958, p. 44.

\(^{39}\)Memorandum to Superintendent Emmert from Howard Baker, 31 October 1956, Buildings-General Glacier Park Company, file C-58, GNPHC.
as had Superintendent Libbey years earlier, that the McDonald Hotel was in a proper location and that the present building "can be worked over to advantage." Director Wirth had similar misgivings about the new complex at Apgar and when Congress refused to allocate construction funds for the joint facility there, the issue died, the hotel remained and the Knutson Corporation confined its renovation energies primarily to the east side of the Park.

Even a 7 per cent decline in the number of visitors to the Park, reflecting a general Park-wide decrease in business conditions in 1958, did not dampen progress. Hotel managers rejoiced at learning that the house counts were down only 2 per cent in comparison. With more advanced reservations than for several years for Park operations in 1959, Knutson urged his employees and work crews on, reminding them of their 1959 deadline.

Behind this veil of new-found concern lingered the implacable antipathy of the Great Northern. While continuing to authorize and subsidize the reconditioning, President Budd restated in 1958, "We believe the needed expansion of Park facilities could be provided more successfully by a concessioner whose primary business interest is in serving Park

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40 Letter to John Budd from Conrad Wirth, 10 January 1958, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.

41 Great Northern Railway Annual Report, 1958, p. 18.
visitors rather than operating a railroad."  

In the meantime, Glacier's new facade was approaching its final stages. General Manager of the Glacier Park Company, J.B. Temple, announced that the three year rebuilding program would be completed on schedule in time for the opening of the 1959 season. Over the winter months, kitchen modernization, painting and roofing repairs had dominated the work of nearly one hundred workers. Vastly improved lighting had been installed, carpet laid and cocktail lounges and gift shops added.  

Mid-season statistics for 1959 revealed the fruits of labor and capital. Despite the fact that the Park recorded 24 per cent fewer visitors, the hotels reported handling 60 per cent more patrons than during the previous season. General Manager Temple, after reviewing profit returns from the Company's units, pronounced that his firm was heading toward a forty-seven year high with Glacier Park Lodge at East Glacier "setting the pace." On June 30, attendance at that hotel was 131 per cent ahead of attendance on that date one year earlier. Many Glacier Hotel was 53 per cent ahead and other lodgings showed similar gains. Temple credited the booking of more

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42 Letter to Fred A. Seaton from John Budd, 24 October 1958, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
43 Great Falls Tribune, 22 April 1959.
44 GNRR Annual Report, 1959, p. 18. See also, Great Falls Tribune, 5 July 1959, p. 4.
than 15,000 convention days for the majority of the business gain. The Company was host to twenty-six conventions in 1959.45

The next year, 1960, marked the final year of operation for the Glacier Park Company as a subsidiary of the Great Northern. Holding steadfastly to its policy of abandonment, the Railroad, in the spring of the year, reaffirmed its wish to "cease operating in the Park and dispose of its holdings."46 And now, with the Company enjoying unheard of success, was precisely the moment that the Railroad had strived for. This time-worn announcement was of little surprise to Park officials and even less to watchful Montanans. It only confirmed what many observers had suspected: that the Railroad's real intentions were shallow; that the veneer was thin. At least one, newspaper editor and publisher Mel Ruder, pointed out, "It is hard to believe the constant flow of money spent by the Great Northern for improvements in the Park. All this is for a season that is in effect ten weeks long." Referring to Many Glacier Hotel after its whirlwind renovation, he said, "...it would seem like it is worth its weight in gold. It isn't. We wouldn't take the Park hotels as a gift, not with ____________________

45 Great Falls Tribune, 26 May 1959, p. 5. For a descriptive account of all convention activities and hotel entertainment, see New York Times, 16 August 1959.

46 The Missoulian, 4 March 1960.
their short seasons and high maintenance costs.\textsuperscript{47} Ruder's comments notwithstanding, a replacement had to be found since the departure of the Great Northern would leave a painful vacuum--a vacuum which the Park Service firmly resolved to fill. They considered the Company's physical structures, now more than ever, not extraneous appurtenances, but rather valuable units of housing for over one thousand visitors.\textsuperscript{48} Hence, the search for a new concessioner resumed.

Park Service Director Wirth solicited bids for qualified applicants prepared to finance and operate the Company's units plus additional facilities, particularly in the low-cost range to meet increasing visitor needs.\textsuperscript{49} The Great Northern also conducted discussions with parties interested in acquiring the Company's holdings. Their meetings with prospective applicants hinged on the need that the concession should be owned and operated by an "experienced resort hotel operator."\textsuperscript{50} Almost prophetically, one appeared in the early months of the year.

\textsuperscript{47}\textit{Hungry Horse News}, 11 March 1960.

\textsuperscript{48}During 1960 there was a brief movement to dispose of all hotels and other "mechanical contraptions" from the national parks. The aegis of this idea may be found in \textit{National Wildland News}, May 1960, p. 9.

\textsuperscript{49}\textit{Great Falls Tribune}, 4 March 1960, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{50}See \textit{Seattle Post Intelligencier}, 14 June 1964 (Pictorial Review).
Don Hummel brought with him to Glacier some impeccable credentials. An attorney and former mayor of Tucson, Arizona, he had also served as Chairman of the Western Conference of National Park Concessioners. He owned and operated the concession facilities in Lassen and Mt. McKinley national parks and, thus, was hardly a newcomer to the public service scene. For both the Railroad and the Service, a more capable candidate could not have been found.\footnote{51}

Actually, negotiations between the Railroad and Hummel had been in session for some time. Don Knutson, speaking for the Company in March of 1960, revealed that meetings were being carried out but that a decision was two or three months away. Great Northern spokesmen were more cautious stating that a formal decision was not likely "for several months."

That decision did not come until November of 1960.\footnote{52} The November 29 dispatch in the \textit{Great Falls Tribune} bore words noteworthy for their significance. It read:

\begin{quote}
GLACIER PARK COMPANY STEPS DOWN
The Great Northern announced that its subsidiary, the Glacier Park Company, will be sold to Don Hummel of Tucson, Arizona, effective January 1.\footnote{53}
\end{quote}

\footnote{51}{\textit{GNRR Annual Report}, 1960, p. 17.}
\footnote{52}{\textit{Minneapolis Star}, 4 March 1960.}
\footnote{53}{\textit{Great Falls Tribune}, 29 November 1960.}
The Railroad, after nearly fifty years, had finally relinquished its hold to the hotel franchise. 54

Logically, the transferral of the Transport Company to Hummel's newly christened Glacier Park Incorporated followed only two months later in January of 1961. The Park Service expected this and welcomed it. "I feel certain that if the Transport Company is not now gobbled up by the Glacier Park Incorporated, it will be any minute," said Lyle McMullen, Regional Service Director, just prior to the transferral. 55 Hummel dissolved the old Transport Company and included it in the functions of his new Corporation. On that basis, all vehicles and other transportation units were listed to the Glacier Park Incorporated, the purpose being to obtain the maximum tax advantage authorized under the law.

54 Financial consideration of the sale was not made public. Some observers suggested an inflated sum of $4,500,000.00 based on the capital worth of the Company as entered at the Flathead County Clerk and Recorder's Office. Others cite a price of $1,500,000.00. In either case, the final sum probably represented the nuisance value of the Company to the Railroad in spite of the recent investment. Sizable amounts of furniture and equipment were included in the transaction which involved the following units: Lake McDonald Hotel (still Government-owned), Many Glacier Hotel, Glacier Park Lodge, Prince of Wales Hotel (in Canada), Swiftcurrent and Rising Sun Motor Inns and Lake McDonald and Two Medicine Camp Stores. (See Hungry Horse News, December 16, 1960).

Now Glacier's administrators had their long-awaited goal. Throughout the 1950's, Park Service authorities had struggled with the Great Northern over contractual formalities and the Company's obligations to the public. The struggle now ceased. The new Corporation set up to handle concession affairs in the Park pledged cordial relations and moved swiftly to fill the void left by the retreating Railroad. Hummel inherited the legacy of a railroad bridled with disinterest. His task was to redefine the past and reconcile the future along the terms demanded by the Park Service, thereby resurrecting at least a portion of the former Glacier Park Company's tarnished image. Yet, strangely enough, Glacier's officials could not find it in themselves to exalt at this hour, for in losing the Great Northern they had perhaps lost a better part of themselves in Glacier Park.

And for the Great Northern, the once restless and boundless railroad that had plunged into the concession scene, the chronicle was complete. The potency of an idea conjured up by Railroad promoters early in the century had become sterile. In their case, the movement conceived of promotion did not always perpetuate promotion and brought with it all manner of unwanted obligations. Still, the railway continued regular rail passenger service to the Park during the tourist season and worked faithfully with the new hotel management in
the promotion of the Park and in the development of train and bus tours. In the wake of development, on the periphery of progress and in the backwash of the ambitious transcontinental railway lay the shrunken hotel system. Brooding upon the future and only mildly concerned with the past, the Great Northern turned away from this system which, though of minor importance to them, was and always has been, an inseparable segment of Glacier's history.

Relishing the quietness that came with the aftermath of the negotiations, Director Wirth, writing a final word to President Budd, said reflectively, "While these actions formally terminate the contractual arrangements enjoyed with your Company for so many years, we look forward to your continuing interest in Glacier National Park and hope we can continue to count on you as a friend of the National Parks."\textsuperscript{56} In so many ways the Railroad and its subsidiary had been friends. Like most railroad companies which bonded themselves to a business in a national park, the Great Northern was gradually cast into a role of reluctant concessioner shortly after its peak involvement in the early part of the century. By 1961, both Service and Railroad had completed the turn toward their diametrically opposed goals.

\textsuperscript{56}Letter to John Budd from Conrad Wirth, 10 May 1961, Misc. Correspondence, Glacier Park Company, file 900-05, GNPHC.
For in Glacier Park, in common with other parks, the concessioners were never meant to be totally sovereign—no concessioner ever is. Sovereignty rests only with the scores of visitors for whom the parks were created.
CONCLUSION

Like other national parks which have had to supply visitor services, Glacier has had its uneasy amalgams, its own unique variants and its moments of harmony with its concessioners. The activities of the agents who sought to offer overnight accommodations are inseparable from the overall history of the Park. The chronicle of Glacier's concession management spanned important years of birth, growth and stability out of which grew a notable alliance between Government and private enterprise. Trustees of the Park, while providing access, interpretation, management and protection, also had to recruit private capital for visitor facilities to insure that the visitor's Park experience would be enriched by the pleasure of spending a night within the confines of the Park.

Around the McDonald Valley, embryo camps and hotels appeared in the twilight years preceding the creation of the Park through the efforts of Dow, Apgar, Geduhn, Snyder, Lewis, and others. They presented Glacier's administrators with a phalanx of landowner-proprietors offering vital visitor housing already firmly implanted in the Valley by 1910. They also presented the administrators with the intolerable menace of unmanageable inholders operating
under Government franchise. Often they were enigmatic, though this much was clear: Service authorities unerringly realized that none among the Valley's proprietors was capable of rendering total, Park-wide hotel services and, therefore, were incompatible to management schemes calling for a single concessioner for the entire Park. The mistakes of Yellowstone, with its scores of operators, would not be repeated.

As the Park moved into the second decade of the Twentieth Century, the periodic discord in the Valley was sometimes concurrent with the contrasting harmony on the Park's east side. The existence of the former may be said to have given rise to the latter. Faced with the possibility of administering a wide variety of concessions in other areas of the Park, the National Park Service stood ready to grant generous immunities to the agent capable of establishing an acceptable array of Park accommodations. Officials in the Interior Department used the precedent set forth in Yellowstone of granting a regulated monopoly to an agent for the accommodation of visitors and to the Great Northern Railroad went the major franchise for providing the Park's principle hotel services. The most dominant band in Glacier's concession spectrum, then, became the Railroad's
subsidiary, the Glacier Park Hotel Company.

The Railroad stepped to the fore vigorously between 1910 and 1930, hoping to reap the bounties of tourism. The same urge that brought local sightseers into the McDonald Valley also brought a multitude of eastern vacationers to the Park's east side. The Hotel Company, endowed with the birthright of its franchise, moved with spontenity. The progress and achievements of the Company during these years testify to the determination of the Great Northern. The fortunes of other of the Park's concession businesses rose proportionately with that of the Great Northern as each became integrated, to a large degree, with the other to offer complete visitor service. Long distances and slow travel required that hotels and chalets and camps be located at the end of the day's journey. Consequently, saddle horse, tour boat, and bus transportation businesses fell in with the Company symbiotically. In the 1920's, the concession picture blossomed into a full-scale enterprise that rivaled other national parks of the period. The Hotel Company rested comfortably during these years, glowing within from the business that it stimulated for the Railroad and relatively exempt from guidelines without. It was a time when success was expected and failure was only temporary. Success, unfortunately, was meteoric. So much that was
promising, so much that seemed optimistic, soon began to fade. After the golden years of the Twenties, the Railroad's task became more difficult to both define and implement. In an age when the automobile was inexorably displacing rail travel as the most popular means of summer tourism and also, more tellingly, exposing vacationers to cheaper forms of accommodation, the hotel and chalet system faced either change or dissolution. By the 1930's and certainly by the end of the Second World War, the system, as originally conceived, could hardly ascribe itself to itself, much less to prospective patrons. Things not only seemed different, they were quite different in fact.

Both during and after World War II, the changing demands of tourism created concern in Minneapolis and disharmony in Glacier. Even though the railway had built one of the finest passenger fleets in the nation, rail patronage was in a downward spiral. This was a crushing realization for the Glacier Park Hotel Company whose status, in common with concession companies in other parks, was based on the acceptability of rail travel and the popularity of expensive mountain resorts. This philosophy had been born of confidence, though beneath all the bravado of its exponents and talk of aligning with the Park officials' Master Plans, a reluctance began to emerge. Funding authorization for hotel improvements was difficult and
became ever more so as the Railroad's Board of Directors came to regard the Company as an expensive stepchild in constant want.

Beginning in 1951, the Railroad began its withdrawal. They filed their standard reasons for disinterest—a renewal of a long-term lease would mean additional maintenance and capital investments, the lease had become more restrictive than in earlier lease periods, operations were unprofitable, capital investments had depreciated enormously and, most important, the Park Service was pressing for more auto cabin camps which were contrary to the original purpose of investing in Park accommodations to stimulate rail travel. The Railroad judged that it would be easier to abandon the old code than to rebuild a new one. There were not, to be sure, many Louis Hills in the post-war decade. Not until the decade approached its end did a representative of a new order come forth to try to discover, among the remains of the old dispensation, a new set of enduring motives for launching a Park concession.

The events of the 1930's and the 1950's, when collision of viewpoints and interests reached their peaks, reminded Glacier's trustees that the Railroad, whether coexisting or not, could at times be utterly intractable. Officially, the Government's initial dealings with the Railroad and the
Company were solicitous and courtly. Most concession partnerships begin in an atmosphere of good will—Glacier's were no different. By an instinct characteristic of the whole climate of promotion associated with the new Park in 1910, the Interior Department welcomed the Railroad as a necessary public benefactor. The dominant assumption, then and thereafter, was that the Great Northern would become a permanent partner in progress. Rapt Park rangers stood by approvingly as the Railroad valiantly thrust its subsidiary into the hotel business, for, along with the advancing front of their tracks, came the strong need for the promotion of the new park which rested adjacent to them.

In the immediate years which followed, the Great Northern prided themselves on running a line of luxurious sleeping and parlor cars to the Park, fit setting for their wealthy patrons. The hotel and chalet system there was truly a colonial adventure based on the rapid growth of the tourist industry and pleasing returns in rail fares. To enable full fruition of this objective, they allied with the Park Service expecting to be everlastingly co-equals in progress.

The resulting harmony over the years was due to a unique collaboration between the offices of the Great Northern and those of the Interior Department—a coincidence that led some to suppose that the goals of the Service and the Railroad rose in unison and shone forth jointly to the public, although
such was not always the case. In a very real sense, however, and on so many occasions the two did cooperate with mutuality. They blended into a single development-oriented tool of management on many projects often unseen and unspoken.

Nowhere was the partnership more in evidence than during the first two decades of the railway's involvement. Fortunately for Glacier's first superintendents, the Railroad worked energetically with the Park administration for the first steps of Park improvement. Much credit for the initial movement to create the Park rests with the Railroad. Due to an absence of Federal money for Park-wide improvement projects in those early years, the Great Northern forged ahead with ambitious road and trail building plans. It worked hard to promote and publicize the Park; it assumed responsibilities at times when the Service was unable to. Park rangers used the scattered alpine chalets and hotels for interpretive talks and other visitor gatherings and boat and saddle horse concessioners pointed to them as focal hubs for departure and arrival, shelter and social intercourse.

The greatest good to come out of the partnership was that of longevity. Glacier's hotel concessioners endured the hardships of operation for fifty years when many less motivated proprietors would have been compelled to leave. Even in the McDonald Valley, numerous proprietors of
pre-Park days continued quiet service on their private land enclaves. In sum, they shared the dream of a great and popular national park with the Federal administrators in this period, but the influx of auto travellers, the decline of rail traffic and with it the failure of the hotel and chalet system had not been reckoned.

Unquestionably, the evolution of travel did much to dislodge the Railroad from its Park involvement. In the 1930's, the Glacier Park Hotel Company entered the Depression years as an accepted partner of the Service and left it in a storm of criticism. One obvious reason, of course, was the quickening demise of their accommodation complex and the demand for moderately-priced auto cabin camps, of which the Railroad wanted no part. Catering to auto travellers over an elite rail touring class was an unspeakable wrongdoing. They could not easily sanction housing which favored auto travellers instead of rail travellers. Any change in the character of accommodations from those constructed at the beginning of the century was a perversion of the originally sought goal. The Great Northern never willingly reshaped that goal. Meanwhile, the hotel and chalet clusters operated fitfully. During the Depression and the first years of the war, it was a tribute that they operated at all. Yet, the Thirties remained the Thirties, endlessly productive of bad news for the failing alliance.
The National Park Service gained steadily in administrative momentum and prestige between 1916 and 1940. The once compliant Service stirred from the role of observer to that of participant in affairs dealing with the future of the Park. In actual fact, the Service grew to a formidable federal agency while the Hotel Company shrank in its role as an important Railroad subsidiary. Though expecting that the Company conform to its edicts, they sponsored no patterns of easy adjustment. Their directives became pointed, forceful and officious as the Service attempted to make the Company follow their wishes rather than those of the Railroad. With time, their urgings became sharper and edged closer to the argument that the Company was to be the sole provider of visitor accommodations in the Park. They believed that the Company, as a responsible concession agent, should not be spared the troubles that beset the Park. The refusal of the Company to react with reasonable dispatch to the Service's building requests in the Thirties seemed to be in the spirit of a deliberate revolt. When threats of a franchise revocation was imminent, the Company promulgated a series of stop-gap measures. Giving lip service to the new code, the Great Northern still leaned heavily and with consummate hope upon the old.
So it was that the Park Service came to scorn the vagaries of its principle concessioner. Since they held public service, at times sacrificial to its utility operators, in highest consideration, they could tolerate none that were irresolute. They wanted the Company to be all things to all tourists. The Railroad looked elsewhere for a cause and in so doing suffered some disturbing lapses of faith. They firmly believed that the promotion of rail travel was the chief purpose of their hotel subsidiary. Too often both parties saw little enough of either goal.

The years of World War II marked a slight reconciliation between the two parties. There was silence from the Interior Department as the Government eased the pressure on all its national park concessioners because of decreased park visitation. The rapprochement was too brief to be relished, however. The Glacier Park Company braced for the post-war decade of the 1950's hoping for a panacea to halt the faltering concession system. Meanwhile, they struggled with the Service over contractual obligations, fostering more ill-feeling.

If the Railroad turned a deaf ear to the Government's plea for more and better accommodations in the post-war years, it was not simply because they were weary of listening to the usual Federal harangue. They were learning from
many sources that the national park involvement by large railroad companies had passed. One reason was that the parks no longer served as the convenient promotional models that they had been early in the century. They wanted no dealings with businesses which could not yield up substantial profits for the railway. Clearly, the spirit of the mission, for them, had perished. Though the Great Northern refused to fit itself to the new mold, they at least reshaped the old one late in the 1950's so that another, more ambitious concessioner could. The generous outpouring for the Company's renovation and the timely sale in 1961 brought the Railroad's involvement and the subsequent partnership to an end.

While the Great Northern brought capital and industrious development to Glacier early in the century, they also brought many ulterior motives which ultimately superceded their original concession ideals. Overall, the Railroad's chief purpose for transcontinental service was in the trade with the Puget Sound country. Of local business along the line, characteristic of their Glacier concerns, there could be for many years only little. Dimly apprehended was the reminder that the Park was, and would continue to be, a storehouse of resources and not an implement of profit. If this were not enough to account for a pervading superficiality, there was other evidence that the Glacier Park Company was fast becoming
a holding company for a wide variety of activities parceled out by the Great Northern.

The Railroad exemplified this cavalier attitude in 1940. By their request, the state of Minnesota amended the Company's articles of incorporation with the inclusion of two sections governing the nature of business conducted, neither of which had anything remotely connected to the Park and the Railroad's holdings therein. The two provisions allowed the Great Northern, through the Company, to engage in the logging and manufacture of lumber and forest products, speculate on the purchase, selling and dealing of mineral lands and participate in the mining, smelting and refining of coal and iron ore in Minnesota, Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Canada.¹

Between 1940 and 1961 the railway actually expanded the peripheral activities of the Company. Even while the Company was disposing of its holdings in the Park in the final years of the 1950's, other miscellaneous activities of the Company flourished. Early in 1961 the Company acquired 175,000 shares of stock in the Western Pacific Railroad Company. This line connected with the Great Northern at Bieber, California and formed an important part of the North-South "Inside Gateway"

¹GNRR Annual Report, 1940, p. 90.
between California and the Pacific Northwest. Elsewhere, in Southern Alberta, the Company held title to 8700 acres of land in the area of the Waterton Lakes oil fields. Drilling activity began there in 1961 and the Company constructed several pipelines to serve the area. Other divisions of the Company continued to manage timber lands, operate tie treating plants and hold land for future industrial development. The Great Northern's Annual Report for 1961 reported that the Glacier Park Company "had a successful year" adding almost dispassionately, "It is no longer operating hotels in Glacier Park."2

It is enough to say that the Railroad's dream was fundamentally a casualty of their own promotional endeavors. Though increasingly more and more people came to the Park over the years, their arrival and departure was affected by automobile and not by train. The construction of improved roads to and within the Park widened areas of access, bypassed hotel and chalet sites and created demands for shelter for legions of motorized vacationers. The end was achieved but the means had been altered upsettingly.

Additionally, the Railroad consistently committed the error of offering too much of the wrong kind of accommodations.

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Be it ignorance of democratic principle or stubborn corporate pride, the Railroad, first and last, sought a wealthy patron for their housing units. Such was the profit-producing gospel that had come to imbed itself in the railroad mind. That the Park was meant for all manner of people never came to full realization.

The Park Service suffered from fault as well. Their allowance of inconsistent adherence to rather than a strict enforcement of the franchise guidelines led the Railroad to view their monopoly with strong, though misguided, favor at the outset. It became much more difficult as years went by and as contracts became more restrictive to get the Railroad to react with continued acceptable conduct. Obviously, the Glacier Park Hotel Company spoiled the Service for lesser agents. Yet, it was unwise of the Government to have fastened all hope upon the waning star of that Company.

Thus, time gradually eroded the concession franchise and the long-standing partnership which accompanied it. When the time came for dissolution, it was the Park Service which felt the greater loss. Along with the old order of things went a set of values which gave dignity, richness and notoriety to the Park and its concession facilities; and with the passing of the Park's principle concessioner, went an era not again to be retrieved.
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The Glacier National Park Historical Collection at Park Headquarters, West Glacier, Montana contains an extensive store of official government records, documents, annual and monthly reports, as well as letters, telegrams, memorandums, and other primary source material. There are also chronological historical files, newspaper clipping files, and a number of artifacts and items of historical interest.