

parks were still islands of civilization linked by rail through a vast wilderness where railway hotels catered to the elite tourist class. By the close of the period, the mountain parks constituted the remaining islands of wilderness on an increasingly agriculturalized and urbanized landscape intersected by roads and highways for auto travel, which accelerated mass tourism. National park expansion had by this time given rise to a number of natural and historic parks across Canada that resembled an eccentric family more than a planned system.

The ACC was poised as a prominently placed client-user group during the formative period of national park development. During the Edwardian era, the ACC explored and mapped many areas in the Rockies, circulated information about the parks and, in the early 1900s, even made direct contributions to the Dominion Parks section of the Annual Report issued by the Department of the Interior.³ The club was an indispensable partner in the early days of park management, at a time when the whole parks administration might have fit into a one-room office. As time went on, the ACC buttressed parks conservation policies and assisted with the restoration of mountain areas "despoiled by tourists and others."⁴ A long history of cooperation between the club and government administration was built on this foundation and, to a fair degree, it shaped the evolution of the national parks in concept and reality.

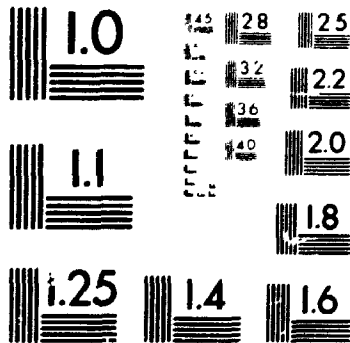
Canada's expanding system of national parks evolved inside a thunderhead of public and private interests. The value and function of the mountain parks—Canada's first

³See for example *Annual Report of the Department of the Interior*, 1912, pp. 8, 39-40.

⁴Elizabeth Parker, "The Approach to Organisation," CAJ (1938), p. 97.



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**Beyond the Visionary Mountains:
The Alpine Club of Canada and the Canadian National Park Idea,
1906 to 1969**

by

PearlAnn Reichwein, B.A., M.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of History

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
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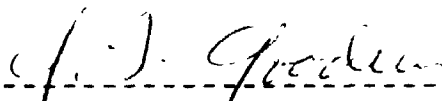
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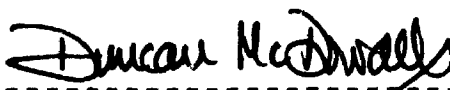
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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy



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18 January 1996

"Each one of us dreams dreams and sees visions The peaks we climb in our reveries are nobler than any we can hope to ascend in real life, but it is our visionary mountains which govern our actual accomplishments "

ACC President Cyril Wates

The Gazette, October 1938

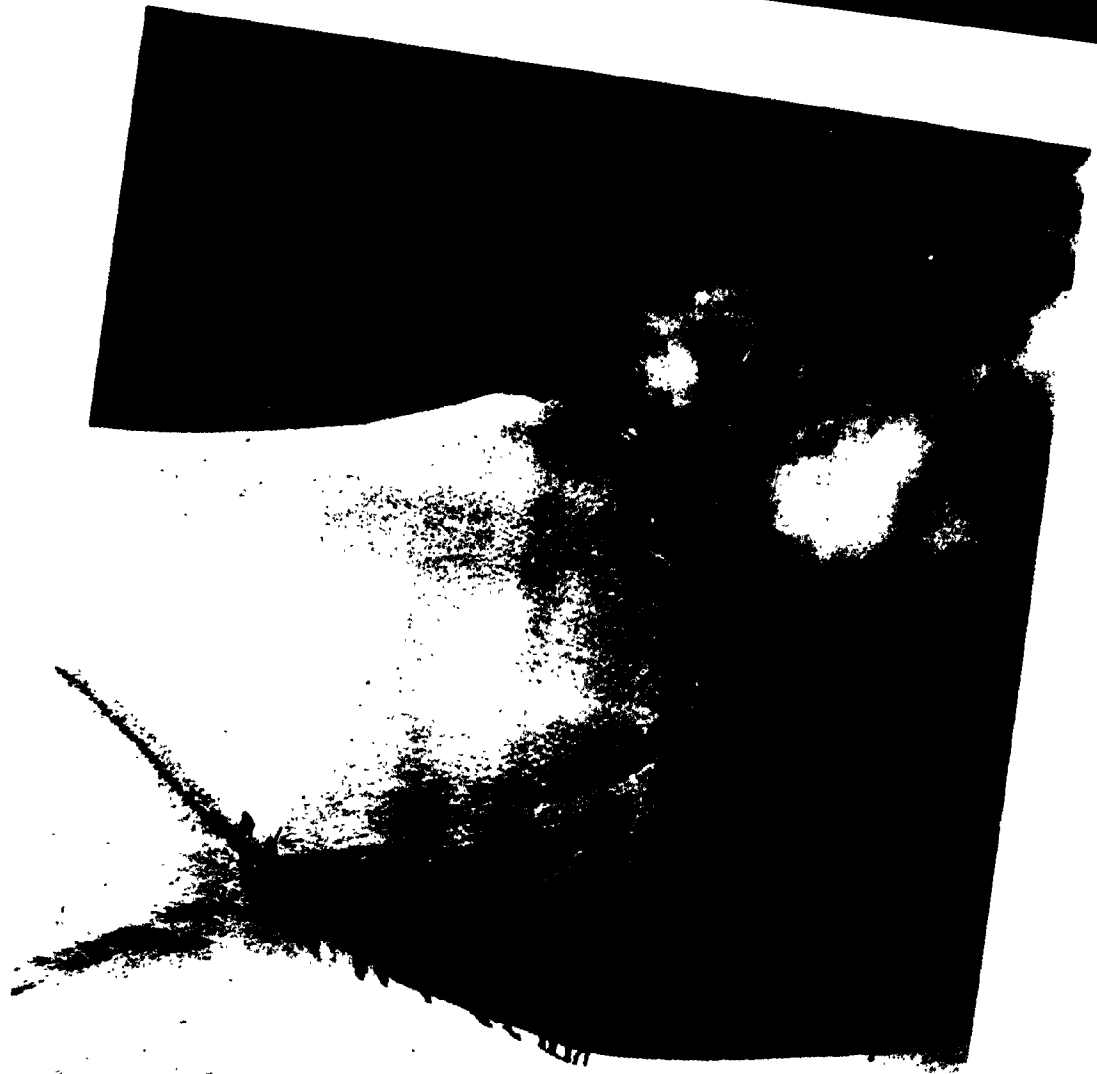


Illustration 1: ACC climbers on Mt. Huber 1909. Source: E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada: The CPR and the Beginnings of Canadian Tourism*, (Banff: Altitude, 1983), p. 95.

Abstract

The Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) was established in 1906 in Winnipeg to promote mountain climbing and an appreciation of the Canadian "mountain heritage." Club founders Arthur Oliver Wheeler and Elizabeth Parker created an organization focused on alpinism in the national mountain parks. The ACC organized annual climbing camps, explored remote areas, and encouraged international awareness of Canada's mountain regions. The annual *Canadian Alpine Journal* was published by the club to publicize Canada's presence on the world stage of mountaineering. This study examines the history of the ACC and its role as an active outdoor recreation group that contributed to shaping the Canadian national parks.

Analysis of the ACC begins with western cultural views toward nature and parks. The ACC's organizational history, material and social culture, annual summer mountaineering camps, and partnerships with government and the railways is discussed. The club's attitudes toward nature, conservation, recreation, and tourism shed light on changing views of the environment and parks from the early 1900s to the 1960s. Activism during hydro-dam debates over Waterton Lakes, Spray Lakes, and Lake Minnewanka illustrates the club's role as an early conservation lobby group, which created the Canadian National Parks Association in 1923. During the Depression and World War II, the club switched its focus from conservation to recreation. The ACC espoused tourism in the postwar national parks. Research draws on collections from the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies Archives and the National Archives of Canada.

The ACC constructed a club culture based on its definition of Canadian alpinism. The club continually reinvented itself and the idea of Canada's national parks. The ACC was a leading recreational stakeholder in the western mountain parks whose purpose, like that of the national parks, embodied an ongoing paradox between use and preservation. The ongoing balance between these contending objectives altered the character of the club and affected its vision of the national parks. The ACC emerged as a prominent interest group that influenced public policy and became a key voluntary partner in park management as Canada's national parks evolved inside a thunderhead of public and private interests.

Dedication

To R, B, and P

Acknowledgements

Since beginning this project, I have logged more kilometres across Canada than the 1925 ACC Mt. Logan expedition traveled to conquer the highest mountain in the land. As this journey ends, I would like to thank those who helped me along the way.

At Carleton University, Brian McKillop welcomed me to a department where I was fortunate to know as my teachers Kerry Abel, Carman Bickerton, Keith Johnson, Peter King, Duncan McDowall, Del Muise, and John Taylor. Great thanks go to Dr. McDowall, who generously read and commented on many drafts of this work, and to Prof. Taylor for his guidance and kind words of encouragement.

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Carleton permitted me to leave Ottawa for a period of extended research in the Rockies, thus allowing me to live in the region that I have studied for so long and learn directly about its cultural and natural history. Here I thank Banff National Park colleagues Ian Clarke and Mirjam Grobler who encouraged my studies of Canada's national parks.

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Close friends stood beside me and lightened the load along the way, especially Ed, Gail, and Pam. Jumpstart, Greyhound, and Wringer's also helped in this regard.

Above all, deepest appreciation goes to my family members for their endless support, love, and encouragement throughout my years of university study. This work is dedicated to my father, mother, and sister. You were with me from start to finish through all the unwritten stories. Thank you.

PearlAnn Reichwein

Banff, Alberta
August, 1995

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	xi
LIST OF MAPS	xiv
LIST OF APPENDICES	xv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xvi
CHAPTER 1. Panorama: <i>Sic Itur Ad Astra</i>	1
Victorian Nature	8
Conservation and Canada, 1890 to World War I	24
From Progressives to the Managerial State, 1920-1950s	39
The Alpine Club of Canada	42
CHAPTER 2. A National Alpine Club: The Origins of the ACC, 1906-1926	48
The Winnipeg Meeting, March 27-28, 1906	73
Organizing the ACC: Structure, Constitution, and Membership	78
Highlights of ACC Activities, 1906-1926	105
CHAPTER 3. "A Tented Town": The Annual ACC Camps	116
Camp Logistics and Material Culture	119
The Social Culture of the Alpine Club Camps	134
"Old Camp Friends": ACC Camp Program Activities	169
The Foundations of Partnership	185
Paradise Valley	203

CHAPTER 4. "Hands Off Our National Parks". The Alpine Club and the Public Domain, 1921-1930	205
The Fight for Access to the Public Domain	207
Protecting the Public Domain—The Waterton Lakes Irrigation Debate	220
"Commercial Invasion"—Confronting the Minnewanka and Spray Lakes Dam Proposals, 1922-1930	235
The Vision of Parks—Ideals and Realities	259
CHAPTER 5. Changing Frontiers The ACC Faces the Depression and War, 1930-1945	263
The Nature of Mountain Sport	263
Taking Stock—The ACC Confronts Hard Times	272
New Frontiers. Climbing Between the Wars	287
The Sport Agenda	291
War, Power, and Parks—The Recurring Dilemma of the Minnewanka and Spray Lakes Dams, 1930-1942	303
CHAPTER 6. Limitless Playgrounds? Canada's Postwar Mountain Parks	319
Reconstruction and Canada's Postwar Playgrounds	322
The ACC's Postwar Approach to Conservation and Recreation	335
Reaching the Limit—Finding the Balance	356
CHAPTER 7 From Vantage Point on Mountain Top	358
APPENDICES	367
LIST OF SOURCES	377

List of Tables

No	Page
Table 1: Gender Distribution and Female Marital Status	368
Table 2: Membership Distribution by Category	369
Table 3: Membership Distribution by Region in Actual Numbers	370
Table 4: Membership Distribution by Region in Percentages	370

List of Figures

No.		Page
Figure 1	List of Delegates at ACC Winnipeg Meeting	77
Figure 2	Postwar Visitor Attendance	333
Figure 3	Membership Distribution by Sex	371
Figure 4	Membership Distribution by Sex in %	372
Figure 5	Female Marital Status	373
Figure 6	Membership Distribution by Region	374
Figure 7	Membership Distribution by Region in %	375
Figure 8	Membership Distribution by Category	376

List of Illustrations

No.	Page
<p>Illustration 1: ACC climbers on Mt. Huber 1909. Source: E. J. Hart, <i>The Selling of Canada: The CPR and the Beginnings of Canadian Tourism</i>, (Banff: Altitude, 1983), p. 95.</p>	ii
<p>Illustration 2: A. O. Wheeler, age 52. Source: Esther Fraser, <i>Wheeler</i>, (Banff: Summerthought, 1978), p. 97.</p>	54
<p>Illustration 3: Elizabeth Parker, n.d. Source: CAJ (1938), p. 92.</p>	61
<p>Illustration 4: ACC founding meeting, Winnipeg, March 1906. Source: P. A. Reichwein, "Guardians of the Rockies," <i>The Beaver</i> (Aug./Sept. 1994), p. 6.</p>	74
<p>Illustration 5: ACC members at 1922 Palliser Pass camp, A. O. Wheeler front center. Source: CAJ (1923), p. 267.</p>	90
<p>Illustration 6: Phyllis Munday with daughter Edith, n.d. Source: Susan Leslie, ed., <i>In the Western Mountains: early mountaineering in British Columbia</i> (Victoria: Provincial Archives of B.C., 1980), p. 53.</p>	97
<p>Illustration 7: <i>Canadian Alpine Journal</i> table of contents. Source: CAJ (1907), p. i.</p>	106
<p>Illustration 8: <i>Canadian Alpine Journal</i>, table of contents. Source: CAJ (1907), pp. ii-iii.</p>	107
<p>Illustration 9: Banff Alpine Clubhouse on Sulphur Mountain. Source: CAJ (1947), p. 177.</p>	111
<p>Illustration 10: ACC campers at Hector Station, n.d. Source: Susan Leslie, ed., <i>In the Western Mountains: early mountaineering in British Columbia</i> (Victoria: Provincial Archives of B.C., 1980), p. 19.</p>	117
<p>Illustration 11: 1922 Palliser Pass Camp. Source: CAJ (1923), p. 268.</p>	122

Illustration 12: Tents at the 1911 Sherbrooke Lake camp. Source: CAJ (1912), p. 144	123
Illustration 13: 1932 Sir Donald camp. Source: CAJ (1932), p. 4.	124
Illustration 14: 1946 ACC Camp Circular. Source: P.A. Reichwein, private collection	130
Illustration 15: 1911 Ptarmigan Lake camp with outfitters at work. Source: CAJ (1916), p. 126	146
Illustration 16: Swiss guides Christian Häsler Jr., Edward Feuz Jr., and Ernest Feuz at Field, B.C., c. 1928. Source: Susan Leslie, ed., <i>In the Western Mountains: early mountaineering in British Columbia</i> (Victoria: Provincial Archives of B.C., 1980), p. 12.	155
Illustration 17: "A snow cornice on Mt. Vice-President," 1906 Yoho Pass camp. Source: CAJ (1907), p. 2.	157
Illustration 18: "A party of graduates and guides returned from the official climb of Mt. Vice-President," 1906 Yoho Pass camp. Source: CAJ (1907), p. 36.	158
Illustration 19: 1906 Yoho Pass camp dining fly, Elizabeth Parker and A.O. Wheeler in foreground, Chinese cooks in background. Source: CAJ (1907), p. 50.	176
Illustration 20: ACC campfire, 1911 Sherbrooke Lake camp. Source: CAJ (1912), p. 144.	177
Illustration 21: ACC Annual Meeting, 1911 Sherbrooke Lake camp. Source: CAJ (1912), p. 146.	183
Illustration 22: CNR advertising. Source: CAJ (1923), p. 277	201
Illustration 23: Postwar CNR advertising. Source: CAJ (1953), p. 179.	202
Illustration 24: Mt. Assiniboine Tour advertising. Source: CAJ (1923), p. 278.	211

Illustration 25: ACC leaders, left to right, J.D. Patterson, A.O. Wheeler, A.H. MacCarthy, W. W. Foster, anon., anon., G.W. Smith, H B Mitchell, T.B. Moffat, W.J.S. Walker, S.H. Mitchell, c. 1920-21. Source: CAJ (1956), p 25	247
Illustration 26: Blizzard on Mt. Logan. Source: CAJ (1925), p. 76.	267
Illustration 27: Medical treatment following the Mt. Logan ascent Source: CAJ (1925), p. 80	268
Illustration 28: Elizabeth Parker Hut, exterior and interior views. Source: CAJ (1931), p. 160	292
Illustration 29: Crampons, crampon bindings, and boots. Source: CAJ (1933), p. 122	299
Illustration 30: Ice axes and ice pitons Source: CAJ (1933), p. 122	300
Illustration 31: Carabiners, piton hammers, and piton catcher. Source CAJ (1932), p 170	300
Illustration 32: Arthur Oliver Wheeler in later years Source: Esther Fraser, <i>Wheeler</i> , (Banff: Summerthought, 1978), p 154	320
Illustration 33: ACC Ski Camp at Wheeler Hut, Selkirk Mountains, March 1948. Source: CAJ, p 137	345

List of Maps

	Page
Main Region of ACC Activity	57
Banff to Mt. Assiniboine Walking and Riding Tour, c. 1922.	211
Changing Boundaries of Rocky Mountains (Banff) National Park, 1885-1930.	258

List of Appendices

	Page
Appendix A	
Statistical Methodology	367
Appendix B	
Tables	368
Figures	371

List of Abbreviations

ACC	Alpine Club of Canada
CAJ	<i>Canadian Alpine Journal</i>
CNPA	Canadian National Parks Association
CNR	Canadian Northern/National Railway
CPAWS	Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
CPR	Canadian Pacific Railway
CPRA	Canadian Pacific Railway Archives
MFP	<i>Manitoba Free Press</i>
NAC	National Archives of Canada
RG	Record Group
WFP	<i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>
WMCR	Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies Archives

CHAPTER 1

Panorama: "*Sic Itur ad Astra*"

Every year, millions of visitors stream through the gates of Canada's mountain parks that brace the Continental Divide between Alberta and British Columbia. Here is found the first Canadian national park, originally created in 1885 by federal Order-in-Council as Rocky Mountains Park, a 26 km² hot springs reserve. Now known as Banff National Park, it was the first in a family of protected areas that today forms a complex system of diverse natural regions across Canada.¹ In many ways, Banff and its sister parks—Yoho, Glacier, and Jasper—established the earliest image of Canada's national parks as spectacular and sublime wilderness mountainscapes.²

Winding through the Rockies, the Trans-Canada Highway passes through the gates of Banff National Park and skirts the town of Banff. A quick turn off the main highway leads directly up Banff Avenue—the ever-changing main street of a modern, international tourist destination. At the junction where Banff Avenue crosses the Bow River, the Banff National Park Administration Building, a sandstone manor house, graces the manicured lawns at the foot of Sulphur Mountain. To the west lie the Cave and Basin Hot Springs—birthplace of the national parks—and to the east, the massive Canadian Pacific Banff Springs Hotel. As signified by these architectural landmarks, Sulphur

¹For elaboration, see Max Finkelstein, *National Parks System Plan* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1990).

²Yoho and Glacier were established in 1886 and Jasper in 1907. As of 1990, the respective area of these parks was 1313 km², 1349 km², 10 878 km²; Banff occupied 6641 km². See Finkelstein, p. 21.

Mountain became more than a mere outlet for thermal mineral waters heated deep within the earth; it became the epicenter of tourism and national park development in the Canadian Rockies.

Lost in the forest, returned to nature by time, the site of the once-grand Alpine Club of Canada Banff Clubhouse is also found on Sulphur Mountain. Where hundreds of pairs of hobnailed leather boots once crossed the gravel driveway and clattered up the stairs, and where the sounds of music and dancing on the veranda drifted out into the cool night air, there is now a quiet grassy plateau in the trees near the traffic grinding up Mountain Avenue. When built in 1909, the Alpine Clubhouse stood out as a prominent structure midway up the side of Sulphur Mountain, made all the more visible by a red pitched-gable roof and turret jutting out against the green-forested slopes. From this vantage point, the Alpine Club observed Banff in the valley below, along with the major landmarks of administration and commerce on Sulphur Mountain. Until it was bulldozed in 1974, the Banff Clubhouse was the abiding landmark of the Alpine Club of Canada and a symbolic cornerstone of building the Canadian national park idea.

From its founding in 1906, the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) was a critical partner in the development of Canada's national parks. As a voluntary organization of climbers and mountain enthusiasts, the ACC shared several aims with the national parks: fostering mountain recreation—climbing, camping, hiking, and skiing; opening the Rockies to exploration and tourism; and protecting the natural qualities of the parks for public edification and enjoyment. Acting as a national club specializing in the realm of mountaineering, the ACC worked in close association with the national parks. By virtue

of its involvement in mountain recreation in the Rocky Mountain parks, the ACC was drawn into a preferred relationship with the national parks administration, a partnership that began early in the 1900s and lasted through the 1950s. This period was particularly decisive in the invention of the Canadian national parks. It was the conceptual coming of age for the idea of national parks in Canada—what they were, what they ought to be. During the same period, the ACC laid its own structural groundwork. The Alpine Club of Canada and its consonance with the parks administration were constants in this evolution.

The history of Canada's national parks has focused most frequently on the dual agencies of the state and commerce, yet the parks were also shaped by their users. As a nongovernment organization of private citizens active in alpinism, the ACC participated directly and indirectly in public-policy formation. It acted as an articulate and politically alert interest group with its own concerns and agendas. Often, these objectives overlapped with those of the national parks department. ACC leaders and federal parks administrators maintained a dialogue which led to alliances and the growth of the ACC's preferential user status in the parks. Through its activities, the ACC added to the increase of tourism and park development in the Rocky Mountain parks, and, consequently, to the need for park management policies. Whether the issues involved conservation or recreation, the ACC and the Parks Department were partners in defining park management and Canadian national parks public policy.

Canada's national parks went through a formative phase of development between the early 1900s and the end of World War II. At the outset of the 1900s, the mountain

parks were still islands of civilization linked by rail through a vast wilderness where railway hotels catered to the elite tourist class. By the close of the period, the mountain parks constituted the remaining islands of wilderness on an increasingly agriculturalized and urbanized landscape intersected by roads and highways for auto travel, which accelerated mass tourism. National park expansion had by this time given rise to a number of natural and historic parks across Canada that resembled an eccentric family more than a planned system.

The ACC was poised as a prominently placed client-user group during the formative period of national park development. During the Edwardian era, the ACC explored and mapped many areas in the Rockies, circulated information about the parks and, in the early 1900s, even made direct contributions to the Dominion Parks section of the Annual Report issued by the Department of the Interior.³ The club was an indispensable partner in the early days of park management, at a time when the whole parks administration might have fit into a one-room office. As time went on, the ACC buttressed parks conservation policies and assisted with the restoration of mountain areas "despoiled by tourists and others."⁴ A long history of cooperation between the club and government administration was built on this foundation and, to a fair degree, it shaped the evolution of the national parks in concept and reality.

Canada's expanding system of national parks evolved inside a thunderhead of public and private interests. The value and function of the mountain parks—Canada's first

³See for example *Annual Report of the Department of the Interior*, 1912, pp. 8, 39-40.

⁴Elizabeth Parker, "The Approach to Organisation," CAJ (1938), p. 97.

national parks—were variously conceived over time by contending forces. The dual mandate of the national parks, use and preservation, generated ongoing tension as different national parks visions surfaced, collided and transformed in policy, legislation, and practice. During this formative period, the ACC acted as a key agent in the invention of the national park vision.

Canada first conceived of the Dominion parks as playgrounds for commercial exploitation according to the "doctrine of usefulness" in the late nineteenth century. Spectacular scenery combined with the potential for health-related tourism at thermal spas were assets on which a nation could capitalize. In an era when federal economics were built on the National Policy of exploiting all the frontiers of resource development in a newly formed country, the beauty and potential of the Rockies beckoned to eastern capitalists and politicians. Sir John A. Macdonald commented that a resort at Banff would "recuperate the patients and recoup the Treasury," in an early hint of the paradoxical aims of the national parks.⁵ In accordance with wise-use conservation at the turn of the century, parks were treated as a resource to be carefully tapped without waste for the greatest good of the greatest number. As a by-product of the urban recreation movement, populists and reformers stressed the social need for mountain national parks as public playgrounds for the common good. With the expansion of "scientific management" and business progressivism, parks were seen as a laboratory for systematic manipulation by planners and administrators. Led by the "land ethic" of American

⁵See p. 98 in R.C. Brown, "The Doctrine of Usefulness: Natural Resource and National Park Policy in Canada, 1887-1914," in *The Canadian National Parks: today and tomorrow*, eds. J.G. Nelson and R.C. Scace (Calgary: University of Calgary, 1968), pp. 94-110.

conservationist Aldo Leopold (1887-1948), ecologists emphasized the biocentric value of parks as living systems to be preserved in their natural balance. Through all these trends, parks remained the sanctuaries of nature to wilderness preservationists and romantics, and to transcendentalist nature devotees the sanctuary of the oversoul, contrary to the dominant "doctrine of usefulness."

The *Rocky Mountain Parks Act* (1887) that governed the Dominion parks prescribed that these areas be used as "public parks and pleasure grounds for the benefit, advantage and enjoyment of the people of Canada."⁶ Yet to ensure future generations the same pleasures, protection also became an inherent element of the park equation. This seemingly paradoxical dual mandate was inscribed in the *Rocky Mountain Parks Act* (1887), the *Dominion Forests Reserves and Parks Act* (1911), and the *Dominion Forests Reserve and Parks Act* (1927) governing the Dominion parks prior to the proclamation of the *National Parks Act* (1930). The tension between use and protection was also evident within the ACC structure, arising from the commitments in its constitution to opening the mountains as a "national playground" and ensuring the preservation of "the natural beauties of the mountain places and of the fauna and flora in their habitat."⁷ Thus the national parks and the ACC embodied a structural dialectic pivoting on the contending imperatives of human use and nature preservation.

The tension between use and preservation within the ACC produced a lively discourse that reflected various individual visions of the value and function of the parks.

⁶See *Rocky Mountain Parks Act* (1887).

⁷"Constitution" CAJ (1907), p. 178.

Over the course of 50 years, the club's vision of parks changed with the times. In some senses, the overall ACC approach to the national parks idea reflected the dominant vision of the day, but, more importantly, it also played a part in its creation, and thus forged part of the broader culture through the medium of leisure recreation and sport. As one of the early national park user groups, the ACC exercised practical and political influence in defining the changing vision of national parks in Canada. The ACC formed partnerships with the federal parks administration and the railways, partnerships that set the direction for later developments. Above all, the ACC consistently supported middle-class access to recreation and tourism, and worked to realize this end with its commercial and political partners in the mountain parks.

From year to year, faithful ACC members traveled for miles to indulge and delight in the splendour of the western mountains. What drove these people to the summits far from the bright lights of urban, industrial city life? Did they follow the ACC motto "*sic itur ad astra*"—this way unto the stars—reaching for heights grasped only in the company of climbers and nature? Did they seek an escape in a welcome wilderness once nature had been tamed elsewhere? Were the national parks by extension the natural mountain playgrounds of the city? What was the place of the Alpine Club of Canada in the broader cultural firmament from the late Victorian period to the nuclear age? The answers to these questions begin with nature.

Victorian Nature

The meaning and significance of nature in western culture have been approached from various angles. Clarence Glacken's survey of literature from antiquity to the eighteenth century suggested that three concepts of the relationship between human culture and nature dominated western thought: the earth was the product of a great design, ordered for use by man; nature influenced man; and man was a geographic agent who modified the earth. These concepts—originating from mythology, theology, philosophy, pharmacy, medicine, the weather, and everyday life—were the subject of discussion from the 5th century B.C., a discussion that has persisted for over 2,300 years. The human place in nature has been persistently in question. From Sophocles onward, a separation was recognized between man and other life forms.⁸ This dichotomy may be a particular attribute of western-European thought concerning nature, in that humans were placed in superiority over and practically outside the rest of nature.

Despite the persistence of this dichotomy, the conquest and settlement of North America forced western Europeans to intellectually confront the immensity of nature as they struggled to meet the physical challenges of survival in a new and often harsh northern environment. Theologically instructed and culturally socialized to fructify the wilderness and bring civilization to the new world, many newcomers battled against what

⁸Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and culture in western thought from ancient times to the end of the eighteenth century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), pp. i-viii, 706-712. Note the convention of using the word "man" to designate human reflects the language of the original sources.

they perceived as an untamed, savage land in an attempt to recreate North America as a pastoral garden and religiously moral "city on the hill." The myth of *terra nullius*—the principle asserted by colonial powers that the land was empty—permitted the newcomers to treat America as a continental *tabula rasa* ready for their imprint. Nevertheless, nature waited at every turn, ready to reclaim its dominion.

Thus American attitudes toward nature emerged from an atmosphere of conquest. For almost three centuries, wilderness was the focus of an attack on political, military, economic, religious, physical, and intellectual fronts. As Roderick Nash suggested in *Wilderness and the American Mind* (1967), the American reaction toward the untamed wilderness of the New World came from the sociocultural conditioning of Western thought against wilderness. Christianity, Judaism, classicism, and even the experience of "primitive man" predisposed Americans to a repugnance and fear of the wild which led them to impose human order on the land:

For most of their history Americans regarded wilderness as a moral and physical wasteland fit only for conquest and fructification in the name of progress, civilization, and Christianity."

Echoing the Turnerian school to a certain extent, Nash suggested that the physical and conceptual confrontation with wilderness was essential to the development of American civilization. With the gradual taming of the frontier, some Victorians grew more sympathetic in their attitudes toward wilderness, as illustrated by the rise of literary romantics such as America's Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and John Muir.

¹Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. xv.

From a historiographic viewpoint, Francis Parkman illustrates the American romantic attraction to wilderness once its menace had been diminished. The themes of wilderness and conquest were central to the early history of North America, as interpreted in his work from the 1850s to the 1870s. His lyric accounts of the imperialist battle between France and England for control of the continent are cast against a vivid primeval forest. He considered the story of North American Anglo-French conflict to be "the history of the American forest," admitting that "my theme fascinated me, and I was haunted with wilderness images day and night." Parkman was strongly influenced by Byron's romanticism. As the forest backdrop for a foreboding encounter between noble savages and European imperialism, wilderness served as a literary device to represent the light and dark undertones of morality rather than environmental realism.¹⁰ In Parkman's works, the wilderness, like the Indians, was doomed to fall before European civilization, and therein resided its romantic appeal. That wilderness would succumb was a foregone conclusion.

The "West" was a particular focus of the saga of conquest and the changing perceptions of wilderness both in Canada and the United States. In *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900* (1980), Doug Owram argued that the Canadian North West was promoted from 1856 to 1900 as an edenic garden by Ontario expansionists set on building an agricultural hinterland and Canada's "means to empire." The wilderness of the North West symbolized romance, desolation, and opportunity in the Canadian mind. It rang with a romantic call to

¹⁰Francis Parkman cited in Michael Kraus and D. Joyce, *The Writing of American History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1985), p. 126.

freedom and adventure, mythically embodied by American Indians, early explorers, and the voyageurs. Wilderness reinforced the Christian mission to subdue the physical and moral desolation of a forbidding land and foreign cultures. And, according to expansionists, the North West promised economic rewards through the subjugation of wilderness to the forces of Canadian civilization through settlement. Thus the West was transformed in myth from a "howling wilderness to a fertile garden."¹¹

The garden myth was evident in the work of literary nationalist Charles Mair (1839-1927). Mair, a vocal proponent of Ontario expansionism who was once the prisoner of Louis Riel at Red River, likened Canada to a youth whose destiny lay in the West. His 1875 essay described "The New Canada":

Like a youth upon the threshold of life, clear-eyed, clear-headed, muscular and strong. Its course is westward. Its traditions and a history to make, a national sentiment to embody, and a national idea to carry out.¹²

Despite his brush with cold reality at Red River, Mair's 1886 drama "Tecumseh" rhapsodized the West as if it were a bucolic garden:

The prairie realm—vast ocean's paraphrase—
Rich in wild grasses numberless, and flowers
Unnamed save in Nature's mute inventory.¹³

According to Mair the expansionist, in the words of his much celebrated play, the plains were like the ocean's frontier:

Great prairies swept beyond our aching sight

¹¹Doug Owram, *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 107.

¹²Mair cited in Norman Shrive, *Charles Mair: Literary Nationalist* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 131.

¹³Charles Mair, *Dreamland and Other Poems & Tecumseh: A Drama* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), Act 1, Scene ii, p. 21.

Into the measureless West; uncharted realms,
 Voiceless and calm, save when tempestuous wind
 Rolled the rank herbage into billows vast,
 And rushing tides, which never found a shore.¹⁴

Mair's romantic image of the western frontier illustrates the garden motif promoted by Ontario expansionists, ultimately at the expense of the first peoples who depended on wild, free-roaming herds of bison to sustain their cultures.

Although downplaying the similarities between the Canadian and American frontiers, O'ram's analysis of Canadian expansionism reveals its inspiration by American scholar Henry Nash Smith's school of myth and symbol analysis. Smith's *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (1950) cast a new light on American western expansionism as an eastern-based movement that perpetuated several myths in order to sustain the symbol of the western wilderness as a virgin land ready for conquest. These myths were crowned, according to Smith, by Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis.¹⁵ Ironically, Turner linked wilderness to the fundamental ideological tenet of American political culture—democracy. With the close of the great American western frontier, Turner presented his now renowned paper "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893) in which he attributed the growth of American democracy to the frontier experience. The availability of free land, ostensibly unoccupied, provided for

¹⁴Mair cited by Norman Shrive, *Charles Mair: Literary Nationalist* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 183.

¹⁵Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1950).

the regeneration of a more egalitarian society on the western frontier and served as a safety valve for overpopulation in the eastern United States.¹⁶

Aside from its implications for American democracy, Turner's frontier nationalism bridged the gap between scientific and Progressive history, and reflected the changing contemporary value judgement of wilderness. As settlement spread across the West, American attitudes toward wilderness were changing. Wilderness no longer posed a threat to fledgling settlements with only a toehold on America. Conquest was complete.

Attitudes toward nature in nineteenth-century Canada were deeply entrenched not only in the frontier experience but also in the abiding Victorian passion for exploration and natural science. Before the professionalization and fragmentation of the biological and physical sciences, amateur natural history led the way to discovery. In this milieu, Victorian mountaineering originated. Ultimately, natural science contributed to Darwinism and the Progressive conservation movement and, thus, exerted a residual influence on Canadian alpinism.

The Victorian perspective on religion, nature, and science inculcated a strong interest in natural history. As Carl Berger explained in *Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada*, natural history had both religious and scientific dimensions prior to the Darwinian crisis of faith. Nature revealed God's hand in creation and man's placement at the top of a divinely ordered universe. The study of natural history was regarded as a decorous, intellectual, social activity and leisure time well spent on a

¹⁶F.J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1962), passim.

morally rewarding subject. According to Berger, in Canada—as elsewhere—natural history was more than a simple pastime: "It was an instrument for the appropriation and control of nature and a vehicle through which divine purpose stood revealed."¹⁷

Victorian science in Europe led to mountain exploration in the Alps. When natural scientists began to probe the nature of glaciers in France's Chamonix Valley, climbing carried the pursuit of science to the summits. In return, science carried the news of the summits back down to the world of earthly ambitions. The first climbers to scale Mont Blanc in 1786 were such explorers.¹⁸ Alpinism originated as an expansionary form of scientific exploration that took on dimensions of international competition and nationalist conquest. The leading names in nineteenth-century mountaineering were frequently associated with higher scientific learning and groundbreaking criticism. English literary critic Sir Leslie Stephen (1832-1904), Scottish glaciologist and physicist James David Forbes (1809-1868), Swiss naturalist Louis Agassiz (1807-1873), and biologist Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895) and physicist John Tyndall (1820-1893)—both British professors of natural philosophy—were all mountaineers.¹⁹

¹⁷Carl Berger, *Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p. 77.

¹⁸R.W. Clark, *Men, Myths and Mountains* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1976), p. 55.

¹⁹Forbes, Huxley, and Tyndall were closely associated with The Alpine Club (England) and ascribed a scientific function to their mountaineering excursions. Stephen was also a member. His satire of the overtly scientific approach to mountaineering prompted Tyndall to resign from the club for several years, see David Robbins, "Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class: the Victorian Mountaineers" *Theory, Culture & Society* (1987), pp. 588, 590, 598. Notably Huxley and Tyndall were to become the *bêtes noires* of the anti-Darwinian establishment. In public Huxley played the role of bulldog for Darwin. Tyndall came under attack following his 1874 "Belfast Address" to the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which was defamed by his opponents as materialist science that flew in the face of accepted Paleyite doctrines, see A.B. McKillop, *A Disciplined*

Throughout the latter half of the 1800s, science, theology, and the Higher Criticism were afflicted by Darwinism in a debate that characterized an age of questioning and doubt.²⁰ Darwin's evolutionary theories prompted a sharp reconsideration of the process of creation and man's place in nature. Evolution challenged the belief that God had created a pre-ordained universe with a fixity of species well ordered for use by mankind, and struck at the heart of Victorian sensibilities about man's superiority in the great chain of being as an image of the divine creator.

However, Darwinian empiricism failed to uproot the foundations of natural history in nineteenth-century English Canada, which were based on the traditions of Baconian science and Paleyite natural theology. Bacon stressed that the empirical observation of nature revealed reality through experience while suggesting the divine pattern of creation. Creation, according to the Paleyites, was the work of a beneficent creator who invoked a world of harmony, order, and balance.²¹ A few Canadian intellectuals, including McGill's principal, geologist and palaeontologist William Dawson, and philosopher W.D. LeSueur, took a combative interest in Darwinism, but many Canadians sidestepped the debate. Historian William Waiser argued that "Darwin's ideas were alien to the Canadian tradition of natural science, and thus were largely ignored."²² To a large

Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979), p. 113, 154-55. For Stephen's alpine involvements, see Noel Gilroy Annan, *Leslie Stephen: His Thought and Character in Relation to his Time* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1951), pp. 80-89; Phyllis Grosskurth, *Leslie Stephen* (Harlow: Longman's, Green & Co., 1968), pp. 14-19.

²⁰McKillop, pp. 135-37.

²¹McKillop, pp. 94-95, 103.

²²W.A. Waiser, *The Field Naturalist: John Macoun, the Geological Survey, and Natural Science* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), p. 9.

extent, the widespread popularity of the amateur natural history movement in Canada belied the earth-shattering revelations of Darwin and persisted into the 1900s in much the same Baconian style. Canada was a vast field of exploration for natural historians and, at the time of Darwin's first challenges in 1859, still offered a bright future of discoveries to amateurs and professionals.

Suzanne Zeller argued that natural history was one of the few cultural interests uniting all of nineteenth-century British North America and that it nurtured the transcontinental development of Canadian nationhood. According to Zeller, the concept of Canada as a transcontinental nation was invented through the medium of the four main nineteenth-century inventory sciences: geology, terrestrial magnetism, zoology, and botany. Thus, just as theories of plant distribution suggested a botanical model for growth that spread into the north, the inventory sciences forecasted the potential for Canada's national growth through northward expansion.²³ A mutually reinforcing relationship with the sciences intensified in Canada as national development in turn pushed the need for further scientific investigation.

The vigour of Victorian natural history pervaded Canadian society. It laid the foundation of many national institutions, including the Geological Survey of Canada (1842); the Victoria Memorial Museum (1911)—predecessor to the Canadian Museum of Civilization; the Dominion Experimental Farms and Stations (1886);²⁴ and the Alpine

²³Suzanne Zeller, *Inventing Canada: early Victorian science and the idea of a transcontinental nation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

²⁴Morris Zaslow, *Reading the Rocks--The Story of the Geological Survey of Canada 1842-1972* (Toronto: Macmillan Canada with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and Information Canada, 1975); W.A. Waiser, *The Field Naturalist: John Macoun, the Geological Survey, and Natural Science* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989).

Club of Canada (1906). Organized natural history societies, such as the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club (1879), offered naturalists a social outlet, promoted their interests, and successfully lobbied to have nature study classes incorporated into the public school curriculum early in the 1900s.³⁵ Victorian women in Canada were active amateur natural historians, although their gender generally precluded them from professional scientific activities because of social constraints and their limited access to university education, specialized training, and career-track science.³⁶ An interest in natural history and the prevention of cruelty predisposed social critic and intellectual Agnes Maule Machar (1837-1927) to help found the Canadian Audubon Society and urge the creation of a national park to preserve Ontario's Thousand Islands.³⁷ The natural history "bug" infected even the highest political circles: Sir Wilfrid Laurier was an experienced birder from his youth, and Sir Robert Borden pursued the botany and cultivation of native wildflowers.³⁸ In Canada, the influence of Victorian natural history lasted well into the twentieth century.

In the mountains, the frontiers of natural science followed the frontiers of travel. Just as Victorians were enthralled by the search for the Pole, the secrets of the Canadian Rockies captivated many travelers—ocean-going and armchair alike. The completion of

³⁵George Altmeyer, "Three ideas of nature in Canada, 1893-1914," *Journal of Canadian Studies* (August 1976), pp. 26, 35.

³⁶Marianne Gosztonyi Ainley, "Last in the Field? Canadian Women Natural Scientists, 1815-1965," in *Despite the Odds: Essays on Canadian Women and Science*, ed. Marianne Gosztonyi Ainley (Montreal: Vehicule Press, 1990), pp. 25-62.

³⁷Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p. 186.

³⁸Berger, *Science, God, and Nature*, p. 77-78.

the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 through the jagged interior of a mountainous land augured the beginning of a new age in the Rockies. No longer impassable to the casual traveler, the mountains were "open for business." Pioneer railway tourists were quick to publicize their adventures and pass on the secrets of the Rockies to the world. Railway tourism offered the rarest of sights with the least amount of effort in the height of style. Even Lady Agnes Macdonald convinced her husband John A. to ride with her on a steam engine's cowcatcher to get a closer look at the passing alpine scenery when they traveled the CPR line through the Rockies in 1886. Her testimonial to this adventure was reprinted in CPR promotional literature:

Here the pass we are traveling through has narrowed suddenly to four miles, and as mists float upwards and away, we see great masses of scarred rock rising on each side—ranges towering one above the other. Very striking and magnificent grows the prospect as we penetrate into the mountains at last, each curve of the line bringing fresh vistas of endless peaks rolling away before and around us, all tinted rose, bluish-pink and silver, as the sun lights their snowy tips. Every turn becomes a fresh mystery, for some huge mountain seems to stand right across our way, barring it for miles, with a stern face frowning down upon us; and yet a few minutes later we find the giant has been encircled and conquered, and soon lies far away in another direction.²⁹

In the same year that the CPR met from west to east, Canada's first national park came into being. In 1885, Rocky Mountains Park Reserve set aside a hot springs site on Sulphur Mountain that was fully designated a Dominion park two years later. Clearly, the railway saw the potential for commercial tourism and played a large part in convincing Ottawa to take action before other private interests took hold. In one of the earliest critical historical articles on Canada's national parks, R.C. Brown argued that

²⁹E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada: The CPR and the Beginnings of Canadian Tourism* (Banff: Altitude, 1983), p. 24.

parks fit into exactly the "doctrine of usefulness" which emanated from Macdonald's National Policy. Rocky Mountains Park offered scenery, timber, and minerals for exploitation in line with a general emphasis on nation building through resource extraction.³⁰ Ottawa's decision to involve itself with parks and expand its activities in this sphere after Macdonald's tenure was not fully explained by Brown's analysis.

The Dominion parks became a star destination of Victorian foreign travel. Unlike their counterparts to the south, Canada's national parks still offered a windfall of exploration. American George Vaux Jr. (1863-1927) commented on "the consciousness that so little exploration has been carried out that each visitor is practically a new discoverer."³¹ The experience of the Vaux family, Quakers from Philadelphia, epitomized the spell that fell over the Victorian traveler and natural scientist in the mountains, as William S. Vaux Jr. (1872-1908) described his family's first visit to the Selkirks in 1887:

Any lover of nature will find the study and exploration of glaciers a most fascinating pastime, especially in this region where everything is so new and unknown the investigations will become doubly valuable from a scientific standpoint, and the student will have the satisfaction of knowing that he is treading steps but seldom attempted by others and among scenes which can hardly be surpassed in any part of the world.³²

Over the course of many summers, the Vaux family made train trips to photograph and study glaciers in the Selkirk Mountains of British Columbia. Mary Vaux

³⁰ R.C. Brown, "The Doctrine of Usefulness: Natural Resource and National Park Policy in Canada, 1887-1914," in *The Canadian National Parks: today and tomorrow*, eds. J.G. Nelson and R.C. Scace (Calgary: University of Calgary, 1968), pp. 94-110.

³¹ Cited in Edward Cavell, *Legacy in Ice: The Vaux Family and the Canadian Alps* (Banff: Whyte Foundation, 1983), p. 7.

³² Cavell, p. 64

(1860-1940), sister to the junior George and William, spent more than 40 summer seasons in the Canadian mountain parks. Her urge to return was like a need for oxygen:

Sometimes I feel that I can hardly wait till the time comes to escape to the free air of the everlasting hills. I sometimes wonder how it is that those who love the out of doors so much, seem always to have their lots cast in the manmade town.³³

The CPR hotel Glacier House served as the homebase of explorations in the Selkirks, attracting international tourists, scientists, surveyors, mountaineers, dilettantes, and various leading lights. Swiss guides were employed by the railway to lead these guests to the mountaintops.³⁴ The parks, strung together by steel rails between grand hotels, served as civilized outposts in the mountain wilderness. Framed by the windows of elegant dining cars and citadels like the Banff Springs Hotel and Chateau Lake Louise, the mountains could be enjoyed as an unusual landscape, transformed in the Victorian mind from sublime terror to sublime majesty.³⁵ Public wilderness, in an increasingly urbanized world, attracted many with a yearning to step outside into a grand alpine playground.

During the golden age of Canadian rail travel from the late nineteenth century into the 1920s, the CPR ensured that the internationally recognized image of Canada was the Rocky Mountain wilderness. An extensive marketing program was launched at the turn

³³Cavell, p. 7. Mary Vaux married in 1914 at age 54. Her husband was Dr. Charles Doolittle Walcott (1850-1927), Secretary of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., and the geologist and invertebrate paleontologist noted for his discovery of the Burgess Shale on Mt. Wapta, B.C.; see Cavell, p. 13; Vivian Kinnaird and Derek Hall, *Tourism: A Gender Analysis* (New York: John Wiley, 1994).

³⁴Andrew J. Kauffman and William L. Putnam, *The Guiding Spirit* (Revelstoke, B.C.: Footprint Publishing, 1986).

³⁵John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (San Francisco: Sage, 1990).

of the century to promote luxury travel to CPR hotels along the transcontinental railway line and overseas onboard the CPR steamship fleet. The Rockies were the focal point of these campaigns, which featured promotional literature headlining "Fifty Switzerlands in One," "The Challenge of the Mountains," and "Banff and the Lakes in the Clouds in the Canadian Rockies."³⁶ The hallmark of CPR tourism was elegance in travel.

Naturally, the railway concealed from its passengers the cockroach infestations at Mt. Stephen House in Field.³⁷ Nor did it refer to the narrow sleeping-car bunks, which, as one wag remarked in 1895, were about as convenient for a lady "as her coffin" with "nowhere to pile up the multitudinous garments, hair, teeth, and so on, that she may shed, except at the foot of her bed" adding the final observation that "the ladies who come on board looking the daintiest go off looking the worst."³⁸ Overlooking these minor annoyances, the CPR promoted its own image of refined rail travel through the spectacular mountain surroundings of "the Canadian Pacific Rockies."

Under the patronage of the CPR, artists known as the Canadian "railway school" emerged to produce paintings, engravings, and photographs of attractions along the line for use in tourism campaigns. Showcased among these attractions were mountain landscapes, rendered for the CPR by such artists as Lucius O'Brien, Thomas Mower

³⁶E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada: the CPR and the Beginnings of Tourism* (Banff: Altitude, 1983), p. 65-67.

³⁷Swiss guides, including Rudolph Aemmer and Edward Feuz, Jr., were enlisted with a work crew to clear the vermin-infested hotel cellar under the kitchen in 1914; efforts were futile. Feuz joked the unwanted guests had arrived in the baggage of temperamental British alpinist Edward Whymper and the discredited Kaufmann brothers, Swiss guides discharged by the CPR, see Andrew J. Kaufman and William L. Putnam, *The Guiding Spirit* (Revelstoke, B.C.: Footprint Publishing, 1986), p. 153.

³⁸E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada: the CPR and the Beginnings of Tourism* (Banff: Altitude, 1983), p. 48.

Martin, George Horne Russell, F.C. Bell-Smith, and Carl Rungius. A.C. Leighton, who was recognized for his mountain landscapes produced as commercial artwork for the CPR through the 1920s, went on to become one of the founders of the Banff School of Fine Arts in 1933.³⁹ Thus the CPR made concerted efforts to promote the Canadian mountain beauties through active tourism campaigns.

In Europe, mountaineering had eagerly consumed its golden age by the 1870s, swallowing peak after peak as it crossed the continent. British climbers accelerated past the French, Swiss, Austrians, and Germans. Edward Whymper's 1865 Matterhorn summit is generally recognized as the culminating point of the first great ascents in Europe. By then, the first national alpine clubs had been established, led by The Alpine Club (England) in 1857, which gathered a distinguished assembly of Britain's educated male elite with a taste for adventure and the pursuit of knowledge. The Alpine Club, simply titled with British conceit, was described by Arthur Wheeler as "a gathering of the foremost men of the world." The Ladies Alpine Club (England) followed in 1907. Anglo-alpinism expanded to embrace athleticism, art, and pleasure, along with science and exploration as proper motives for mountain climbing. Among these motives, a distinct aesthetic emerged: "The premise of the Alpine Club aesthetic was that only traversing the rock face, inching his way up ice steps, enabled the climber, at rest, to see the mountain as it truly was."⁴⁰ An unrestrained appetite for new terrain drove climbers

³⁹See E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada*, p. 107; David and Peggy Leighton, *Artists, Builders and Dreamers: 50 Years at the Banff School* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1982), pp. 28-32, 42, 65.

⁴⁰A.O. Wheeler, "The Alpine Club's Jubilee" *CAJ* (1908), p. 295; Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (Toronto: Random House, 1995), p. 502-06; for further background on British and European mountaineering, see Ronald W. Clark, *Men, Myths & Mountains* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976); Francis Keenleyside, *Peaks and Pioneers: The Story of Mountaineering* (London: Paul Elek

to the four corners of the globe. The British in particular ventured across their empire in search of new mountains. To alpinists, the Canadian Rockies stood like a beacon on an obscure landscape.

The convergence of Darwinian debate, natural history, and Victorian tourism during the late nineteenth century formed a crucial intellectual juncture from which flowed twentieth-century ideas about national parks and Canadian alpinism. Inevitably the struggle to reconcile critical inquiry and Darwinism with religious piety in nineteenth-century Canada caused a complex conflict between empiricism and idealism, rationality and conviction, and science and religion. This struggle would ultimately result in the emergence of the secularized ethics and social sciences after World War I.⁴¹ Post-Darwinian agitation channelled into twentieth-century reform movements, based on secular social ethics and the Christian social gospel. Reformers seized on a variety of issues including health, planning, recreation, and conservation. Throughout this process of intellectual realignment, natural history retained its popularity, perhaps in part as a continuity by which Canadians could measure such rapid change as urban industrialization against the rest of Canada's quiet expanse. Railway tourism brought the Rockies to a world stage of international travel. The national parks became the playing fields of Canadian alpinism. The attraction of the Dominion parks to mountaineers was obvious and enduring: mass tourism would ultimately crowd in on their footsteps.

Ltd., 1976); Walt Unsworth, *Hold the Heights: The Foundations of Mountaineering* (Seattle: Mountaineers, 1994).

⁴¹McKillop, pp. 216-28.

Conservation and Canada, 1890 to World War I

In the mid-nineteenth century, a new consciousness of the dynamic between nature and human forces was seeded. By the 1890s, it had germinated. Just as Darwin described how the environment influenced the adaptation of the human species, American statesman and amateur geographer Georges Perkins Marsh (1801-1882) drew attention to how man as an agent of geographic change had modified the environment. Marsh's 1864 geography denied the myth of infinite resource superabundance. His book, *Man and Nature; or, Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action* (1864), presaged the devastation to be waged on nature by man in terms of species elimination and terrain exhaustion over the next 50 years. In *Man and Nature*, the emergence of a North American movement for conservation can first be detected.

Marsh scrutinized the global scale of man's effects on nature. In the tradition of eighteenth-century French count Georges de Buffon's theory that man was an agent of environmental change comparable to the powers of wind and water, Marsh's book marshalled an impressive array of information about the changes wrought on terrestrial life by humankind. The work demonstrated how humans, as agents of geographic change, had in many cases overpowered the balance of nature and brought on catastrophes such as flooding, aridification, soil depletion, and deforestation. It challenged the false assumption that earth provided an infinitely exploitable source of natural resources, and entreated the wisdom of restoring the harmonies of nature and reducing resource waste. An incidental premise of the study indicated "man is...a power

of a higher order than any of the other forms of animated life."⁴² On this last point, Marsh concurred with the Sophoclean view of man's separate place from other species in the order of nature. Overall, Marsh's mid-nineteenth-century assessment articulated a new awareness of the human power to cause geographic change and the consequent obligation to careful earthly stewardship. The broad scope of Marsh's treatise foreshadowed a global ecological approach predating twentieth-century geography and marked a prophetic watershed in the beginnings of the modern conservation movement in North America.

Within 50 years of Marsh's work, extirpation had reduced the once great herds of American plains bison to a forsaken few, and the mighty flights of passenger pigeons over the New World had been driven extinct. These indisputable ecological crises coincided with the start of mass settlement in the Canadian West and the end of the American frontier. Population growth exploded on two fronts: rising rural settlement was surpassed by urban migration. These grand transformations called into question in the minds of many naturalists and nature lovers the state of affairs between humans and nature and led to reappraisal.

Even expansionist Charles Mair eventually lamented the losses wrested by western settlement. "The Last Bison," written in 1890, expressed his personal reappraisal of frontier settlement and its effect on the once great herds:

All vanished! perished in the swelling sea
 And stayless tide of an encroaching power
 Whose civil fiat, man-devouring still,
 Will leave, at last, no wilding on the earth

⁴²George Perkins Marsh, *Man and Nature; or, Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action*, ed. David Lowenthal (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1965 reprint), p. 3.

To wonder at or love!⁴³

As settlement devoured the prairie wilderness, Mair atoned for his expansionist vision in a plea to preserve the bison "whose extinction would be a disgrace to civilized man."⁴⁴

Mair's transformation epitomized the larger reappraisal at hand.

North America erupted with myriad reform movements as the nineteenth century drew to a close. Conservation grew into such a movement as it gathered steam in the 1890s. Nourished by various philosophical influences, conservation attracted a wide range of adherents. Ideas of modern conservation were transmitted from Europe to Canada, in some cases filtering first through the United States. Joseph Petulla suggested that the American conservation movement was derived from cross-currents of thought inspired by the Enlightenment and Romanticism of eighteenth-century Europe:

The forerunners of the conservation movement arrived at their conclusions from quite different starting points: "resource conservationists" from the scientific movement within the Enlightenment and the "nature preservationists" from the enthusiastic and worshipful preoccupation with the wonders of nature. Therefore, resource conservationists would later insist that resources be wisely used but used none the less; nature preservationists wanted nature to be left alone and untouched.⁴⁵

⁴³Charles Mair, "The Last Bison" in *Dreamland and Other Poems & Tecumseh: A Drama* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), pp. 148-153.

⁴⁴Norman Shrive, *Charles Mair: Literary Nationalist* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), pp. 204-05. Mair's paper "The American Bison: Its Habits, Methods of Capture and Economic Use in the North-West, with reference to Its Threatened Extinction and Possible Preservation" was presented before the Royal Society of Canada in 1890. Soon after, the Dominion Government purchased a bison herd from Montana and shipped it to a sanctuary at Wainwright Park, Alberta, as Mair had recommended.

⁴⁵Joseph Petulla, *American Environmental History: The Exploitation and Conservation of Natural Resources* (San Francisco: Boyd and Fraser, 1977), p. 218.

This European heritage is not readily acknowledged in the predominant Progressive interpretations of the American conservation movement that have influenced the historiography of conservation in Canada.⁴⁶

Samuel Hays set the tone for the progressivist school of utilitarian conservation with his work *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (1959). With Robert Wiebe's overtones of a search for order and the development of specialized technocrats, Hays described the emergence of U.S. Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot's utilitarian strategy for wise use conservation. Contrary to Hays' assertions, the philosophical genesis of the gospel of efficiency was not made in America by Pinchot, but rather primarily transmitted from Europe. To some extent, this lacuna has contributed to the misconception that conservation in Canada was a derivative of Pinchotism and the American conservation movement. While the transmission of ideas across the border was undeniable, it was by no means a one-way exchange, nor was it strictly American.

Michel Girard has made a good case that conservation in Europe was roughly 50 years ahead of North America and served as the model for the United States and Canada. In the mid-nineteenth century, German universities led the academic development of conservation. German and French materials dominated the scientific field. American

⁴⁶As Michel Girard has pointed out, the progressivist interpretation of the conservation movement is widespread, as with Carolyn Merchant, "The Women of the Progressive Conservation Crusade: 1900-1915," Carroll Pursell, "Conservation, Environmentalism, and the Engineers: The Progressive Era and the Recent Past," and Ronald C. Tobey, "Comment: Conservation and Environmental Movements in the United States," in *Environmental History: Critical Issues in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Kendall E. Bailes (Lanham: University Press of America, 1985), pp. 153-97. Also see J. Leonard Bates, "Fulfilling American Democracy: The Conservation Movement, 1907 to 1921" *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, June 1957, pp. 29-57; and Peter Gillis and Thomas R. Roach, *Lost Initiatives: Canada's forest industries, forest policy and forest conservation* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986).

forestry students educated in Europe were the primary transmitters of these conservation ideas to the United States. Pinchot's predecessor Prussian Bernhard Fernow (1851-1923) left a decidedly Germanic imprint on the advancement of North American forestry science and conservation, administratively with the U.S. Forest Service, and educationally through his involvement in founding the first forestry programs at Cornell, Yale, Pennsylvania College, and the University of Toronto.⁴⁷ Fernow advised Pinchot to study forestry in Nancy, France. Even George Marsh reflected this European influence. His 1864 *opus magnum* was heavily influenced by European sources. Marsh, a talented linguist, also had direct exposure to European currents of thought while serving as American ambassador to Turkey in the 1850s and to Italy from 1861 until 1882. According to Girard, conservation-minded outdoorsman and American president Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), who appointed Pinchot, studied natural history in Germany.⁴⁸ When Roosevelt obtained his natural history degree from Harvard in 1880, the school was heavily influenced by German research methods of microscopic biology and textbooks such as the 1875 English translation of German botanist Julius Sachs' *Geschichte der Botanik*.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Fernow also published a practical guide for urban forestry in North American cities. See Bernhard Eduard Fernow, *The Care of Trees in Lawn, Street and Park* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1910).

⁴⁸Michel Girard, "Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: un modèle de gestion de l'environnement venu d'Europe?" *Histoire sociale/ Social History* (May 1990), pp. 63-79.

⁴⁹Theodore Roosevelt was a well-educated proponent of Victorian natural history and field studies. During his youth, he aspired to be among naturalists like John James Audubon. In 1881 Roosevelt climbed the Matterhorn during his honeymoon in Switzerland. He was also the first president of the Boone and Crockett Club founded in 1887. See Paul Russell Cutright, *Theodore Roosevelt: The Making of a Conservationist* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), pp. 131-32, 190-97.

Fernow's contribution to the conservation movement in Canada was at least equal to and in some respects more direct than Pinchot's. In 1906, they both made presentations at the first Canadian Forestry Convention, a national event presided over by Prime Minister Laurier. This conference bolstered the early Canadian Forestry Association and the creation of provincial forest services, and encouraged the establishment of Canadian forestry schools in which Fernow played an active part as the first Dean of Forestry at the University of Toronto from 1907. True to European form, Fernow advocated state forest management. When the Canadian Commission of Conservation was struck in 1910, Fernow was one of the first names recommended for membership by Chairman Clifford Sifton.⁵⁰ Perhaps during the later years of Fernow's career, he found Canada offered a receptive climate for his ideas with room for professional growth uncrowded by Pinchot. In any case, Fernow must be credited to a large extent with being the father of modern forestry in Canada and an intellectual keystone in the development of rational resource management.

The discussion of conservation leads inevitably to characterization of the differing "types" of conservation. The common tags that have been used to explain the movement are illustrated in Petulla's 1980 value typology of conservation traditions. Accordingly, John James Audubon, Francis Parkman, George Catlin, and transcendentalists Emerson,

⁵⁰F.J. Thorpe, "Historical Perspective on the Resources for Tomorrow Conference," in *Resources for Tomorrow* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1961), p. 1-4. Thorpe credited Fernow as "the forefront of the whole movement in the United States and Canada for the rational development of renewable resources." Thorpe's analysis of conservation pointed to the experience of European countries as the primary influence over the U.S. movement. Nonetheless his discussion of the 1906 Canadian Forestry Convention, Canadian university forestry programs, and the Canadian Commission of Conservation took the traditional approach by stressing Pinchot's influence: "Suffice it to say here that his influence on the subsequent movement in Canada which revolved around the Commission of Conservation was considerable."

Thoreau, and Muir exemplified a "biocentric" tradition that placed the ultimate value of nature in nature itself. "Utilitarian conservation," as represented by American federal officials like Pinchot, maintained the value of natural resources was based on their exploitation as commodities and advocated "wise use" through scientific management in order to exact optimal returns in the marketplace. Finally, an "ecological tradition" of conservation arose from the study of the interdependence of natural communities by scientists such as Marsh, Darwin, Tansley, and twentieth-century innovator Aldo Leopold.⁵¹

The advantage of a typology of this sort is largely descriptive. When taken superficially, these brands can lead to a misrepresentation of the conservation movement as an excessively sectarian phenomenon. These "types" were rarely mutually exclusive, whether on the part of the individuals or the groups that espoused conservation. They serve better as a description of conservation tactics or measures than as a Linnaean-style classification system for conservationists. The supporters of conservation came from various points of entry, often accommodating an eclectic blend of values in unexpected and sometimes "teeth-gritting" harmony.

From the 1890s to World War I, several positive images of nature arose across Canada and contributed to a nascent conservation movement. Contrary to the contemporary tradition of literary criticism led by Northrop Frye and Margaret Atwood that portrayed the Canadian relationship with nature in a threateningly sinister light, many turn-of-the-century Canadians were sympathetic to nature, as illustrated by the literature

⁵¹Joseph M. Petulla, *American Environmentalism: Values, Tactics, Priorities* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1980), pp. 26-34.

of the day. Canadian writers like Adeline Teskey (c. 1855-1924) and Margaret Marshall Saunders (1861-1947), for example, were sympathetic to animals and conservation. Teskey's 1911 novel *The Yellow Pearl* referred to the cruelty of using steel leg-hold traps to procure fashion furs; Saunders' *Beautiful Joe* (1894), a didactic story about an abused dog, won an American Humane Society prize and became a bestseller. Charles Mair wrote about the bison in an eleventh-hour effort to stall their extinction. National parks introduced sanctuaries for endangered species including bison and pronghorn antelope.⁵² Many Canadians saw nature as a benevolent influence: in a milieu of rapid urbanization, vanishing open space, and disappearing species, they turned to nature for answers.

In "Three ideas of nature in Canada, 1893-1914" (1976), George Altmeyer responded to Frye's school of analysis, contending that a positive outlook on nature emerged as "a protective reaction against the unsettling tendencies in modern society"—such as city living, resource consumption, and Darwinian secularization. Championed by social reformers and sportspeople alike, a "back-to-nature" outdoor recreation movement at the turn of the century advocated nature as a means of restoring health and alleviating the tensions of city life, like a benevolent mother teaching her child. Along with a proliferation of outdoor journals, children's camps, scouting, and the "cottage syndrome," the movement fostered interest in a range of activities from walking, birdwatching, and bicycling, to canoeing and mountaineering.⁵³

⁵²Adeline Teskey, *The Yellow Pearl: a story of east and west* (Toronto: Musson, 1911), pp. 36-37, 57; Janet Foster, *Working for Wildlife: The Beginning of Preservation in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1978), pp. 55-73, 103.

⁵³George Altmeyer, "Three ideas of nature in Canada, 1893-1914" *Journal of Canadian Studies* (August 1976), pp. 21-36.

Developments in wildlife protection and forestry awakened a latent ethic of wise use conservation, stimulating a realization to some degree on the part of business and the state that nature was not an infinite provider but a limited storehouse of resources. According to Altmeyer, a gospel of good stewardship to preserve and protect nature was the moral and aesthetic dimension of conservation, a doctrine similar to that propounded by naturalists like Ernest Thompson Seton (1860-1946), who promoted "camera hunting," and John Thomas (Jack) Miner (1865-1944) and Lt. Colonel William Wood (1864-1947)⁵⁴, who believed in setting aside sanctuaries for birds and wildlife as a means of reducing the exploitation of nature. The disappearance of game fishes, bird and mammals challenged the myth of inexhaustibility in Canada and the U.S. As Janet Foster argued, Canadian government authorities were in the forefront of wildlife protection measures, such as the 1916 International Migratory Bird Treaty, and luminary National Parks Commissioner J.B. Harkin was the first Canadian to recognize "the value of wilderness as a resource."⁵⁵

Finally, amid the turmoil of religious uncertainty unleashed by Darwinism and the Higher Criticism, Christians could still look to nature as evidence of God's hand in creation. Canadian nature poets, such as canoeists Charles G.D. Roberts, Bliss Carman, and Archibald Lampman, could adore nature as the spiritual medium to divinity.⁵⁶ In

⁵⁴William Wood, *Animal Sanctuaries in Labrador: An address presented before the second annual meeting of the Commission of Conservation* (Quebec: January 1911).

⁵⁵John F. Reiger, *American Sportsmen and the Origins of Conservation* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985); Gerald Killan, *Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Provincial Parks System* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993); Janet Foster's depiction of J.B. Harkin emphasizes his sympathy for wilderness preservation, in contrast to Leslie Bella's denunciation of Harkin's outlook in *Parks for Profit*, see Foster, p. 74-89

⁵⁶Altmeyer, pp. 21-36.

1916. Duncan Campbell Scott wrote about the healing influence of the wilderness and the spiritual presence to be found in nature after the last canoe portage to "The Height of Land":

Upon one hand
 The lonely north enlaced with lakes and streams,
 And the enormous targe of Hudson Bay,
 Glimmering all night
 In the cold arctic light;
 On the other hand!
 The crowded southern land
 With all the welter of the lives of men.
 But here is peace, and again
 That Something comes by flashes
 Deeper than peace,—a spell
 Golden and inappellable.⁵⁷

Altmeyer suggested that members of the Alpine Club of Canada spoke candidly of the divine presence in nature accessible to mountaineers:

Although nature lovers of all descriptions found spiritual inspiration in contact with the out-of-doors, it was alpine climbers who expressed most clearly the idea that Nature was God's Temple...it was the Club's President who put most bluntly the religious significance of alpinism. "The one spot above all others where there is no place for an atheist...is on the summit of a mountain peak."⁵⁸

Thus Altmeyer revealed an immense complexity in the Canadian attitude toward nature. His interpretation centered around three motifs:

The idea of Nature as a Benevolent Mother was a reaction against the effects of urban life. The idea of Nature as a Limited Storehouse was a result of the death of the myth of abundance. The idea of nature as a Temple was an attempt to alleviate religious uncertainty. For each of these

⁵⁷ Duncan Campbell Scott, "The Height of Land" in *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English*, eds. Russell Brown and Donna Bennett (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 207-10.

⁵⁸ Altmeyer, p. 31

themes, Nature served as a medium through which one might deal with the complexities of a nation in transformation.⁵⁹

Altmeyer challenged R.C. Brown's view of the Canadian conservation movement as a simple outgrowth of the National Policy "doctrine of usefulness." Rather, the conservation movement was a complex body of opinion that included moral and aesthetic elements that "all demanded the conservation of Nature for more than monetary reasons."⁶⁰ His work sustains the view that many Canadians, supported by their philosophical inclination to believe in nature as the embodiment of balance and harmony, held ideas that were contrary to the commercial exploitation ethos and very much at variance with the harsh Darwinian portrayal of survival in a brutally competitive environment.

The latter was better reflected in the contemporary view of the city as a depraved setting in contrast to the serene purity of nature's lakes, hills, and forests. As early as 1895, Lampman's "City of the End of Things" warned of a grimly dehumanized, dystopic industrial city devoid of life:

Where no thing rests and no man is,
And only fire and night hold sway;
The beat, the thunder and the hiss
Cease not, and change not, night nor day.

And moving at unheard commands
The abysses and vast fires between,
Flit figures that with clanking hands
Obey a hideous routi.e...

Nor ever living thing shall grow,
Nor trunk of tree, nor blade of grass;

⁵⁹Altmeyer, pp. 22, 34.

⁶⁰Altmeyer, p. 31.

No drop shall fall, no wind shall blow,
Nor sound of any foot shall pass.⁶¹

With this dark city in mind, many initiatives prior to World War I sought to convey the virtues of nature to urban dwellers.

Secular and religious reform movements on the rise during this period focused most frequently on the problems of city life under the industrial capitalist system and carried over into movements for recreation and conservation. Overcrowding, poor health, and poverty persisted among these ills. Instilled by urban planners, the City Beautiful concept, and philanthropic reform movements including the social gospel, momentum in Britain and North America picked up for the creation of public parks and playgrounds to convey a sense of nature in urban areas and encourage outdoor recreation. Frederick Law Olmsted's 1857 design for New York's Central Park was a case in point. From British urban planner Thomas Adams (1871-1940) to American social worker Jane Addams (1860-1935), advocates argued that parks and playgrounds relieved crowding, offered a healthy alternative to street life and allowed for proper socialization through shared recreation. Although they were, in effect, not natural areas but physically and socially constructed spaces, urban parks and playgrounds were promoted as a naturalistic alternative to the perceived mechanical rhythms and impersonal scale of the city. Social reformers were a well-equipped, experienced group with the skills to build organizations. They found an overlapping interest and shared constituency with the back-to-nature outdoor recreation movement active in Canada's national parks. In many ways, the national parks functioned as the great alpine playgrounds of the cities, and

⁶¹Archibald Lampman, "The City of the End of Things" in *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English*, eds. Russell Brown and Donna Bennett (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 187-89.

mountaineering appealed to early twentieth-century social reformers as a physically rigorous, character-building outdoor recreation that counterbalanced the "withering" effects of city life.

The relationship between planning and the conservation movement was also evident in the establishment of the federal Commission of Conservation in 1910 under Laurier. Until 1921, the commission served as a national forum for expert discussion of natural resource use and management. It appears to have grown out of a declaration of principles made in February 1909 at the North American Conservation Conference held at the request of the United States government. American President Theodore Roosevelt had thrown the force of his office behind the conservation agenda, resulting in a cohesive program that included the U.S. National Conservation Commission. This body got off the ground as a result of the joint 1909 conference but was asphyxiated soon after when funding was cut off under President Taft.⁶²

Meanwhile, the Canadian Conservation Commission appointed a distinguished panel and remained active through World War I. Initial commissioners included Prof. Bernhard Fernow of the University of Toronto, Rev. George Bryce of the University of Manitoba, Prof. Henry Marshall Tory of the University of Alberta, Senator William Cameron Edwards, and federal cabinet members Frank Oliver, Minister of the Interior; Sidney Fisher, Minister of Agriculture; and William Templeman, Minister of Mines. Prof. A.P. Coleman of the University of Toronto School of Practical Science, an original member of the Alpine Club of Canada, was also initially recommended by Sifton but was passed over in favour of Edwards. Although Ottawa intended for the Commission to

⁶²Information pertaining to the Canadian and U.S. conservation commissions from Thorpe, pp. 1-6.

serve as a central agency to coordinate and circulate learned studies pertinent to natural resource conservation, Commission members conceived of a broader program that included research on a wide range of subjects.

The six official areas of concern to the Commission were forestry, lands, water, fish and wildlife, minerals and fuels, and public health. Like most Canadian commissions, the Commission of Conservation churned out volumes of material in its 12 years of existence. In this case, however, much of the work was responsible for pioneer advancement in the resource fields, public health, and regional planning in Canada. According to parks historian F.J. Thorpe, committees of the Canadian Conservation Commission adopted a "broad ecological viewpoint" in their dealings with land use, agriculture, and fish and wildlife:

All those who brought various branches of biological training to the work of the commission contributed a great deal to the general understanding, by the commission, and by those who came in contact with its work, of the ecological balance of natural resources and of the impossibility of considering any of these resources in isolation from the others.⁶³

Similarly, public health was broadly defined as interactive, involving urban and rural planning and the use of natural resources. In this regard, Sifton successfully recruited English planner Thomas Adams to produce an array of reports for the Commission.⁶⁴

Thorpe noted the "sentimental or purely preservationist approach" to conservation was not highly visible.⁶⁵ Considering the scientific characteristics of the Commission,

⁶³Thorpe, p.4.

⁶⁴See for example: Thomas Adams, *Rural planning and development: a study of rural conditions and problems in Canada* (Ottawa: Commission of Conservation, 1917).

⁶⁵Thorpe, p. 5.

this result is not surprising. What is remarkable are the advanced concepts and state of conservation research produced at this time in Canada. The work of the Commission and its associated researchers suggests that government conservation was alive and gaining strength in Canada, in concert with public and private efforts. Even after the U.S. National Conservation Commission had ended ten years earlier, the Canadian Conservation Commission under Sifton successfully highlighted conservation as a public-policy issue in Canada.

Thus, by the end of World War I, conservation had arrived in Canada and established its profile on the public-policy horizon. A new awareness of the relationship between humans and the earth was on the rise, clearly challenging the myth of infinite abundance. The idea of nature was reappraised and set in a positive light by many Canadians who turned to it for reassurance and relief in the confusion of modern times. Parks and conservation appealed to social reformers critical of public health and welfare in urban areas. Parks linked social reform and the outdoor recreation movement. Influenced by European example, academic disciplines such as forestry emerged in Canada and the United States to argue the need for rational resource conservation. The Canadian Commission of Conservation brought conservation to public attention, laying the groundwork for future developments and a growing relationship between nature and the state.

From Progressives to the Managerial State, 1920-1950s

In Canada, resource management and conservation were increasingly the domain of positive state intervention from the 1920s to the 1950s. If anything, the Progressive conservation movement on both sides of the border set the stage for the emergence of the managerial state and interventionist liberalism in conservation through to World War II. In *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency* (1959), Samuel Hays asserted that American Progressive conservation movement collapsed during the 1910s. Michel Girard has taken issue with this interpretation, noting that many of the landmarks of the conservation movement came after this date:

Contrairement à ce qu'avait affirmé Hays, le mouvement progressiste de la conservation ne s'est donc pas effondré durant les années 1910. En fait, des lois importantes ont été promulguées pour protéger les oiseaux migrateurs et certaines espèces d'animaux en voie de disparition durant cette décennie. Le système des parcs nationaux américains fut établi en 1916. Les premières lois contre la pollution furent appliquées durant les années 1910 et 1920. Toutes ces lois étaient de nature fédérale et administrées par des spécialistes dirigés par Washington. Ce qui s'est effondré, c'est la résistance des Américains au modèle qui leur a été imposé.⁶⁶

The model, of course, was the European one of state control over natural resources.

From 1900 to 1945, conservation and parks in Canada were subject to the guidance of the positive state. As intellectuals emerged from the universities to take up the role of public servants, the mandarins of science and social science worked their way into the new managerial state.⁶⁷ In the field of conservation, the role of academics was

⁶⁶Girard, p. 75.

⁶⁷Regarding Canada, see Douglas Owram, *The Government Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986).

early in evidence through the Canadian Conservation Commission. Economic and social intervention on the part of the state continued to affect resource management in many areas including agricultural land use, for example, the *Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act* (1935), public hydroelectric development, and the expansion of national parks.

Conflicts over resource development in the national parks increased through the 1920s. Proposals for massive engineered changes to the natural hydrology of water systems in Waterton and Rocky Mountains (Banff) national parks stirred controversy and fed the mills of legislation. Irrigation and hydroelectric developments to foster agriculture and electrification in Alberta met with resistance from national park advocates, such as the ACC, who refused to pay the price exacted from their Rocky Mountain wilderness. Historians C.J. Taylor and Thomas Dunlap suggested the interwar period gave rise to stronger environmental protection in Canada's national parks and a heightened appreciation of wilderness beyond its commodity potential for resource extraction. The new *National Parks Act* (1930) reflected this changed outlook.⁶⁸

Away in the mountain national parks, mountaineering entered a new phase of development. As climbing evolved, it became more technical and relied on equipment and techniques undreamed of by early mountaineers who had set out in tweed with a rope and alpenstock. Guides fell out of favour. To the new generation of climbers, increasing the technical difficulty of the route was of prime importance. Differences between the new and the old styles created a perennial friction between the two

⁶⁸C.J. Taylor, "Legislating Nature: the National Parks Act of 1930," and Thomas R. Dunlap, "Ecology, nature and Canadian national park policy: wolves, elk, and bison as a case study," in *To see ourselves/ to save ourselves: Ecology and culture in Canada*, eds. Rowland Lorimer et al. (Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1991), pp. 125-37, 139-47.

generations of climbers, relived today in the debate between alpine mountaineers and sport climbers. In Canada, one constant remained: the ACC and its appetite for new climbing areas. Through the 1920s and 1930s, the ACC expanded its roster of outdoor activities in keeping with the increase in winter sports generally as the mountain parks moved to a four-season calendar.⁶⁹

The end of World War II brought conservation and the national parks to the post-war reconstruction agenda. Expansion, delayed by depression and war, surged to the forefront of state planning for the postwar years. The natural resources subcommittee of the federal Advisory Committee on Reconstruction, set up in 1943, identified conservation protection of renewable resources as a priority measure but clearly envisioned the national parks in terms of tourism. Among objectives listed to improve tourism, such as highway improvement, expanding the "economic base for travel," and publicizing the need for improved accommodation and facilities, the subcommittee on natural resources noted the need for enlarging and upgrading the national parks.⁷⁰ Here the state was joined by private interests, including the ACC, which envisioned the expansion of national park infrastructure, such as trails, roads, and services. Thus, after World War II, state control over Canada's national parks harnessed conservation resource management to economic development according to a new doctrine of usefulness.

⁶⁹For discussion of the development of winter sports in Banff see William B. Yeo, "Making Banff a Year-Round Park" in *Winter Sports in the West*, eds. E.A. Corbet and A.W. Rasporich (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta, 1990), pp. 87-98.

⁷⁰Thorpe, p. 9.

The Alpine Club of Canada

Into this forest of changing times and ideas came the Alpine Club of Canada. On the coattails of Victorian tourism in the Rockies, a nationalist impulse led to the formation of an independent Canadian alpine club in 1906. The organization became a consistent proponent of middle-class recreation and public access to the national parks, and created a distinctive brand of Canadian nationalism amalgamated from various influences. From the time of its creation in the age of Laurier to its 50th anniversary after World War II, the ACC supported a revolving agenda of concerns that incarnated all that is contradictory in Canada's national parks. Struggles within the club illustrate how the cultural meaning of the national parks was subject to dynamic definition, and, thus, draw attention to the cultural content and institutional structure of mountaineering in Canada.

To date, academic study of the ACC has been limited. The 1978 Gina LaForce thesis argued that the ACC became antiquated after World War I because of a failure to renew its membership and adapt to change. Absorbed by short-term modernization, this analysis neglected to put cultural struggles within the ACC in the context of its long-term organizational life.⁷¹ In his sociology of British mountaineering and The Alpine Club (England), between 1860 and 1914, David Robbins illustrated the advantages of applying a Gramscian-culturalist approach to the study of middle-class sport and leisure. That is, sport is treated as culture placed within the context of class relations. Studies in

⁷¹Gina LaForce, "The Alpine Club of Canada, 1906-1929: Modernization, Canadian Nationalism, and Anglo-Saxon Mountaineering" (M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1978).

sociology and social history have often described how sport and recreation preferences divide along lines of class culture—especially with reference to the working class. However, Robbins pointed out the converse: "Sport may be an arena in which members of different classes and class functions come together."⁷² This forum for class mixing was particularly instrumental in the case of Victorian mountaineering, which, by bringing together the middle and upper classes, played a role in creating a "historic bloc" central to the hegemonic process. Rather than exaggerate the class homogeneity of this sport subculture, the cultural studies approach points to the struggle whereby the historic bloc is formed:

The most revealing and significant features of sport and leisure subcultures are likely to be found in the tensions and conflicts that exist within them and in the ways in which these are resolved by assembling potentially contradictory cultural elements into "teeth gritting" harmony.⁷³

In the case of British mountaineering, Robbins argued that three "different and potentially conflicting discourses"—scientism, athleticism, and romanticism—were simultaneously at play within The Alpine Club. Scientism, he contended, derived from the scientific origins of Victorian climbing. Before mountaineering evolved into a sport in the modern sense, science was the primary motivation and objective of climbing. The Alpine Club was institutionalized according to the structure of a scientific academy with an emphasis on meetings, learned studies, and publication. Although it remained structurally entrenched in The Alpine Club, science was gradually pushed aside by an athletic rationale for climbing as a means to achieve "physical fitness and courage in the

⁷²Robbins, p. 580.

⁷³Robbins, p. 581; also see Tony Bennett, "Hegemony, ideology, pleasure: Blackpool" in *Popular Culture and Social Relations* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1986), pp. 135-54.

face of danger and adversity." According to the proponents of this doctrine, mountaineering instructed moral strength and manliness. Yet by the 1870s, both scientism and athleticism were subject to criticism by a decidedly romantic group within The Alpine Club that emphasized the sacrosanct spiritual significance of nature. Thus mountaineering culture was influenced by undercurrents of romanticism running counter to the predominant discourse of athleticism and the institutional legacy of science.⁷⁴ The existence of these inner contradictions and their resolution are of prime importance. Through them, the process of cultural struggle is illustrated, and we come to see sport as one of the building blocks of the broader culture, as Robbins concluded shortly before his death in a climbing fall in 1986:

Leisure activities should not be seen as a straightforward reflection of understandings constructed elsewhere in society. Mountaineering brought together different fractions of the Victorian middle and upper classes and different conceptions of leisure, of relations between individuals and between individuals and nature. In resolving such conflicts, the sport did not so much reflect the common sense of the Victorian period as provide one of the many sites at which it was constituted.⁷⁵

Thus Robbins' analysis dissects the inner significance of sport as it relates to the broader cultural milieu, and mountaineering takes on a Thompsonian meaning far beyond a superficial look at climbing as a simple if capricious outdoor activity.

Likewise, the Alpine Club of Canada was one of the sites of a cultural struggle to construct a twentieth-century "teeth-gritting harmony." In terms of class, its membership attracted an educated group of middle- and upper-class professionals, along with and including active social reformers and the well-established elite. The structure of this

⁷⁴Robbins, pp. 587-93.

⁷⁵Robbins, p. 597.

explicitly Canadian club was modeled after its imperial mother, The Alpine Club (England), with the notable exception that in Canada, women were not barred from membership. Among the ACC membership as a whole and within individual members, several tensions were at play, particularly regarding alpinism, conservation, and recreation. Each of these themes found abundant opportunity for expression with respect to the national mountain parks. The ACC's dynamic national park vision in part derived from the elastic cultural struggle within the group to balance competing values. From this struggle for harmony within the group, the ACC extended its vision of the national parks outward to the broader culture.

The primary geographic concerns of this study lie in the region of the Rocky Mountain main ranges in Alberta and British Columbia. Banff, Yoho, Kootenay, and Jasper national parks figure prominently in the history of the ACC. Other parks of interest include Waterton Lakes National Park in the southern Alberta Rockies, and Glacier and Mount Revelstoke national parks in the Columbia Mountains of British Columbia.⁷⁶ The term "Rockies" is popularly applied to include all these areas, though properly the Rocky Mountain Trench separates the Rocky Mountains from the Columbia Mountains to the west with its well-known Selkirk Range. Although ACC activities branched out across Canada and abroad, its first and perennial campgrounds and climbing areas were located in this region parallel to the Continental Divide.

⁷⁶Kootenay was established in 1920 and now measures 1406 km². Waterton Lakes, established in 1895, today measures 505 km². Glacier, established in 1886, was an active center of early alpine activity and has a current area of 1349 km². Mount Revelstoke was created in 1914 and today measures 260 km². See Finkelstein, pp. 19-21.

The inception of vast wilderness parks created by the Dominion government first occurred in this region. The federal Department of the Interior administered public lands and natural resources in the Canadian West—exempting British Columbia—even after the creation of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905, until the *Resources Acts* and agreements transferred these powers to the two provinces in 1930.⁷⁷ Thus, until 1930, the central government was able to create national parks in the West with relative ease. As the first Dominion parks, the Rocky Mountain parks in turn affected later park growth across the country. They created a lasting image for the national parks that grew to be synonymous with Canada, internationally symbolized by landscapes such as Lake Louise that have become cultural icons.

Construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway through Kicking Horse Pass and of the Grand Trunk Pacific northern route through the Yellowhead carried alpinists within range of new, unexplored climbing frontiers. These rail lines crossed through Banff, Yoho, Glacier, and Mt. Revelstoke to the south, and Jasper to the north. Mountaineers radiated out from the railways and reached farther into the backcountry in their search for new climbs and "unnamed" peaks. The parks along the railways offered relatively easy access to exciting climbing during Canada's golden age of mountaineering from the 1890s to 1920. From that point, the ACC continued to press farther into the mountain parks to new climbing areas recessed from the range of common tourists.

The period covered by this study begins with the establishment of the Alpine Club in 1906 and covers roughly 50 years in the evolution of both the club and the

⁷⁷W.F. Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks*, vol. II (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1977), pp.10-11.

national parks. By the 1950s, the original club members had given way to their children and grandchildren. The Victorian vision of national parks as a vast, undiscovered wilderness had lapsed, as exploration pushed back the mapped frontiers of the mountain parks. The national parks matured from their nineteenth-century beginnings in the Rocky Mountains to a patchwork quilt of parks across Canada. The growth of postwar auto-tourism and changes to federal park administration in the 1950s, combined with the rise of systematic park planning methods in the 1960s, launched a new era in park history. Thus the 1950s were a turning point for the ACC and the national parks, consolidating the national park visions of the first half of the twentieth century.

Almost 90 years after its creation, the ACC today numbers over 5,000 strong. But the once proud Banff Alpine Clubhouse no longer looks out from Sulphur Mountain. Like the Clubhouse, the old view is gone, blocked by the growth of trees and town. Only the mountains remain seemingly unchanged, slowly aging in geophysical time. Onto this mountain backdrop flickered the visions of the Alpine Club of Canada.

CHAPTER 2

A National Alpine Club: The Origins of the ACC, 1906-1926

Arthur Oliver Wheeler, an Irish-born land surveyor, took his first climbing lessons at Glacier House, British Columbia, in 1901. While working on a phototopographical survey of the Selkirk Mountains for the Dominion Land Survey, Wheeler found he needed a working knowledge of alpine climbing technique. The manager of Glacier House, Mrs. J.M. Young, placed the Swiss guides employed by the CPR at his disposal. Six guides accompanied Wheeler up Mt. Overlook, all eager to impart their expertise to the greenhorn climber. As Wheeler later recounted, his experiences at Glacier House prompted his conversion to mountaineering:

It is needless to say that these surroundings, the climbs, the nightly gatherings around the fire and the yarns, in which the summits were always reached, soon had the usual effect and I became a devoted enthusiast of climbing in the delightful, devilish Selkirks, where semi-tropical forests and dense undergrowth of alder and devil's-club guarded the approach to the icefields and their surrounding snow-clad peaks.¹

Wheeler's enthusiasm for climbing and his professional interest in the Rockies resulted in a lifelong devotion to alpinism in Canada. Ultimately, Wheeler was best known as the founding father and leading spirit of the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC), a national organization that put Canadians on the global mountaineering map, fostered the growth of alpinism in Canada, explored the national mountain parks, and publicized the Canadian Rockies as a tourist destination.

¹A O Wheeler, "Origin and Founding of the Alpine Club of Canada, 1906" CAJ (1938), pp 85-87

Arthur Oliver Wheeler was the eldest son of Captain Edward Oliver Wheeler and Josephine Helsham, members of the landed Anglo-Irish gentry. He was born May 1, 1860, at his father's family estate in Kilkenny, Ireland, and educated at private school in Dublin, Ballinasloe College in County Galway, and Dulwich College in London. In 1876, diminishing financial circumstances forced Wheeler's parents to emigrate with their children to the new world, following an already well-established pattern of resettlement. The family settled in Collingwood, Ontario, joining like-minded Anglicans and Conservatives. Captain Wheeler assumed the position of harbour master, and Arthur entered a land survey apprenticeship with the firm of Lauchlan Alexander Hamilton and George Urquart Ryley.²

In 1877, Wheeler joined a field survey party that journeyed across the Great Lakes into the bush north of Bruce Mines, Ontario. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, Canada was literally discovering itself as a land mass. George M. Dawson, Joseph Tyrell, Sandford Fleming, and John Macoun were among the many survey parties who struck out on expeditions to reveal the new Dominion's geological and biological potential from ocean to ocean.³ Wheeler's first summer of rough-country

² The key biographical sketches of A.O. Wheeler are Esther Fraser, *Wheeler* (Banff, Alta.: Summerthought, 1978); "Arthur Oliver Wheeler" CAJ (1940), pp. 205-12, [biographical notes]; "Arthur Oliver Wheeler" CAJ (1944-45), pp. 140-46, [obituary]. The accounts are repetitive; thus, biographical information on Wheeler is credited to these sources except where noted.

³ There is a wide literature on nineteenth-century surveyors and surveying in Canada, including: Zaslow, *Reading the Rocks*; Waiser, *The Field Naturalist*; Fraser, *Wheeler*; Zeller, *Inventing Canada*; George Grant, *Ocean to Ocean: Sandford Fleming's Expedition through Canada in 1872* (Toronto: Coles, 1970); Don W. Thomson, *Men and Meridians--The History of Surveying and Mapping in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1967); F.J. Alcock, *A Century in the History of the Geological Survey of Canada* (Ottawa: King's Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1948); J.C. Barkhouse, *George Dawson--The Little Giant* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co., 1974); E. Hall, *Early Canada--A Collection of Historical Photographs by Officers of the Geological Survey of Canada* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1967).

survey work set a pattern for the years to come. In the course of his career, Wheeler devoted most summers to cross-country travel, drawing survey lines through the wilderness. His personal and professional life was thus destined to become a nexus for developments in topographic science, alpine exploration, and westward expansion.

Wheeler made his first trip west of the Great Lakes in 1878. He assisted Elihu Stewart to survey Indian reserves near the Prince Albert Settlement in the North-West Territories. On this trek, Wheeler walked the distance from Winnipeg to Prince Albert and back. On other expeditions to the west early in the 1880s, Wheeler returned to survey timber berths in Manitoba and prairie townships in the North-West Territories that became part of latter-day Saskatchewan.

After completing his studies, Wheeler qualified as an Ontario land surveyor in 1881 and a Dominion land surveyor in 1882. He was also professionally accredited in Manitoba in 1882, British Columbia in 1891 and Alberta in 1911. By age 31, Wheeler held professional qualifications allowing him to survey across Canada, from the Great Lakes to the Pacific Coast.

The federal Department of the Interior engaged Wheeler as a technical officer in its Topographical Surveys Branch in 1885. In Ottawa, he was introduced to a specialized branch of topography. The Surveyor General of Canada, Dr. Edouard-Gaston Deville, taught Wheeler photogrammetry—an innovative method of using photography to survey mountainous areas. This training put Wheeler on the threshold of a new technical advance that would eventually forge his reputation as a specialized surveyor and alpine topographer.

The same year, Wheeler served as a lieutenant in the Dominion Land Surveyors' Intelligence Corps, formed to join forces against the 1885 Metis Uprising. Surveyors in the vanguard of nation building in the North-West Territories knew the lay of the land, and understood the economic and strategic implications of securing the region. Wheeler's shoulder was wounded in cross fire at Batoche, but despite such minor setbacks he applied his expertise as a seasoned North West surveyor to moving General Middleton's men over the rough frontier. He received the Saskatchewan Medal and Clasp for his service.

Returning to Ottawa, Wheeler befriended the family of Dominion Botanist John Macoun, an early explorer and notable proponent of western settlement. His daughter, Clara Macoun (1864-1923), subsequently married Wheeler on June 6, 1888. Clara Macoun was a capable organizer with "a talent for affairs and a faculty for detail that amounted to genius." When Clara was 17, she and her sister had assisted their father by arranging the research material for Macoun's first book, the classic *Manitoba and the Great Northwest* (1882). Although her life was characterized by weak health and repeated bouts of illness, Clara did not complain about her suffering. To the contrary, she would show a keen interest in the Alpine Club of Canada and share the duties required to run the early ACC camps.⁴

Arthur and Clara's family life was marked by frequent seasonal separations as Wheeler, like his father-in-law, set off for summer field work. However, Clara was accustomed to the seasonal departures associated with scientific field work, a tolerance that was likely increased by her own interest in western exploration, as a friend once

⁴"Clara Wheeler: An Appreciation" CAJ (1923), pp. 252-53.

commented: "Her sympathy for her husband's pursuits was based on real knowledge."⁵

Their only child, Edward Oliver (1890-1962), was born in Ottawa and educated at Kingston's Royal Military College. Following his father's lead, he became Brigadier Sir Oliver Wheeler, Surveyor General of India, known for his laborious survey reconnaissance of the approaches to Mt. Everest in 1921; he was knighted in 1943 in recognition of longstanding merit.⁶

In 1890, Arthur Wheeler and family moved from Ottawa to New Westminster, British Columbia. Encouraged by Macoun's enthusiasm for the western frontier and opportunities for survey work in British Columbia, Wheeler began his own survey business based in New Westminster. From 1890 to 1893, he surveyed timber berths and mining sites in the mountainous British Columbia interior and outlined townships and subdivisions on the rich ground between Edmonton and Calgary. Despite the economic depression of the early 1890s, Wheeler worked on surveys to close the frontiers of the Canadian west, particularly as the immigration policies of Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton took effect and the prairies became the cutting edge of national expansion. The overall pattern of Wheeler's highly mobile life illustrates the westward migrations of

⁵"Clara Wheeler: An Appreciation" CAJ (1923), pp. 252-53.

⁶"Brigadier Sir Edward Oliver Wheeler" CAJ (1962), pp. 160-63. Oliver Wheeler's phototopographic survey and map of Everest is discussed in the saga of the early British expeditions organized by the Mount Everest Committee--a joint effort of the Alpine Club (U.K.) and the Royal Geographical Society--see: C.K. Howard-Bury, *Mount Everest: The Reconnaissance, 1921* (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1922), pp. 319-28, pp. 329-337, as Major H.T. Morshead remarked "Major Wheeler had probably the hardest time of any member of the Expedition, and his success in achieving single-handed the mapping of 600 square miles of some of the most mountainous country in the world is sufficient proof of his determination and grit," p. 328; C.G. Bruce, *The Assault on Mount Everest, 1922* (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1923); E.F. Norton, *The Fight for Everest: 1924* (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1925). Regarding the broader context of the 1953 Everest ascent, see Gordon T. Stewart, "The British Reaction to the Conquest of Everest," *Journal of Sport History* 7 (Spring 1980): 21-39.

his era. Wheeler's explorations as a land surveyor and mapmaker served as the forerunner of westward settlement.

As a surveyor and mapmaker, Wheeler criss-crossed little-known regions of the western frontier that eventually transformed Canada's national development. As a toponymist, he left his mark on the west in the form of official names for geographic features, such as Redoubt Mountain and St. Nicholas Peak in Banff National Park. He returned to the federal civil service from 1893 until 1910, working again in the Topographical Survey Branch of the Department of the Interior. During this phase of his career, Wheeler's work concentrated primarily on surveying areas of today's Alberta and British Columbia mountain ranges just beyond the Continental Divide. The increasingly challenging mountain terrain brought his skills as a phototopographer into full play

Working under Colonel J.S. Dennis in summer 1894, Wheeler examined the irrigation potential of what later became southern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Until 1900 the Survey Branch office sent Wheeler out of Calgary to lead field crews on irrigation and phototopographic surveys as far south as Milk River and west through the foothills to the eastern slopes of the Rockies. His work tracked the headwaters of various rivers, reported on hydrological systems, and provided for mapping the topography of these areas by the use of hundreds of plate photos Wheeler assembled once he returned from the field. These Dominion surveys formed some of the first precise reports to record rainfall, geography, and the resources of the western plains and eastern slopes. Surveys by Wheeler and his parties mapped the spaces first extolled for settlement by botanist John Macoun—and only imagined by most of his generation until the advent of the



Illustration 2: A.O. Wheeler, age 52. Source: Esther Fraser, *Wheeler*, (Banff: Summerthought, 1978), p. 97.

Canadian Pacific Railway carried surveyors like Wheeler into the region to lay the ground for tracks and homesteads.

At the turn of the century, Arthur Wheeler came to prominence as an alpine phototopographer and began mountaineering. In 1900, he was dispatched to survey and map the coal-mining region in the Crowsnest Pass. Surveys through British Columbia's Selkirk Mountains along the CPR just west of the Rockies in 1901-1902 defined Wheeler's professional reputation. These trips laid the ground for his publication *The Selkirk Range* (Ottawa: Dept. of the Interior, 1905), a comprehensive geography and mountaineering history of the region, accompanied by photo illustrations and a map folio. The book was well reviewed by the press, including *Manitoba Free Press* literary editor Elizabeth Parker, who wrote: "Mr. Wheeler has reason to be proud of his really great achievement in Canadian mountain literature."⁷

Arthur Wheeler broke new ground as a pioneer surveyor and emerged as an authority in the field of alpine phototopography. Sir Sandford Fleming sponsored his admission to the Royal Geographical Society circa 1902. William Frederick King, Canadian international boundary commissioner, recruited Wheeler as an expert for a secret 1903 mission to map terrain involved in the Alaska-Yukon boundary dispute. Wheeler traveled by steamship from Vancouver disguised as a tourist, crossed the early April snows by dogsled and snowshoe into the Yukon Territories, then raced back to Ottawa to submit his findings early in May. According to Wheeler, Lord Alverstone's border adjudication did not do justice to Canada's arguments in the case. Later in 1903, Wheeler was appointed Topographer of the Department of the Interior. From 1903 to

⁷Elizabeth Parker, "The Selkirk Range," *Manitoba Free Press*, 25 Nov. 1905.

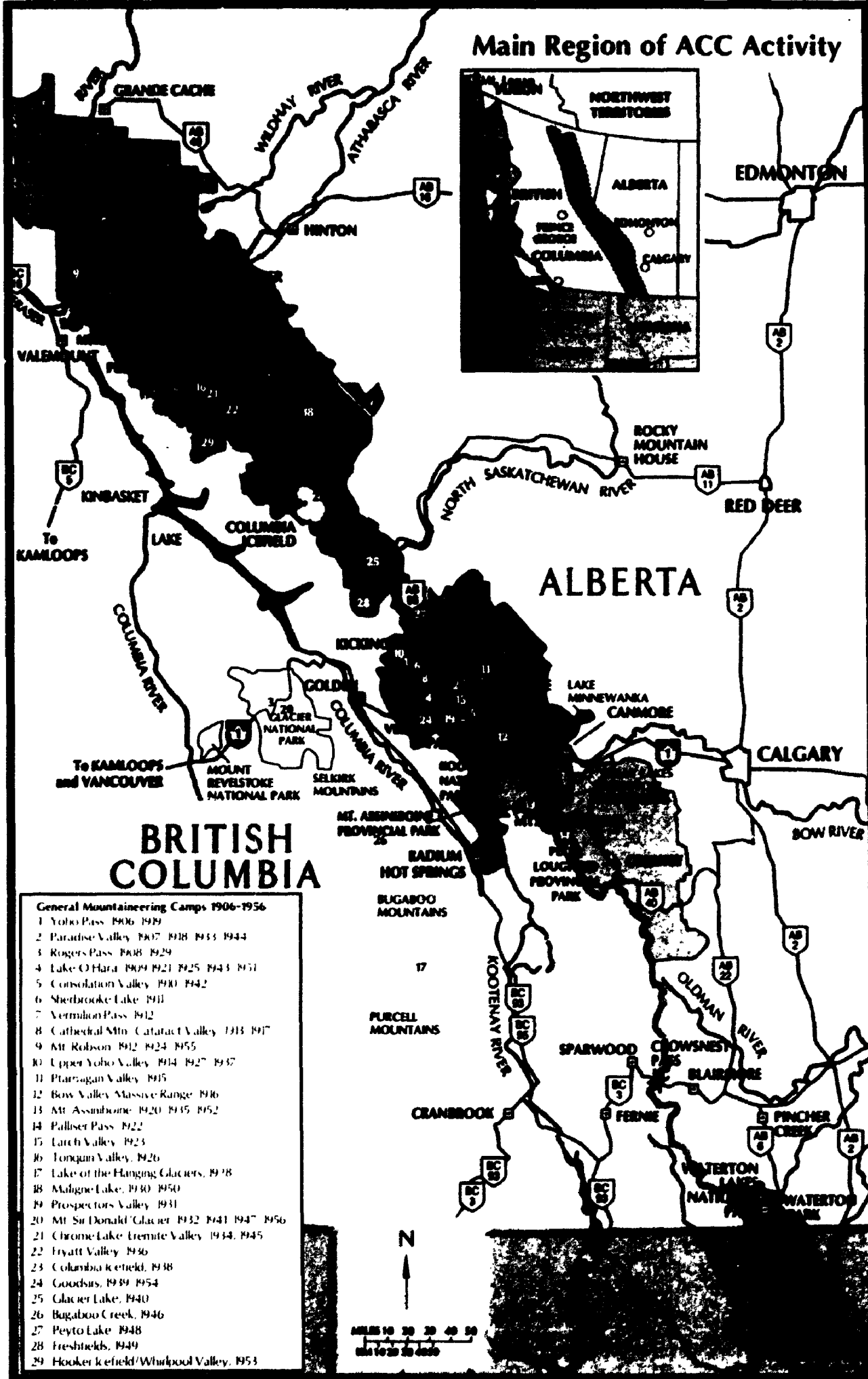
1910, he continued his phototopographic surveys of the main ranges of the Canadian Rockies along the CPR corridor. Wheeler's surveys and topography reinforced the fabric of Canadian nationalism.

The Department of the Interior sent Wheeler to represent Canada at the International Geographic Congress in Washington, D.C., in September 1904. Wheeler presented a paper—"Topographic Surveying by Means of Photography"—to the Congress and displayed his maps and mountain photos. He extended this journey with a tour through New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and to the St. Louis World's Fair, where his photos and maps were exhibited in the Canadian Pavilion. Wheeler's professional status rose as his work spread into international circles.

Following the successful publication of *The Selkirk Range*, Wheeler's *grande oeuvre* was yet to come. From 1910 to 1913, he engaged once again in his private business working on surveys in British Columbia, including subdivisions of Tetachuck Lake northeast of Bella Coola. From 1913 to 1925, Wheeler was appointed British Columbia Commissioner on the Alberta-British Columbia Boundary Commission.

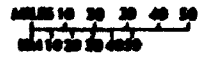
During these years, Wheeler mapped the watershed line of the Rocky Mountains from the 49th parallel 600 miles north to its intersection with the 120th meridian near the Yellowhead Pass. This border is recognized as the jagged line separating the southern halves of Alberta and British Columbia. Wheeler's career reached its zenith when he laid out the Continental Divide between these two provinces. Three atlases of his contoured maps accompanied the interprovincial boundary report. On completion, he retired from active professional surveying at age 65. His great achievements were

Main Region of ACC Activity



General Mountaineering Camps 1906-1956

- 1 Yoho Pass, 1906-1909
- 2 Paradise Valley, 1907, 1918, 1933, 1944
- 3 Rogers Pass, 1908, 1929
- 4 Lake O'Hara, 1909, 1921, 1925, 1943, 1971
- 5 Consolation Valley, 1910, 1942
- 6 Sherbrooke Lake, 1911
- 7 Vermilion Pass, 1912
- 8 Cathedral Mtn., Cataract Valley, 1913, 1917
- 9 Mt. Robson, 1912, 1924, 1955
- 10 Upper Yoho Valley, 1914, 1927, 1937
- 11 Ptarmigan Valley, 1915
- 12 Bow Valley Massive Range, 1916
- 13 Mt. Assiniboine, 1920, 1935, 1952
- 14 Palliser Pass, 1922
- 15 Larch Valley, 1923
- 16 Tonquin Valley, 1926
- 17 Lake of the Hanging Glaciers, 1928
- 18 Maligne Lake, 1930, 1950
- 19 Prospectors Valley, 1931
- 20 Mt. Sir Donald/Glacier, 1932, 1941, 1947, 1956
- 21 Chrome Lake/Tremite Valley, 1934, 1945
- 22 Fryatt Valley, 1936
- 23 Columbia Icefield, 1938
- 24 Goodbars, 1939, 1954
- 25 Glacier Lake, 1940
- 26 Bugaboo Creek, 1946
- 27 Peyto Lake, 1948
- 28 Freshfields, 1949
- 29 Hooker Icefield/Whirlpool Valley, 1953



recognized by the Dominion Land Surveyors' Association,⁴ which elected Wheeler honorary member in 1929. Even after his retirement, Wheeler continued to play a role in his professional field, presenting research in 1931 as Canada's representative on the International Commission on Glaciers.

Wheeler's professional accomplishments went far beyond the calibre of the average land surveyor. From Ontario to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, his career spanned a groundbreaking period of expansion and methodological development in Canadian surveying and topography. As an recognized leader in an international field, Wheeler's work contributed to Canada's lasting geo-political definition as a nation. To a large extent, he was also responsible for laying the institutional foundations of Canadian alpinism.

Wheeler's visits to Glacier House in 1901 and 1902 brought him into contact with a small but extremely active community of adventurers, scientists, and travelers bent on illuminating the mysteries of this mountain region. Before Canadians caught on to the late-Victorian vogue for alpinism, Glacier House had become a popular summer resort for the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, and for members of other groups, including the mountaineers of The Alpine Club (England).

The Canadian Pacific Railway carried these visitors through the Rocky Mountain playground and offered comfortable accommodations in railway inns and hotels, such as Glacier House, strung along the tracks. Nested near the summit of Roger's Pass below the cascading ice of the Illecillewaet Glacier, Glacier House was a particular favourite among prosperous Americans who returned annually from the northeastern United States.

⁴Subsequently the Canadian Institute of Surveying.

Among these regulars were many of the region's natural history experts: the Vaux family of Philadelphia known for their photography, botanical painter Mary (Sharples) Schäffer, and Charles Doolittle Walcott of the United States Geological Survey (later Secretary of the Washington Smithsonian Institute). William Vaux Jr. referred to them as a "decidedly Rocky Mountain cult."⁹ The first climbs and map recorded for the area around Glacier House were made by Irish Rev. William Spotswood Green, a member of The Alpine Club (England).¹⁰ To cater to its customers staying over at Glacier House—and perhaps to add an authentic accent to its promotion of the "Canadian Alps"—the CPR provided the services of accredited mountaineering guides from Switzerland. Thus a seasonal community of Rocky Mountain enthusiasts gathered at Glacier House every summer to further their explorations, and the conquests of foreign climbers served as a catalyst for Canadian alpinism.

In 1901, Wheeler met Prof. Charles E. Fay, then president of the Appalachian Mountain Club. The Appalachian club dated back to the early 1870s and had started out as a natural history group devoted to the appreciation of the New England hills. As it matured, the club's focus shifted to mountaineering; Fay was instrumental in turning

Edward Cavell, *Legacy in Ice: The Vaux Family and the Canadian Alps* (Banff: Whyte Foundation, 1983), p. 6.

¹⁰Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p. 84.

attention to the Canadian Rockies. Adventure chronicles such as W.D. Wilcox's *Camping in the Rockies* (1900) and H.C.M. Sutfield and J.N. Collie's *Climbs and Explorations in the Canadian Rockies* (1903) also publicized the region to outsiders. Fay became keen to form a national American Alpine Club along the lines of The Alpine Club (England), which led Wheeler to contemplate creating a national alpine club in Canada. The concept was slow to advance among Canadians reluctant to participate in what they considered a risky if not foolhardy sport:

I discussed the subject of a Canadian Alpine Club with him [Fay] and during the following winter corresponded with possible prospects to ascertain the feasibility of forming such a club. I met with scepticism and indifference and found only one enthusiastic supporter, the Rev. Dr. J.C. Herdman, pastor of the Presbyterian church at Calgary, who was an enthusiastic lover of the mountains and an ardent climber.¹¹

By the following summer, Fay was already organizing the group that would be established in 1903 as the American Alpine Club. Hearing of the difficulties in drumming up support for a Canadian alpine club, Fay suggested Wheeler form a Canadian branch of the American Alpine Club.¹² This suggestion ultimately prompted Canadian nationalists to renew the drive for a properly Canadian alpine club.

Canadian apathy toward mountaineering was not without critics who chastised the loss of Canada's national esteem as first ascents in the Canadian Rockies fell to other nations. Canadian records for first alpine ascents on domestic soil were few; American

¹¹Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p. 87.

¹²Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p. 88.



Illustration 3: Elizabeth Parker, n d. Source: CAJ (1938), p. 92.

and British climbers dominated the field, along with climbers from other nations with organized mountaineering clubs. Canadian journalist Elizabeth Parker called attention to this discrepancy:

How many first ascents have been made by Canadians? It is simply amazing that we leave the hardships and the triumphs of first ascents to foreigners. Even a Hindoo [sic] Swami has climbed one of the highest peaks in this region. Canada has not even an Alpine organisation Is the mountaineering prestige gained by climbing our high mountains to be held by Americans and Englishmen?¹³

Wheeler had found an ally. In September 1905, Parker's column in the *Manitoba Free Press* urged the Winnipeg Canadian Club to initiate a national alpine club responsible for encouraging Canadian mountaineering and the appreciation of Canada's "mountain heritage." Parker drew a direct link between the existence of structured alpine clubs and a nation's performance in the field of mountaineering. Her public appeal for a national alpine organization in Canada ran counter to the idea of consolidating Canadian mountaineering interests within an American alpine structure. A distinctively Canadian alpine club would consolidate a national "sense of power" by linking nationalism with mountaineering.

While he worked for the Department of the Interior in the early 1900s, Wheeler's two-volume work *The Selkirk Range* was published in 1905. In November 1905, Elizabeth Parker reviewed Wheeler's book in the *Manitoba Free Press*, praising its potential to popularize the history of mountaineering in Canada and to educate Canadians about their own rich mountain regions. Parker declared that the apparent ignorance of

¹³Elizabeth Parker, MFP, 23 Sept. 1905, p. 20

Canadians of their "mountain heritage" was combined with a general indifference toward climbing:

I, myself, am ashamed to record that when I have made the mountaineering appeal these fifteen years to healthy, vigorous, prosperous and even intellectual compatriots of my own, I have usually received one response: "What's the good of risking your life? The Americans are welcome to get to the summits of the Rocky mountains first. They have plenty of money and leisure."¹⁴

The resistance Wheeler had met in his early attempts to form a Canadian club persistently stalled progress. Overcoming apathy was the first step in building momentum for a Canadian alpine club.

At this point, Wheeler had also begun a letter campaign to the press proposing Canadians form a section of the American Alpine Club. Parker strongly opposed the idea in her review. By no coincidence, she appealed to nationalism in her arguments for the creation of a Canadian club.

I understand there is a movement on foot for the formation of a Canadian alpine club in affiliation with the American club [I] . . . would protest against Alpine organization on any such basis . . . We owe it to our own young nationhood in simple self-respect, to begin an organized system of mountaineering on an independent basis. Surely, between Halifax and Victoria, there can be found at least a dozen persons who are made of the stuff, and care enough about our mountain heritage to redeem Canadian apathy and indifference. It is simply amazing that for so long we have cared so little.¹⁵

As Wheeler later recalled, Parker's reaction "took me roundly to task, declaimed my action as unpatriotic, chided my lack of imperialism and generally gave me a pen-lashing in words

¹⁴Parker, MFP, 25 Nov. 1905, p. 23

¹⁵Parker, MFP, 25 Nov. 1905, p. 23

sharper than a sword."¹⁶ However, it also held out the promise of returning to the original concept of establishing an independent national alpine club in Canada, for Parker was a partner equal to the task of overcoming apathy by summoning up nationalist support for the idea.

Elizabeth Parker was a Canadian journalist whose literary columns in the *Manitoba Free Press* were widely read from 1904 through the interwar period. Parker's book reviews and editorials were a frequent forum for her strong views on Canadian subjects. With style, grace, and an appealing sense of humour, Parker's columns set into action a lively movement for a Canadian alpine club.

Elizabeth Parker was born in Colchester County, Nova Scotia, on December 19, 1856. Her parents were Mary Tupper and George Fulton. Mary Tupper died when her daughter was only two years old, and in later years, the girl's life-long appreciation of literature was nurtured by an invalid stepmother. Educated in Nova Scotia public school, Elizabeth Fulton continued her studies at the Truro normal school, obtaining a first-class teaching certificate. She worked as a school teacher for one year. Then, at age 18, she married Henry J. Parker.¹⁷

In Halifax, she began her married life as Elizabeth Parker and raised a family. She had three children: two boys—Henry S.F. and James Glen, and a daughter named Jean. Her interest in literature remained strong, and she pursued it through several literary

¹⁶Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p 88

¹⁷"Mrs Elizabeth Parker Dies In Her 88th Year" *Winnipeg Free Press* Oct 27, 1944, p 11

organizations and lectures at Dalhousie University.¹⁸ In 1892, the family moved to Winnipeg where Parker's husband Henry was employed as a railway clerk. He remained a longtime employee of the Canadian Pacific Railway, working as an abstracts clerk and a chief forwarding clerk in the local freight department, until roughly 1915 when he became an accountant.¹⁹ Their move to Winnipeg coincidentally proved to be a step toward advancing Elizabeth's professional career as a writer.

Parker became actively involved in community life, charitable projects, and church work in Winnipeg, much in keeping with her female contemporaries Nellie McClung and Lady Aberdeen. She served as the first secretary of the Winnipeg Traveller's Aid Society, founded the Winnipeg branch of the Women's Canadian Club (1907), and was regarded as an "instrumental" organizer of the Young Women's Christian Association. Ultimately, Parker was recognized as an honorary member by several organizations, including the Alpine Club of Canada, the University Women's Club, and the Poetry Society in Winnipeg.²⁰

Literature continued to hold Parker's fascination, and she had particular interest in the poetry of Robert Browning. In 1904, Parker formed a circle of friends who met to study poetry at her home during the long Winnipeg winter. This affinity for Browning

¹⁸"Mrs. Elizabeth Parker Dies In Her 88th Year" *Winnipeg Free Press* Oct. 27, 1944, p. 11

¹⁹Gina LaForce erroneously identified Elizabeth Parker's husband as Herschel C. Parker, Ph.D., an American scientist at Columbia University and prominent mountaineer who was the first ACC life member. To the contrary, Henry J. Parker was Elizabeth Parker's husband. Henry Parker was not visibly involved in mountaineering and remains a somewhat obscure figure who died in 1920. His occupation can be determined by cross-referencing the Parker family addresses with his name as listed in the *Winnipeg Directory, 1892-1915*.

²⁰"Mrs. Elizabeth Parker Dies In Her 88th Year" *Winnipeg Free Press* Oct. 27, 1944, p. 11

steered her toward professional success in journalism and directly contributed to a long association with the *Manitoba Free Press*, a prairie daily known after 1931 as the *Winnipeg Free Press*.²¹ Owned by Clifford Sifton, a prominent Liberal minister of the federal cabinet, and edited by John W. Dafoe from 1901 to 1944, the *Free Press* was known for its pro-Liberal stance prior to World War II. Its staff included several independent women writers, most notably the crusty, indomitable agricultural editor and women's activist Ella Cora Hind (1861-1942). At the turn of the century, the *Free Press* championed Laurier's vision of Canada and effectively promoted many of the causes of the day, including Canadian nationalism and woman suffrage.

Having complained that a Winnipeg recital of Browning's works was not covered in the *Free Press*, Parker was invited to write a review. Her review on January 13, 1904, met with approval and later that year she launched a regular weekly column entitled "Literary Causerie." In 1905, she had several articles published about holidays in the Rockies. In 1912, her daily feature "A Reader's Notes" began to appear on the editorial page under the pen name "The Bookman." As a literary editor, Parker avoided the pretension of "highbrow" critics, preferring to present her column as a personal review of books and literature. Readers and authors paid her tribute, such as those expressed by E.W. Thomson in the 1915 *University Magazine*:

To Elizabeth: "The Bookman"
 The prairie crocus sheathed in velvet grey . . .
 Who utters daily, lucid, just, serene

²¹"Mrs Elizabeth Parker Dies In Her 88th Year" *Winnipeg Free Press* Oct. 27, 1944, p. 11

Thoughts garnered while she burns the midnight oil,
Thoughts pure from all the wide world's mammon-moil.²²

Toronto's *Saturday Night* remarked on the acuity of Parker's reviews and their place in Canadian journalism:

"A Reader's Notes" has won a unique place in Canadian journalism not only as the one daily column in the dominion, but particularly for the special flavor, the individuality and keen literary perception born of sound judgment which have all these years gleamed unflinching through it.²³

Having started a career in journalism in her late 40s, Parker's column continued to appear to popular acclaim until she was 84.

In the early 1900s, strengthening an awareness of Canada's mountain heritage became Parker's preoccupation. First witness to the spectacular vistas of the Canadian Rockies in the late 1880s, Parker again traveled through the mountains on a trip to the west coast in the 1890s.²⁴ In 1904, she journeyed with her three children to the spa town of Banff for an 18-month sojourn to restore her health in the fresh mountain air and therapeutic thermal hot springs, as was the practice of the day. Their holiday included sidetrips to Lake Louise, Field, and Glacier House, which were featured in a series of articles in the *Free Press* about holidays in the Rockies.²⁵ Although foreign publications had begun to reveal the secrets of the Rockies to travelers by the early 1900s, Parker was

²²"Mrs Elizabeth Parker Dies In Her 88th Year" *Winnipeg Free Press* Oct 27, 1944, p 11

²³"Mrs Elizabeth Parker Dies In Her 88th Year" *Winnipeg Free Press* Oct 27, 1944, p 11

²⁴Elizabeth Parker, "Some Memories of the Mountains" *CAJ* (1929), pp 56-57

²⁵Elizabeth Parker, "A Backward Look at a Midsummer Holiday" *MFP*, 30 Sept 1905, p 21. "A Holiday Trip in the West" *MFP*, 16 Sept 1905, p 21. "The Canadian Rockies A Joy to Mountaineers" *MFP*, 23 Sept 1905, p 20

eulogized as one of the first Canadians to write about the attractions of the western mountains for readers in Canada. Her prolonged stay in Banff had a profound effect: "She lived there with her children for 18 months and during that time formed a love for the Rocky Mountains which lasted all her life."²⁶

Parker expressed this love for the mountains in her articles about the Canadian Rockies and her work for the ACC. Her lyrical descriptions of the mountains suggested the mystical qualities of nature. Imbuing her accounts of the mountains with nineteenth-century romanticism, she referred to hikers as "mountain pilgrims," as if they were party to a spiritual quest that could inspire renewal and personal transformation among the high hills:

The rambler secretes physical energy and goes in the strength of that energy for many a long, monotonous day of grinding and commonplace. Then he gets some dawning sense of infinitude and of the immensity and mystery of the creation He learns unspeakable things about himself. No man standing in the wet sunshine of the summer morning, lifting his eyes unto the hills and making his vows can do other afterwards than fight the fight of life with higher might and with greater gentleness to his fellow fighters, all too ill equipped for such fighting.²⁷

Contact with nature's mysteries brought one closer to the Divine. Thus the mountains were a haven for the restorative powers of nature much needed by twentieth-century men and women chained to the secular monotony of modern existence.

The transcendental value of the mountain wilderness was unmistakable to Parker, whose affinity for the Romantic poets had shaped her literary sensibilities and, thus, her

²⁶WFP, 27 October 1944, p. 11

²⁷Elizabeth Parker, MFP, 23 Sept. 1905, p. 21; regarding nineteenth-century currents of thought, see Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators*, and Carl Berger, *Science, God and Nature*

perception of the mountain environment. With repeated visits to the Canadian Rockies, she developed her "inward eye" for the transcendental insights of nature's beauty.²⁸

Paradoxically, mountaineering opened the door to this inward world even as one entered the great outer world of nature, as Parker reflected in the first issue of the *Canadian Alpine Journal*:

There comes to the mountaineer of pure mind and willing spirit the sense of which Wordsworth tells, of the presence interfused in Nature; the presence that dwells among the sheer peaks and in the living air and the blue sky and in the mind of man; the motion and the spirit that rolls through all things. Browning sums it in his swift way: "which fools call Nature and I call God." To this climber is given a key to many an utterance of the Masters, which else remained for him unlocked.²⁹

In the mountains, Parker, much like the Romantic poets, felt a strong spiritual connection between nature and the Divine, as Arthur Wheeler observed at the time of her death in 1944:

When in their midst she seemed deeply impressed by the feeling of being in touch with the Almighty Creator whose presence was inspired by the solemn beauties of the snow-clad heights and flower-strewn valleys all around. She never seemed happier than when seated amidst the camp tents drinking in the thrilling scenes and absorbed in the vitality of life moving about her.³⁰

Twinned with Parker's romantic admiration for the Rockies was a strong streak of Canadian nationalism, for she saw the mountains as a magnificent natural heritage to be treasured by all Canadians. Parker connected the mountains to Canadian nationalism, just as opening the west was ideologically linked to strengthening Canada's emerging

²⁸Parker, CAJ (1909), p. 143

²⁹Parker, CAJ (1907), p. 8

³⁰A.O. Wheeler, "In Memoriam Elizabeth Parker" CAJ (1944-45), pp. 125

nationhood.³¹ She could not understand why Canadians were indifferent to their mountains and to mountaineering. Parker insisted on the national importance of the Rockies: "The Canadian Rocky Mountain system, with its unnumbered and unknown natural sanctuaries for generations yet unborn, is a national asset."³² Parker brought just this romantic sensibility and nationalistic enthusiasm for the Rockies to building the Alpine Club of Canada, a structure that reinforced Anglo-Canadian organizational life and nationalism.

In 1905, Parker and Wheeler joined forces to organize a distinctly Canadian alpine club. Their accounts vary as to exactly how they agreed on a course of action. Wheeler reminisced that the review of *The Selkirk Range* played "right into my mitt" for his prompt reply to the writer: "If you will give me your assistance and can open the columns of the *Free Press* to our support, I shall be very glad to go ahead on patriotic and imperial lines." He later discovered the author of the review was no other than Elizabeth Parker writing under one of her pen names, "M.T." Then, with the support of editor J.W. Dafoe, Parker began to publicize the formation of a Canadian alpine club through the *Free Press*. In Calgary, Rev. J.C. Herdman launched a similar publicity campaign in the *Calgary Herald*. According to Wheeler, this "propaganda" was highly successful in bringing their cause to

³¹Regarding the importance of the west in building Canada's sense of nationalism, see Douglas Owsram, *Promise of Eden* and Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976)

³²Parker, CAJ (1907), p. 7.

public attention in that it "made other papers sit up and take notice" and thus prepared the ground for the organization of a Canadian alpine club.³³

Parker, on the other hand, recalled a slightly different course of events. Following the review of his book, Wheeler approached her to join his efforts to form a Canadian branch of the American Alpine Club:

Would I help? I would, but only for an independent club. He was dubious about success in organizing on our own basis, and argued for his proposed branch of the older, active club.³⁴

Correspondence ensued between Wheeler and Fay, wherein Fay contended that America could stand for all of North America as far as the name of the American Alpine Club was concerned. Parker rebuffed this interpretation with her opinion that "the word had a national not a geographical significance." When Fay and Wheeler proposed to change the name of the American Alpine Club to the "Alpine Club of North America," Parker queried: "What about the significant national symbol, the Eagle, on their crest?" In the meantime, Parker gained the support of *Free Press* editor and Canadian nationalist J.W. Dafoe, "who said that though lacking personal mountaineering ambition, if an alpine club was formed, he would favour decidedly a Canadian club." According to Parker, she and Wheeler corresponded with "university men" and other interested parties to ascertain which direction to follow: "There was only one answer." They proceeded with a Canadian club.³⁵

³³Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p 88

³⁴Parker, CAJ (1938), p 96-97

³⁵Parker, CAJ (1938), pp. 96-97.

Notwithstanding the variations in these accounts, building a Canadian alpine club advanced quickly once Wheeler and Parker joined forces. The club promoted a distinct combination of alpinism and Anglo-Canadian nationalism made in western Canada. With publicity came a growing regard for the idea of forming a Canadian alpine club on the part of people with a direct interest in the Rockies. On the commercial tourism front, this group included Mr. R. Marpole, General Superintendent of the Western Division of the CPR, and a number of regional outfitters and trail guides. In the case of Dr. A.P. Coleman, geologist with the University of Toronto School of Practical Science, and Mrs. Julia Henshaw, author of a Rocky Mountain wildflower botany, science motivated an interest in creating the club. For local climbers, such as Rev. Dean Paget of Calgary, the appeal was obvious.³⁶

On February 14, 1906, they took a great step forward when, as arranged by Mr. Marpole, Arthur Wheeler met CPR Second Vice-President William Whyte at a Western Division conference of railway officers held at Mt. Stephen House in Field, British Columbia. In a rather bold move, Wheeler approached Whyte for 20 return railway passes to Winnipeg from anywhere in Canada in order to transport delegates to a conference where they would form a Canadian alpine club. Whyte's response was as dramatic as it was canny:

He looked astounded, then incredulous, then scornful, as much as to say "What confounded cheek." Then he roared, "Twenty passes to Winnipeg from any part of the Railway!"³⁷

³⁶Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p. 89.

³⁷Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p. 90.

This early encouragement set a pattern that would recur as the railways played the role of godparents in the life of the Alpine Club of Canada.

The Winnipeg Meeting, March 27-28, 1906

Situated on the windswept flood plains of the Red River, Winnipeg, Manitoba is no mountaineering mecca. Few would guess that Canada's first national alpine club was founded here in 1906. Although Winnipeg was an unlikely place for alpine sports, it was the turn-of-the-century railway bull's eye of Canada and the natural midpoint for Canadians meeting from west and east. This prairie city—with its bustling nucleus of people and railways—served as the gathering point for the founders of the Alpine Club of Canada.

Thus, in March 1906, delegates steamed into Winnipeg to start a Canadian alpine club. Through the offices of Elizabeth Parker, the inaugural conference was held at the YMCA, where the delegates also found accommodation. Wheeler and Herdman arrived together by train on March 26 and quickly held an informal meeting with Parker at her home to finalize the conference agenda. Twenty-six delegates met for their first session on the afternoon of March 27, chaired by Dr. A.P. Coleman, who rapidly appointed committees responsible for electing club officers, establishing a constitution, and carrying out other business. In the evening, a lecture with a lantern-slide show was held before an enthusiastic audience at the YMCA auditorium. Headlined "The Wonderland of Canada," Wheeler and Herdman delivered an enticing array of lantern views featuring Rocky Mountain panoramas, a legion of waterfalls and rivers, mountain summits and climbing



Illustration 4: ACC founding meeting, Winnipeg, March 1906. Source: P.A. Reichwein, "Guardians of the Rockies," *The Beaver* (Aug./Sept. 1994), p. 6.

scenes, ice and snow formations, plants, animals, and the Cave of Cheops discovered high in Rogers Pass. To those members of the crowd who had never traveled to the mountains, these images must have been as exotic and far from their everyday lives as the Egyptian pyramids.³⁸

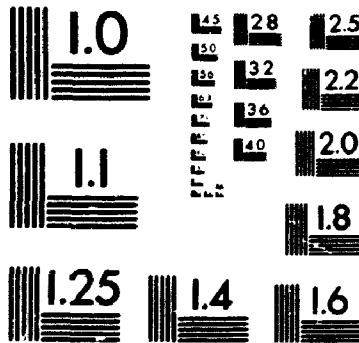
The following day's events consisted of working meetings, a publicity lunch, elections, and a dinner. A constitution committee met to draft the principles of the club. Several delegates attended a luncheon of the Winnipeg Canadian Club at which Wheeler made an address as guest speaker. This speech, in which Wheeler "portrayed Canada's great mountain heritage and explained the aims of the proposed Alpine Club of Canada," met with congratulations and the approval of clergyman Dr. C. W. Gordon (Ralph Connor) and E. L. Drewry, who each sponsored \$25 to join up as associate members. That afternoon, the delegates adopted the club constitution, elected the club officers for a two-year term, and decided on three important matters. First, the temporary headquarters and library of the club would reside at 160 Furby Street—the Parker family home in Winnipeg. Next, the club would hold its first annual camp in Yoho Pass, British Columbia, in July 1906, only four months later. The annual camp would be the vehicle to teach and promote mountaineering in Canada.³⁹ Last, the club decided to publish an annual periodical, the *Canadian Alpine Journal*, which proved an enduring historical record of the club's activities.

³⁸Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p. 90-91

³⁹Wheeler, CAJ (1938), pp. 91-93. Presbyterian clergyman and novelist Charles William Gordon was also known by his pen name, Ralph Connor. He served as a Presbyterian missionary in the Banff-Canmore area from 1890 to 1893, and is commemorated by the Canmore Ralph Connor Memorial Church, formerly the Canmore Presbyterian Church.

2

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The conference closed with an inaugural dinner held at Manitoba Hall, remembered annually at ACC anniversary dinners held by each section of the club. An elated atmosphere and high spirits capped off the proceedings that night:

The inaugural dinner followed in the evening, when some stirring speeches were made born of experiences in rare altitudes, and the healths of the King (God bless him!), the Club and its officers, were drunk with all the enthusiasm of a young mountaineering organization.⁴⁰

The 1906 black-and-white photo of delegates to the Winnipeg conference suggests a more formal portrait of the group. Dressed in dark suits and overcoats, they stand in the front doorway of the Winnipeg YMCA, a male gathering broken by the faces of two women. Members sport a heavy climbing rope and a spiked ice axe—the symbols of the alpine club. In the background, the rough stone walls look like rock-climbing holds rising on a solid foundation.⁴¹ Institutionally, this effect was achieved by the Alpine Club of Canada.

Twenty-six delegates had attended the founding meeting of the ACC.⁴² Delegates came from six provinces: British Columbia sent five, Alberta nine, Manitoba eight, Ontario two, Quebec one, and Nova Scotia one. Thus the greatest number were from the western provinces nearest the Rocky Mountains, which provides another indication of the western nature of alpinism. Elizabeth Parker and her daughter, Jean, were the only two women registered. Included among the others were the

⁴⁰Elizabeth Parker, "Report of the Secretary" CAJ (1907), p. 164.

⁴¹Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p. 90.

⁴²Wheeler and Parker conflict on the total number of delegates who attended the 1906 Winnipeg conference. Parker who was known for accuracy reported 28 delegates. Although this figure may be correct, she does not list the delegates. For analysis, Wheeler's figure will be taken as the standard since he lists the delegates by name. See Wheeler, CAJ (1938), pp. 91-93; Parker, CAJ (1907), p. 164. See Table of Delegates.

**Figure 1. List of Delegates at ACC Winnipeg Meeting,
March 27-28, 1906**

Name	Profession	City/Town	#
British Columbia			5
W.T. Dalton	Unknown	Vancouver	
E.A. Haggan	Engineer	Vancouver	
J.A. Kirk	D.L.S.	Revelstoke	
S.H. Baker	Outfitter	Glacier	
Tom Martin	Guide	Field	
Alberta			9
R.E. Campbell	Outfitter	Lagan	
Dan Campbell	Outfitter	Lagan	
Tom Wilson	Outfitter	Banff	
W.A. Brewster	Outfitter	Banff	
A.O. Wheeler	D.L.S.	Calgary	
J.C. Herdman, D.D.	Clergyman	Calgary	
Dean Paget, M.A.	Clergyman	Calgary	
Lucius Q. Coleman	Rancher	Morley	
A.M. Gordon	Clergyman	Lethbridge	
Manitoba			8
Elizabeth Parker	Journalist	Winnipeg	
Jean Parker (Miss)	Homemaker	Winnipeg	
Stanley H. Mitchell	Businessman	Winnipeg	
C.W. Gordon, D.D.	Clergyman	Winnipeg	
D.H. Laird	Lawyer	Winnipeg	
J. Stanley Will	Professor	Winnipeg	
C. E. Macpherson	CPR	Winnipeg	
T. Fraser	Clergyman	Portage la Prairie	
Ontario			2
A.P. Coleman, Ph.D.	Professor	Toronto	
W.S. Taylor	Magazine Editor	Woodstock	
Quebec			1
L.O. Armstrong	CPR	Montreal	
Nova Scotia			1
R.H. Murray	Unknown	Halifax	
Total			26

Source: Derived from A.O. Wheeler, "Origin of the Alpine Club of Canada" CAJ (1938), pp. 91-92.

well-known Banff outfitters Tom Wilson and Bill Brewster, the editor of *Rod and Gun* W.S. Taylor, and social reformer Rev. C.W. Gordon. Among the 26 delegates, at least six outfitters and guides attended, followed in number by five clerics, two professors, two Dominion Land Surveyors, two press editors, two railway officials, one lawyer, and a rancher.⁴³ The presence of academics, such as Dr. A.P. Coleman, and members of the Dominion Land Survey brought to the ACC a penchant for science and exploration. The mountain outfitters and guides from Alberta and British Columbia, along with CPR representatives from Winnipeg and Montreal, held a direct commercial interest in the potential of the ACC to boost mountain tourism. Significantly, Protestant ministers were strongly represented, seemingly drawn to the divine proximity of the summits and the redeeming social benefits associated with outdoor recreation. What did this group—surveyors and editors, rail executives and professors, cowboys and ministers—share in common? Ambitions for organized mountaineering in the Rockies.

Organizing the ACC: Structure, Constitution, and Membership

The structure of the ACC was modeled much like its imperial originator of alpine clubs in Britain. The Alpine Club, formed in London in 1857 much along the lines of a scientific institution, was the first national alpine club, and with typical British clubishness and imperial breadth it laid out these specific goals:

⁴³Of the remaining delegates, three were of undetermined occupation, one was retired, and one was a single woman living at home.

The promotion of good fellowship among mountaineers, of mountain climbing and mountain exploration throughout the world, and better knowledge of the mountains through literature, science and art ⁴⁴

These goals formed a model for the ACC constitution, tailored with objectives specific to a national alpine club in Canada. The constitution adopted by the ACC in 1906 entrenched the principles of a multifaceted alpine organization that was, by design, much more than a simple athletic club for climbers:

- (a) The promotion of scientific study and exploration of Canadian alpine and glacial regions.
- (b) The cultivation of art in relation to mountain scenery
- (c) The education of Canadians to an appreciation of their mountain heritage.
- (d) The encouragement of the mountain craft and the opening of new regions as a national playground
- (e) The preservation of the natural beauties of the mountain places and of the fauna and flora in their habitat.
- (f) The interchange of literature with other alpine and geographical organisations.⁴⁵

Beyond fellowship, climbing, and education, the Victorian tradition of alpine science and exploration carried through to the ACC, echoing the British club, which struck a personal chord with many ACC men and women who were grounded in the shared culture of late nineteenth-century natural history.

⁴⁴Cited by R. W. Sandford, *The Canadian Alps: The History of Mountaineering in Canada* (Banff, Alta.: Altitude Publishing, 1990), p. 26; for further background on British alpinism, see Ronald Clark, *Men, Myths & Mountains* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976), Francis Keenleyside, *Peaks and Pioneers: The Story of Mountaineering* (London: Paul Elek, 1976)

⁴⁵"Constitution" CAJ (1907), p. 178.

A major distinguishing feature of the above ACC objectives was item (e) regarding the "preservation of the natural beauties" along with mountain creatures and their habitat. By 1906, conservation was a topic worthy of adherence among Canadians, especially anyone with an interest in natural history and the outdoors. Preservation, however, was in many ways at odds with item (d) "the opening of new regions as a national playground." Nowhere was this conflict more evident than in Canada's national parks. The ACC constitution in effect duplicated the dual mandate of national parks legislation and its inherent conflicts between use and preservation. This structure brought the ACC parallel to the goals and aspirations of the national parks.

During this period, the term "playground" was frequently used to describe the national parks. As geographers John Marsh and Margaret Johnston have observed, there were commonalities in references to Canada's Rocky Mountains as a "playground," "heritage," and "national asset". "Many of the statements regarding the Club's philosophy coincide with statements used contemporaneously to promote the national parks."⁴⁶ Essentially, the national parks were designated to satisfy anthropocentric wants; however, realizing this goal created a tension between use and preservation. Opening the wilderness to public enjoyment carried with it the peril that true wilderness would cease to exist, nature's beauties would be spoiled, and human intervention would adversely affect wild creatures and their habitat. Like playgrounds, the national parks were outdoor areas for

⁴⁶Margaret Johnston and J. Marsh, "The Alpine Club of Canada, Conservation and Parks, 1906 to 1930" CAJ (1986), p. 17

public enjoyment and recreation, but they were also public trusts to be protected in their natural state for future generations; herein lurked the shadows of conflict

Structurally, the ACC functioned on two levels. At the national level, the ACC headquarters acted as a central organizing body for the club, while "sections" formed in major cities across Canada and abroad to engage in local activities. Similarly, the club's management structure was two-tiered. At the national level, ACC officers initially included a president, eastern vice-president, western vice-president, secretary, treasurer, librarian, and patron. With the addition of a three-member advisory board, this group constituted the executive board of the ACC. As the club grew, the executive expanded to include new positions: director (1910-26), central vice-president (1966), and American vice-president (1948).⁴⁷ At the section level, a chairman and secretary performed executive duties. The number and location of the ACC's various sections altered throughout its history in accordance with changes in membership. Soon after the Winnipeg meeting, sections sprang up in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, New York, and London, England. As the activities of the club increased, several committees replaced the advisory board to oversee issues related to management, the club house, skiing, glaciers, the ACC huts, and the alpine journal.⁴⁸ Thus, like the national parks administration that functioned through its Ottawa headquarters at the national level and through its superintendents in each park, the ACC instituted and adopted a national

⁴⁷"Constitution" CAJ (1907), pp. 178-81. *List of Members*, 1976.

⁴⁸*Constitution and List of Members*, 1958.

and a local management organization that reflected a well-ordered hierarchy common to many of the management structures of its day.

At the Winnipeg meeting, the first ACC executive officers were elected for a two-year term. Arthur Wheeler accepted the position of active president, which he fulfilled until 1910, while Canada's pioneer of railway surveys, Sir Sandford Fleming, K.C.M.G., was appointed club patron as honorary president. Two vice-presidents, Dr. Arthur P. Coleman and Rev. Dr. J.C. Herdman, were elected to represent eastern and western Canada respectively. Winnipeg became a center of club organization based around club Secretary Elizabeth Parker, Assistant Secretary Stanley Mitchell, Club Librarian Jean Parker, and lawyer D.L. Laird who served as treasurer. In addition to the club's officers, an advisory board was assembled composed of outfitter Tom Wilson from Banff, and mechanical engineer E.A. Haggan and Dominion Land Surveyor J.A. Kirk from Revelstoke. Together they served as the club's executive board and managed the business of running a national organization ⁴⁹

The ACC's business was conducted at an annual general meeting usually held outdoors during the summer camp. The club's constitution called for an annual summer camp where climbers could gather to climb, study, appreciate, and explore the mountains. Because the annual camp was the focal point of the club's activities at the national level, it offered one of few opportunities for its members and leaders to gather in one place. During the rest of the year, club life was animated at local meetings, and business operated via a sustained correspondence among members of the national and local executives.

⁴⁹A.O. Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p. 92

Five grades of membership in the ACC were established at the 1906 Winnipeg meeting. Membership grades and the associated annual dues were defined in the ACC constitution published in 1907. "Active Members" paid \$5, "Graduating Members" \$2.50, "Associate Members" \$25, "Subscribing Members" \$2, and a special "Life Membership" was available for active members who paid a one-time sum of \$50. "Honourary Members" were recognized as a distinguished circle within the ACC. "Active Members" were evaluated according to one of two standards in the early years of the ACC:

- (a) Those who have made an ascent of not less than ten thousand feet above sea-level in some recognized mountain region.
- (b) Those who for eight years prior to the date of organization have been annual visitors to Canada's mountain regions and have contributed to a knowledge of the same by means of scientific or artistic publication.⁵⁰

These eligibility standards of active membership were widely framed to encompass many of the early Rocky Mountain trailblazers and pacesetters who in some cases were not mountaineers in the precise sense of the word but had nonetheless made a significant contribution to the development of mountaineering in Canada. Active membership automatically carried with it the right to vote on club business.⁵¹

The grade of "Graduating Members" provided for the training and accreditation of new climbers. Inexperienced climbers were allowed a maximum of two years to fulfil the qualifications for active membership. This requirement was usually achieved with a "graduating" climb at the annual ACC summer camps where mountaineering techniques

⁵⁰"Constitution" CAJ (1907), p. 178-81.

⁵¹Ibid..

were instructed on guided climbs.⁵² Thus there was a strong emphasis on activism within the club.

"Associate Members" accommodated club sponsors and patrons who were unable to qualify as active members. According to this class of membership, ACC supporters could be affiliated with the club and "lend a helping hand towards its maintenance."⁵³ In the first year of the ACC's existence, this class of membership included several prestigious patrons, such as the wife of Calgary's cattle king Mrs Pat Burns, Chancellor of Queen's University Sir Sandford Fleming, Toronto President of the Canadian Bank of Commerce Byron E. Walker, and Winnipeg's powerful Second Vice-President of the CPR William Whyte.⁵⁴ Thus the Alpine Club attracted some of the key activists in the "making" of a national culture at the turn of the century; these "worthies" lent legitimacy and organizational prowess to the fledgling club.⁵⁵

The constitution also provided for "Subscribing Members." This grade permitted members who were "unable to take an active part in the outdoor work of the Club" to subscribe to ACC publications and exchanges, such as the annual journal. A subscribing membership was a convenient means of staying up to date with the ACC for members who

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³"Constitution" CAJ (1907), pp. 178-81

⁵⁴"List of Members" CAJ (1907), pp. 182-83

⁵⁵See Maria Tippett, *Making Culture: English-Canadian institutions and the arts before the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990)

were not in close proximity to the Rockies, who lived abroad or who simply pursued a passive interest in the club. It also facilitated exchanges with other organizations.⁵⁶

Finally, the ACC associated itself with various leaders in the mountain world by granting honorary memberships. "Honourary Members" were deemed eligible based on the following criteria: "Those who have pre-eminently distinguished themselves in mountaineering, exploration or research and in the sacrifice of their own interests to the interests of the Club." Honourary members were elected by a two-thirds majority of recorded club votes.⁵⁷ Along with Elizabeth Parker, others elected to honorary ACC membership included: British alpinists Dr. J. Norman Collie, F.R.S., and Edward Whymper of London; Irish mountaineer Rev. W. Spotswood Green, M.A., F.R.G.S., of Dublin, who made the first map of the Selkirks; Surveyor General of Canada Dr. Edouard Deville, L.L.D., F.R.S.C., of Ottawa; the father of photogrammetry, Col. A. Laussedat, of the Institute of France, of Yzeure; and President of the American Alpine Club Prof. Charles E. Fay, Litt. D., of Tufts College, Massachusetts.⁵⁸

Total enrolment in the ACC climbed dramatically from 79 in the first year, to 200 early in 1907, 400 in 1908, and more than 650 in 1911. There were 599 members in 1922 and 652 in 1930. Membership growth in the ACC was strong and steady prior to the onset of the Great Depression. By 1939, however, membership had dropped to 510 due to economic recession. World War II also caused a decline in membership, which

⁵⁶"Constitution" CAJ (1907), pp. 178-81.

⁵⁷"Constitution" CAJ (1907), pp. 178-81.

⁵⁸"List of Members" CAJ (1907), pp. 182-83.

totaled 472 in 1946. With the return of peacetime, the ACC membership expanded. In 1956, club membership was higher than ever at a total of 871.⁵⁹ Thus ACC membership growth recovered from the interruptions of depression and war to increase again during the 1950s.

As Gina LaForce depicted in her history of the ACC from 1906 to 1929, the social characteristics of the Canadian club's early membership bore a close resemblance to its British predecessor. The ACC was a strongly anglo-saxon, English-speaking organization reinforced by many members of British ethnicity. The membership was largely urban, well-educated, and drawn from professionals in the middle to upper classes. Thus the ACC membership closely resembled that of the British club:

A homogenous group of clergymen, teachers, lawyers, civil servants, businessmen, military officers, and the like. What linked them together was an urban background, membership in the leisured, professional classes, and a public school or university education which frequently tied them to the "aristocracy of intellect."⁶⁰

To a large extent, the Canadian alpine club reflected the same characteristics typical of anglo-mountaineering.⁶¹

⁵⁹Elizabeth Parker, "Report of the Secretary" CAJ (1907), p. 164; "Report of Secretary" CAJ (1908), p. 320; "Report of the 1911 Camp" CAJ (1912), p. 146; ACC membership statistics based on "Red Book" membership lists published semi-annually by the club; see Table 1.

⁶⁰Gina LaForce, "The Alpine Club of Canada, 1906-1929: Modernization, Canadian Nationalism, and Anglo-Saxon Mountaineering" (M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 11 July 1978), p. 2.

⁶¹Also see Robbins, pp. 579-601.

The members encompassed the spectrum of anglo-Canadian society from the renowned Sir Sandford Fleming to the hundreds of city dwellers who traveled to the ACC summer camps each year. About half of the pre-World War I membership was urban, living in rapidly expanding cities.⁶² Occupationally the ACC was in the main composed of white collar professionals with a heavy representation of school teachers, university faculty and staff, barristers, engineers and medical professionals, and a sprinkling of artists, businessmen, civil servants, and clerics. Among the members shone the celebrated illuminaries of the alpine world—summiteers, explorers, scientists, and literati. This well-educated, articulate group shared an avid interest in natural history, alpine climbing, and the mountains.⁶³

Like Wheeler and Parker, who were 46 and 50 years old respectively when they started the club, the first generation of ACC participants were generally middle-aged. With the bulk of these ACC members in their 40s, 50s, and 60s, "many of the ACC were themselves raised in the heyday of Victoria's reign."⁶⁴ Thus many of the ACC's first members brought with them a formation grounded in the Victorian outlook on imperialism, exploration, nature, natural history, science, and mountaineering. The middle-aged character of the club persisted into the late 1920s.⁶⁵

⁶²As LaForce noted from the 1907 and 1914-16 ACC membership lists. 50 percent lived in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal. see LaForce, p. 6

⁶³WMCR, AC 90 F97.

⁶⁴LaForce, p. 6

⁶⁵LaForce, p. 29.

In terms of nationality, 85 percent of the 1907 ACC members were Canadian. British and American members together numbered 12 percent. A fair number of ACC members belonged to both the British and American alpine clubs.⁶⁶ It was common practice to fraternize with more than one club in the international alpine world. The ACC was proud to be affiliated with The Alpine Club (England) in 1920.⁶⁷

Regionally, the majority of ACC members were from western Canada. Over time, the regional distribution shifted, but by and large the club retained a critical mass of western interest throughout its first 50 years. LaForce's study emphasized the decline of the western Canadian membership from 1906 to 1917:

In 1906, 75% of ACC members lived in Western Canada and 10% in Ontario and Quebec. By 1917, the West accounted for only 54%, and the two central provinces, for 16%. Americans now numbered 17% of the club, and Britons, 11%.⁶⁸

Representation from Quebec and Atlantic Canada was noticeably absent from the ACC. However, the above-mentioned drop was only a relative decline compared to the growth of membership in other regions to 1917. Over the longer duration of the club's history from 1906 to 1950, western Canadian membership in the ACC remained a strong factor

⁶⁶LaForce, pp. 5-6, footnote 15.

⁶⁷Various alpine clubs were represented at the ACC camps, for example, The Alpine Club of England, the American Alpine Club, the Swiss Alpine Club, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Mazamas, the Mountaineers, and guests included the Hon. Harrington Putnam, Justice of the Supreme Court of New York State and President of the American Alpine Club, see "Report of the 1911 Camp" CAJ (1912), p. 144; Wheeler, CAJ (1938), pp. 94-95; for the original international honorary ACC members see "Report of the Secretary" CAJ (1907), p. 164; A.O. Wheeler represented the ACC at the 1907 Jubilee dinner of The Alpine Club of London, in 1909 a delegation of 20 members of the British club attended the ACC camp at Lake O'Hara, and in 1920 the ACC was formally affiliated to the British club, see Arthur O. Wheeler, "Origin and Founding of the Alpine Club of Canada, 1906" CAJ, pp. 94-95; E.O. Wheeler, "Golden Jubilee" CAJ (1956), p. 15.

⁶⁸LaForce, footnote 26.

Membership samples for this period show that 40 to almost 50 percent of the ACC membership was concentrated in British Columbia and Alberta.⁶⁹ The western Canadian sections were particularly predominant from 1935, with the demise of the Toronto Section, to the end of World War II. In effect, the Alpine Club was a voice of western Canadian nationalism.

From the outset, the ACC admitted women as members, thus setting the Canadian club closer to its American counterparts than its British forerunner. The Alpine Club (England) did not admit women as members, nor did many other European clubs formed in the 1860s and 1870s. Among these national European alpine clubs, the French alone admitted women, perhaps in keeping with the progressive role of French women in science. In contrast to this European practice, many American clubs did admit women, among them the Appalachian Mountain Club active in the Canadian Selkirks in the late nineteenth century.⁷⁰

Women had been climbing in the Canadian Rockies since the late nineteenth century. For women such as Mary Vaux and Mary Schäffer (members of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences), an interest in natural history led to scrambling in the Rockies. These women alpinists active in the Rockies set a certain standard of acceptance for women's climbing. Women, like men, were motivated by various reasons to climb, but for women alpinism had a distinct signification.

⁶⁹See Figure 7

⁷⁰Ronald William Clark, pp. 56, 76-77. Bill Birkett and Bill Peascod, *Women Climbing: 200 Years of Achievement* (Seattle and London: The Mountaineers, A & C Black, 1989)

Illustration 5: ACC members at 1922 Palliser Pass camp, A. O. Wheeler front center. Source: CAJ (1923), p. 267.



Wilderness afforded greater liberty from gender-based social constraints. In the mountains, farther removed from the gender limitations of respectable middle-class urban life, women could experiment with their own identities. As Mary Russell suggested in her work on women travelers, not all women adventurers were feminists. While travelers such as American mountaineer Fanny Workman literally carried the "Votes for Women" banner of women's suffrage to the summits of the Karakoram in 1912, others, such as Britain's Mary Kingsley, a turn-of-the-century African explorer, were more conservative in their outlook and rejected feminism and the "New Woman."⁷¹ Nonetheless, adventure liberated these women from many of the restrictions of conventional Victorian female roles and allowed them a greater degree of self-determination. For the women of the ACC, climbing nurtured a personal strength that was both physical and mental—a strength that put women on top of the world and opened up new possibilities for their sense of social place.

Elizabeth Parker saw alpinism as a sport for women as well as men. Unlike many mothers who might have paled at the thought of their daughters hanging from the precipices and camping in the wilderness, Parker proudly referred to her daughter Jean as "my climber" and encouraged her to seriously pursue mountaineering.⁷² Because her own age and health stood against active mountaineering, Elizabeth considered herself a climber "who scales the rock and cuts the ice-stairway in imagination only"—true

⁷¹Mary Russell, *The Blessings of a Good Thick Skirt: Women Travellers and Their World* (London: Flamingo, 1994), p. 210, 90-110, 215-219; Alison Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1994).

⁷²Elizabeth Parker, CAJ (1929), p. 58.

to her romantic literary predisposition.⁷³ While the younger Parker climbed avidly and joined three alpine clubs, the elder threw her energies into building a Canadian alpine club that welcomed both women and men.

In this respect, an Alpine Club camp circular issued by the ACC in 1907 insisted ladies wear practical sports attire for climbing. The ACC camps were the main event in the club's calendar and an annual gathering of climbers from around the world. Parker was behind a commonsense approach to dress reform that freed women for athletics:

No lady climbing, who wears skirts, will be allowed to take a place on a rope, as they are a distinct source of danger to the entire party. Knickerbockers or bloomers with puttees or gaiters and sweater will be found serviceable and safe.⁷⁴

The guidebook she authored with Arthur Wheeler echoed the same sensible advice: "What applies to one sex applies to the other in all matters of clothing for actual climbing."⁷⁵

The ACC went so far as to specifically advocate mountain climbing among women. "Mountain Climbing for Women," an illustrated article in the 1909 edition of the *Canadian Alpine Journal* written by Mary E. Crawford, argued that the question "Should women climb mountains?" was 100 years "behind the times." Crawford pointed to the history of nineteenth-century European women climbers in the Alps, Andes, and Himalayas to make the point that women had already been climbing mountains for some time. In light of the fact that women were making alpine history as well as men, she encouraged women to take up the sport of mountaineering. The specific benefits of

⁷³Elizabeth Parker, "Reviews. Two Notable Alpine Books" CAJ (1910), p. 204.

⁷⁴"Yoho Camp Circular Issued" CAJ (1907), p. 170.

⁷⁵Wheeler and Parker (1912), p. 178

mountaineering for women lay, to a large extent, in what she termed the "therapeutic value of climbing." She claimed climbing was the best method of improving health and fitness, and went so far as to suggest nature freed women from commonly assigned Freudian diagnoses:

There is no recreation which, in all its aspects of surrounding and exercise, will bring about a quicker rejuvenation of worn out nerves, tired brains and flabby muscles than mountaineering. It is for women one of the new things under the sun and every fresh mountain is a new delight . . . Diseases of the imagination cannot be discovered anywhere on a mountain side, where Nature asserts herself so grandly to the consciousness and with such insistence that the "ego" with its troubles sinks out of sight.⁷⁶

Alpine clubs that admitted women as members provided affordable equipment and put "the summits within reach of all." Thus women were encouraged to seriously contemplate "Why should I not spend my holiday this year in the mountains?" The lack of sports literature on women's climbing was not to be a deterrent, as Crawford speculated that most books neglected the subject because "the idea is a new one, or . . . only a short time in the year . . . can be given to it by the average woman, while other forms of physical exercise can be practised more continuously." She went on to explain that mountain sickness was of no concern to the average woman whose ambitions would likely take her to "the more easily obtainable ascents" under 12,000 feet; indeed, "climbing was for the stout woman as well as the thin." Ultimately, the rewards of mountaineering contributed to a woman's ordinary life as she resumed her work, performing better than ever:

And so the woman goes back to her tasks revived. For the teacher new lights have been thrown upon history, literature, geography or mathematics. The artist and writer have found a mighty inspiration. The

⁷⁶Mary E. Crawford, "Mountain Climbing for Women" CAJ (1909), p. 86

student of natural history has fresh specimens to classify. The nurse need not rack her tired brain for material to while away the heavy hours of pain for her patient—she has a fund of thrilling and amusing anecdotes to give out of her own experiences.⁷⁷

In the style of popular turn-of-the-century women's magazines, the article concluded that a woman mountaineer "knows she is the happy possessor of the beauty of health gained from her sojourn among the heights."⁷⁸

The Alpine Club was one of many organizations wherein the new and expanding roles of turn-of-the-century Canadian women became evident during an era of active social reform and rapid modernization. Like their male counterparts, the women of the ACC tended to be well educated, Protestant, middle- and upper-class, urban anglos from western Canada and the northeastern United States. They were "joiners" who believed in organized activity and belonged to multiple associations, such as the National Council of Women, St. John's Ambulance, the S.P.C.A., the Royal Geographic Society, and the Girl Guides, as well as various alpine clubs.

During the first 50 years of the club's history, women persistently made up a large proportion of the ACC membership. In 1907, women made up 31.3 percent of the 201 members—a ratio of about one woman to every two men. In 1917, women comprised over 40 percent of the total, narrowing the sex ratio to two women to every three men. This pattern persisted on average through to 1956. Statistical samples of the ACC membership lists published for 1922, 1930, 1939, 1946, and 1956 indicate a

⁷⁷Crawford, pp. 85-91.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 91.

strong persistence of this sex distribution within the club throughout the social and economic changes and two World Wars that marked the club's first 50 years of operation. From 1922, the number of women members grew and remained on average near 41 percent of the entire club membership well into the post-World-War-II era. As of 1994, female representation was only 30 percent of the total membership, or at least 1,586 of the 5,298 ACC members ⁷⁹

Historically, the majority of ACC women were single, although on average roughly a third were listed as "Mrs." in the membership samples from 1907 to 1956.⁸⁰ Although it is difficult to determine a specific figure, it is clear from club records that many of these women worked professionally. College and school teachers, office workers, nurses, occupational therapists, missionaries, doctors, social workers, and artists were among the women of the Alpine Club—along with mothers and women who worked in the home—thus reflecting the expanding occupational horizons of women in Canada.

As exemplified by the Parkers, the ACC women were club organizers as well as mountaineers. A quick glance at the roster of national ACC leaders fails to impart a full historical picture of female leadership within the club, because women most often served as leaders at the local level of the ACC regional sections. Following in the tradition of Elizabeth Parker, an overwhelming number of women served as secretaries to the local sections. Miss E. Valens, Miss M.D. Fleming, Miss M.E. Nickell, and Miss A.C.

⁷⁹See tables; ACC Membership Database 1994.

⁸⁰See Table 1.

Dalgleish, for example, served repeatedly as local secretaries through the 1930s, most often working with male chairmen.⁸¹

Following World War I, women emerged as ACC section chairs. The first female chair was Dr. Cora Best, an internationally renowned conservationist and adventurer. In 1922, Best founded the Minneapolis section of the ACC and served as its chair through 1926 with Mrs. M.J. Nero as her secretary. In 1932, the "chairman" of the Calgary section was teacher and school principal Miss Margaret C. Wylie, a graduate of the University of Toronto and who held an M.A. from Columbia University. From 1938 to 1939, West Coast painter Dorothy Gladys Bell—married to Dr. Fred Bell a past ACC eastern vice president and national president—was the first "lady" chairman of the Vancouver section. In the 1950s, Vassar graduates Lillian Gest and Polly Prescott each stood as the ACC American vice president. Miss M.D. Fleming was the editor of the *Canadian Alpine Journal* from 1942 to 1951. During the 1930s, Phyl Munday organized club photo competitions and cross-Canada exhibits as Honourary Photographic Secretary, and from 1953 to 1969 made her mark as the editor of *Canadian Alpine Journal*. Stripping back the predominantly male national level of ACC executives, it becomes clear that women were not only active in the mass membership of the club, but also contributed considerable skills to its leadership.⁸²

While women were actively involved in club affairs, married women still had to attend to the demands of the home. Combining motherhood and mountaineering posed its

⁸¹See CAJ for section executives through 1930s.

⁸²See CAJ lists of executive members, passim



Illustration 6: Phyllis Munday with daughter Edith, n.d. Source: Susan Leslie, ed., *In the Western Mountains: early mountaineering in British Columbia* (Victoria: Provincial Archives of B.C., 1980), p. 53.

own rewards and responsibilities. When she became a mother in 1921, it seemed natural to an exceptional mountaineer like Phyl Munday, to expose her baby to the outdoors.

"Our daughter Edith grew up, right from the start, in the mountains. We had her on the top of Crown [1503 m] when she was eleven weeks old . . . we carried her in a hammock strung around Don's shoulder . . . and she used to hum with the rhythm of him walking," Munday described. Later that summer, little Edith went with her parents to the B.C. Mountaineering Club camp in the Selkirks beyond the CPR's Glacier House resort. According to Phyl, "the people there wouldn't believe there was a baby at camp up the valley."⁸³ The Munday's were completely at home in the mountains. To such an intrepid mountaineering couple, the mountains could be a family environment. On their longer explorations of the Mt. Waddington area, Edith was left behind and Phyl carried her daughter's photo inside a diary. With her mother and aunt—Phyl's sister Betty—as role models, Edith Munday also became a climber.⁸⁴

Avoiding objective dangers was not always a top priority for women with children. Phyl Munday played a critical role in the exploration of the Mt. Waddington district of the B.C. coastal mountains starting in 1925 when her daughter was a small girl. She described her many journeys into the area as an all-consuming quest for knowledge. Waddington became a passion for Munday, who climbed with her husband Don. His understanding and shared commitment was a great asset to Phyl's lifelong pursuit of climbing.

⁸³Cited in Susan Leslie, *In the Western Mountains: Early Mountaineering in British Columbia* (Victoria: Provincial Archives of British Columbia, 1980), p. 52

⁸⁴Smith, *Off the Beaten Track*, pp. 162-95; Cyndi Smith, "Phyllis Munday: Grand Dame of the Coast Mountains" in *Leading Out: Women Climbers Reaching for the Top*, ed. Rachel da Silva (Seattle: Seal Press, 1992), pp. 40-52.

Having ascended about 100 peaks in her lifetime—a third of which were first ascents and many of which were first female ascents—Phyllis, in every way, climbed as an equal among her peers. She possessed a great strength that exceeded that of her husband. As Don commented on their climbing partnership, "she and I formed a climbing unit something more than the sum of our worth apart." In her later years, Phyl Munday reflected on women in mountaineering, saying "If a person enjoys it, and you are strong enough, and well enough to do it, and you can hold your own with a party . . . then there is no reason in the world why a woman can't do it."⁸⁵

In the words of Elizabeth Parker, the ACC professed to be "as democratic as the Church itself," admitting "any man of good character who fulfils the conditions of active membership."⁸⁶ Inadvertently, this statement turned out to be doubly misleading as the ACC membership selection process was not open, nor was it ideally democratic. According to the ACC constitution, new members were subject to nomination and election by the current club members. Candidates for membership first had to be proposed to the executive board by a minimum of three ACC members acting as sponsors. The board created a ballot bearing the names and mountaineering qualifications of approved candidates. Ballots were then circulated by the club secretary to all active members for the election of nominees. Six weeks were allowed for the return of these ballots to determine the outcome by the majority of votes cast.⁸⁷

⁸⁵Cited in Smith, *Off the Beaten Track*, p. 163, 195

⁸⁶Elizabeth Parker, "Report of Secretary" CAJ (1907), p. 166.

⁸⁷"Constitution" CAJ (1907), pp. 178-81.

In practice, the nomination and election of candidates for membership served to reinforce a homogenous group character of like people and could screen out applicants who might have been considered in some way socially undesirable. ACC executive records reveal several instances when race, religion, and ethnicity figured in determining the suitability of candidates for membership. While these references are few, they appear repeatedly in the written record over a prolonged period, suggesting that social screening and exclusivity concerned certain members of the ACC, in keeping with the practice of many contemporary anglo-saxon organizations in Canada. The white, anglo-Protestant character of the ACC was thus further revealed by its reaction to people from other backgrounds who sought entry to the club.

During the tenure of ACC President Moffat in the 1920s, Jewish applicants were quietly refused membership. Specific cases of antisemitic discrimination arise in the executive papers of 1928. In September, an American school teacher named Miss Mendelson was nominated by ACC members Crosby and Harmon, with Secretary Mitchell serving as a third "on request." Mendelson was then blackballed by the ballots of several "good members" of the New York ACC including Helen Buck, Miss H.M. Smith, Miss Merrill, and Dr. Mary Potter, as Mitchell wrote to Moffat.

She is a Brooklyn school teacher, in [the] same school as Miss H.M. Smith. There is nothing of serious import against her but she is a Jewess and such of her friends and relations as the New York members know are very "sheeny". They are blackballing her. I have already four adverse votes and understand more are on the way. They declare she would be most uncongenial. The Jewish subject is a sore one in New York. They are of course quite within their rights in every way and there is nothing to be done

in the matter The Constitution is quite plain and no reasons have to be given."⁸⁸

As Moffat replied, the ACC would not want Jews to intrude on its membership and pose the risk of "unpleasantness":

It looks as if she will have to be informed that her name did not pass inspection. I know the feeling is very strong against those of her nationality amongst the New Yorkers especially—well we can do without them—and if a few of them were to get into the membership it might create a good deal of unpleasantness.⁸⁹

By September 26, Mendelson's candidacy had been effectively blackballed: "So far I have received eleven votes against Miss Mendelson, which is of course more than enough, five only being necessary. The Constitution is quite plain on this matter."⁹⁰ When asked if the matter should be raised before the Executive or Management Committee, Moffat replied that it was unnecessary: "I suppose the only thing to do will be to notify Miss M. that her application has not been supported by all of our members and therefore she cannot be accepted as a member."⁹¹ Mitchell concluded: "I will write to Miss Mendelson stating that she has not been elected and return her entrance fee."⁹²

In 1928, this antisemitic tendency was reinforced on the surface by the actual and perceived bias of the New York ACC Section against Jews. In the case of another New

⁸⁸WMCR, AC 00M/004, Mitchell to Moffat, 3 September 1928. the men in favour of Mendelson's application were most likely L.S. Crosby and Byron Harmon of Banff

⁸⁹Ibid., Moffat to Mitchell, 4 September 1928

⁹⁰Ibid., Mitchell to Moffat, 26 September 1928.

⁹¹Ibid., Mitchell to Moffat, 26 September 1928, note Moffat's reply

⁹²Ibid., Mitchell to Moffat, 5 October 1928

York applicant, Mr. Rice, who was nominated by Mr. Walsh of the same city, Mitchell was quick to respond with his own suspicions that Rice was simply a gentile alias "to disguise being a Jew". "He is a Jew and would not be desired by the New York section where there are too many; one in every four of population I believe." Curbing this suspicion, Moffat revealed an unwritten expectation regarding ACC membership nominations: "I would think Walsh would hardly propose a Jew as he must know the prevailing sentiment in the New York Section"⁹³ A later letter from Mitchell disclosed that he had indeed uncovered a Jew: "Mr. Walsh will be on the look out [sic] to oppose the Jew, Rees, if he turns up but he wanted us to be on the look out also so as not to sign on request of some one [sic] else"⁹⁴ Although Roman Catholics were party to ACC membership, they too were subject to Mitchell's anglo-Protestant criticism that decried the over-emotionalty of their "race" among southern Europeans and the Irish⁹⁵

Prior to World War II, antisemitic discrimination again showed up in the executive correspondence between Secretary-Treasurer Tweedy and President Wates from 1939 to 1940. In this case, Major Tweedy, a native Englishman and veteran of the Great War, stated that Jews were unwanted: "We do not want that type of person as a rule and it will be hard to keep out our Jewish friends if we once start"⁹⁶ Despite the restrictions inherent in the nomination and election process, Secretary Tweedy expressed concern that the

⁹³Ibid . Mitchell to Moffat, 5 November 1928, note Moffat's reply

⁹⁴Ibid . Mitchell to Moffat, 19 November 1928

⁹⁵WMCR, AC 00M/006, Mitchell to Moffat, 30 April 1929

⁹⁶WMCR, AC 00M/027 Wates Executive Papers, Tweedy to Wates, 20 November 1939

ACC did not have sufficient control over ensuring its membership was exclusive: "The only check we have on prospective members is the signature of three active members, and this has on occasion worked not too well in the past."⁹⁷ Tweedy opposed wide circulation of ACC publicity pamphlets for just this reason: "We may find ourselves saddled with many of the 'Favoured Nation', which so far we have been able to avoid."⁹⁸ Thus some members of the Canadian ACC executive actively excluded Jews from the club and there was tacit recognition, at least among New York ACC members, of this matter.

By contrast, racial intolerance and nativist reservations were defeated when the question of accepting certain Japanese members in the club arose in 1929. The case of Mr. Kitada illustrates the influence of senior ACC members in gaining approval for his application. Secretary Mitchell proceeded with initial caution when Kitada applied for membership after attending the 1928 ACC summer camp as a guest.

As you know he was a very pleasant, well behaved young man but there is a strong feeling amongst many members against the Yellow race. Privately I think Mr. Wheeler is rather strong on that point but I am not sure. It would be unfortunate if Mr. Kitada's name were put up for ballot and then . . . blackballed.⁹⁹

Moffat advised that there was little danger of being "swamped with Japanese members" and suggested Mitchell find out Wheeler's views. In the meantime, Kitada's letter of application was the source of much amusement because it suggested that Mitchell had two wives. Moffat congratulated Mitchell—a dedicated bachelor—on his marriage, joking

⁹⁷WMCR, AC OOM/027, Tweedy to Wates, 4 January 1940

⁹⁸Ibid, Tweedy to Wates, 21 May 1940. Wates' position on these matters is unstated in the correspondence.

⁹⁹WMCR, AC OOM/005, Mitchell to Moffat, 14 March 1929

"Mr. Kitada has let the cat out of the bag? Ha! Ha!" Mitchell rejoined: "I also was amused at Kitada's letter regarding my wife and wondered if he thought I was a polygamist and was married to my two office helpers!"¹⁰⁰ This perceived cultural difference provoked a hearty laugh in an otherwise sober correspondence.

As it turned out, Wheeler thought it was a good idea to accept Shozo Kitada, an executive member of Nihon Aruko Kwai (the Japan Walking Club) who had led Dr. Cora Best on a climb of the Aso-Zan in Japan. Wheeler offered to nominate him and suggested Col. Foster and Moffat add their names as sponsors to ensure Kitada's application passed the vote of the general members. Ever conscious of the British example, Wheeler counseled Mitchell that: "If anyone protests we should mention a Japanese is Hon. Member of the English Alpine Club which is particular and generally considered pretty respectable."¹⁰¹ Thus Kitada's application was nominated to the general membership with the backing of three of the ACC's grand leaders in defiance of the prevailing intolerance toward Asians.¹⁰²

Evidently, Mr. Kitada met the standards of respectability expected by the Alpine Club, while Jews were labeled "uncongenial" as a mask for the club's intolerance. The ACC's anglo-saxon standards of bourgeois respectability were summed up in Mitchell's

¹⁰⁰Ibid , Moffat to Mitchell, 18 March 1929. Mitchell to Moffat, 21 March 1929

¹⁰¹WMCR, AC 00M/006, Mitchell to Moffat, 4 April 1929, WMCR, AC 00M/003, H. Yamasaki to F C Bell, 1 May 1928; Ibid., 14 March 1928

¹⁰²WMCR, AC 00M/009, Mitchell to Moffat, 18 July 1930

approval of British aristocrat Lady Rosemary Baring's involvement with the club. When she arrived at the 1930 ACC camp, he noted Lady Baring was "the right sort for us."¹⁰³

From 1906, the ACC rapidly gained strength as Canada's national alpine club. Drawing on certain elements of the British and American alpine clubs as models, the ACC institutionalized its own structure, goals, and character, which thus resulted in a collective culture of anglo-Canadian, middle-class alpinism. Long indifferent to their mountains, Canadians were on the verge of a commercial revolution of particular relevance to their national parks. At the head of the parade, the ACC carried the flag of middle-class tourism.

Highlights of ACC Activities, 1906-1926

In its first 10 years, the Alpine Club marked several milestones. The first annual camp was held July 9 to 16, 1907 at Yoho Lake near the summit of Yoho Pass in British Columbia. In total, 100 campers attended during the week-long mountaineering school. The ACC applauded the success of its first venture, as Elizabeth Parker noted: "The 'meet,' which began as an experiment, ended as an institution."¹⁰⁴ Club life came to center around these camps held each summer in the national mountain parks.

The *Canadian Alpine Journal* premiered in 1907. This annual publication was first edited by Arthur Wheeler from 1907 to 1927. The *Alpine Journal* was filled with carefully crafted articles about mountain exploration, science, literature, and climbing,

¹⁰³WMCR, AC 00M/009, Mitchell to Moffat, 18 July 1930

¹⁰⁴Parker, CAJ (1907), p. 165.

CANADIAN ALPINE JOURNAL

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CONTENTS—VOLUME I.

	PAGE
Greetings. By William Whyte, Second Vice-President, Canadian Pacific Railway	1
The Alpine Club of Canada. By Elizabeth Parker	3

MISCELLANEOUS SECTION

Memories of the Mountains. By Sir Sandford Fleming, K. C. M. G.	9
Biographical Sketch—The All Red Line. Editorial	34
The Canadian Rockies, a field for an Alpine Club. By Arthur O. Wheeler, F. R. G. S.	36
Canada's First Alpine Club Camp. By Frank Yeligh	47
How We Climbed Cascade. By the Rev. C. W. Gordon, D. D. (Ralph Connor)	58
Camping in the Canadian Rockies. By Mary M. Vaux	67

MOUNTAINERING SECTION

The Ascent of Mt. Goodsir. By Chas. E. Fay, Litt. D., President American Alpine Club	72
The Ascent of Mt. Hungabee. By Herschel C. Parker, Ph. D.	80
The Ascent of Mt. Ball. By John D. Patterson	85
The Ascent of Mt. Assiniboine. By Gertrude E. Benham	90
The Ascent of Mt. Hermit. By the Rev. S. H. Gray	95
The First Ascent of Central Peak of Mt. Bagheera. By W. S. Jackson	100
The Ascent of Mt. Macoun. By the Rev. J. C. Herdman, D. D.	104
The Climb of Crow's Nest Mountain. By P. D. McTavish.	108
The Ascents of Mts. Marpole and Amgadamo. By the Revs. A. M. Gordon, Alex. Dunn and A. O. MacRae	116
Mt. Stephen. By the Rev. G. R. B. Kinney	118
Glossary of Mountaineering Terms. Compiled by Arthur O. Wheeler	133

Illustration 7: *Canadian Alpine Journal* table of contents. Source: CAJ (1907), p. i.

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CONTENTS—Continued

PAGE

SCIENTIFIC SECTION

The Mountain Wildflowers of Western Canada. By Jullin W. Henshaw 130
Glacier Observations. By Geo. Vaux, Jr., and William S. Vaux 138
Observations of the Yoho Glacier. By Arthur O. Wheeler, F. R. G. S. 149

OFFICIAL SECTION

Alpine Club Notes 160
Report of Secretary 164
Statement of Treasurer 167
Report of Librarian 168
Report of the Yoho Camp, July, 1906 169
Report of Chief Mountaineer 171
Receipts and Expenditures, Yoho Camp 177
Constitution 178
List of Members 182

MAPS

The All-Red Line Around the World 52
The Tongue and Moraines of the Illecillewaet Glacier. To accompany "Glacier Observations" by Geo. and W. S. Vaux 142
The Wapta Icefield. To accompany "Observations of the Yoho Glacier," by Arthur O. Wheeler 156

Copies of the Canadian Alpine Journal, Volume I, can be had on application to the following officers of the Executive:

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contributed by club members who were often prominent leaders in various fields. Black-and-white photographs, hand-drawn maps, and engraved prints peppered the text with fascinating images of the Rockies. From its first issue, the *Canadian Alpine Journal* served as the clarion of alpinism in Canada. It rang out an optimistic call for mountaineering and the ACC:

It will not be many years before it will have entrenched itself deep in every province between the two oceans, when its membership will be in the thousands, and each and every Canadian mountaineer make the Club's motto his own—"sic itur, ad astra."¹⁰⁵

The 1907 issue, priced at 75 cents including postage, was 196 pages long. It was printed by the Herald Company in Calgary on cream-coloured heavy bond paper with a forest-green cover. Sir Sandford Fleming smiled beatifically from the frontispiece of Volume I. The *Canadian Alpine Journal* led off with greetings from CPR Vice-President William Whyte and an introduction to the ACC by Elizabeth Parker. Several articles told mountain reminiscences, illustrated by images of trail camps and portraits of historical figures, such as Sandford Fleming's "Memories of the Mountains," C.W. Gordon's "How We Climbed Cascade," and Mary Vaux's "Camping in the Canadian Rockies." Frank Yeigh reviewed the ACC summer camp in "Canada's First Alpine Club Camp," complete with photos attesting to good times enjoyed in beautiful surroundings. Wheeler's piece, "The Canadian Rockies, a Field for an Alpine Club," was part polemic in which he

¹⁰⁵Parker, CAJ (1907), p. 166.

legitimized the Canadian Rockies as a formidable alpine region by international standards and called for more extensive exploration of the little-known area.

The "Mountaineering Section" of the 1907 issue included accounts of 11 mountain ascents in the Canadian Rockies by authors including Dr. Charles Fay of the American Alpine Club, Dr. Herschel C. Parker, climber Gertrude E. Benham, and the Revs. J.C. Herdman and G.R.B. Kinney. A glossary of mountaineering terms by Wheeler complemented these accounts, which were accompanied by photos of the stark summits of Mts. Goodsir and Hungabee, the snow-covered Wapta icefields, craggy routes on the precipices of Crow's Nest Mountain, portraits of noted Swiss alpine guides active in the Rockies, and romantic landscapes of Mt. Assiniboine. The three articles in the "Scientific Section" dealt with botany and glaciology. Julia Henshaw wrote "The Mountain Wildflowers of Western Canada" that listed both common and Latin plant names and included botanical photos of Yellow Adder's Tongue and Great-flowered Gaillardia. Brothers George and William Vaux provided their glacier observations in British Columbia with measurements, photos, and a foldout map showing the movements of the Illecillewaet Glacier. Wheeler contributed a learned article on the Yoho Glacier.

The journal's "Official Section" detailed club business. Reports were presented by the secretary, treasurer, librarian, and chief mountaineer. The events and finances of the first annual camp were summarized, and a circular advertised the upcoming camp. The 4-page ACC constitution was printed, along with a 15-page list of members. Thus concluded the first in a series of rich volumes that recorded the ACC activities.

The annual publication of the *Canadian Alpine Journal* was scarcely interrupted over the course of the two World Wars and the Great Depression, and it continues today in magazine format. This remarkable continuity documents from a Canadian perspective the history and development of the club, of the Rockies, and of mountaineering in general.

As Elizabeth Parker foresaw in 1908, the ACC would stand the test of time:

The Alpine Club of Canada: it is a good name and a significant one to quicken patriotism and to inspire a desire for experience in the hardships and delights of climbing mountains No doubt in the next hundred or two hundred years, a great many mountaineering clubs will flourish in numerical strength and in esprit de corps: for mountaineering is going to be more and more a Canadian sport, and when Canada is as populous as the motherland, the Rockies of Canada will be as popular as the Swiss Alps. But the Alpine Club of Canada will still be the national mountaineering club, and will have gathered to itself a noble succession of Canada's good men in every high and useful vocation of life; will have added a worthy somewhat to Canadian literature, art and science.¹⁰⁶

In the same year the first *Canadian Alpine Journal* was published, there was a strong sign of the young club's acknowledgment from abroad. ACC President Arthur Wheeler was invited to attend the Jubilee dinner of the mother Alpine Club of London, England. He described the celebration staged at Oxford's Lincoln's Inn as a "remarkable gathering" attended by members of "the Church, the State, the Navy, the Army and the Sciences and all the learned professions . . . stars, orders and ribbons."¹⁰⁷ This contact resulted in a party of 20 British Alpine Club members attending the 1909 ACC summer camp at Lake O'Hara. Wheeler ensured the visit was as memorable for the guests as it was momentous for the ACC—he led them on a six-day trip around the Yoho valley, "half

¹⁰⁶Parker, CAJ (1908), p. 323

¹⁰⁷Cited by Fraser, p. 1.

THE ALPINE CLUBHOUSE AT BANFF



The Clubhouse will open the last week in June. Members and friends are invited.

The Clubhouse is situated on the Upper Hot Springs Road. Motorists who drive direct will find ample parking space provided.

The charge for members is \$4.00 a day, non-members \$4.50 a day, children twelve years and under \$3.00 a day. A reduction of ten per cent will be allowed to those staying a week or more. These charges include meals.

While we expect to be able to take care of all members and their friends who will come to the Clubhouse, it will assist the Committee if advance notification is given by letter or telegram stating date and time of arrival. Before June 10 write to the Manager, House Committee, Herald Building, Calgary, and after June 10 to the Manager, Alpine Clubhouse, Banff, Alberta.

Illustration 9: Banff Alpine Clubhouse on Sulphur Mountain. Source: CAJ (1947), p.177.

of it above timber line over the icefields." Wheeler described that the Brits said that "they had never done anything like it before and, in *sotto voce*, sincerely hoped they would never do anything like it again."¹⁰⁸

In 1909, the ACC's landmark Banff Clubhouse was built on the side of Sulphur Mountain "giving permanent visibility to national mountaineering in Canada."¹⁰⁹ Gradually, the club extended its property holdings within the parks to a series of backcountry alpine huts. Of these backcountry shelters, the Fay Hut was the first, built in 1927. In the course of its history, the ACC would construct several permanent bases of operation in the national parks through the Rockies and Selkirk Mountains.

As if showing off its growing strength, the ACC was ready to strike out on an extensive exploratory expedition in 1911 to Jasper National Park, through the Yellowhead Pass, and into the Mt. Robson region. In conjunction with members of the Smithsonian Institute of Washington, D.C., Wheeler led a party into the northern Rockies to map the territory and undertake a survey of the area's geological and biological forms.¹¹⁰ At the 1913 camp, the ACC's W.W. Foster, A.H. MacCarthy, and guide Conrad Kain finally made the "first" recognized ascent of Mt. Robson, the highest mountain in the Canadian Rockies. Exploration also extended to the Pacific. In 1912, club members fought through

¹⁰⁸Arthur O Wheeler, "Origin and Founding" CAJ (1938), pp. 94-95.

¹⁰⁹Parker, CAJ (1938), p 97

¹¹⁰A.O Wheeler, "The Alpine Club of Canada's Expedition to Jasper Park, Yellowhead Pass and Mount Robson Region, 1911" CAJ (1912) pp. 1-83.

dense vegetation on the approach to climbs in the coastal mountains during an expedition to Strathcona Park on Vancouver Island.¹¹¹

In 1920, the ACC dazzled the alpine world at the Allied Congress of Alpinism in Monaco. Organized under the auspices of the Club Alpin Français, the Congress assembled the leading forces of mountaineering and alpine scholarship. The ACC mounted an impressive photographic and map exhibit, with the assistance of Dr. E. Deville and H.F. Lambart of the Geodetic Survey of Canada in Ottawa. The exhibit overflowed from the ACC booth into the next. The ACC also presented several learned papers on topics related to Canada's mountains—geology, glaciology, climatology, and topography—written by leading specialists, many of whom were ACC members. Two delegates, Banff photographer Byron Harmon and American wildflower artist and author Julia Henshaw, represented the ACC. Harmon's motion pictures of the Canadian Rockies were a smash-hit at the Congress:

Byron Harmon then showed the first moving pictures of mountain scenes and carried the French Club off its feet. He had to show them again and again.¹¹²

Bowling the French over was no small achievement for the upstart Canadian club, whose efforts at the 1920 Congress without a doubt gave fine publicity to Canada's mountain regions and national parks and announced the ACC's arrival on the world stage of

¹¹¹Sandford, p. 284. In August 1909, Rev. George B. Kinney and outfitter Donald "Curly" Phillips climbed Mt. Robson by the northwest and west faces and laid claim to the first ascent, but they were later discredited in ACC circles in favour of the 1913 ascent by Foster, MacCarthy, and Kain, see Arthur O. Wheeler, "The Alpine Club of Canada's Expedition to Jasper Park, Yellowhead Pass and Mount Robson Region, 1911" CAJ (1912), p. 2; Lawrence J. Burpee, *Among the Canadian Alps* (New York: John Lane Company, 1914), p. 201-213

¹¹²Wheeler, CAJ (1938), p. 95.

alpinism. The Prince of Monaco honoured Wheeler for this work by conferring on him the Cross of St. Charles, thus making Wheeler an Officer of the Order of St. Charles.¹¹³

The Alpine Club's crowning achievement during these years was accomplished by the Mt. Logan Expedition in 1925. Logan, the highest mountain in Canada, was frequently referred to as "Canada's Everest."¹¹⁴ Following the Mt. Logan triumph, Arthur Wheeler retired as the ACC's managing director. He had given more than 20 years service to encouraging Canadian alpinism. Wheeler provided energetic and longstanding leadership to the ACC as its first president from 1906 to 1910, director from 1910 to 1926, and editor of the *Canadian Alpine Journal* from 1907 to 1927. By the time he retired, Wheeler and his counterparts among the ACC's first generation of members had succeeded in raising the profile of Canadian mountaineering from obscurity to international recognition. Camping and climbing in the mountains were at the heart of the ACC. Essentially, the club stuck to this central project even as it changed with the times, adapting to innovations in mountain recreation, reaching abroad on expeditions, and shifting its view on the national parks.

When an ACC management committee replaced the director's post in 1926, Wheeler was named Honourary President for life. Renowned British climber Arnold Louis Mumm, of champagne fame, expressed high praise for Wheeler:

If ever a man was entitled to lay down an office with the consciousness that he had accomplished a memorable and unique work, it was you I can't

¹¹³CAJ (1944-45), p 144.

¹¹⁴"The Mount Logan Expedition" CAJ (1925), pp 1-121.

think of anyone who has accomplished quite such a bit of constructive work in the cause of mountaineering as you have done.¹¹⁵

Like an alpine oracle, Wheeler had succeeded in "his keenest desire—to spread the gospel of the mountains."¹¹⁶ During the interwar period, the Alpine Club of Canada would continue to convey this good news, that prepared the way for the popularization of mass tourism in the Rocky Mountain parks.

The esprit of the Alpine Club of Canada by 1926 was a nationalist expression of passion for Canada's mountains. Climbing was a means of experiencing the raw glory of the Canadian "mountain heritage." The club membership was strongly rooted in western Canada, nearest the great North American mountain ranges. As a national organization, the club evinced a sense of Canadian nationhood that has come to be known in Carl Berger's words as "the sense of power." This strength propelled the Alpine Club of Canada from its Victorian origins into twentieth-century movements for nature conservation and outdoor recreation.

¹¹⁵Cited in Fraser, p. 146.

¹¹⁶CAJ (1944-45), p. 146

CHAPTER 3

"A Tented Town": The Annual ACC Camps

The first Alpine Club of Canada camp, held in the Yoho Pass in 1906, made a lasting impression on Toronto writer Frank Yeigh. Having left his home at 667 Spadina Avenue and crossed the prairies by train to Field, a small CPR station in a high mountain pass, Yeigh was unlikely to forget his journey to the British Columbia Rockies. Alpinists bearing ice-axes, alpenstocks, and umbrellas—all "laden with impedimenta"—gathered to wait in anticipation for the next morning's trek into camp. "No wonder we were excited!" he recounted, "For once in our blessed lives we all saw the sun rise and flood the awesome canyon of the Kicking Horse as the dark shadows of the night were dispelled." The rose-hued dawn on a mountain skyline was an exhilarating sight followed by the hike into camp.

At last, the summit of Yoho pass! At last, that striking picture of a tented town nestling amid the realm of trees! You remember it, do you not, fellow-camper? The white canvas homes for a brief day amid avenues of greenery, under a sky of blue, with grey old Wapta and Michael's mount standing sentinel, three thousand feet higher still. You remember, do you not?—as if we could ever forget—the incomparable scene beside the incomparable Yoho lake, holding in its translucent waters all the emerald and amethyst shades in Nature's color box.¹

Over the next 50 years, the wonder of Yeigh's experience was relived each time the Alpine Club struck its tents in the valleys of the Canadian Rockies. Camp life had far-reaching implications, here Yeigh met his future wife. Like many ACC members who formed

¹Frank Yeigh, "Canada's First Alpine Club Camp" CAJ (1907), p. 47, 51



ACC group waiting on platform at Hector, B.C., between Lake Louise and Field on the CPR line (F. V. Longstaff photo)

Illustration 10: ACC Campers at Hector Station, n.d. Source: Susan Leslie, ed., *In the Western Mountains: Early mountaineering in British Columbia* (Victoria: Provincial Archives of B.C., 1980), p. 19.

lifelong bonds of camaraderie and affection with their companions at camp, Yeigh discovered that alpinism was more than just a hobby. It was a shared spirit that infused and united the lives of members of the Alpine Club.

As the Alpine Club of Canada matured from its first camp in the Yoho Pass in 1906 to the 50th Anniversary Camp at Glacier, British Columbia, in 1956, the annual camp and its ritual activities provided the essential continuity in the club's activities. The ACC camps were the regular heartbeat of club tradition and changed little for more than 50 years. Innovations such as ski mountaineering and winter camps were added to the ACC program, but the summer mountaineering camp remained the main annual event, the central pulse in the life of the national club. Thus thousands of alpinists migrated annually to Canada's national parks and shared the "incomparable scene" that Yeigh recalled from his first look at the idyllic Alpine Club camp at the foot of the mountains.

The annual ritual of camp life illustrated the impulses at the centre of the alpine movement. First, the Alpine Club camps were attended by urban, middle-class professionals who esteemed the beauty of nature in the mountains, pursued health through outdoor recreation, supported the national parks as an expression of the Canadian "mountain heritage" and believed that Canada ranked among the world's mountaineering nations. At the annual camps, members developed their own social and material culture. With its frequent conspicuous presence in the Rockies, the Alpine Club developed a strong collective identity as a pioneer recreational user group in the national parks. As such, it voiced the importance of conservation while, ironically, acting as the thin edge of the wedge of commercial tourism in the parks. Finally, to operate the annual camps, the club

relied on active partnerships with government and business. These partnerships, initiated in the early 1900s, formed a remarkable combination of interests that shaped public policy and commercial development, as the Alpine Club of Canada made a distinct and lasting impression on the Canadian national parks well into the 1950s.

Camp Logistics and Material Culture

Hail! Hail! the Gang's all here;
Boots and Ropes and Rucksacks,
Dunnage Bags and Iceaxe;
Hail! Hail! the Gang's all here;
What the heck do we care now?²

The annual Alpine Club camps were held practically every summer since 1906.

With few exceptions, they were held in the Canadian Rockies, mostly in the national parks.

Over the course of 50 years, the camps retained the essential look of the ACC's earliest gatherings around the campfire. A camp set in the great outdoors amid the splendor of the mountains was essential to nourish the naturalistic yearnings of mostly urban club members whose professional work locked them into city life. The continuation of the club camps depended on the organizational skills and resources that this same group demonstrated year after year. Planning the camps involved a concerted effort on the part of club organizers, national parks administrators, and commercial agents to coordinate a large-scale event in a different far-off mountain valley. At first, camps were staged in mountain beauty spots within relatively close reach of the railway corridors. Later, they

²C.G. Wates ed., "Hail! Hail!," *Songs of Canadian Climbers* (Edmonton: Alpine Club of Canada, c 1922), p 1.

moved beyond what is today considered the "frontcountry" into more remote areas farther from civilization. Although planning and logistics adapted over time to meet new circumstances, the material culture of the ACC camps remained intact.

When the flags were raised over the campsite in July and August, the ACC could accommodate more than 100 people in canvas tents for at least two weeks. The camp layout was planned around a large campfire that assumed a symbolic place in the hearts of campers. Official tents, including a huge dining pavilion, offices, cook tent, and tea tent, encircled the fire. Campers dined in the open air sitting at rough-hewn tables and benches under a canvas marquee suspended high overhead on ropes and log support poles. Sleeping tents, secluded in a stand of trees or near running water, were divided into men's and women's quarters, with the addition of a few "married tents" for couples. In 1909, the campsite was first sectioned off for the needs of the camp outfitters, packers, and horses.³ The camps were equipped with all the latest bells and whistles: national and club flags, a notice board to post the climbs and events planned for each day, wake-up bells and horns, rustic furniture, first-aid cases filled with medical supplies, and alarm clocks to rouse early-bird climbing teams in the wee hours of the morning.⁴

³E.J.Hart, *Diamond Hitch: The early outfitters and guides of Banff and Jasper* (Banff: Summerthought, 1989), p. 80.

⁴WMCR, AC 00M/008, Mitchell to Moffat, 30 April 1930. Mitchell noted: "We badly need new flags for Camp. They are disgraceful rags to tell the truth." WMCR, AC 00M/016, McCoubrey to Walker, 12 January 1934. Ibid., Walker to McCoubrey, 19 December 1933. Selby Walker, a Calgary ACC member, had an accident at the 1912 camp where there were no first-aid supplies other than a few bandages. In 1914, he donated the first-aid cases valued at \$300 and filled under the direction of Dr. Fred Bell. Twenty years later, the cases were still in use, refilled as required by a club endowment of \$12/annum. WMCR, AC 00M/011, Sampson to Tweedy, 27 February 1931. Sampson noted: "An alarm clock is needed at the main camp and at each of the outlying camps to assist in getting the climbers up early." Evidently, this jolt was insufficient as campers often needed an extra nudge getting

During the camp, club life centered around the campfire that burned continuously. Frank Yeigh described the 1906 camp layout in Yoho National Park and the central role of the campfire:

The Camp, made gay with banners and flags and bunting of many colors, was divided into three sections: Residence Park, Official Square, and the horse paddock....The dining tent accommodated one hundred, where meals were served from early morn til late night. A bulletin board kept the members acquainted with the daily programmes. In the centre of the Square the big fire burned unceasingly, brightening up for the evening hours, when it was surrounded by as many fire worshippers as there were occupants of the tents, and where were heard more Demosthenian eloquence and oratory, more jokes and quips and antique chestnuts, and more accomplished entertainers than ever gathered on a mountain summit before.⁵

The ACC camps met Yeigh's description for 50 years.

Film and photographs hint at some of the small changes evident over time at the ACC camps, but more important, they underscore the strong continuity in camp appearance and material culture. Film footage and personal photo albums show the white bell-shaped and A-frame tents gathered around the official square positioned beneath stark-faced peaks. In a 1911 photo, a row of young men lie "asleep" in their tent like peas in a pod. A 1933 home movie shows a flag waving over the camp from the top of a bare tree and mountaineers heading out with canvas rucksacks to climb Mt. Eiffel and the Ten Peaks near Moraine Lake, Alberta. On a rainy day, two men climb up the center pole of the dining tent. In a 1950 feature film, several women relax

out of their tents, a duty that fell to Arthur Wheeler, the club secretary, or Swiss guides. *Ibid.*, Tweedy to Sampson, 2 March 1931. Tweedy noted the alarm was not always sufficient to rouse the camp staff: "Last camp I had to call the cooks every morning as the clock did not seem effective."

⁵Yeigh, *CAJ* (1907), p. 51.

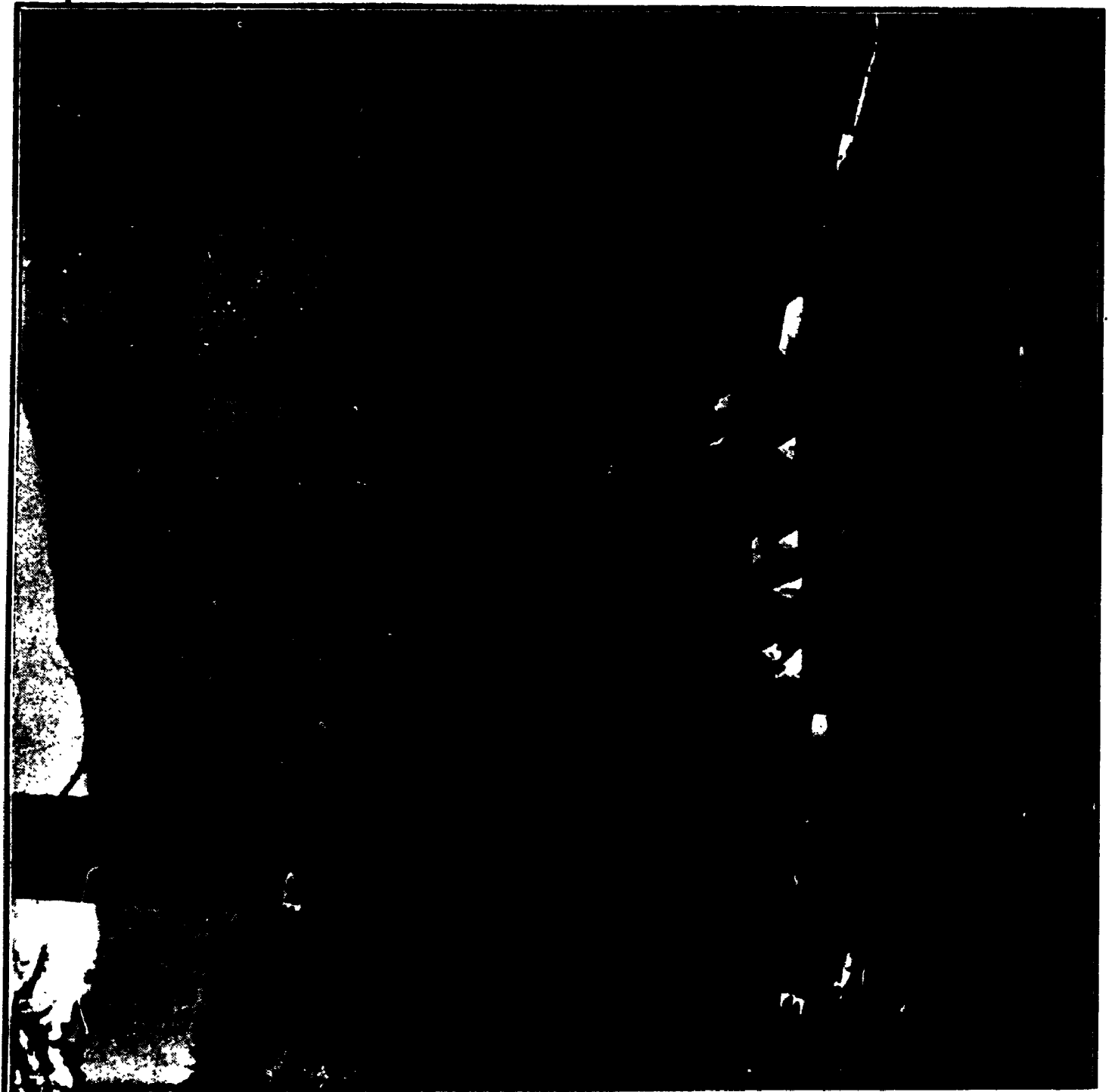


Illustration 11. 1922 Palliser Pass Camp.

Source: CAJ(1929), p. 268.

Photo, H. Pollard

THE CAMP COMMISSARIAT



SHERBROOKE LAKE CAMP

Illustration 12: Tents at the 1911 Sherbrooke Lake camp. Source: CAJ (1911), p. 144.



ROUND THE CAMP FIRE



Photos, Miss Edith Valens

LEAVING FOR A CLIMB

Illustration 13: 1932 Sir Donald camp. CAJ (1932), p. 4.

in the sun on air mattresses lined up outside a large dining tent with flaps rolled up, while other campers in the main square rest, coil ropes, and prepare for climbing. Another photo portrays campers gathered around the 1946 campfire, with the Purcell Mountains and canvas tents in the background.⁶

For their part, these sports men and women were members of a movement that transcended nationalism. Within Canada, the club mastered the intricacies of national organization and affiliation. Bolstered by a national infrastructure represented by the railways, postal system, and national parks, the ACC attracted people from across Canada to a common pursuit; they were ready to fall into action on issues of concern to the club. As a paradigm of a national organization with international scope, the ACC was a prototype of twentieth-century environmental lobby groups. The ACC was ready to defend its "mountain heritage," at home and abroad. Alpinism was international, cosmopolitan, an entrée to a larger sphere of class cohesion connected to European sensibilities.

This heritage was underscored by the fact that much of the climbing equipment and accoutrements at the ACC camps came from Europe, reflecting the European origins of climbing. Ropes known as the "English Alpine Club rope" were ordered from Beale in

⁶For examples of camp stills see WMCR, AC 55-7, Frank Freeborn Albums, 1911. Also see Alpine Club, Purcell Range, B.C., July 1946. Photos by Jack Low. National Archives of Canada, National Photography Collection. National Film Board of Canada Collection. Item nos. 24587-690. For camp scenes circa 1940s, see NAC/NFTSA, twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation Collection, *Alpine Climbers in Canada*, (Fox, n.d.), 35mm sil b&w ans print, acc. no. 1981-0152, no. 8203-0265. For climbers going up tent pole, see WMCR, Lillian Gest Collection, *ACC Camp in Paradise Valley 1933*, (Gest, 1933), 16mm sil b&w film, no 51421/NF-13. For 1950 camp scenes, see NAC/NFTSA, National Film Board of Canada Collection, *Canada Carries On*, (NFB, 1950), 16mm sd col. print, 11mins, acc. no. 1977-0207, no 7709-1326. For 1946 campfire photos see Alpine Club, Purcell Range, B.C., July 1946. Photo by Jack Low. National Archives of Canada, National Photography Collection. National Film Board of Canada Collection. Item no. 24587.

England, three-sided Tricouni boot nails from Hungary, snowglasses and rucksacks from Switzerland. The latter were sold at camp.⁷ In the 1930s, club badges and brooches bearing ACC and ice-axe symbols came from G. Durouvenoz-Duvernay of Geneva at a wholesale cost of 3.25 and 4.50 francs respectively, which were sold to members for \$2.50 and \$3.50.⁸ European goods emphasized the origins of mountaineering and added a foreign mystique to climbing in the Canadian Rockies.

Smaller imported items, such as boot nails and snow glasses, were gradually phased out as they lost popularity or were replaced by more easily obtained goods. In 1937, Secretary Tweedy reassessed the sale of goods at camp:

In the eight years I have been with the Club we have only managed to sell TEN pairs of glasses. These are imported from Switzerland Do you not think we should discontinue glasses?⁹

The supply of boot nails was also at issue:

The tricouni seem most popular, though they are hard on the ropes: far more damage results from standing on the rope with Tricouni as against the edge nail. (Of course they should not stand on the rope BUT they do.)¹⁰

President Sibbald's response was to keep up the supply of goods for sale at camp but to order some goods, such as the glasses, domestically:

⁷WMCR, AC 00M/011, Sampson to Tweedy, 4 March 1931. Ten "English Alpine Club" ropes were ordered for the 1931 camp. Also see advertisement for ropes by Arthur Beale of London, England in CAJ (1931), p. 211. WMCR, AC 00M/013, Tweedy to Sampson, 5 July 1932. Popular boot nails included the Tricouni and other "ordinary Hungarian" stock. WMCR, AC 00M/011, Sampson to Tweedy, 25 February 1931. Swiss paraphernalia included snowglasses, badges, brooches, and rucksacks.

⁸WMCR, AC 00M/008, Mitchell to Moffat, 11 February 1930.

⁹WMCR, AC 00M/023, Tweedy to Sibbald, 18 March 1937.

¹⁰WMCR, AC 00M/023, Tweedy to Sibbald, 18 March 1937.

There would not appear to be any need of sending to Switzerland for the snow-glasses. Excellent tinted glasses with metal ventilators at the sides are available in Canada including a light metal case at about 75 cents per pair.¹¹

Gradually the club considered replacing some of the less specialized imported European mountaineering items with Canadian-made items, such as club badges from Birks-Dingwall of Winnipeg. Even by 1941, however, specialized domestic mountaineering gear was lacking in more important areas, as Tweedy averred "there does not seem to be a decent Canadian rope made."¹²

During the interwar period, the end pages of the *Canadian Alpine Journal*, which at first advertised predominantly European climbing gear, increasingly offered a mix of Canadian and European goods. Products promoted in the *Journal* included camel hair sweaters and sleeping bags by Jaegar Company of Montreal and climbing boots "Made in Canada" and "Worn and recommended by members of the Alpine Club of Canada" by C.A. Vanzant of Banff. "Austrian Akademiker Ice-axes, English-made Mountain Boots," mountaineers' rucksacks "hand-made by Wenman of Golden, British Columbia and the famous Norwegian Bergansmeis," and classic Hudson's Bay blankets were among the "climbers' sundries" and equipment offered by Banff's Dave White and Sons Ltd. British manufacturers continued to promote sports boots and shoes, such as the "Super Brogue" by Norwell's of Perth, "Alpine Bootmaker" James S. Carter's climbing boots from London, and the Robert Lawrie Ltd. "British made Alpine Boot suitable for the most arduous

¹¹WMCR, AC 00M/023, Sibbald to Tweedy, 3 April 1937. Members were noted to prefer snow glasses with elastic headbands to those with wire ear-hooks, see *Ibid.*, Tweedy to Sibbald, 21 April 1937.

¹²WMCR, AC 00M/016, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 8 December 1933. WMCR, AC 00M/030, 8 March 1941.

conditions."¹³ Thus the material culture of alpinism fostered the sense of Canada's participation in an international arena at the Alpine Club camps.

In today's era of ultralight backpacking, it is easy to forget that equipment and supplies transported to the ACC camps weighed thousands of pounds. In 1930, for instance, 7,066 pounds of freight was hauled by truck to Calgary and north by CN Rail to the ACC camp at Maligne Lake in Jasper National Park.¹⁴ A large portion of the ACC freight consisted of heavy canvas tents and tarpaulins. As historian Esther Fraser has noted, supplying and managing the camps was no easy task:

It took a great deal of organizational ability and sheer hard work to set up and run a camp situated in mountain wilderness miles from the railway and accommodating hundreds of people. Thirty or forty tents, enormous amounts of food (each day's meals consumed fifteen sides of bacon, four hams, eighty loaves of bread, innumerable tins of produce and jams), and tools and utensils had to be hauled in by packtrain.¹⁵

The sheer logistics of carrying off such a large annual event located on a different remote site each year attested to the strength of organization behind the ACC camps, which were in this respect not unlike a military camp or a Boy Scout jamboree. Complicated logistics stressed the need for the ACC to cooperate with the national parks department and commercial operators in the Rocky Mountain region. The influx of over 100 people to most of the ACC camps required transportation, supplies, and services. The club established a number of ongoing, informal partnerships to fulfill these needs

¹³For products advertised in the CAJ, see end pages of the 1923 and 1931 issues

¹⁴WMCR, AC 00M/018, Tweedy to McCoubrey, 31 March 1934

¹⁵Fraser, *Wheeler*, p. 63.

With the end of one camp came planning for the next. Prior to the 1950s, camp locations were usually determined a year in advance at the annual general meeting. Correspondence between the national secretary and president increased as logistical planning geared up from January to April in preparation for the upcoming summer camp. A one-page "Camp Circular" advertising the upcoming camp program was sent to club members, the railways, and other interested groups in the spring.¹⁶ Advance registrations were sent to the secretary in due order. By May and June, the secretary was organizing the camp arrangements to be ready for opening day in July. With slight variations due to changing leadership, this timetable functioned well into the 1940s.¹⁷ Early in the 1950s, ACC President Brigadier Sir Oliver Wheeler—retired from his post as India's Surveyor General—instituted a system of advance planning to select sites two to three years ahead. He saw that the national parks department required more lead-in time if the ACC wished to have trails and roads laid out to remote areas.¹⁸ Planning, preparing, and staging each summer camp provided a regular rhythm to the national life of the Alpine Club. The camp provided an annual ritual of affirmation for alpinists, a means of reinstilling their social, philosophical, and recreational cohesion.

¹⁶WMCR, AC 00M/023, Sibbald to Tweedy, 3 April 1937. Prior to the 1937 camp, Sibbald encouraged Tweedy to promote the ACC camp to a broad constituency "by contacting outdoor clubs, hiking clubs and hunting and fishing clubs in Eastern Canada and the United States "

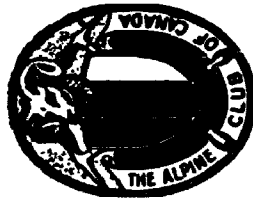
¹⁷For the rhythm of camp planning, see correspondence between ACC Secretary Mitchell and Presidents Bell and Moffat. WMCR, AC 00M/001-009

¹⁸NAC, RG 84, vol. 189, file U36-1, part 1, O Wheeler to James Smart, 19 March 1951, Ibid., Smart to Wheeler, 28 March 1951; Smart to Superintendants, 28 March 1951, Ibid., J.R.B. Coleman to Smart, 4 May 1951.

The Alpine Club of Canada

Founded 1905 Incorporated 1908

Affiliated with "The Alpine Club" and
"The Eskies" Alpine Club (England)



Forty-first Annual Camp

1946

July 14th to July 28th

Fortieth Anniversary Camp

BUGABOO CREEK

PURCELL RANGE, B. C.

not be more than 2 ft. 6 in. in length, when packed, and should be plainly marked with owner's name.

Forty pounds of baggage should be ample allowance for the period of the camp. (For rates see Charges below.)

Camp Charges

1. The charge for the entire period of Camp will be \$60.00.
2. Members staying six days or less will be charged at the rate of \$4.50 per day. Members staying more than the six days will be charged at the rate of \$3.50 for each day in excess of six.

(Note: In adopting this scale the Committee has in mind the very heavy overhead expenses connected with the erection and management of the Camps, quite apart from actual day-by-day accommodation to members. It is felt that those who desire to use the set-up of the Camp for short periods will gladly pay a slightly higher rate for that privilege. The Committee wishes to emphasize the fact that ALL members will pay the \$4.50 rate for the first six days, not merely those who stay for less than that time.)

3. Subscribing members will be charged an additional amount (\$2.50) equal to the difference between their annual fee and that of an Active member.

4. Those coming under section 5 above ("Those Who May Attend") will be given a special rate of \$38.00 for the entire Camp period; or \$3.00 per day for the first six days and \$2.50 per day thereafter.

The above charges are for Camp accommodation only, and do not include transportation charges, which are as follows:

Baggage charges will be \$1.00 each way per lot of 40 lbs.

Lots over 40 lbs. will be charged 5c per lb. extra each way.

Camp Location

The Main Camp will be pitched at the fork of Bugaboo Creek where a logger's cabin marks the end of the rough motor road 25 miles from Spillimacheen Station at an altitude of about 5000 feet. The right-hand fork leads in three or four miles (depending on how much the glacier has receded in the interval!) to the Bugaboo Glacier, fine ice field overhung by the stupendous walls of Snowpatch Spire. Equally impressive but more climbable is Bugaboo Spire beyond, and for more moderate ambitions the bold granite ridges of Brenta, Crescent and Northpost. In the heart of this group nestles a nameless sapphire lake ideal for picnics, which can be reached without snow or ice work. A fly camp near timberline above the Bugaboo Glacier will give access to these varied delights.

From the steep, high pass between Snowpatch and Bugaboo Spires the upper snow plateau gives access to the culminating point of the group, Howser Spire (10,450 ft.) and Pigeon Spire. Farther off from the same pass, peaks of the Robbie Burns Range (dominated by Mt. Conrad, 10,300 ft.) may be attained by a long, up-and-down glacier journey and a return made by Warren Glacier and a grassy pass under Northpost. Several of these spires rival any in the world in vestigulous allure. Nearer home, between the forks, a half-dozen peaks of marked character are available and circular tours will certainly be worked out. The East flank of Bugaboo Creek offers abundant opportunities for exploration. The Septant Group and Mt. Taurus (so named, according to Conrad Kain, "because it looks like a Pool!") will attract lovers of untrodden ground.

Among lower level expeditions the tour up Rockypoint Creek and back over open Alplands with unsurpassable views across Warren Glacier will compete with visits to

Illustration 14: 1946 ACC Camp Circular. Source: P. A. Reichwein, private collection.

The ACC was at the forefront of twentieth-century tourism in the mountain parks and, according to its constitution, provided for "the opening of new regions as a national playground." Alpinism, as it originated in nineteenth-century Europe, was by definition an expansionary form of scientific and imperial conquest. Canadian alpinism, too, was by its very origins an expansionary activity. Mountaineering pushed back the frontiers, always in search of new climbs and "unnamed" peaks as it radiated out from the railway lines and reached farther into the backcountry. The frontiers of mountain sport in Canada were at once geographic and social: exploring the wilderness, across mountain peaks and valleys; and drawing Canadians together in a national alpine movement that formed a part of the larger sphere of international mountaineering.

Until the end of World War I, the ACC operated primarily along the CPR line through Rocky Mountains, Yoho, and Glacier National Parks. The 1916 camp was held relatively close to Banff townsite, as Arthur Wheeler estimated "the locality is very fine and well deserves advertising."¹⁹ But by 1922, Thomas Moffat, leader of the ACC Calgary Section, warned the Superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park that without continued federal sanction and support for Wheeler's ACC-affiliated backcountry tour operation, the club would take its business elsewhere:

We as a Club, have exhausted the near-in points such as Yoho, O'Hara, Paradise, etc. and we must reach out to points further in the heart of the

¹⁹NAC, RG 84, vol 1, file R62, part 2, A Wheeler to Harkin, 9 May 1916

Rockies . . . failing this we will have to transfer our activities to the Mt. Robson district.²⁰

After World War II, repeated exposure to familiar districts in the national parks bored frequent ACC campers. As ACC President Oliver Wheeler—Arthur Wheeler's son—explained: "There is a great urge, particularly from our younger members, for new ground." He advised Ottawa to open up the "virtually unknown" Fortress Lake region for the 1953 camp by laying a road through the recesses of Jasper National Park:

Given a road to that point, the Alpine Club of Canada could popularize one of the finest scenic and climbing areas in the main Rockies and could—would—introduce many, many tourists and members of other organized clubs.²¹

More club camps were held in the northern Rockies starting in the 1920s. Mt. Robson in 1924, Tonquin Valley in 1926, Maligne Lake in 1930, Chrome Lake in 1934, Fryatt Valley in 1936, and the Columbia Icefield in 1938. Alternating from the more southernly Rockies along the CPR mainline to the northern Jasper district served by the CNR, the ACC pushed back the unknown frontiers of the Rocky Mountain parks. The club also varied its camp locations by moving west from Banff and Jasper to Yoho and Glacier National Parks and to the Mt. Robson area on the British Columbia side of the Rockies, thus exploring both sides of the Great Divide.

As a pioneer user, the club assailed the boundaries of recreation in the parks and ventured into areas subsequently opened to mass tourist traffic. The consecutive annual

²⁰NAC, RG 84, vol 102, file U36-1, part 2. Moffat to Stronach, 25 March, 1922

²¹NAC, RG 84, vol 2019, file U36-1, part 6, O. Wheeler to Smart, 20 Oct. 1951. Sir Edward Oliver Wheeler was known for his 1921 survey reconnaissance of Mt. Everest and served as ACC National President from 1950 to 1954

Alpine Club summer camps thus generated revenue in the parks and publicized the wilderness mountain playgrounds to a mass public of potential tourists and recreationists. ACC presidents would often repeat the refrain that "tourists bring the large money, but the Alpine Climber opens up the region for the tourist."²² The ACC cast itself in an imperialist role similar to that of the Hudson Bay Company, which, through exploration and trade laid the foundations for western settlement; in this case, the ACC prepared for mass tourism in the mountain parks by promoting exploration and regional economic growth through commercial tourism. As part of this process, the club transmitted its middle-class values of recreation and conservation to government, and as a preferential user group tried to impress these values on other potential park users through the club's authoritative influence.

Four ACC camps were staged in Paradise Valley, Alberta, before 1945.²³ The first ACC reports extolled the Valley's remote wilderness virtues; today it is considered a day hike from the Moraine Lake Road in the vicinity of one of the world's most toured places—Lake Louise. In this way, the ACC laid the ground for commercial tourism in the parks and public access to remote mountain areas. Alpine Club of Canada campsites were in many cases the precursors of twentieth-century mass tourism in the mountain parks, as the auto age placed these national playgrounds within easier reach of a growing

²²NAC, RG 84, vol. 2243, file Y16-3, part 1, O. Wheeler to Hutchinson, 18 April 1953.

²³ACC camps were held in Paradise Valley in 1907, 1918, 1933, and 1944. ACC, *List of Members*, 1976, p. 150

population of leisure seekers. A sizable contingent of urban Canadians sought their summer escape in the high hills at the ACC camps in Canada's national mountain parks.

The Social Culture of the Alpine Club Camps

Ten months of the year I keep delving for gold,
 With my nose to the grindstone, my nerves growing old;
 Like a leech at his dinner I stay on the job,
 And grouch at the weather with a croak like a frog.
 But the balance of time is one paradise rare,
 'Tis two weeks in the mountains with six to prepare,
 And the thrill of adventure that grapples my breast
 Makes me king of creation—by special request!

Far away in the mountains where bigness abounds
 Man's worth is not rated in dollars and pounds;
 The gold of our friendships is sifted from dross;
 Our friendships are real, without tarnish or gloss;
 There we live as our Maker intended we should,
 Each thought building truly for one common good;
 Thus while Mountains abide or true love doth endure,
 There is nothing can equal the Alpine Club's lure.²⁴

During the early 1900s, Arthur Wheeler made it clear that the ACC attracted middle-class tourists to the Rockies. These salaried urban men and women sought a temporary escape from the city during their summer vacations. At the ACC camps, they joined company with other predominantly anglo-saxon Canadians. During a time when luxury rail travel restricted access to the region to affluent travelers, thereby impeding

²⁴C.G. Wates ed., "The Call of the Alpine," *Songs of Canadian Climbers* (Edmonton: Alpine Club of Canada, c. 1922), p. 1

popular tourism, middle-class Canadians found instant appeal in the ACC's annual invitation to the Rockies:

The camps were promptly taken advantage of by professors and teachers in colleges and schools, by clergymen, by students, by artists and photographers and, generally speaking, by those whose means prevented their visiting the mountain regions under existing tourist conditions, which are only for the wealthy.²⁵

University of Toronto professor A.P. Coleman, New Westminster school teacher Emmie Brooks, Calgary clergyman Dean Paget, and Toronto artist Fred Brigden were typical of those who attended the ACC camps, along with lawyer and Regina civil servant Andrew Sibbald, British Columbia horticulturalist Jean Bostock, British Columbia biologist Ferris Neave, Calgary occupational therapist Margaret Isobel Hind, and Montreal engineer John Brett.²⁶

In some ways, the early ACC camps resembled Thomas Cook's tours that opened the Swiss Alps to middle-class British tourism in the 1860s.²⁷ Cook's success reflected his

²⁵A.O. Wheeler, "The Alpine Club of Canada," *Canadian Life and Resources* (March 1910), pp. 7-12.

²⁶These people attended ACC camps during the following periods: Coleman (c. 1913-1930s), Brooks (1929-1962), Paget (1857-1927), Brigden (1934), Sibbald (1917-c.1940), Bostock (1929, 1935), Neave (1927-1967), Hind (1946-1954), and Brett (c. 1940s-50s). "Arthur Philemon Coleman" CAJ (1938), pp.131-32; Coleman, a painter as well as a geologist, attended "whenever possible." "Emmie Brooks" CAJ (1991), p. 99; Brooks attended 18 camps in total. WMCR, AC 00M/018, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 27 June 1934, re. Brigden. "Andrew S. Sibbald" CAJ (1946), p. 275; Sibbald "scarcely ever missed the annual camp." "E. Jean Bostock" CAJ (1961), p. 133, and WMCR, AC 00M/006, Mitchell to Moffat, 27 June 1929; Jean Bostock, who was joined at the 1929 camp by her artist sister, was noted to be the daughter of a senator, and these women ran the family ranch at Monte Bank, B.C. "Ferris Neave" CAJ (1987), p. 60; Neave "took in several general mountaineering camps." "John Brett" CAJ (1983), p. 53. Brett's camp attendance dates are approximate.

²⁷Thomas Cook capitalized on the idea of taking large groups on tour from Britain to the European continent during the mid-nineteenth century. The Swiss Alps and Chamonix glaciers were highlighted destinations. Cook & Son originated the tour business of today and filled an opening market for popular tourism. In the 1860s, the tourists he guided to the Swiss Alps were members of the British middle classes: "clergymen, physicians, bankers, civil engineers, and merchants," along with "booksellers, literary men, chemists, shopkeepers, theatre book-keepers, lawyers, professors,

ability to deliver scenery, safety, and social security to his clientele; a Cook tour took the "right" people to the "right" destinations, exercised their limbs, fed them well, and built their character and ideals. The word "tourism" first appeared in the early eighteenth century, but before Cook employed steamers and railways to open tourism to the mass market, European travel was the privilege of the aristocratic "Grand Tour."

Similarly, Wheeler's ACC camps exerted a democratizing influence on the tourist market operating in the national parks of the "Canadian Alps." The club existed to bring people to the Rockies; unlike commercial interests such as outfitters and the CPR, it did not labour to raise its profit margin through tourism:

The Alpine Club does not seek to make a profit by its summer camps, and it furnishes all the facilities for mountain travel and exploration, camps, guides, ponies, etc., at the actual cost to the Club. In figures, it furnishes for from three to four dollars a day opportunities that would otherwise cost from ten to fifteen dollars a day. Not only that, but it furnishes facilities for mountain climbing, recreation and study that could not otherwise be obtained, even at the highest prices charged.²⁸

Thus, by offering affordable recreation opportunities, the Alpine Club camps spurred the growth of popular tourism in the Rockies and encouraged the middle class to participate in the Canadian national parks. As Arthur Wheeler expounded to National Parks Commissioner J.B. Harkin in 1921, "the wants of the Alpine Club and the large class they represent" were essentially middle-class interests in contrast to the backdrop of luxury tourism in the mountains:

schoolmasters, scientists, (and) architects." Piers Brendon, *Thomas Cook: 150 Years of Popular Tourism* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1991), p. 81; Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1995), pp. 494, 502; John Towner, "The grand tour: sources and a methodology for an historical study of tourism" *Tourism Management* 5, pp. 211-15.

²⁸A.O. Wheeler, "The Alpine Club of Canada" *Canadian Life and Resources* (March 1910), pp. 7-12.

Canadians of moderate means who desire to travel in the hills have as much right to enjoy the privileges and beauties of their mountain heritage as wealthy outsiders, or wealthy motorists.²⁹

Wheeler's argument held much in common with Harkin's democratic vision of national parks open to all members of the public.

James Bernard Harkin (1875-1955) was Canada's first commissioner of national parks and an inspiration behind the federal parks administration from 1911 until his retirement in 1936.³⁰ Harkin began his career in 1892 as a newspaper journalist in Montreal, followed by a rise to the city editor's desk at the *Ottawa Journal*. In 1901, Harkin was appointed to the public service of Canada. From 1904 to 1911, he served as a private secretary to Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton and his successor Frank Oliver. Informed of the Minister's intention to create a distinct department to oversee national parks in 1911, Harkin readily accepted a position as Commissioner of the newly created Dominion Parks Branch. During his 25-year term, J.B. Harkin guided the development of the Dominion parks from a handful of jurisdictions in the Rockies to a more comprehensive system of nationally protected natural areas and historic sites across Canada. He saw "the great principle of Conservation" as "the duty of a nation to guard its treasures of art, natural beauty, or natural wonders for generations to come." Central to this philosophy was Harkin's belief in "the right of the people to share in the use and

²⁹NAC, RG 84, vol 102, file U36-1, part 2, A. Wheeler to Harkin, 19 Oct 1921

³⁰Biographical information from: WMCR, M113, Accession 1947, folder 6, W.F. Lothian, "James Bernard Harkin: A Brief Biographical Sketch," Ottawa, 31 October 1972. Also see Taylor, *Negotiating the Past*, pp 25-31.

enjoyment of the noblest regions in their own land."³¹ The Alpine Club espoused a similarly democratic vision and in it Harkin would find a steady ally.

However, while they were generally "Canadians of moderate means," ACC campers were not the average group of Canadians. The club's membership was largely a learned and articulate body of urban, anglo-saxon, professional men and women with an active enthusiasm for the mountains. Camp registrants included members of various learned societies—the Royal Society, the Royal Geographical Society, the Royal Meteorological Society, the Royal Society of Medicine, and the Zoological Society.³² Nor were they all Canadian, as exemplified by the attendance of American J. Monroe Thorington, Briton A.L. Mumm, and other nationals.³³ As a collective, the Alpine Club campers represented a specialized cosmopolitan vanguard of middle-class tourism in the Canadian Rockies. Thus, the Alpine Club's democratic vision of parks filtered through an elite lens that defined what constituted proper "use and enjoyment" in the noble national parks.

³¹J.B. Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada* (Saskatoon: H.R. Larson, 1957), p. 7

³²"Report of 1910 Camp" CAJ (1911), p. 189

³³"A.L. Mumm" CAJ (1928), pp. 238-40. Mumm—born in London to the family of champagne fame—attended many ACC camps and, as the CAJ noted, "every Camp which he attended became a red-letter occasion." "J. Monroe Thorington" CAJ (1990), pp. 91-92. Thorington, active with the ACC from 1919 onward, was a distinguished alpinist born in Philadelphia. A synopsis of camp attendance was often classified in the CAJ by places of origin. Nations represented at camp included Belgium and Switzerland. See annual camp reports: CAJ (1910), p. 224; CAJ (1911), p. 195; CAJ (1916), p. 125; CAJ (1931), p. 181; CAJ (1947), p. 176. The Department of Interior *Annual Report* contained a section contributed by the ACC which also noted camp attendance by country of origin. The 1928 report referred to camp registrants from "Canada, England, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and the United States." See Department of the Interior, *Annual Report* (Ottawa, 1928-29), p. 131

The ACC campers were a cohesive group bound by a strong collective identity as a distinct "class of visitors" in the national parks, a group with its own particular needs and interests.³⁴ As with most clubs, the people who attended the ACC camps shared certain broad social characteristics. Likewise, members of the ACC shared a common experience within the structure of the club. As sociologist David Robbins discussed with respect to Victorian mountaineers in Britain, the structures which institutionalize middle-class sport form a basic dimension of middle-class culture, in this case the sport subculture of anglo-Canadian mountaineering as engendered by the ACC.³⁵ Within the ACC's organizational hierarchy and program, institutionalized camps with instruction, graduating climbs, and prescribed activities were the structural basis of the collective club identity fundamental to the culture of middle-class, anglo-Canadian mountaineering. Ideologically, a shared nationalism based on the greatness of Canada's "mountain heritage" bonded members from ocean to ocean.

Unlike some alpine clubs, the ACC did not consider inexperience an obstacle to participation. To the contrary, the ACC camps were a venue for instruction in "mountain

³⁴NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 2, Resolution, General Meeting ACC, Victoria, 11 Feb. 1922

³⁵David Robbins, "Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class: the Victorian Mountaineers," *Theory, Culture and Society*, 4 (1987), pp. 582-83. Robbins noted: "Study of the forms in which sport practices are institutionalized is particularly important in the case of middle-class sport, where participation rates are highest and where participation is generally mediated by involvement through some sort of sporting association." He cautioned that structuralism be incorporated with discourse analysis to fully appreciate the signification of meaning inherent in sport practices: "A more fruitful assimilation of structuralism would seem to involve careful examination of both the consequences of and the contradictions between the organization of sport discourses and the institutionalized structures of sporting activities, in order to understand how both can share or limit the possible ways in which subjects make sense of their participation." On the issue of structural analysis, Dean MacCannell observed: "I am suspicious of research that insists on the primacy and independence of social class, that does not attempt to go beyond class to discover still deeper structures that might render class relations in modern society more intelligible." See Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken Books, 1989), p. 11.

craft" and served to channel newcomers into the culture of alpinism, in keeping with the club mandate.³⁶ The camps were attended by many newcomers to hiking and mountaineering, as was the case of Frank Yeigh who was enthralled by his experience at the 1906 camp at Yoho Pass. The club's constitution specifically called for an annual summer camp to teach new climbers and revitalize the work of the ACC:

A summer camp in some suitable part of the mountain regions shall be organized in each year for the purpose of enabling Graduating members to qualify for Active membership, and the members generally to meet together for study and climbing in the alpine districts of Canada.³⁷

Following instruction, a "graduating climb" was required to certify new climbers as active members. Thus each camp produced a fresh graduating class of mountaineers ready to open Canada's national mountain playgrounds, and at the same time revitalize the rituals and values at the heart of the club.

The ACC taught climbing skills to people who otherwise may never have set foot on a mountain. Inspired by a nationalistic dedication to share the Canadian "mountain heritage" by promoting climbing and tourism in the Rockies,³⁸ the ACC camps were the principal means of broadening mountaineering. As geographer Margaret Johnston has indicated, this inclusive approach was in contrast to the New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC), founded in Christchurch in 1891, which acted chiefly as a national fraternity for

³⁶The ACC mandate referred to "The encouragement of the mountain craft and the opening of new regions as a national playground." See "Constitution" CAJ (1907), p. 178.

³⁷"Constitution" CAJ (1907), p. 181.

³⁸Regarding the nationalistic inspiration of the ACC, see Gina LaForce (1978). P. A. Reichwein, "Guardians of the Rocky Mountain Wilderness: Elizabeth Parker, Mary Shaffer, and the Canadian National Park Idea" (M.A. Research Essay, Carleton University, 1990).

the experienced elite of New Zealand climbers and did not see instruction as part of its role until the 1930s.³⁹ By inducting newcomers into mountaineering, the ACC renewed its membership and ensured that its larger objectives—putting Canada and Canadians on the mountaineering map—would be fulfilled. New recruits also introduced a dynamic that compelled the ACC's culture of organized Canadian mountaineering to adapt as times changed.

One change to the social culture of the ACC camps between 1906 and the 1950s was a growing tolerance of children and youths as campers. In contrast to the youth camping movement that brought children and youths into the Ontario wilderness during the same period,⁴⁰ minors rarely attended the early ACC camps and were officially discouraged from so doing. Club Secretary Stanley Mitchell made this policy clear in 1928: "I also think it unwise to admit young people under age except under very exceptional circumstances."⁴¹ Family of instrumental members of the ACC executive were included under these circumstances occasionally. Adult family members often attended together at the camps, as was the case when President H.E. Sampson's wife planned to

³⁹Margaret E. Johnston, "Diffusion and Difference: The Subcultural Framework for Mountain Climbing in New Zealand," *Tourism Recreation Research*, 18(1) (1993), pp. 41-43. As Johnston argued, both clubs inherited the tradition of the British Alpine Club, but regional differences produced two climbing subcultures NZAC maintained: "The role of the club was to publicise and promote mountain activities. It was not to teach newcomers how to climb. That task was to be accomplished by professional guides." Johnston argued that the ACC camps described to New Zealanders by Conrad Kain, an Austrian mountaineering guide associated with the ACC, served as the model for NZAC's instructional camps. The NZAC camps started in the 1930s in response to concerns about "needless deaths" and aimed to indoctrinate newcomers to mountaineering with the "proper attitude to safe climbing."

⁴⁰The Ontario youth camping experience has been highlighted in Bruce W. Hodgins and Fernadine Dodge, eds. *Using Wilderness: Essays on the Evolution of Youth Camping in Ontario* (Peterborough: The Frost Centre, 1992).

⁴¹WMCR, 00M/003, Mitchell to Bell, 12 April 1928

attend the 1932 camp along with her son, Alan, and his fiancée.⁴² For the most part, however, the ACC camps remained an adult event until social and economic pressures in the Depression brought about a change in practice and policy.

The policy against the attendance of minors did not go unchallenged in light of repeated questions submitted to Mitchell's successor, Major W.R. Tweedy, regarding the admittance of young campers. Following inquiries in 1933 about the attendance of two 16-year-olds—the son and the nephew of a member—Tweedy recommended creating a junior section at camp to accommodate teenage campers. President McCoubrey dissuaded the secretary, arguing that a youth section would pose certain disadvantages. It was simpler, he advised, to accept the teens at camp and benefit from the added revenue they would bring to the club.⁴³

Following a similar request in 1934, Tweedy emphasized to McCoubrey that it was against the club constitution to allow families with children at camp. Breaching the rules might risk tension between the members:

Some members may have planned other holidays so as to be with their families, and if they find some children were permitted to attend they will feel naturally, rather sore.⁴⁴

Tweedy was himself constrained by the policy against children. He noted on several occasions that, due to his absence in the Rockies while organizing the club's summer events, he had hardly any time to spend with his children before they returned to school in

⁴²WMCR, AC 00M/013, H.E. Sampson to W R Tweedy, 4 July 1932

⁴³WMCR, AC 00M/016, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 20 July 1933

⁴⁴WMCR, AC 00M/018, Tweedy to McCoubrey, 23 March 1934

the fall.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, he did not recommend their admittance. In the 1934 case, President McCoubrey accepted the teenagers, reasoning that they "would not be in the way," and advised that the club could ill afford to be "too choosy" under tight financial circumstances. Financial considerations created by the Depression, combined with repeated requests, eroded the policy against young campers. Ultimately, the admission of youth campers revitalized and propelled the club's duty to spread the "gospel" of the mountains to future generations of Canadians.

Also in 1934, "the usual camp boys" were eliminated from the staff at camp.⁴⁶ Although excluded from attending as campers, "camp boys" were recruited as workers to haul members' luggage from train platforms to trucks, tote dunnage bags to the tents, fetch mail, and run errands. Considerable service was offered to campers in this respect, but Banff outfitter Ralph Rink's comment that he was "glad to get rid of the boys" suggests they may have approached camp life in a playful rather than a businesslike manner. Tweedy was prepared to enlist "some local Boy-Scouts" to fill the job if necessary, mentioning that one of the members, Rex Gibson, was a scout master who "might give us a tip."⁴⁷ Some camp boys aspired to join the ranks of the mountaineers, as was the case of Robert Hind, who started as a camp boy, was elected an active member around 1933 and

⁴⁵See WMCR 00M/019, Tweedy to Sibbald, 7 August 1934. "Would it be alright for me to leave here the night of the 7th [September]. This would give me the weekend with the children before they go to boarding school. Otherwise I shall not see them til Xmas, and have not seen them since Easter " Sibbald approved, provided no business arose at the Banff Clubhouse *Ibid* , 9 August 1934.

⁴⁶WMCR, AC 00M/018, Tweedy to McCoubrey, 10 April 1934

⁴⁷WMCR, ACC 00M/015, ACC Camp Costs Summary 1930-32; AC 00M/18 Tweedy to McCoubrey, 30 August 1933. Hind is also noted on the Executive Lists ACC, *List of Members*, 1976, p. 148-49.

ultimately served as ACC Western Vice President (1954-56) and National President (1964-66).⁴⁸

By 1937, the age barrier had begun to fall, and young people were officially admitted to camp for the first time. Although Tweedy complained that "children eat twice as much as the others," general consensus noted that the younger participants "proved a valuable addition to all camp activities, including the camp fires."⁴⁹ For many ACC members, climbing was a tradition that ran in the family. Until the 1930s, children were officially prohibited from attending the annual ACC camps. No doubt some mothers and fathers felt climbing might present too great a risk to themselves and their young children, while others found the club regulations prevented them from bringing their children to camp. Acceptance of children and teenagers at the ACC camps ushered in a new era of family participation that continued to grow, and, ultimately, led to distinct family camps, first held in 1969 and carried on through 1980.⁵⁰ Family participation was, in effect, a crucial means of transmitting the club's ethos from generation to generation.

Beyond its official membership, the club attracted other groups to operate its camps. These groups served the client needs of the ACC and thus capitalized on the club's

⁴⁸WMCR, AC 00M/0116, Tweedy to McCoubrey, 30 August 1933

⁴⁹Cited in Mary Andrews, "Passport to Paradise: The Alpine Club of Canada Summer Camps" *B.C. Historical News* (Spring 1991), p. 25

⁵⁰See back issues of *The Gazette* (February 1969 to May 1980) regarding family camps. The November 1969 issue noted "The first one was a big success and plans will certainly be made to repeat it." In 1970, two camps were held with a respective attendance of nine adults and twelve children at Lake O'Hara, and 14 adults and 16 children at Little Yoho. A 1979 family camp at the Stanley Mitchell Hut was attended by 16 people while 48 attended one at Little Yoho. By autumn 1979, *The Gazette* noted "In order to encourage people of all ages and experience levels to attend camps, it was decided to hold a camp at the Clubhouse in September, 1979." Concurrent concerns arose about the viability of the size of the large General Mountaineering Camp and its environmental impacts. A move to several smaller camps of approximately 25 people began in 1980.

economic potential. Cowboy outfitters built the "tented town" occupied by the ACC each summer at the foot of the mountain. Taking upward of 100 visitors camping in the national parks required the services of commercial outfitters experienced in guiding parties through the woods, transporting people and goods, wrangling horses, supplying expeditions, and organizing a comfortable home away from home in camp. Known as the "men in buckskin," outfitters played an integral role in staging the annual ACC camps. At least six guides and outfitters attended the ACC's inaugural meeting in Winnipeg in 1906. Largely due to the donation of services by mountain guides from Laggan, Banff, Field, and Glacier, the ACC was able to stage its first camp less than four months later:

Considering the condition of our treasury at the time, it was a most ambitious and dubious undertaking. It would not have been possible but for the generosity of a number of the mountain tourist outfitters, who gave their services and the services of their men and pack ponies free of charge.⁵¹

The club augmented the local tourist traffic and increased outfitting business in the Rockies; it was not long before the camps became a lucrative venture. Ultimately, contracts for the annual ACC summer camps and spin-off private parties became an important part of the bread and butter on which regional outfitters relied for their own financial success.⁵²

⁵¹These events are recalled by A O Wheeler in "Origin and Founding of the Alpine Club" CAJ (1938), p. 92-94

⁵²E.J Hart, *Diamond Hutch: The early outfitters and guides of Banff and Jasper* (Banff. Summerthought, 1989), pp 75-81 Hart's work has elaborated on the history of the regional guides and outfitters and discussed the ACC camps from this perspective, contending the ACC remained "an important factor in the financial security of the area's outfitters "

Pika Peak

Ptarmigan Peak



Photo, G. W. Patterson CAMP DURING THE SNOW STORM



Photo, F. O. N. Fisher BAGGAGE ARRIVING AT HATCHET LAKE CAMP



Illustration 15: 1911 Ptarmigan Lake camp with outfitters at work. Source: CAJ (1916), p. 126.

Contrary to the common image of the twanging Texas cowboy, the majority of Canadian Rocky Mountain cowboys spoke with a lilt echoing family ties to Ontario, the northern United States, England, and Ireland.⁵³ In this respect, the outfitters and guides fit right in with members of the ACC. At the outset, commercial outfitting was largely an independent business run by various regional operators. Arthur Wheeler was a strong proponent of these independents and sought to defeat the monopolistic tendencies of Banff's Brewster family dynasty in the local transportation business and those of the CPR.⁵⁴ In 1909, the Otto brothers were appointed as "Official Outfitters to the Alpine Club of Canada," but this position was short-lived as the Brewster Transfer Company soon took over their business in the Field-Leanchoil district of British Columbia. This change provoked Wheeler, who was forced at the last minute to accept the services of the Brewsters for the 1910 camp in Consolation Valley:

It is much to be regretted that here the mountain transport is handled by a monopoly, which can only result in poor service. The individuality of the old-time outfitters has gone and a lot of cheap hirelings have been substituted.⁵⁵

⁵³E.J. Hart, *Diamond Hitch: The early outfitters and guides of Banff and Jasper* (Banff: Summerthought, 1989), *passim*, and p. 3. Although he did not give great consideration to this theme, Hart's portraits of the mountain men repeatedly mention an anglophone and specifically British ethnic background. Hart described the regional outfitters and guides as "a group of rather unique individuals" "Instead of being drawn exclusively from backwoods environments... I found that many were from fine English, American and Canadian backgrounds; some were well-educated and most seemed to be of higher than average intelligence."

⁵⁴Today, the Brewster name continues its association with the Rocky Mountain national parks in the form of a regional tour-bus company, Brewster Transportation and Tours Inc., owned by Greyhound Lines of Canada, a subsidiary of Dial Corporation.

⁵⁵"Report of 1910 Camp" CAJ (1911), p. 195

William A. (Bill) Brewster and one of his brothers, along with partner Philip A. Moore, had resigned from the ACC without explanation in 1906, only days after returning to Banff from the ACC founding meeting where they had vouched "to give the proposed [1906] Yoho camp all possible assistance." Wheeler noted wryly: "The alpine idea evidently did not sink very deep into their systems."⁵⁶ He argued the Brewsters' change in plans would cost the newly formed ACC:

Unfortunately, the day of loaves and fishes is past and when 100 people come out of the train at Field they will expect to be transported with their baggage to the Camp and when there to be fed, tented and provided with plenty of diversion. All this means money or its equivalent and the Brewsters' withdrawal represents in hard cash, something over \$200.00.⁵⁷

The total cost for the 1906 camp was estimated at \$1,500, with half the amount payable by those in attendance. In advance of the 1909 Lake O'Hara camp, the Brewsters intentionally attempted to beleaguer the club, as Wheeler recounted to William Whyte, Vice President of the CPR:

To carry out his contract with the Alpine Club, Otto Bros. had to employ Jimmy Simpson and his outfit of horses, some ten in number. After the camp was over J.W. Otto told me that Brewster had offered \$300.00 to lose his horses so that they would not be available for the Camp, but that Simpson had declined to break faith with Otto. Otto told me this in confidence, but a few days later I was told the same story at Glacier, and found that it was current gossip. Had the scheme been successful we should have been badly left in the lurch with a number of distinguished English alpine people on our hands, and naturally, I felt rather indignant.⁵⁸

⁵⁶WMCR, AC 00M/006, A O Wheeler to W A. Brewster, 21 April 1906 Ibid., Wheeler to Parker, 30 April 1906. Philip A. Moore (b. 1879, Bayonne, New Jersey) had joined the Brewster's business venture in 1904, see Hart, *Diamond*, pp 57-58

⁵⁷WMCR, AC 00M/006, A Wheeler to Parker, 6 May 1906

⁵⁸WMCR, AC 00M/006, A Wheeler to William Whyte, 31 March 1910

Wheeler felt particularly stung by this scheme as he was, at the time, the host of an eminent party of British guests representing the Alpine Club whom he wished to impress at the ACC camp. Thus, for various reasons, club officials became wary of the Brewster clan: "For the first years . . . the Brewsters were always covertly opposing the Club."⁵⁹ This mercenary scramble illustrates the club's first brush with the dilemma of democratic mass tourism: the purest alpine ideals unavoidably provoked commercial considerations.

As the ACC gained prominence, the Brewsters and Moore sought to associate themselves with the club on more favourable terms. Moore joined as a new member in 1927, "nothing being said about bygones as it was considered he had never really been a member"; and the Brewsters managed to work their way back in as honorary members, publicly parading themselves as founders of the Alpine Club once memory had faded with time.⁶⁰ By the 1930s, the ACC was well-established on the institutional landscape, and offered commercial outfitters associated with the club a certain advantage in the regional market.

The rough-neck cowboys had stiff competition for notoriety alongside the camp cooks. As one ACC organizer observed to the club president, there was "no more fatal mistake" than changing the grub expected at camp.⁶¹ The cook could make or break its

⁵⁹WMCR, AC 00M/006, Mitchell to Moffat, 21 June 1929. Here Mitchell included relevant items of Wheeler's correspondence dated 1906-1910 regarding the Brewsters.

⁶⁰WMCR, AC 00M/006, Mitchell to Moffat, 21 June 1929. Mitchell opposed recognizing the Brewsters based on his reading of the pertinent definitions in the ACC constitution "I can not see the slightest justification in admitting them as Charter members, or as we call them Original members . . . It of course was not intended to apply to people who resigned within less than a calendar month."

⁶¹WMCR, AC 00M/013, Stanley Mitchell to H.E. Sampson, 26 February 1932

success. The first cooks were loaned from the capable staff of the CPR. In the early years, Chinese men filled the role. Jim Pong, known as "Ping-Pong," was the head cook for many years from 1906 to 1911. His formal portrait was printed in the 1912 *Canadian Alpine Journal*.⁶² Pong bucked the usual ACC brand of discipline at camp. Although the camps were generally dry—in keeping with the middle-class temperance movement and quite unlike most authentic pack trips—Pong ensured that he had a personal supply of spirits on hand. Swiss guide Edward Feuz, Jr., claimed this stock came in handy when the chance arose to steal a drink in the shadows. According to Feuz, the cook tent had been known to burn down when Pong hit the bottle, despite the best efforts of the kitchen helpers to extinguish the flames.⁶³ Nonetheless, Pong knew how to run a camp kitchen, as suggested by Wheeler's assessment of his performance in 1910:

Jim and his assistants were the perfection of camp machinery, and the surest token was the fact that there were always plenty of good things to eat just when they were wanted.⁶⁴

In effect, the cooks and cowboys—with their unruly drinking and overtly capitalist motives—affronted the lofty ideals of the alpine movement.

Gradually, the Chinese railway cooks were succeeded by an assorted and inauspicious crew. In Secretary Mitchell's review of the 1927 camp, he noted to the club president: "There were white cooks but they were not overwhelmingly a success." When

⁶²Frank Yeigh noted the cook's name was "Jim Bong" and referred to his nickname as "Ping-Pong." See Yeigh, CAJ (1907), p. 51. For photo portrait marked "Jim Pong," see "Report of 1911 Camp" CAJ (1912), p. 146.

⁶³Andrew J. Kauffman and William L. Putnam, *The Guiding Spirit* (Revelstoke, B.C.: Footprint, 1986), pp. 112-13.

⁶⁴"Report of the 1910 Camp" CAJ (1911), p. 189.

a woman applied for the job in 1929, she was rejected by Mitchell: "Privately I do not think a woman cook would fit in." He preferred to retain a man named Gillespie who had cooked at the previous camp, even though he had relied on dry goods and failed to offer much in the way of fresh food.⁶⁵ Male cooks—known as "bull cooks"—continued to serve the ACC camps through the 1930s.⁶⁶ By the end of World War II, women worked as cooks and dishwashers at the ACC camps, as illustrated in the silent film *Alpine Climbers in Canada*. In this post-World-War-II feature film, a female cook is shown clanging a dinner bell, followed by campers rushing into the ACC dining tent. Women, apparently campers, are later shown in a tent washing stacks of white enamel cups and bowls in aluminum washtubs and buckets.⁶⁷

A tea tent operated alongside the cook tent and dining pavilion on the camp's official square. Like the campfire, the tea tent was another gathering point symbolic of ACC life. This canvas shelter enclosed a wood-burning stove for drying wet clothing, gear, and climbers, and offered steaming mugs of tea and lunches to welcome campers in from their journeys. Customarily, the tea tent was run by women ACC volunteers; at other times, male outfitters were known to take the job.

⁶⁵WMCR, AC 00M/002, Stanley Mitchell to Fred Bell, 9 August 1927. Ibid., AC 00M/006, Mitchell to T B Moffat, 20 May 1929.

⁶⁶WMCR, AC 00M/018, Tweedy to McCoubrey, 31 March 1934. Letter refers to bull cook and waiters employed by outfitter Hargreaves.

⁶⁷NAC/NFTSA, twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation Collection, *Alpine Climbers in Canada*, (Fox, n.d.), 35mm sil b&w ans print, acc. no. 1981-0152, no. 8203-0265. Film may portray July 1946, judging by similar stills of a female cook taken by Jack Long. See Alpine Club, Purcell Range, B C, July 1946. Photos by Jack Low. National Archives of Canada, National Photography Collection. National Film Board of Canada Collection. Item nos. 24687, 24609.

Clara Wheeler—Arthur Wheeler's wife and "capable collaborator" whose "guiding hand was on the cooks, the commissariat, and on all other arrangements for the comfort of large mountaineering parties" at the early ACC camps—was an elegant and gracious teatent volunteer. Although frail and ill-suited to heavy exertion, Mrs. Wheeler carried out her duties very well where a bottomless teapot and a good ear were concerned: "She presided as hostess, and at any time of day or evening she had the indispensable tea ready for tired climbers and listened with keen interest to their experiences of the day."⁶⁸ Miss Edna Caroline Kelley, a member of the Edmonton ACC Section, acted as "Tea Hostess" on several occasions, winning campers' approval for her "gracious and thoughtful solicitation." Although an enthusiastic skier and golfer, her health was not strong enough for climbing, and she focused instead on "camp life, the friends she met there, the Alpine flowers, animals, and the comradeship of the camp fires."⁶⁹ Even in the midst of alpine wilderness, the ACC camps imparted middle-class standards of gentility, decorum, and gender roles to "roughing it" in the woods.

Other women—possibly younger, more athletic members—found the duty onerous. Tweedy observed in April 1936 that Miss Valens preferred to avoid the tea tent and limit her duties at camp to office administration: "She will still object to the teas etc., she liked the office work."⁷⁰ As late as July 1936, he remarked there was a shortage of help for the

⁶⁸"Clara Wheeler" CAJ (1923), pp 252-53 Fraser, *Wheeler*, p 64

⁶⁹"Edna Caroline Kelley" CAJ (1953), pp 130-31

⁷⁰WMCR, AC 00M/022, Tweedy to Sibbald, 17 April 1936.

tea tent except for Miss Rita Rushworth, "the only lady I have managed to get so far for the tea tent."⁷¹ By the following year, Rushworth was no longer available:

Miss Rushworth is marrying Heb Dickson in the summer and [I] do not think they will be in camp; in any case I do not suppose she would care to honeymoon in the office or tea tent!⁷²

Evidently, marriage disrupted the continuity of Tweedy's female volunteer staff. By 1939, the tea tent was "run by a committee of ladies" who traded shifts with the main volunteer.

Correspondence between Tweedy and President Wates, longtime Edmonton ACC leader, suggests why the tea tent job may have been drudgery. In addition to making tea, preparing lunches for the campers was part of the job. Tweedy argued he must have an experienced volunteer in the tent:

I do *not* agree with a change each year, it takes about a year to train one up properly, and is much easier for all concerned (cooks, girl, guests and myself) to have someone who knows the ropes.⁷³

This tirade led Wates to respond sarcastically that Tweedy ought to go ahead and enlist Miss Kelley from Edmonton into "Tea Tent Slavery" as "Chamber Maid in Chief and Sandwich Slasher," despite his concerns that giving the position to one of his section members might result in charges of favouritism, despite the unappealing work.⁷⁴

Considering the nature of the work and the demands of the supervisor, it is no wonder that women volunteers held various reactions to working in the tea tent and that Tweedy had

⁷¹WMCR, AC 00M/022, Tweedy to Sibbald, 2 July 1936

⁷²WMCR, AC 00M/023, 21 May 1937

⁷³WMCR, AC 00M/025, Tweedy to Wates, 6 January 1939

⁷⁴WMCR, AC 00M/025, Wates to Tweedy, 10 January 1939

to contend with a revolving crew. Although alpinism in Canada was progressive in admitting women as members, women could not entirely escape the subservient gender roles ascribed to them by the social standards of the day.

The most glamorous figures at the ACC camps were the Swiss mountaineering guides. With sun-bronzed faces and handsome tweed attire, the Swiss guides played up their daring, romantic appeal. These men, brought from Switzerland by the CPR in 1899, were the first professional mountain guides in the Canadian Rockies.⁷⁵ 1912 Alpine Club camps benefitted from the services of Swiss guides on loan from the the CPR and CNR hotels in the Rockies.

The Swiss guides introduced ACC climbers to the fundamentals of mountaineering and led them up the mountain sides. Edward Feuz, Jr., complained that "in 1906, the first year, I had to drag a lot of idiots to the top of Mount Whyte (now [Mt.] Vice-President) in the Yoho just so they could qualify for Club membership." Great responsibility fell on the shoulders of the guides when dealing with such an inexperienced group. They had little reward for the additional strain. Accustomed to leading mountaineering excursions for guests of the CPR hotels, Feuz later expressed dismay with the middle-class nature of the annual ACC camps:

Those people at the camps were the cheapest skinflints I ever had. They took all my time when I could have been with rich Americans and

⁷⁵For literature on the Swiss guides, see Andrew J. Kauffman and William L. Putnam, *The Guiding Spirit* (Revelstoke, B.C.: Footprint, 1986); Conrad Kain, *Where the Clouds Can Go* (Boston: Charles T. Branford, 1954); Roxroy West, "Swiss Guides and the Village of Edelweiss" *The Beaver* (Summer 1979), pp. 50-53; Alison Griffiths and Gerry Wingenbach, *Mountain Climbing Guides in Canada: the Early Years* (Parks Canada, unpublished manuscript, 1977); John Marsh, "The Rocky and Selkirk mountains and the Swiss connection 1885-1914" *Annals of Tourism Research* 12, pp. 417-33; John Marsh, "The evolution of recreation in Glacier National Park, British Columbia, 1880 to present," in Geoffrey Wall and J. Marsh eds., *Recreational Land Use* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1982), pp. 62-76.



Illustration 16: Swiss guides Christian Häsler Jr., Edward Feuz Jr., and Ernest Feuz at Field, B.C., c. 1928. Source: Susan Leslie, ed., *In the Western Mountains: Early mountaineering in British Columbia* (Victoria: Provincial Archives of B.C., 1980), p. 12.

Englishmen who were regular clients and knew me well. Those tips at the camps were nothing—maybe \$10 for two weeks. I had to work night and day, and again listen to a damned [wake-up] bell, the way I did when I was fifteen years old.⁷⁶

This experience must have been common among the CPR's Swiss guides who were loaned to the club each summer, until a system of alternating the guides was introduced at their request.⁷⁷ The guides brought a European dimension to the ACC camps and—judging by Feuz—sometimes felt hemmed in by the constraints of the middle-class, anglo-mountaineering establishment.

The importance of the professional guides cannot be underestimated. When the early ACC parties prepared to set foot on the summits, it was generally with a Swiss guide "on lead." Without them, the early ACC would have lacked a knowledgeable body of mountaineering leaders and instructors experienced in climbing the Canadian Rockies at a time when there were few Canadian mountaineers. The presence of foreign guides lent a European cachet to the camps in the Rockies and legitimated the Canadian alpine movement.

During the 1930s, the railways laid off their staff of Swiss guides. Osborne Scott, CNR General Passenger Agent and ACC member, responded to the club's request for assistance at the 1934 ACC camp by announcing that there were no more Swiss guides available:

⁷⁶Edward Feuz, Jr., cited in Andrew J. Kauffman and William L. Putnam, *The Guiding Spirit* (Revelstoke, B.C.: Footprint, 1986), p. 113.

⁷⁷Kauffman and Putnam, *The Guiding Spirit*, p. 114.

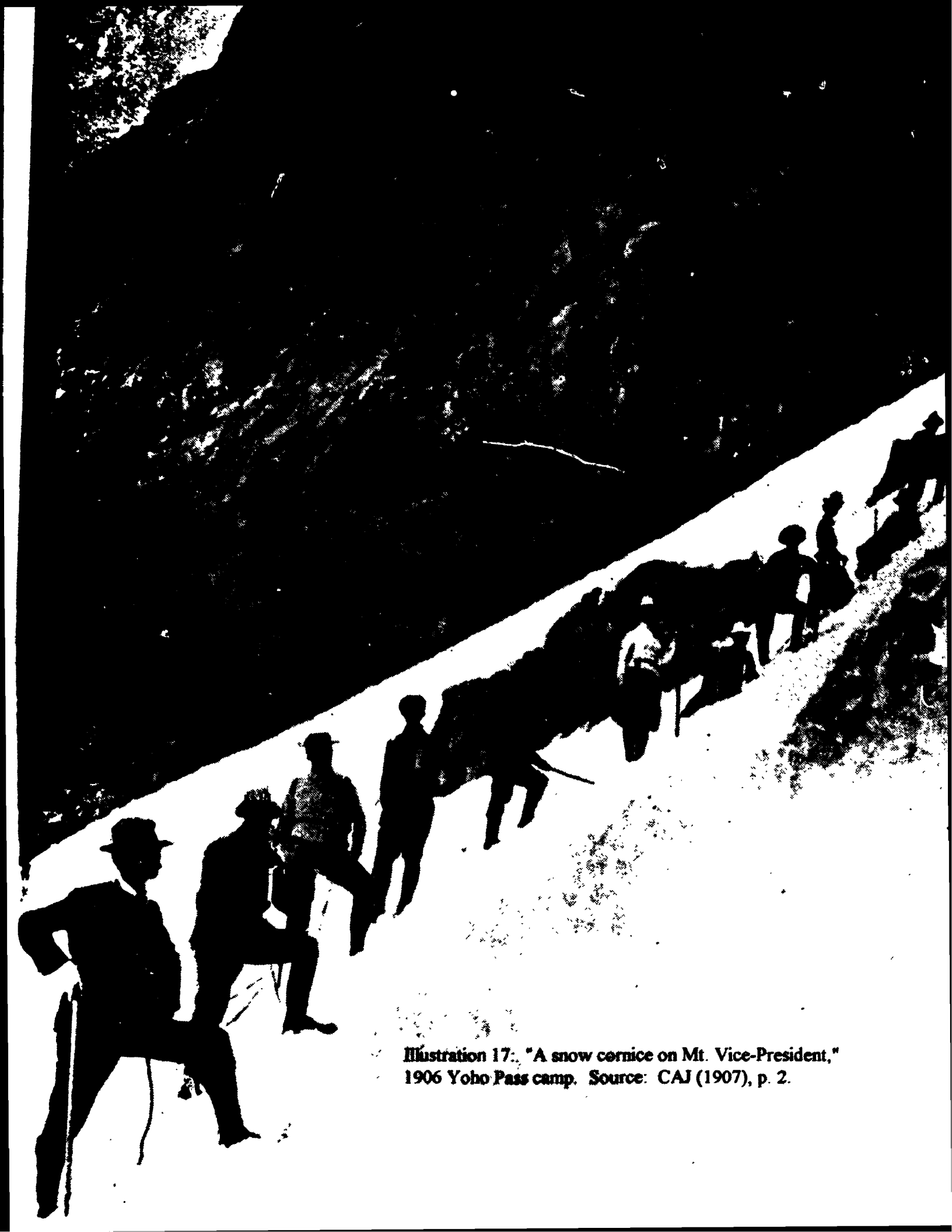


Illustration 17: "A snow cornice on Mt. Vice-President,"
1906 Yoho Pass camp. Source: CAJ (1907), p. 2.



Illustration 18: "A party of graduates and guides returned from the official climb of Mr. Vice-President," 1906, Yoho Pass camp. Source: CAJ (1907), p. 36.

I regret exceedingly we are not in a position to supply Swiss Guides. As a measure of economy we did away with their services at Jasper and there are not now any such guides in our employ.⁷⁸

Looking to its own pool of talent, the ACC recruited volunteer instructors and guides from among its membership. Amateur guides were most frequently male but a few women—such as Emmie Brooks, Polly Prescott, and Phyl Munday—led climbs. The club bestowed the Silver Rope Award for guiding, and in 1940, approved the principle of granting the award to men and women on the same basis.⁷⁹ In effect, the annual camps had allowed the club to develop an indigenous corps of experienced leaders who gradually took over the function of the Swiss guides.

From their first moments in camp, the administration of the campers and staff fell into the hands of the ACC national secretary-treasurer and a team of office assistants. The national secretary-treasurer was in effect the club manager. The post was first filled by founder Elizabeth Parker, followed by two long-standing secretaries before the end of World War II: Stanley Hamilton Mitchell from 1908 to 1928, and Wharton Richard

⁷⁸WMCR, AC 00M/018, Osborne Scott to A A McCoubrey, 13 March 1934

⁷⁹WMCR, AC 00M/017, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 30 January 1934 Mrs MacArthur and Mrs. Phyl Munday led badge climbs WMCR, AC 00M/029, Gibson et al. to Executive Board, n d 1940. Ibid, Wates to Tweedy, 14 November 1940 Miss Polly Prescott of Cleveland, Ohio, was rope leader on camp climbs from Mts Athabaska, Hanbury, Vaux, Little Messines, Forbes, and Lyall, and the leader of "manless" ascents on Mts Edith Caveil, Louis, Ptarmigan, President, including new routes on Edith Cavell and "Waterfowl"—an unnamed peak west of Poboktan Creek. In 1940, she was awarded the ACC insignia of the Silver Rope. Regarding the phenomena of a woman leading climbs, see Miriam O'Brien Underhill, "Manless Climbing," in *Leading Out*, ed Rachel da Silva (Seattle: Seal Press, 1992), pp 3-12

Tweedy from 1929 to 1943.⁸⁰ The long duration of service given by these men was a hallmark of continuity within the club.

Glasgow-born Stanley Mitchell (1863-1940) lived in Switzerland as a child, where his "love of high mountains was born in both mind and heart"⁸¹ Mitchell served as the ACC secretary through 21 formative years of the club's history. As a young man, he had immigrated to Canada where he joined his brother, H.B. Mitchell, in the lumber trade. When the ACC was founded in Winnipeg, he became one of the original members and worked as Elizabeth Parker's secretarial assistant when the club was getting off the ground. His brother also joined the ACC and served as a club vice president circa World War I and chaired the Memorial Fund Committee following the war.⁸² Although held back from sports since childhood by weak health, Stanley Mitchell loved the mountains and adopted the ACC "alpine idea" wholeheartedly. From 1907 to 1926, he worked as assistant editor of the *Canadian Alpine Journal* under Arthur Wheeler. Throughout later life, the Alpine Club became Stanley Mitchell's constant vocation.

Indeed, Mitchell's life was woven through the historical fabric of the club's first decades. Secretary Mitchell outlasted the terms of seven national ACC presidents: A.O. Wheeler, A.P. Coleman, J.D. Patterson, W.W. Foster, J.W. Hickson, F.C. Bell, and T.B. Moffat. Club business was largely communicated through correspondence during this

⁸⁰For list of secretary-treasurers and club managers, see ACC, *List of Members*, 1976, p. 149

⁸¹Unless otherwise noted, biographical information derived from "Stanley Hamilton Mitchell" CAJ (1939), pp. 101-06

⁸²WMCR, AC 00M/007, Mitchell to Moffat, 16 September 1929

period. Mitchell's letters, pecked out on a reluctant typewriter, form a unique window on ACC matters over more than 20 years.

The ACC office and club business moved with the secretary. At times, they were located in Mitchell's stark bachelor rooms in a Vancouver boarding-house, where he was once forced to store part of the voluminous club library on shelves in the bathroom due to lack of space.⁸³ By 1927, a bookcase—measuring eight feet high by nine feet long—was stored in Mitchell's residence to hold "over 700 journals" along with club files and records. Mitchell observed: "Everything is now in the office instead of being scattered in hall, kitchen and bathroom as it was before."⁸⁴ Other furnishings in the two-room bed-sitter were sparse but, nonetheless, Mitchell offered the use of his rooms for meetings of the Vancouver Section:

It seems to me that with a little management practically all the office could be at the disposal of the Section members of an evening. Screens could hide my two tables. The ugly office chairs could be moved into my room and feminine brains could conjure up some curtain arrangement to hide the files on the walls. The oilcloth is not ornamental but a rug might be procured to hide it of an evening. The Section impedimenta could be kept at the end of the office I do not use during the day.⁸⁵

⁸³WMCR, AC 00M/001, Mitchell to Bell, 16 September 1926 "I am wondering whether it would not be possible to put up a series of shelves in the bathroom on which could be stored the stock of back Journals we keep on hand here for sale and also the Journal cuts I wonder if bath steam would damage them I should not think there would be enough to make any difference I do not plan a Turkish bath arrangement" Ibid , 3 November 1926 "Put up shelves in the bathroom for the stock of Journals "

⁸⁴WMCR, AC 00M/001, Mitchell to Bell, 26 October 1927

⁸⁵WMCR, AC 00M/001, Mitchell to Bell, 12 January 1927

During his tenure, Mitchell was based in Calgary, Banff, Vancouver, and Sidney, British Columbia. Most summers were spent in the Rockies where he was well known at the ACC's Banff Clubhouse, built in 1909 on Sulphur Mountain:

He had the gift of creating lasting friendships and was well adapted to meeting and looking after the entertainment of visitors to the Alpine Club House at Banff, where he spent his summers, and of members and visitors attending the Club's annual camps.⁸⁶

Tending to members' needs was one area where Mitchell excelled. Arthur Wheeler recalled "his warm-hearted solicitude for the comfort of our guests that would lend them the half of his own camp-bedding sooner than have them sleep cold." Year after year, although the long walk to the Banff post office and back up Sulphur Mountain to the Clubhouse taxed his weak heart, Mitchell persisted in "his own austere sense of a secretary's duty." Austere seems an apt description of a man who was generous yet economical. Mitchell went to great lengths fulfilling his duty to ensure the contentment of others, even while his own life remained characteristically simple to the point of ascetic. Nonetheless, he retained a middle-class sense of refinement. For instance, he noted with pleasure that Winnipeg's Royal Alexandra Hotel had laid out "the best Spode china and solid silver as used by royalty and vice-royalty" on the occasion of the ACC's 10th Anniversary Dinner in 1926.⁸⁷

Mitchell's physical limitations did not hinder a well-read knowledge of mountain literature and maps, and in this respect he outpaced many active climbers. Club members

⁸⁶"Stanley Hamilton Mitchell" CAJ (1939), pp 101-06

⁸⁷"Stanley Hamilton Mitchell" CAJ (1939), pp 101-06

thought of him as "a reading gentleman" who walked the Rockies, Himalayas, and other mountain chains through literature. Essentially, Secretary Mitchell was a Victorian living in twentieth-century Canada: he pursued vigorous travels and exploration through alpine books and maps, and conceived of his duty to the club much as his duty to King and Country. These were the sensibilities he brought to the ACC, which resonated with club members.

Mitchell retired to a nursing lodge in Victoria, British Columbia. He had grown hard of hearing and suffered from a weak heart that forced him to avoid higher altitudes.⁸⁸ Despite a long illness and confinement, he continued to serve the club in an honorary capacity:

From his bed of sickness, Stanley Mitchell filled the office of Honorary Secretary with a keen interest and enthusiasm which forever belies the theory that an honorary office is merely a sinecure. His finger was constantly on the pulse of the Club, and, in view of his necessarily restricted outlook, his accurate knowledge of Club affairs was nothing short of amazing.⁸⁹

Mitchell's ability to follow club affairs was always based on his large number of correspondents among various sections of the ACC. His strong sense of fraternity held fast during old age when "he maintained a correspondence with very many of his old mountain friends, which seemed to be his chief remaining interest in life." Mitchell's "chatty and humorous letters" transported him from confinement back to the Rockies and

⁸⁸Regarding deafness, see WMCR, AC 00M/002, Mitchell to Bell, 6 June 1927. As early as 1929, Mitchell was beginning to feel cardiac stress from the altitude in the Rockies. He noted with mettle: "Find the jump from sea level to this rather sudden. Only began to feel it at Field but shall be acclimatized by tomorrow." See WMCR, AC 00M/006, Mitchell to Moffat, 5 July 1929.

⁸⁹"Stanley Hamilton Mitchell" CAJ (1939), pp. 101-06.

"kept alive the memories of happy days spent at camps in the mountains he loved so well." After Mitchell's death in 1940, Elizabeth Parker noted he had been "a true Anglican...deeply but not clamorously religious"—a perspective that likely coloured his perception of nature in the form of mountain beauty. His funeral was held in Victoria and his ashes were buried in the Banff Cemetery as he desired.⁹⁰ Club President Cyril Wates remarked: "Here was a mountaineer and a man, in the finest sense of the words...he cherished ideals for the Club which cannot fail to inspire us for all future time."

Mitchell was succeeded as club secretary in 1929 by a man affectionately known as "Tweedy" or "The Major." Wharton Richard Tweedy (1889-1965) was the second longest-serving ACC secretary and "a devoted servant of the Club" for over 15 years.⁹¹ Born and educated in England, Tweedy traveled to British Columbia as a young man and settled in the Okanagan Valley. There, he entered business running pack trains for survey parties, until the outbreak of the Great War. With wartime, he joined the Canadian forces and was transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps where he rose to the rank of Major and used his skills as a horsemaster commanding a transport unit in France and Salonika. Returning to British Columbia, Tweedy married and had two children. Circa 1931, they ran an orchard at West Summerland in the British Columbia Okanagan.⁹²

⁹⁰WMCR, AC 00M/0028, Tweedy to Wates, 13 March 1940; *Ibid.*, 21 March 1940.

⁹¹Unless otherwise noted, biographical information derived from "Wharton Richard Tweedy" CAJ (1965), pp. 208-09.

⁹²WMCR, AC 00M/011, Tweedy to Sibbald, 26 May 1931.

Although he was hired by the club in 1929 to work part time as secretary for an annual salary of \$1,460, Tweedy soon found the job had "developed into a more than full time one." Attempting to negotiate a raise for 1932, he cited an increased work load related to the membership size and requirements of the *Canadian Alpine Journal* as justification. A new contract signed November 1, 1932, tendered \$150 a month plus lodging at the Banff Clubhouse through the summer and travel expenses—little more than \$1,800 per year.⁹³

Tweedy was reputed to be "a consummate horseman and leader of men" possessed of "an uncanny knowledge of the mountain country " He combined these qualities in his management as ACC secretary. Dissenters, however, suggested Tweedy was a rigid, hard-nosed ex-military man whose manner may have hurt the club more than helped it. As his obituary stated, there was more than one side to his personality:

On first acquaintance the Major appeared somewhat unapproachable as he did not wear his heart on his sleeve. His gruff demeanour and military bearing may have caused some apprehension to the uninitiated. But behind this stiff facade dwelt a kindly gentleman and generous soul who would go to any length to help others in time of need and trouble. Many a time weary and benighted climbers have been cheered on their way back to camp by the timely appearance of the Major, who could always produce a "wee drop," a saddle pony and an encouraging word.⁹⁴

Evidently, Tweedy was not above bending the rules to provide for the immediate needs of his charges who, after all, were not much different from the men he had led in the war.

⁹³WMCR, AC 00M/012, Tweedy to Sibbald, 12 January 1932. AC 00M/0018. Contract between Tweedy and ACC, 1 November 1932.

⁹⁴CAJ (1965), pp. 208-10.

The secretary was central to the operation of the Alpine Club; an operation that by its very nature attracted a stern, anglo-military man like Tweedy.

Major Tweedy benefitted from Stanley Mitchell's voice of experience as past secretary, and the two became good friends during the course of Tweedy's service as secretary. When Tweedy was forced to undertake absences from the job, his colleague and old camp comrade Mitchell took charge of operating the ACC national office. Tweedy illustrated the duality of his firm yet caring nature when Mitchell was nearing death in 1940:

I fear he will not last long and I was really horrified to see how he had sunk I feel he will just slip off quietly very shortly, and he wished me to take charge of things for him.⁹⁵

During Tweedy's appointment as secretary-treasurer from 1929 to 1943, he was associated with six ACC presidents: T.B. Moffat, H.E. Sampson, A.A. McCoubrey, A.S. Sibbald, C.G. Wates, and E.C. Brooks. Unlike Stanley Mitchell's friendly banter, Tweedy's correspondence was brisk and to the point—much like the economical management style he practised through a period marked by the Depression and war.

In 1933, Tweedy proposed to run the outfitting of the ACC camps himself. Eventually, he took over their operations with the collaboration of Banff's Swedish guide-outfitter Ralph Rink.⁹⁶ As Camp Manager, Tweedy responded efficiently to crises, including the emergency evacuation of an injured mountaineer off the Columbia Icefields

⁹⁵WMCR, AC 00M/027, Tweedy to Wates, 7 March 1940

⁹⁶WMCR, AC 00M/016, Tweedy to McCoubrey, 20 July 1933. Ibid., 25 July 1933. Rink was the official ACC outfitter during the 1920s under Wheeler's Banff to Mount Assiniboine Walking and Riding Tours, see Hart, *Diamond*, pp. 140-42

by horse in 1938, and the relocation the 1940 Glacier Lake Camp to avoid a devastating forest fire and ensure the camp still opened on time. This excitement may have compensated the major somewhat for missing active military duty during World War II.⁹⁷

The Major also compiled the first index to the *Canadian Alpine Journal*. President McCoubrey applauded the progress shown on this project, remarking that it had never before been attempted.⁹⁸ This initiative extended past Tweedy's retirement from the ACC circa 1944 until 1963, when his work on the index ceased due to poor health. By then, the index covered the volumes from 1907 to 1958. Major Tweedy died in 1965, having arrived at "the end of the trail."

Mitchell and Tweedy brought their middle-class organizational talents to bear on the ACC camps as well as regular club operations. They did not run camp affairs alone but built an administrative structure that brought the annual camps to life. The fresh mountain air may have invigorated the club's idealism, but the club bureaucracy breathed life into the organization and ultimately brought the people to the mountains.

Each year, a tent office was set up for conducting ACC business at camp, and the secretary-treasurer enlisted a staff of clerical assistants to handle registrations, fee payments, paperwork, and mail. Single professional women—such as Miss Henley, the 1931 camp stenographer—were engaged as clerks in exchange for their expenses to attend camp and the occasional bonus. Henley combined climbing with her clerical duties:

⁹⁷WMCR, AC 00M/027, Wates to Tweedy, 25 September 1939

⁹⁸WMCR, AC 00M/015, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 17 April 1933

Miss Henley says she is willing to work without bonus and to take the annual meeting minutes, provided she can get off to attend camp and also...make some climbs should the spirit move her. This will be satisfactory to me and should afford some saving on previous years.⁹⁹

In 1931 and 1932, camp clerk Miss Valens was responsible for taking and typing the minutes of the club's annual general meeting. Tweedy noted that Valens deserved a bonus, in addition to her return fare from Banff to camp and expenses while in camp and at the Clubhouse.¹⁰⁰ Miss Erma Arneson, assistant to the University of Saskatchewan's Registrar, was another frequent figure on Tweedy's staff in the 1930s and received a free stay at camp in exchange for clerical work.¹⁰¹ Through its middle-class professional membership, the ACC was able to draw on a bank of experienced organizational skills and talent.

Mitchell generally required two clerks and a camp boy to run the office.

Tweedy initially tried to reduce the size of the office staff, rationalizing:

I do not intend to have a stenographer at Banff this year (there were two last summer with nothing to do) as I think if mail is properly addressed it can be easily sent up to camp.¹⁰²

After he had a few camps under his belt, the office staff returned to more or less the original system with "two girls"—including a stenographer to take the AGM minutes.¹⁰³

⁹⁹WMCRC, AC 00M/011, Tweedy to Sampson, 18 April 1931.

¹⁰⁰WMCRC, AC 00M/013, Tweedy to Sampson, 20 June 1932.

¹⁰¹Tweedy explained ladies would volunteer in camp in exchange for free fees for each day worked. He did not differentiate between volunteer tasks in this discussion. See WMCRC, AC 00M/020, Tweedy to Sibbald, 12 May 1935. Regarding Miss Arneson, see WMCRC, AC 00M/021, Sibbald to Tweedy, 11 June 1935; WMCRC, AC 00M/022, Tweedy to Sibbald, 17 April 1936; WMCRC, AC 00M/023, *Ibid.*, 21 May 1937.

¹⁰²WMCRC, AC 00M/010, Tweedy to Sampson, 5 February 1931.

¹⁰³WMCRC, AC 00M/013, Tweedy to Sampson, 2 January 1931.

Thus, camp administration was built around the strong personality and leadership of the secretary-treasurer and the skills of a floating staff of professional office workers drawn from the ACC membership.

Over the course of 50 years, the ACC camps retained much of their original social character. "Old camp friends" developed their own collective identity as a distinct "class of visitors" to the national mountain parks, and participated in creating the ACC social culture. On the rope, in the tea tent, around the campfire, the Alpine Club rediscovered, instilled, and perpetuated its social values with each generation of campers: the divine beauty of the mountains; nature's role in physical and moral health as a corrective to mechanized urban life; the significance of the national parks as spiritual and recreational escapes from daily life in a modern technological age; the moral uplift of well-used leisure and organized physical sport with one's class peers; the nationalist dimension of Canadian participation on the world stage of mountaineering; and the Alpine Club's elite leadership role in defining the key priorities of Canada's national parks in both public policy and popular opinion. The camps framed the structures of common experience that united men and women of the Alpine Club as a distinct, middle-class subculture organized around the ideals of alpinism.

"Old Camp Friends": ACC Camp Program Activities

A successful Alpine Club camp offered a full program of activities to keep the "Alpiners" active and amused. Activities ranged from full-fledged, tooth-and-claw

climbing to gentle botanizing among the mountain wildflowers. ACC programming formed a structure of common experience shared among club members that united them in the culture of Canadian mountaineering. What ritual activities set the rhythm of life in the Alpine Club camps?

Once ensconced in the "tent town," campers turned their attention to the events ahead of them for the next one or two weeks. In keeping with the ACC motto "sic itur ad astra," they lifted their eyes to the mountains. Daily guided climbs and hikes were posted on the camp bulletin board under "Orders of the Day." New members learned knots and "mountain craft" to prepare them for climbing on rock and ice. New ACC members had to submit to a graduating climb to fulfill the requirements of active membership and, practically speaking, to learn the ropes. Swiss CPR guides, followed in later years by amateur leaders, filed out of camp trailing groups of up to 20 alpinists ready to tackle the routes to the surrounding peaks.

Arthur Wheeler's diaries give a strong indication of the rhythm of climbing trips heading in and out of summer camp. Rousing climbing parties at unmerciful hours of the morning was one of Wheeler's tasks, and on these occasions his experience as a survey boss accustomed to early rising came into play. Notes from 1913 and 1917 suggest a common pattern: "Up early and got off Graduating party"; "Up at 4.30, called party for Pope's Peak. Got them off."¹⁰⁴ The entry describing the 1923 Larch Valley camp in Banff National Park illustrates the busy comings and goings of a day in camp, although Wheeler considered it a "lazy morning" with many campers at rest.

¹⁰⁴A. O. Wheeler diaries, 15 July 1913. Ibid., 20 July 1917

Glorious day. Windy but hot and bright in the morning. Up at 4.45 a.m. but on going to the fly found the Neptuak party had gone. Turned in and had another snooze. Up again at 6a.m. and had breakfast. At 7a.m. sent off Pinnacle Party and Temple Party. Wenkchemna and Opabin Party on tryout. Lazy morning in camp. Some seventy in camp. Clouding over. Party came in at 3.30p.m. arriving therein Osborne Scott. Camp fire gathering. Calgary party came in over Sentinal Pass. With them J.B. Hutchings. Several cloud showers. Nothing of account.¹⁰⁵

Early starts were essential for long climbs, whether because of the distance of the approach or because ice and snow conditions change in the heat of the sun and grow increasingly prone to avalanche. Thus the rhythm of camp activity was set by the departure and arrival of climbing parties, the number of people in camp, environmental conditions, and the time of day.

At the 1934 Chrome Lake camp, various climbs were made including first ascents on Anchorite (2880 m), Angle (2910 m), and Needle Peaks (2970 m), and the Pinnacles at the head of Eremite Pass in Jasper National Park.¹⁰⁶ R.J. Cuthbertson, manager of the Royal Bank in Shaunavon, Saskatchewan, was one of five experienced mountaineers roped together on the Anchorite climbing team. Cuthbertson published a characteristic narrative of climbing at the ACC camps:

The climbing party in each case was limited to one rope of five experienced mountaineers, the writer being a member of the Anchorite party. This party—Capt. E.R. Gibson, Winterburn, Alta. (leader), R.T. Zillmer, Milwaukee, U.S.A., Miss P. Prescott, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A., Henry J. France, London, England, and the writer—left Camp at 8 a.m. The route taken was up the Eremite Creek, through a beautiful evergreen bluff and

¹⁰⁵A.O. Wheeler Diaries, 28 July 1923. Osborne Scott was an ACC member and Winnipeg CNR man. J.B. Hutchings was an official of the national parks department. See Chapter 4 for their involvement in the 1923 annual general meeting.

¹⁰⁶Altitude stated in Robert Kruszyna and William L. Putnam, *The Rocky Mountains of Canada North* (New York and Banff: American Alpine Club and Alpine Club of Canada, 1985), pp. 232, 239, 240.

over a meadow alpland. Then over a very rough morain to Eremite Glacier on the extreme right, leading up to the very steep snow slopes from which we followed a rock ridge to the summit of the mountain.

The steep snow slopes and the rock ridge proved quite interesting and we reached the summit about 12.30, where we erected a cairn. A record of the climb, consisting of the names of the members of the party, the route followed, etc., was left. Owing to the extremely cold wind and sleet storm we remained on the summit only a few minutes and dropped down to a lower level where we had a hurried lunch.

No difficulty was encountered in the descent of the mountain, which was varied to a considerable extent by glissading down some of the steep snow slopes. We arrived back in Camp at 4 o'clock, in time for afternoon tea, with a feeling of satisfaction at having added another peak to the long list of mountaineering exploits, and in also having had the privilege and real thrill of making a first ascent—a thrill which is now left to comparatively few mountaineers.¹⁰⁷

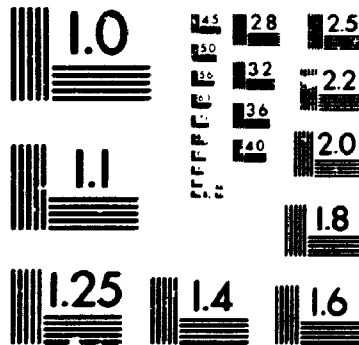
Groups went to the top of an unclimbed mountain and back, all in a day's fun, and were back in time for afternoon tea. No doubt Cuthbertson's Alpine Club outing sketched a clean-cut picture of outdoor sport that his employer, the Royal Bank, sought to promote among its professionals—"paragons of amateur sport"—that formed an important part of its Canadian corporate image.¹⁰⁸ Mountaineering accounts, such as this one from the widely-circulated *Royal Bank Magazine* and many of the articles in the *Canadian Alpine*

¹⁰⁷R. J. Cuthbertson, "Alpine Club Activities: A Description of Chrome Lake Camp in the Eremite Valley," *The Royal Bank Magazine* (May 1935, no. 158), p. 4.

¹⁰⁸Duncan McDowall, *Quick to the Frontier: Canada's Royal Bank* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993), pp. 106-110. McDowall indicated the Royal Bank keenly encouraged its bankers to engage in wholesome middle-class sporting life. "Manly, outdoor pursuits"—such as boating, curling, golf, and hockey—were the key sports in question. It should be added that mountaineering pushed the limits of the Royal Bank's responsible corporate image in some respects because of its inherent risk-taking nature. However, courage, determination, and team work in the face of calculated risk-taking were qualities common to both finance and mountaineering, qualities desirable in a strong image for a corporate bank.

3

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PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS

Journal, were published to lay claim to ascents and publicize the exploits of the Alpine Club

Historian Gina LaForce has argued that, although technical advances in climbing made leaps and bounds after World War I, the ACC continued to practice the sport in much the same style that was introduced to the Rockies late in the nineteenth century¹⁰⁹ Classic mountaineering was traditionally led by professional guides who concentrated on ascents that could be reached by relatively easy access routes with simple equipment, chiefly hobnailed boots and a hemp rope. Later developments saw the introduction of mechanical aids, such as pitons and carabiners, that drove climbing up vertical, more hazardous technical routes that were out of reach to classical alpine mountaineers.¹¹⁰

For the ACC, alpinism encompassed mountaineering, trekking, and hiking, along with other activities commonly practiced in the mountains. The annual camps were a popular main event for the amusement of the club as a whole, and many participants began without climbing experience. Fly camps—smaller camps put up beyond base camp—were sometimes offered as part of a trail excursion at the annual camp to venture out into the surrounding mountain districts. Walking treks, picnics, "kodaking," painting, drawing, exploring, swimming, fishing, photo exhibits, playing cards, and watching other climbers

¹⁰⁹Here, LaForce was influenced by Chris Jones' view in *Climbing in North America*. See LaForce, pp. 25-27.

¹¹⁰A carabiner (also "karabiner" or "biner") is defined as "a snap link with a spring-loaded gate usually made of light alloy and used for a wide variety of attachment purposes." A piton (also "pin," "peg," "nail") is "a steel blade in various forms, shapes and sizes, which is hammered into a crack either for security or as an aid to progress", John Cleare, *Collins Guide to Mountains and Mountaineering* (London: Collins, 1979), p. 204. For historical overview of artificial climbing devices, see Tom Hiebler, "The Evolution of Karabiners in Alpine History," *Alpine Journal* (1969), pp. 320-23. Steven Schneider, *High Technology* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1980).

progress up rock walls and across snowfields were all part of an Alpine Club camp.¹¹¹

Consequently, ACC programming spanned various levels of interest, skill, and exertion.

A busy schedule of activities in the fresh mountain air ensured a healthy appetite, and hungry campers consumed vast quantities of food. In 1934, outfitter Jack Hargreaves offered the following menu "to be sure of giving satisfaction to the Alpiners":

Breakfast

orange, grapefruit
oatmeal, wheatlets, whole wheat
grape nuts, cornflakes, etc.
ham or bacon and eggs
jam, marmalade, toast, hotcakes, syrup and honey
tea, coffee

Trail Lunch

meat sandwiches, sardines
sweet sandwiches, cookies
fruits

Dinner

soups, meat or fish, vegetables
cheese and crackers
pie, pudding, fruit and cake
cocoa, tea, coffee
fresh lettuce and celery

Evening "Lunch"

canned fish, smoked fish, meat
vegetables (fresh and canned)
pudding, pie, fruit
bread or biscuits
coffee, tea¹¹²

¹¹¹For an excellent summary of camp activities from climbing to "pottering around camp," see Mary Andrews, "Passport to Paradise: The Alpine Club of Canada Summer Camps" *B.C. Historical News* (Spring 1991), pp. 21-23.

¹¹²WMCR, AC 00M/018, Jack Hargreaves to McCoubrey, 5 March 1934.

Despite its generous cowboy portions, this hearty fare required modification to meet the special dietary needs of mountaineers weakened by their first efforts at hard climbing after winter intervals of soft city living. In the wake of the 1934 camp, President Sibbald noted that the outfitter for the 1935 camp should supply a sufficient quantity of fruit juice for those unable to eat solid foods.

It is a very common experience particularly during the first week of camp before people are hardened up physically that upon completing an ascent some of the members of the party find themselves unable to eat dry food and nothing satisfies their craving or meets their condition so well as some fruit juice.¹¹³

Regarding camp food, Banff outfitter Ralph Rink was popular with the ACC. In 1940, he received the following review. "Rink sets a good table whereas I have heard that [Claude] Brewster left a lot to be desired last summer" ¹¹⁴ A camp's success depended on the quality of camp grub as much as on the weather, and thus a good review of the camp depended on an agreeable review of the food

The campfire was symbolically "the altar and hearthstone of the Club" ¹¹⁵ After the day's events, the campfire was stoked to a blaze as ACC members gathered to listen to lectures, make music, tell stories, and have fun. Speakers touched on the exploration, geology, history, botany, and philosophy of the mountains. Mountaineers regaled listeners with their adventures on challenging peaks, and outfitters entertained with chilling bear

¹¹³WMCR, AC 00M/019, Sibbald to Tweedy, 21 August 1934

¹¹⁴WMCR, AC 00M/027, Tweedy to Wates, 15 January 1940

¹¹⁵An unnamed female camper cited by Parker, CAJ (1910), p. 207

Illustration 19: 1906 Yoho Pass camp dining fly. Elizabeth Parker and A. O. Wheeler in foreground. Chinese cooks in background. Source: CAJ (1907), p. 50.





THE CAMP FIRE CIRCLE

L. Tail

Illustration 20: ACC campfire, 1911 Sherbrooke Lake camp. Source: CAJ (1912), p. 144.

stories and tall tales.¹¹⁶ Timeless campfire amusements—sing-alongs, hot chocolate, and theme nights—entertained campers in a mood for rest and relaxation.

Incidents both serious and amusing highlighted the many ACC evening campfire programs. Sir Edward Whymper, the famous lion of English climbing who conquered the Matterhorn in 1865, spent three days with the 1909 ACC camp and delivered a campfire address in which he "read passages of letters from British alpinists, talked about the beauties of the Rockies and the inspiration to be found in mountaineering." At Arthur Wheeler's request, Whymper then auctioned off articles of climbing gear to raise funds for the ACC.¹¹⁷ Toronto artist Fred H. Brigden attended camp to paint the mountain landscapes and offered a lecture on Canadian art in 1934. Rancher and naval commander Albert H. MacCarthy described his 1913 ascent of Mt. Robson (3954 m) with W.W. Foster and Conrad Kain, and the 1925 conquest of Canada's highest mountain—Mt. Logan (5959 m). British climber Sir Noel Odell capped off one campfire with stories about his experiences with Mallory on Everest.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶Eduard Feuz commented that he doubted the verity of many tales even when they were told by ACC dignitaries about their early days in the wilderness. See Kauffman and Putnam, p. 113.

¹¹⁷Raymond Huel, "Edward Whymper in the Rockies, Part II" *Alberta History* (Winter 1982), pp. 36-37. For further information about Edward Whymper's activities in the Canadian Rockies, see Elizabeth Parker, "Edward Whymper" CAJ (1912), pp. 126-35; Raymond Huel, "Edward Whymper in the Rockies, Part I" *Alberta History* (Autumn 1981), pp. 6-17; Raymond Huel, "The CPR and the Promotion of Tourism in Western Canada: Edward Whymper in the Crowsnest Pass" *Prairie Forum* (Spring 1986), pp. 21-32. Edward Whymper, *Scrambles Amongst the Alps* (London: John Murray Ltd., 1954, 1st ed. 1871). Edward Whymper's ice axe now hangs over the fireplace at the ACC clubhouse in Canmore, Alberta.

¹¹⁸For references to campfire highlights, see Andrews, p. 23. "Fred Brigden" CAJ (1957), pp. 66-67. Brigden was "not a mountain climber, but had a great love for mountains and sketched mountain and other Canadian scenery from Newfoundland to British Columbia.... His pictures are hung in the National Gallery at Ottawa, the Art Gallery of Toronto and elsewhere." "Albert H. MacCarthy" CAJ (1957), pp. 64-65. MacCarthy was a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy who had ranched near Wilmer, B.C. in the Windermere Valley, and devoted his later years to his love for dogs through the S.P.C.A. in the state of Maryland. The Mt. Logan summit expedition is described in great detail in A.H. MacCarthy, "The Climb" CAJ (1925), pp. 59-80.

A snapshot of the 1910 camp in Consolation Valley, Banff National Park, captures the activity and ambiance around an Alpine Club campfire. Arthur Wheeler imbued his description with a transcendent nature, illustrating how the campfire brought people together as a club under the open skies:

The camp fire was as usual the evening centre of attraction. There is something peculiarly fascinating in watching the flames lick up towards the black, star-strewn sky, surrounded by the tall spruce trees overtopped by mighty precipices of rock crowned with stained snow. The sing-songs varied in excellence. L. S. Amery's camp fire song, inspired by last year's experiences at Lake O'Hara was rendered several times. Miss Chevrier's recitations were greatly appreciated. The audience was most enthralled, however, when Dr. Longstaff could be induced to related some of his Indian experiences. It is perhaps making much of little, but it is such intercourse as this that makes fellow subjects from different parts of the Empire understand each other and tends to bring about a most beneficial society.¹¹⁹

The Dr. Longstaff in question was Thomas Longstaff, a physiologist who had explored the frozen Arctic and the Himalayan mountains in India. Wheeler's imperialist overtones suggested the ACC campfire was an international forum for alpine clubs worldwide—particularly for the anglo-imperial mountaineering brethren—joined around the fire. Here, the nationalist mission of the ACC was revealed. As a national

¹¹⁹A O Wheeler, "Report of 1910 Camp" CAJ (1911), p. 190

mountaineering club inspired by British example, the ACC placed Canada in the ranks of the world's great mountaineering nations, thus generating a nationalist "sense of power" for Canadians.¹²⁰

Aside from serious activities around the campfire, a playful atmosphere could unleash the campers from the demands of everyday adult conduct. A mock Indian pow-wow, for example, threw the crowd into childlike revelry:

One night blankets and quilts were purloined from the tents, the ladies dressed their hair in braids and an Indian pow-wow was held, the big dish-pan forming an effective tom-tom. This all sounds very childish, but to enjoy camp life thoroughly one must revert to the child-like spirit. The fact remains that to the healthy mind it is singularly attractive, and to the wearied brainworker, singularly restful.¹²¹

In the fresh mountain air, the middle-class, urban worker was rejuvenated with a spirit of youthfulness; thus this form of recreation was seen to be a healthy outlet, despite the condescending overtones of the "pow-wow." Camping in the mountains allowed the normally buttoned-down professional a chance to unwind in uncombed disarray and unfettered play, while sharing the company of like-minded people. Childlike games allowed the "wearied brainworker" to relax the standards of adult professionalism and gender roles demanded by city life. Momentarily embracing nature while letting loose youthful abandon in their parody of Indian life, the campfire inspired workers to return to city life renewed.

¹²⁰For background on Canadian imperialism and nationalism see Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976).

¹²¹A.O. Wheeler, "Report of 1910 Camp" CAJ (1911), p. 190.

On Sunday mornings, the campfire turned into an outdoor center of religious worship. Often, Protestant clerics among the ACC members led the club in Christian devotional services. On Sunday, August 4, 1912, Arthur Wheeler noted in his diary "Rest day in Camp. Breakfast at 8a m Divine Service at 10a m Dean Robinson presiding."¹²² The very alpine setting evoked the celebration of the divine creation of nature as Frank Yeigh reflected of his 1910 experience in British Columbia's Yoho Valley:

One stood entranced among the scenic grandeur, the wonderful colouring, the titanic peaks guarding the vale, and the distant views of other alpine giants. The beholder rejoiced in such a revelation of Nature, he rejoiced in the freedom of the hills, in the rare opportunity of living among the Kings of the Cordilleran range. We had sped across God's plains to reach the Rockies, now we were living amid God's hills. In the silent watches of the night, when we camped near the Laughing falls, God's stars seemed to hover nearer than ever before, and on every hand were God's rivers and cascades and forests and glacial streams and icefields capping the summits.¹²³

To believers among the ACC, the magnificence of nature suggested the hand of the divine creator at work. Even among nonreligious club members, this draw toward the divine element of nature was felt, as the towering mountains seemed to place human life in a much larger spiritual context. Hymns and scripture ripe with alpine allusions rang out to the valley walls:

"I to the hills will lift mine eyes." Often rang out the words of the grand old psalm, as hillward and mountainward the eyes of all were instinctively lifted in solemn worship and in admiring praise. A fit temple in which to worship the Creator of this and all worlds was the Yoho.¹²⁴

¹²²A O Wheeler Diaries, 4 August 1912

¹²³Frank Yeigh, "Canada's First," p 54-55

¹²⁴Yeigh, "Canada's First," p 55

Surrounded with alpine flowers and evergreens in an old cabin, a 1955 camp service held at Mount Robson began with singing "Go Tell It on the Mountain."¹²⁵

Early in the 1900s, members such as Elizabeth Parker and Rev. Doctor C.W. Gordon would have carried the social gospel into the fabric of the ACC. This active philosophy of building a better world through social change teamed well with the organizational impulse behind the ACC, which included social gospellers among its members. Even if the dominant note in the campfire services was Protestant, there was a common theme that appealed beyond specific creeds—whether Christian or transcendental. These gatherings in mountain splendour brought religious expression to an ecumenical level difficult to achieve in the churches of pre-World War II Canada.

Sunday meetings were not the only official gatherings around the campfire—the annual general meeting (AGM) also claimed its moment in the ring. Arthur Wheeler's "rest day" in camp on August 4, 1912, was largely given over to the AGM following Sunday prayers:

Spent balance of morning at my report. Annual Meeting at 2p.m. Evening mock trial Day fine. Party of 16 went out to bivouac for night for climb of Mt. Ball tomorrow. E. Feuz, Oliver, Bell, Forde, Foster, etc.¹²⁶

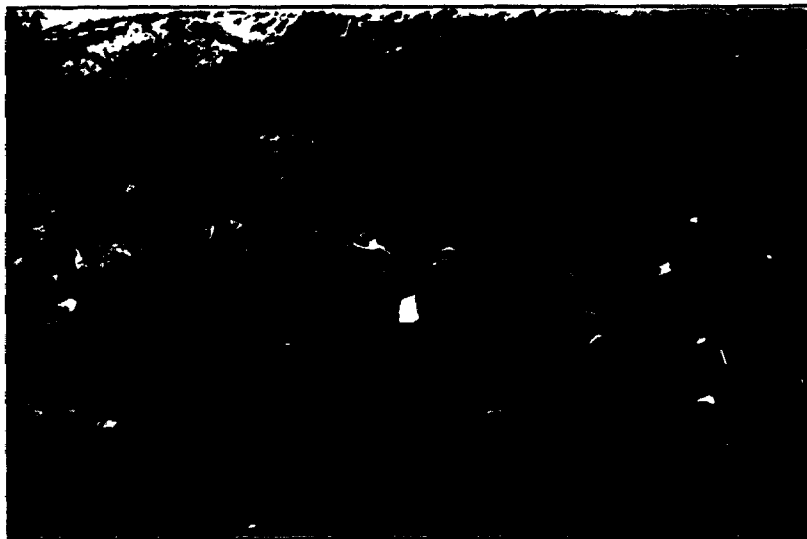
The camps were an appropriate occasion to conduct the official business of the club, because there were few other opportunities for a national assembly of members. Club business, such as "the construction of the Banff Clubhouse, acquisitions of books for the

¹²⁵Andrews, p. 23.

¹²⁶A.O. Wheeler Diaries, 4 August 1912



H. Chapman
VICE-PRESIDENT PATTERSON PRESIDES AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.



H. Chapman
CHEERS FOR VICE-PRESIDENT PATTERSON

Illustration 21: ACC Annual Meeting, 1911 Sherbrooke Lake camp. Source: CAJ (1912), p. 146.

Library, and money, money, money,"¹²⁷ along with issues related to conservation and the national parks, were subjects of discussion at the AGM. Executive meetings were also held to coordinate detailed issues and plan for the following year's camp

Holding the general meeting in the final days of the camp was important to avoid an exodus of campers and a consequent drop in attendance revenues: "Everyone goes away immediately after the Annual Meeting which means we lose their pay. Hence we went to have it as near the end of Camp as possible."¹²⁸ His successor, Secretary Tweedy, complained that camp programming must be continued following the general meeting lest there was nothing organized to keep campers active: "Many people asked why the Camp practically shut down the evening of Wednesday of the Annual Meeting when God Save the King was sung at the Campfire."¹²⁹ One year, a chicken supper followed the annual general meeting to restore good feelings among members after a particularly divisive debate.¹³⁰ This practice suggests the AGM could be a heated forum for discussion and personalities. Apparently, the chicken dinner became another club tradition along with the general meeting.

From mountaineering to chicken suppers, activities at the annual summer camp forged a structure of common experience that united club members and carried them home until they could meet again around a mountain campfire. Shared camp rituals animated

¹²⁷ Andrews, p 23

¹²⁸ WMCR, AC 00M/005, Mitchell to Moffat, 18 January 1929

¹²⁹ WMCR, AC 00M/012, Tweedy to Sibbald, 16 August 1931

¹³⁰ Mary Andrews, "Passport to Paradise: The Alpine Club of Canada Summer Camps" *B.C. Historical News* (Spring 1991), p 23

the national life of the Alpine Club, entrenched common traditions among its members and enlivened the principles of alpinism. Outdoor recreation in Canada's mountain playgrounds persisted as the dominant feature of the social culture of the Alpine Club. Paramount to the club's long record of successful annual camps were the enduring partnerships it developed with the public and private sector. These partnerships girded the very existence of the annual ACC camps and, thus, the social culture of alpinism in Canada.

The Foundations of Partnership

Staging an Alpine Club camp for more than 100 people in a new remote location every summer required remarkable cooperation between public and private partners. If cowboys and guides made the camps possible logistically, railways, distant politicians and bureaucrats made them possible strategically. In its earliest months, the ACC forged these strategic partnerships and later attempted to continue them to the club's advantage. Public partners backing the camps included the federal government, through the national parks administration, and the provincial governments of Alberta and British Columbia. Railways were the largest private operators with an interest in the ACC. The Canadian Pacific Railway ran through Banff, Yoho, Glacier, and Revelstoke national parks. The Canadian Northern route through Jasper and Mt. Robson country was completed in 1915, it was consolidated under the Canadian National Railways flag in 1919 with the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in 1923. The national railways held a large investment in mountain tourism. Smaller operators, such as guide-outfitters, hoteliers, and suppliers, also saw the

potential of assisting the ACC. Railroads and outfitters perceived that the Alpine Club promoted tourism in the Rockies and could stimulate the regional economy with its annual camps, spin-off tours, and overall publicity for the mountain parks. The ACC would bring people to the Rockies, who would in turn take the Rockies to the world

The club depended most on the federal government because it controlled the national parks in the Rockies, which were, naturally, attractive regions for mountaineering. Mountainous areas in Alberta and British Columbia that fell outside the national park boundaries—Mt. Robson, for example—were under the authority of their respective provincial government. The state saw the club's activities in a two-fold role.

First, the ACC would increase visitation to the Rockies, and second, the club would improve the general awareness of the region. Ottawa and the provinces wished to promote tourism in the Rockies as a form of economic development,¹³¹ and the ACC promised to bring people to the area and promote the mountains as a tourist destination. In an age when surveys by government and the major railways were still charting many districts, the ACC was an adjunct volunteer in geographic exploration and discovery in the Rockies. The ACC also promised to raise Canada's national profile on the world stage of mountaineering. Thus it was in the interest of government to support the annual ACC camps. In these years, any division between the interests of park "owners" and park "users" was difficult to discern.

¹³¹See Brown, "The Doctrine of Usefulness" in *The Canadian National Parks today and tomorrow*, eds J G Nelson and R C Scace (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1968), pp 94-110. Brown contends the parks were first established according to a "doctrine of usefulness" in keeping with the National Policy under J A Macdonald.

The earliest ACC camps were subsidized by provincial and federal funding. In 1906, Alberta offered a \$250 grant toward the first ACC camp, even though it was held in Yoho, British Columbia. The 1910 camp in Consolation Valley, Alberta, was supported by a \$500 grant from Alberta and a \$1,000 grant from British Columbia, followed by a \$500 sum from each of the two provinces for the 1911 camp at Sherbrooke Lake, British Columbia and the club's explorations in the British Columbia Mt Robson region¹³² Direct federal grants to the ACC were common from 1906 until the 1930s

From the outset, federal parks officials encouraged the club's activities, realizing that when it came to tourist visitors in the mountain parks, the rest would follow the best of the alpine world. The ACC's role in publicizing the parks was continually highlighted as a rationale for close cooperation between the department and the club, as indicated, for example, by Howard Douglas, Chief Superintendent of Dominion Parks, in 1914.

The Alpine Club is doing splendid work in connection with the opening up and advertising of mountains within the Parks boundaries as well as outside and anything that we can do to facilitate their operations I think should be carried out¹³³

In 1916, Dominion Parks Commissioner James Bernard Harkin stated "it is the policy of the department to cooperate in every way possible with the Alpine Club," and during his tenure, this policy was followed by the department.¹³⁴ After Harkin's retirement in 1936, the department continued this preferential policy into the post-war period. As late as

¹³²"Report Yoho Camp" CAJ (1907), p. 177 "Statement of Treasurer" CAJ (1911), p. 197-98

¹³³NAC, RG 84, vol. 2243, file Y16-3, part 1, Douglas to Harkin, 21 February 1912

¹³⁴NAC, RG 84, vol. 1, file R62, part 2, Harkin to Rocky Mountains Park Superintendent, 25 May 1916

1949, Roy A. Gibson, Ottawa Director of the National Parks, noted to his Deputy Minister:

The mountain parks receive splendid advertising from the activities of the Alpine Club. We have always considered this justification for special treatment.¹³⁵

The ACC was a prominently placed client-user group during the formative period of national park development. During the Edwardian era, the ACC explored and mapped many areas in the Rockies, circulated information about the parks, and in the early 1900s directly contributed a report of its camps and activities to the Dominion Parks section of the Department of the Interior Annual Report.¹³⁶ The club was an indispensable partner in the early days of park management when the whole parks administration might have fit into a one-room office. Parks were created in the 1880s as a result of the CPR's pressure on government to establish spa resorts in the Rockies; thus the railways were the primary commercial beneficiaries of the mountain parks. However, park users were also beneficiaries of the national parks, and the Alpine Club exacted pressure on public policy as a pioneer park-user group. As time went on, the ACC buttressed parks conservation policies and assisted in restoring mountain areas "despoiled by tourists and others."¹³⁷ A long history of cooperation between the club and government administration was built on this foundation. This partnership shaped the evolution of the national parks in concept

¹³⁵NAC, RG 84, vol. 189, file U36-1, part 1, Stronach to Smart, 13 April 1949, see note to Deputy Minister, 16 April 1949.

¹³⁶See for example, Department of the Interior, *Annual Report*, 1912, pp. 8, 39-40; *Ibid.*, 1921, p. 24; *Ibid.*, 1928-29, p. 131.

¹³⁷Parker, "The Approach to Organisation," CAJ (1938), p. 97.

and reality during the first half of the twentieth century, in terms of how the role of parks was conceived and how this role would change or persist.

A reciprocal relationship developed between the club and the parks administration, whereby the ACC called on the department for operational services, an annual federal grant to sponsor camps and activities, and access privileges within the parks. The national parks authorities in turn recognized the ACC as the national mountaineering authority, referred the public to the club for information, and relied on the ACC for expertise and free publicity. The two parties shared an interest in the aims of the national parks and encouraged each other's activities relating to conservation, tourism, and mountaineering. From the club's perspective, the ACC was a selfless institution and first among groups deserving preferential treatment in the parks. This canon was passed from one club generation to the next as the ACC celebrated its achievements and sought to justify continued government support.

The national parks department was the prime player in the federal government's ongoing relationship with the ACC. The most effective ACC executives and Parks administrators fostered this reciprocity to mutual advantage, frequently employing informal channels or an internal collegial network to carry on contacts. A prime example of this extraordinary rapport is that Commissioner Harkin and longstanding ACC leader Arthur Wheeler *both* worked for the Department of the Interior. From 1911 to 1936, they interacted in person and via correspondence regarding matters of concern to the ACC and the parks. Harkin even used this conduit to spur the club's defence of the national parks

against the incursion of resource developments.¹³⁸ This opportunity for dialogue opened up communications and strengthened the partnership between the club and senior administration, although sometimes at the expense of park superintendents who found themselves circumvented by Wheeler's inclination to deal with top officials in Ottawa.

Generally, superintendents served the on-the-ground needs of the club—sending their wardens to assist at summer camps, installing telephone communications lines at camp, bringing electricity to the Banff Clubhouse, loaning tons of woolen blankets to the camps, getting the trails in shape for hikers—in accordance with the daily operational demands of park management. Some superintendents forged closer ties with the ACC, such as Jasper Superintendent Maynard Rogers who encouraged ACC publicity of his park in the 1923 *Canadian Alpine Journal* and received invitations to informal gatherings of the Edmonton Section during the interwar period.¹³⁹ In the later 1940s, Homer Robinson, associate superintendent of Parks and Resources Information in Ottawa, reinforced liaisons with the club to profit from the added glamour of mountaineering in park advertising and monitor the inside workings of the organization.¹⁴⁰

The reciprocal relationship between the national parks administration and the club also showed up in public policy formation. Often, the ACC stimulated parks policy, for example, regulating public use of backcountry fire roads as access routes to ACC camps, licensing procedures for club huts, and mountaineering registration, as the department

¹³⁸NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 2, Harkin to A. Wheeler, 6 April 1922; see Chapter 4.

¹³⁹NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 2, Rogers to Mitchell, 31 October 1923. NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 5, Rogers to Wates, 28 November 1932

¹⁴⁰NAC, RG 84, vol. 189, file U36-1, Homer Robinson letters 1946-48

coped with the daily realities of managing user demands. While ACC president in the 1950s, Oliver Wheeler requested that national parks undertake long-range planning of trail projects to accommodate the club's advance selection of campsites. This request moved down the chain of command from Ottawa, out to park superintendents, down to wardens in the field, and back up the administrative ladder. Thus the national parks hierarchy set planning in action to coordinate ACC demands within an overall policy framework for regular trail development.¹⁴¹

In other cases, the department approached the ACC for specialized input in the areas of safety, ski mountaineering, the training and regulation of mountain guides, and on-the-ground alpine expertise. Regarding backcountry skiing, Harkin noted in 1933:

It is considered that the Alpine Club being the pioneer organisation supporting such recreation throughout the Parks will be in a position to offer suggestions.¹⁴²

Thus policymaking for the national mountain parks was an interactive process that involved user and state, and the ACC developed a strong partnership with the national parks department that lasted into the 1950s. Due to the long duration of this partnership and the perception that the ACC was a "pioneer" recreational group in the national parks, the club achieved a special status that was in some ways self-perpetuating.

Alongside its partnership with the national parks administration, the Alpine Club fostered an ongoing partnership with the national railways winding through the Rockies.

¹⁴¹NAC, RG 84, vol 189, file U36-1, part 1, O Wheeler to Smart, 19 March 1951. Ibid., Smart to Wheeler, 28 March 1951; Ibid., Smart to Supts., 28 March 1951. Ibid., Coleman to Smart, 4 May 1951

¹⁴²NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 5, Harkin to A Wheeler, 22 September 1933

The CPR and CNR assisted the ACC in the form of goods and services. The ACC brought tourist business to the Rockies, directly through their summer camps and indirectly by promoting the region as a destination for holiday-goers. The CPR and CNR benefitted from the ACC and encouraged its activities insofar as the railways stood to gain.

William Whyte, CPR Vice President, approved of the formation of the Alpine Club by giving free tickets to the 1906 Winnipeg meeting and continued to be a supporter. His greetings opened the first volume of the *Canadian Alpine Journal* and confidently underscored the patriotic value of the national Alpine Club and the role of the camps in fostering an appreciation of Canada's mountain heritage:

The opening of the Alpine Club's Season of 1907 is awaited with the most pleasurable anticipation by great numbers of whole-hearted and patriotic Canadians. That the coming Season will be an epoch in the history of the Club is my firm conviction. With its large membership and loyal adherents all, awaiting eagerly the time when they may be permitted to try conclusions with the glorious peaks and mountain passes in our great West, the Club has, within itself, the quality of unlimited success.... When one considers the personnel of the Club and the field they have chosen for their outing this season, one cannot help but prophesy that the Camp this year will be a great success, and I cannot too strongly urge all of our young Canadians to attend, when the opportunity will be afforded them of climbing their own mountains and thus securing an appreciation of some of the beauties of their own country.¹⁴³

While the ACC venerated nature and saw the club's patriotic value in terms of encouraging an appreciation of the Canadian mountain heritage, the CPR saw patriotism in terms of commercial exploitation and growth. Along with executive patronage, the railways offered the ACC camps material assistance in the form of preferential train fares, financial

¹⁴³William Whyte, "Greetings" CAJ (1907), pp. 1-2.

grants, and the loan of Swiss guides, cooks, and equipment. The club offered a commercial opportunity to market the Rockies to a broad range of visitors who would in turn advertise the CPR's resorts. This tradeoff was crucial to the client-patron relationship between the club and the railway.

John Murray Gibbon (1875-1952) oversaw the CPR's assistance to the ACC camps through the 1920s and 1930s. Gibbon was a writer and CPR publicity agent who made great contributions to the promotion of Canadian arts and culture. He belonged to the Alpine Club and greatly enjoyed rambling through the Rockies by foot or on horseback.

Born in Udewelle, Ceylon, in 1875—son of a tea planter—and educated at Oxford, Gibbon was a man of many talents and a retiring modesty. From 1913 to 1945, he acted as the CPR's general publicity agent based at the company's Montreal headquarters in Windsor Station. To promote CPR adventure packages on mountain trails, Gibbon founded the Trail Riders of the Canadian Rockies in 1924 and the Sky Line Trail Hikers of the Canadian Rockies in 1933. Author and founder of the Canadian Authors' Association, Gibbon's literary works included five novels, *Canadian Folksongs Old & New*, and a history of the CPR entitled *Steel of Empire* (1935). Gibbon's initial interest in multiculturalism led to organizing various CPR-sponsored folk festivals—such as the Banff Highland Gathering—to celebrate Canada's wealth of ethnic music and "handicrafts." He died in 1952 and was buried in the Banff Cemetery. In testimony to his love for the mountains, the grave was marked by a bronze plaque of a riderless trail horse by Banff sculptor Charles A. Beil. As one of the early proponents of a national recognition of the

arts and culture, Gibbon made a lasting impact on the Canadian identity. His involvement with the Alpine Club of Canada had similar results.¹⁴⁴

For many years, Gibbon acted as the CPR's liaison man with the ACC. In 1927 Gibbon led ACC President Fred Bell in a successful lobby of British Columbia politicians to have road and trail improvements made to the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers and thus allow the Trail Riders and Alpine Club easy access to the 1928 summer camp in this location. British Columbia Lieutenant Governor R.R. Bruce and Speaker of the House J.A. Buckham, M.L.A. for Columbia, were the main targets of this action. Bruce was a member of the ACC, and suggested the direction the lobby should take to reach W.H. Sutherland, British Columbia Minister of Public Works.¹⁴⁵ Buckham agreed to improve the trail to Lake of Hanging Glaciers but stopped short of accepting a motor road leading directly to the lake:

I got an appropriation for the Trail a few years ago and I will endeavour to get more money to put it in first class shape as a trail for your Club's visit

¹⁴⁴The folk festivals began with a showcase of French-Canadian culture held at the Chateau Frontenac in 1926 and expanded to series of events that included the multicultural Great West Canadian Folksong, Folkdance and Handicraft Festivals at Regina's Hotel Saskatchewan and Calgary's Palliser Hotel, a Sea Music Festival at the Hotel Vancouver, and three "Highland Gatherings" held at the Banff Springs Hotel starting in 1927. A printed version of Gibbon's 1938 radio series "Canadian Mosaic," sponsored by the CPR, merited a Governor General's award. Material on Dr. John Murray Gibbon is derived from files of the Canadian Pacific Railway Archives in Montreal. See CPRA, file B-07.15. Gibbon. Particular references to: "Memorial to Dr. John Murray Gibbon" *Spanner* (September/October, 1955), p. 9; "New Book On Canadian Pacific History Comes from Pen of J. Murray Gibbon" *Canadian Pacific Staff Bulletin* (October 1, 1935), p. 2; "John Murray Gibbon Ends Notable Company Career" *Canadian Pacific Staff Bulletin* (July 1945), p. 10; "J. Murray Gibbon" *Spanner* (August/September 1952), p. 37; "A profile of John Murray Gibbon" *CP Rail News* (July 25, 1984), p. 5; "C.P.R.'s Gibbon celebrated 'mosaic'" *CP Rail News* (December 1988/January 1989), p. 5. Also see Hart, *The Selling of Canada*, pp. 105-109; Gary Bret Kines, "Chief Man-of-Many-Sides: John Murray Gibbon and his contribution to the development of tourism and the arts in Canada" (M.A. thesis, Carleton University, 1988).

¹⁴⁵WMCR, AC 00M/002, Mitchell to Bell, 5 September 1927; *Ibid.*, 28 September 1927; *Ibid.*, Bell to Mitchell, 4 October 1927; B.M. Greene, ed., *Who's Who in Canada* (Toronto: International Press, 1936-37), p. 1522.

next year and do anything I can to assist you, but I could never have the heart to ask for an Automobile Road to Hanging Glacier. Personally I think this would detract from the pleasure of the trip out there.¹⁴⁶

Here, Buckham showed unusual sensitivity to the potentially adverse affects of road development on this wilderness. However, as far as ACC Secretary Mitchell was concerned, a road was linked to future tourism development in the area:

The Lake will no doubt be a centre of attraction if properly developed and money would be spent in the neighbouring towns in consequences [sic]. We want the road extended as far as possible, good enough for average cars, not Rolls Royce. The main object is to shorten the trail both for ponies and walkers.¹⁴⁷

In April 1928, British Columbia Premier John MacLean attended the annual ACC dinner in Victoria. Mitchell noted: "It was an asset having the premier there who evidently has the correct point of view."¹⁴⁸ Whether this comment was directly related to trail and road improvements to the Lake of Hanging Glaciers is unknown. Trail construction went ahead in 1928. In July, Bell was concerned the British Columbia election might have interfered somewhat with the work, but the Department of Public Works had assured him that "the matter was in hand and that there was no need to worry."¹⁴⁹ Ultimately, an unusually lucrative ACC 1928 camp was held at the Lake of Hanging Glaciers, largely due to the profit the ACC made by accommodating Gibbon's

¹⁴⁶WMCR, AC 00M/002, J.A. Buckham to F.C. Bell, 19 September 1927.

¹⁴⁷WMCR, AC 00M/002, Mitchell to Bell, 25 January 1928.

¹⁴⁸WMCR, AC 00M/003, Mitchell to Bell, 2 April 1928.

¹⁴⁹WMCR, AC 00M/003, Bell to Mitchell, 25 June 1928.

Trail Riders in camp at a charge of \$822. The ACC's final profit on the camp was \$700.¹⁵⁰ Thus by working in tandem with J.M. Gibbon and the CPR Trail Riders and by exercising the political influence of its members with British Columbia politicians, the ACC acted as the thin edge of the wedge that drove later tourism into the Lake of the Hanging Glaciers.

Along with political connections, the club also cultivated good contacts with the railways. Clearly, John Murray Gibbon was a key ACC contact within the CPR through the 1920s and 1930s and played an instrumental role in facilitating the annual camps. Through the 1920s, the CPR gave free advertising to upcoming Alpine Club camps along with other international tourist attractions featured in the regular *Canadian Pacific Railway Bulletin*.¹⁵¹ In 1927, Gibbon advised the ACC of the value of publicity and suggested the club should launch a campaign to increase its membership.¹⁵² In August 1928, Secretary Mitchell met with Gibbon to plan the 1929 ACC camp at Rogers Pass, and Gibbon committed the following assistance from the CPR:

1. Transport of outfit and supplies in one car from Banff to Glacier Station and return.
2. Haulage of [tent] poles from Donald to Glacier Station. The poles are to be selected and cut by our construction gang.
3. To supply water from Bear Creek to the Camp. Estimated 300 feet of 1-inch pipe will be sufficient.

¹⁵⁰WMCR, AC 00M/002, Bell to Mitchell, 18 August 1928; Ibid., Mitchell to Bell, 31 August 1928.

¹⁵¹See for example: *Canadian Pacific Railway Bulletin*, nos. 149 (1921), 173 (1923), 222 (1927), 224 (1927), 233 (1928), 258 (1930), 261 (1930)

¹⁵²WMCR, AC 00M/002, Mitchell to Bell, 9 August 1927.

4. To overhaul and put in shape the Rogers Pass Hut.¹⁵³

Mitchell observed to Moffat: "You understand that anything Mr. Gibbon guarantees will go."¹⁵⁴ In 1931, the CPR's C.W. Stokes, General Publicity Agent for Europe, attended the ACC camp in Prospector's Valley as a guest of the club.¹⁵⁵ Through this type of assistance, along with an average subsidy of \$200, the CPR assisted the continuation of the ACC camps through the Depression

Alexander Addison McCoubrey (1885-1942) was another key ACC contact within the CPR. In 1928 McCoubrey served as the ACC Eastern Vice President, in 1932 as President, and from 1930 to 1942, as editor of the *Canadian Alpine Journal*. As the CPR's Chief Draftsman and later Assistant Engineer in Winnipeg, "Mac" was well-placed to read the railway's support for the ACC. In October 1928, he offered an inside confirmation of the CPR's assistance for the 1929 Lake of Hanging Glaciers camp to Secretary Mitchell:

Letter from McCoubrey today We are getting everything we ask for from CPR. Tent and equipment both ways, poles from [Donald Station?], trail to Hut repaired, blankets in hut, truck at our disposal at Glacier.¹⁵⁶

McCoubrey also advised the ACC Management Committee, consisting of H.E. Sampson and A.W. Drinnan, of the CPR's commitment to the 1933 camp in Paradise Valley. Swiss guides would be on loan for the duration of camp "Owing to the fact that we have only

¹⁵³WMCR, AC 00M/004, Mitchell to Moffat, 22 August 1928

¹⁵⁴Ibid..

¹⁵⁵WMCR, AC 00M/011, Sampson to Tweedy, 30 April 1931

¹⁵⁶WMCR, AC 00M/004, Mitchell to Moffat, 12 October 1928

three Guides on the payroll this year, I was very apprehensive about getting this, but the Company have [sic] been good enough to promise them." In keeping with precedent, there would be a \$200 grant toward camp expenses "on the usual condition that Mr. Wheeler write the publicity articles for the camp."¹⁵⁷ In the midst of economic depression in 1934, McCoubrey was able to obtain second-hand equipment for the club at low cost from the CPR.¹⁵⁸ The same year, President Sibbald claimed the ACC camp to be held at Mt. Assiniboine in 1935 was a boon to the railway: "The presence of the camp in their territory is . . . of advertising value to them and they have always been very helpful." He also inquired: "Has McCoubrey any special contact in that quarter which would be of value?"¹⁵⁹

By the early 1940s, however, the ACC's claim on the CPR's assistance grew increasingly tenuous. The Rockies had established a reputation as an international attraction, along with the Rocky Mountain hotels—the CPR's Banff Springs Hotel and Chateau Lake Louise, and the CNR's Jasper Park Lodge which opened in 1922.¹⁶⁰ Railroad tourism was a lesser concern as automobiles moved mass tourism into the mountains, and earlier mid-size CPR hotels such as Glacier House and Mt. Stephen had given way to more popular auto-oriented bungalow camps. Affordable accommodations at the Banff Alpine Clubhouse competed with the railway hotels by drawing away potential

¹⁵⁷WMCR, AC 00M/015, McCoubrey to Management Committee, 31 May 1933. *Ibid.* 5 June 1933

¹⁵⁸WMCR, AC 00M/019, Sibbald to Tweedy, 17 August 1934

¹⁵⁹WMCR, Sibbald to Tweedy, 29 November 1934

¹⁶⁰Cyndi Smith, *Jasper Park Lodge in the heart of the Canadian Rockies* (Jasper, Alta: Cyndi Smith, 1985).

customers.¹⁶¹ Finally, the CPR had successfully developed its own camp packages in the form of the Trail Riders and Sky Line Trail Hikers. By 1940, Secretary Tweedy indicated to President Wates that the CPR's willingness to cooperate with the club was diminishing, as he noted Murray Gibbon and the CPR were "harder to deal with each year"¹⁶²

The Canadian National Railway held a similar interest in ACC camps and activities in Jasper National Park and in districts like Mount Robson along the northern line. ACC President Fred Bell observed in 1927 "I think that it has been a good policy in the past to visit the ground 'tributary' to the CNR occasionally, and still think so"¹⁶³ Alternating from south to north from Banff to Jasper and east to west over the Continental Divide from Alberta to British Columbia offered various camp locations and climbing, drew on different national parks, and shared the "benefits" of the ACC camps with both competing railways.

The CNR seemed particularly eager to participate in ACC camps in the 1920s and 30s, a time when the railway advertised Jasper National Park as a high point on the northern trans-Canada line. Under the aggressive management of Sir Henry Worth Thornton (1871-1933) through the 1920s, an intense rivalry sprang up between the CNR

¹⁶¹WMCR, AC 00M/025, Tweedy to Wates, 15 November 1938 Tweedy noted "I get hints from the CPR that we are cutting into their prices. This was from Murray Gibbon re. the non-member rate at the Club house, and though nicely folded up, his intent was quite plain. A rise in non-member rates might smooth that over. I have stressed the fact that they get the rail fares from the members, but they seem to think they would get the people anyway."

¹⁶²WMCR, AC 00M/030, Tweedy to Wates, 22 January 1940

¹⁶³WMCR, AC 00M/002, Bell to Mitchell, 6 September 1927

and the CPR.¹⁶⁴ Accordingly, the CNR welcomed the ACC into its territory with various enticements to compete with the CPR's long-standing club patronage.

In 1930, Robert N. Ayre, Montreal CNR Publicity Department representative, publicized the camp at Maligne Lake in Jasper National Park. In 1931, a CNR "publicity man" wished to supply information about the ACC and its 1925 Mt. Logan expedition to a Toronto magazine.¹⁶⁵ Osborne Scott, a Winnipeg-based CNR general passenger agent during this period, was another railway liaison with the club. He was also an ACC member. In 1934, Scott handled the ACC's requests for assistance at Chrome Lake in the Eremite Valley. The CNR assisted according to terms similar to those offered previously by the CPR: CNR freight services transported the camp equipment between Calgary and Jasper, and the railway contributed \$200 toward the cost of transport. Although Swiss guides were no longer engaged by the CNR, Scott promised the railway's support. "We will do everything in our power to make the attendance as large as possible."¹⁶⁶ In April 1934, the CNR agreed to transport without charge an ACC photo exhibit for display at the Hudson Bay Department Stores across western Canada.¹⁶⁷

The ACC benefitted from strong partnerships with government and commercial interests. From 1906 to the 1930s, the club enjoyed solid, productive partnerships with

¹⁶⁴Smith, *Jasper Park Lodge*, p. 13. Thornton was a frequent visitor to the CNR's Jasper Park Lodge. He enjoyed riding there and was referred to as "the big man on the big horse." Also see *Canadian Encyclopedia*, 1988 ed., s.v. "Thornton, Sir Henry Worth."

¹⁶⁵WMCR, AC 00M/012, Sampson to Tweedy, 12 January 1932.

¹⁶⁶WMCR, AC 00M/018, Osborne Scott to McCoubrey, 13 March 1934.

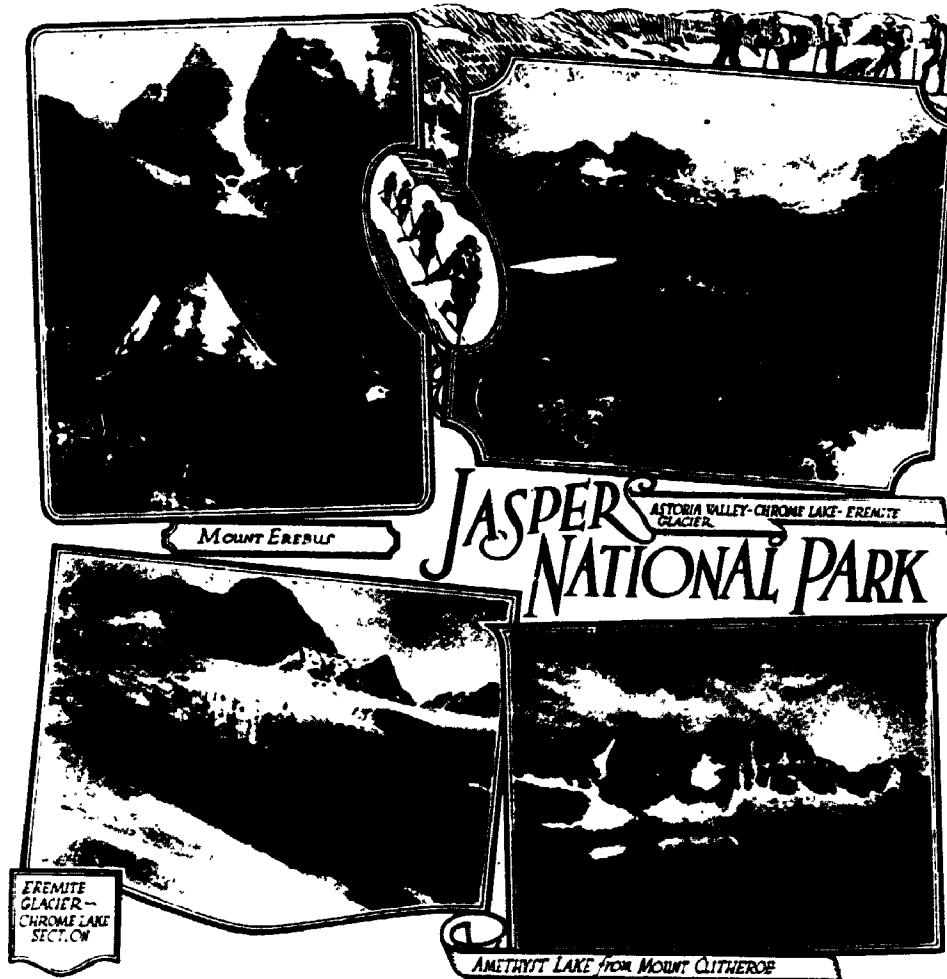
¹⁶⁷WMCR, AC 00M/018, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 9 April 1934. Tour stops included Edmonton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Calgary, and Regina.

WHERE TO MEET IN 1925

THE ALPINE CLUB WILL FIND IN
THE TONQUIN VALLEY JASPER NATIONAL PARK
MANY PEAKS UNEXPLORED—UNNAMED

201

Thousands of Square Miles of Alpine and Glacial Regions Unstudied and not
Mapped along the New Route through the Canadian Rockies
MANY PEAKS WELL OVER 10,000 FEET UNSCALED



HERE IS OPPORTUNITY! Graduate and Make History—Let us help you Blaze a New Trail.

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G. A. McNICHOLL, General Passenger Agent, Vancouver, B.C.
OSBORNE SCOTT, General Passenger Agent, Winnipeg, Man.
H. C. BOURLIER, General Passenger Agent, Toronto, Ont.
E. C. ELLIOTT, General Passenger Agent, Montreal, Que.
F. W. ROBERTSON, General Passenger Agent, Moncton, N.B.

Illustration 22: CNR advertising. Source: CAJ (1923), p. 277.



WORLD OF YOUR OWN

You'll enjoy your 1953 Alpine Club Camp in Upper Whirlpool Valley . . . land of alpine splendor . . . where colorful peaks hurl one challenge after another . . . a vast, towering wonderland created for timeless days of climbing

When you leave the Valley come to our playground at Jasper, and holiday life at the new Jasper Park Lodge . . . famous showplace of the Rockies where you can golf, swim, play tennis, go trout fishing. Linger a while with us, and you'll never forget **this** summer

CANADIAN  **NATIONAL**

Illustration 23: Postwar CNR advertising. Source: CAJ (1953), p. 179.

government and the national railways. By the late 1920s, the partnerships began to show strains as public and commercial policy began to diverge from club goals. Not until the 1930s did real differences in motivation and goals emerge. With the Spray Lakes controversy and the growth of automobile tourism in the national parks, Ottawa and the railway boardrooms of Montreal were obliged to listen to other voices echo their concerns over the Rockies.

Paradise Valley

In 1906, Annie L. Laird and her brother David, a young lawyer, left Winnipeg by train to attend the first ACC camp held at Summit Lake in Yoho Pass. Their father, David Laird, was a Liberal elected to Parliament in 1873 who held various appointments in the Canadian North West, including a Lieutenant Governorship. Friends of Elizabeth Parker, the Lairds were among the earliest Alpine Club members and David Jr., served as the club's first treasurer.

On July 12th, Annie and David climbed Mt. Vice President, among Edward Feuz's "lot of idiots" who had never before climbed a mountain. They graduated to active club membership. Annie Laird returned to the Rockies for the following camp. Here in Paradise Valley, British Columbia, she was reunited with the members of the Alpine Club, among them Frank Yeigh—the Toronto author who wrote the almanac *5000 Facts about Canada* and a mountain travel narrative called *Through the Heart of Canada*. Annie and Frank were subsequently married and lived in Toronto. The couple maintained an interest in the Alpine Club through the Toronto Section, and Annie invested in an ACC lifetime

membership. The Yeighs did not return to the Rockies for other ACC camps—as if Paradise Valley could never be surpassed.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸WMCR, AC 00M/018, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 9 April 1934. Tour stops included Edmonton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Calgary, and Regina.

CHAPTER 4

"Hands Off Our National Parks": The Alpine Club and the Public Domain, 1921-1930

During the 1920s, several major hydro-development projects were proposed to harness the irrigation and electrical potential of the eastern Rockies. The national mountain parks, to which middle-class urban alpinists had turned in search of serenity and nature's untrammelled beauty in the late 19th century, were not immune to the economic and technological needs of the new century that were manifested on the farm and in the city. In 1922, the federal Department of Interior's Irrigation Service had its eye on raising the water level of the Waterton Lakes, 270 km southwest of Calgary, to supply drought-stricken prairie farmers in southern Alberta. Urban growth and rural modernization provided an eager market for the consumption of electric energy in Alberta, and, throughout the 20s, 30s, and 40s, the Calgary Power Company made repeated applications to Ottawa to develop the electrical potential of watersheds in the Alberta Rockies. This urge to tamper with nature rankled the Canadian alpine movement.

Throughout the 1920s, the Alpine Club of Canada opposed hydro-development proposals for irrigation and power dams that infringed on national park lands and waters. As a leading recreational stakeholder in the mountain parks, the club took a firm stand

against tampering with watersheds in the Rockies, which it feared would ruin the natural environment and set a dangerous precedent for commercial encroachment on national park territory. During the heated debates over hydro dams in Waterton Lakes and Rocky Mountains national parks, the Alpine Club and the Dominion Parks Branch enunciated the principles that later came to characterize public policy and legislation governing Canada's national parks. Among these new tenets of management, park inviolability emerged as a cardinal rule.

After World War I, environmental protection and wildlife preservation gained increasing importance in national park policy under Dominion Parks Commissioner J.B. Harkin. Prolonged conflicts over resource development during this period ultimately forced conservation closer to the top of the national parks policy agenda. Historian Barry Potyandi has argued that conflicts during the 1920s were crucial to the definition of conservationist philosophy in national parks policy:

It would seem . . . that the process of defining policies that embodied the conservationist philosophy could only be developed fully in time of crisis. Within Rocky Mountains Park, the movement received its greatest impetus from the issue of additional hydro-electrical power development by the Calgary Power Company on Lake Minnewanka and the Spray Lakes.¹

As a voice of opposition to hydro developments throughout the 1920s crisis period, the Alpine Club played a critical role in promoting conservationist philosophy in public policy

¹Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park, 1792-1965: A History* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1984), Microfiche Report Series 196, pp. 170-71.

regarding the national parks, as Alpine Club founder Arthur Wheeler signalled with his emphatic slogan "Hands Off Our National Parks."²

The Fight for Access to the Public Domain

The prelude to the Alpine Club's campaign against hydro developments in the 1920s was a smaller debate over government subsidization that focused on public access to the national parks, which showcased the ACC's strength as a political lobby group. When the latitude of club activities in Rocky Mountains Park was challenged, the ACC mustered to the defence of its perceived prerogative—middle-class recreation and tourism. In 1922, ACC Director Arthur Wheeler mobilized ACC members to defend the Mt. Assiniboine Walking and Riding Tour. This enterprise offered hiking and saddle tours to the Mt. Assiniboine district of British Columbia via Rocky Mountains National Park. The tours, commercially operated by Wheeler as a retirement venture from 1920 to 1927, catered to middle-income tourists and were loosely affiliated with the ACC. The tour's clientele—many of whom were ACC members—sought an affordable way to see to the "Matterhorn of the Canadian Rockies" while camping in the backcountry areas of Mt. Assiniboine and Rocky Mountains Park.³ Outfitters in Banff, however, took exception to

²*The Gazette* (June 1923), p. 5.

³Mount Assiniboine forms a horn-like peak much like its famous European counterpart. Like the CPR's references to the "Canadian Alps," Wheeler alluded to the European Alps by advertising Mount Assiniboine as "The Matterhorn of the Canadian Rockies." BNP, 6.2/5-L3.1/A-11, vol. 1, box 80. Advertisement "Rocky Mountains of Canada: Banff to Mount Assiniboine," 1921.

Wheeler's federally subsidized operation. They alleged that his tours invaded the regional market for saddle outfitting when he offered side trips off the main Assiniboine circuit.⁴

The concept of Wheeler's "walking tour" had the approval of Commissioner Harkin as early as 1914. Wheeler emphasized to the Minister of the Interior the need for affordable travel and accommodations to permit "walking parties" of modest means to travel in the mountains:

The very high cost of hotels, and travel the moment you leave the railway, is now almost prohibitive except to the very wealthy and such a class is very largely in the minority of those who would visit the Rockies if accommodation could be placed within their means.⁵

Replying on behalf of the minister, Harkin agreed: "As you know I am thoroughly in sympathy with your ideas with respect to ways and means of keeping travel in the mountains."⁶ Such exchanges characterized the shared symmetry of federal administrators and alpinists before the war unleashed new social and economic pressures on the policy landscape.

Like Wheeler, Harkin wished to extend the opportunities for middle-class, urban Canadians to gain a firsthand appreciation of their national parks, and thereby contribute to the health, education, and well-being of the nation. Apart from the economic arguments in favour of parks that filled the Department of the Interior's annual reports, Harkin admitted to a mystical belief that mountains had the power to inspire:

⁴BNP, 6.2/5-L3.1/A-11, vol. 1, box 80, Superintendent R.S. Stronach to J.B. Harkin, 21 February 1922.

⁵NAC, RG 84, vol. 2243, file Y16-3, part 1, A.O. Wheeler to Roche, 9 February 1914.

⁶NAC, RG 84, vol. 2243, file Y16-3, part 1, A.O. Wheeler to Roche, 9 February 1914; *Ibid.*, J.B. Harkin to A.O. Wheeler, 10 March 1914.

People sometimes accuse me of being a mystic about the influences of the mountains. Perhaps I am. I devoutly believe that there are emanations from them, intangible but very real, which elevate the mind and purify the spirit.⁷

The transcendental quality of Harkin's beliefs was similar to the philosophy espoused by American conservationist John Muir (1838-1914). Muir, who founded the San Francisco-based Sierra Club in 1892 and played a leading role in the battle against damming the Hetch Hetchy Valley of California's Yosemite National Park from 1903 to 1913, was a secular pantheist who worshipped the sublime in nature. Muir described the mountains as nature's temples, and his writing expressed the divine inspiration he experienced amid the rugged, natural beauty of the Sierra Nevadas.⁸ Elaborating on the divine quality of nature in the mountains, Harkin offered a philosophical justification for the existence of the national parks that was rooted in a transcendental appreciation for the Rockies and informed by the principles of democratic citizenship:

National Parks are maintained for all the people—for the ill, that they may be restored, for the well that they may be fortified and inspired by the sunshine, the fresh air, the beauty, and all the healing, ennobling, and inspiring agencies of Nature. They exist in order that every citizen of Canada may satisfy his craving for Nature and Nature's beauty; that he may absorb the poise and restfulness of the forests; that he may steep his soul in the brilliance of the wild flowers and the sublimity of the mountain peaks; that he may develop in himself the buoyancy, the joy, and the activity he sees in the wild animals; that he may stock his mind with the raw material

⁷Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada*, p. 14

⁸Gavin Henderson, "The Father of Canadian National Parks" *Borealis* (Fall 1994), pp. 28-33. The wealth of literature on and by Muir includes the following works: John Muir, *The Yosemite* (New York: The Century Co., 1912), pp. 249-62; Michael Cohen, *The pathless way: John Muir and American Wilderness* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984); Stephen R. Fox, *The American conservation movement: John Muir and his legacy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); Holway R. Jones, *John Muir and the Sierra Club; the battle for Yosemite* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1965); Frederick Turner, *Rediscovering America: John Muir in His Time and Ours* (New York: Viking, 1985); Jim Butler, "The First Environmentalist" *Borealis* (Fall 1989), pp. 25-29; Stephan Fuller, "In the Footsteps of John Muir" *Borealis* (Fall 1989), pp. 30-33.

of intelligent optimism, great thoughts, noble ideals; that he may be made better, happier, and healthier.⁹

To this end, the national parks offered Canadians with disposable income and leisure time the chance to enter a rich world of wild spaces, and—by their very nature—affordable walking tours fit well with Harkin's concept of natural national parks open to all people.

Although the department could not undertake such a venture, Harkin assured Wheeler that it would welcome a private applicant interested in operating a walking tour.¹⁰ In 1920, Wheeler began his "public walking tour" with the first economy-class commercial trips to the Mt. Assiniboine district. The Parks Branch backed the idea and provided subsidies to Wheeler's tours in the form of camp equipment from surplus World War I military stores and the construction of trails and bridges.

Wheeler advertised the irresistible benefits of his tours along the same lines that Harkin used to describe the national parks. He appealed to those who were "worn and tired from the daily grind of routine existence":

Here in this land of forest primeval, of lakes of exquisite blues and greens, of cascading torrents, flower-strewn alplands, wildly tumbling ice-falls, towering rock peaks and cloud-capped mountains massed with snow, one finds peace, health and happiness. Come and try it!¹¹

The CPR Publicity Department accepted 10,000 walking tour leaflets for distribution in 1921 and publicized the tour in its own promotional literature. Trips departed from a

⁹Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada*, p. 16.

¹⁰NAC, RG 84, vol. 2243, file Y16-3, part 1, A.O. Wheeler to Roche, 9 February 1914; *Ibid.*, J.B. Harkin to A.O. Wheeler, 10 March 1914.

¹¹BNP, 6.2/5-L3.1/A-11, vol. 1, box 80, Advertisement "Rocky Mountains of Canada: A Public Walking or Riding Tour for 1920 Under the Patronage of the Alpine Club of Canada." For other publicity, see *Ibid.*, "Special Route Prepared for Tourists Wishing to Visit Mt. Assiniboine" *Calgary Herald*, 13 June 1921.

Banff to Mt. Assiniboine

A Walking or Riding Tour for Outdoor People.

— 1924 —

211

Leaving Middle Springs Camp, Banff (Headquarters) twice a week during July, August and September.



Mt. Assiniboine and Sunburst Lake

MT. ASSINIBOINE PARK.

A British Columbia Government Reserve.

Twenty Square Miles of Scenic Splendours.

For Mountaineers, Hikers, Artists, Scientists, Photographers and Fishermen.

Good food and camp beds, excellent fishing, exhilarating atmosphere, gloriously coloured lakes, Alpine flower gardens.



Visit WONDER LODGE

at the heart of Mt. Assiniboine Park.

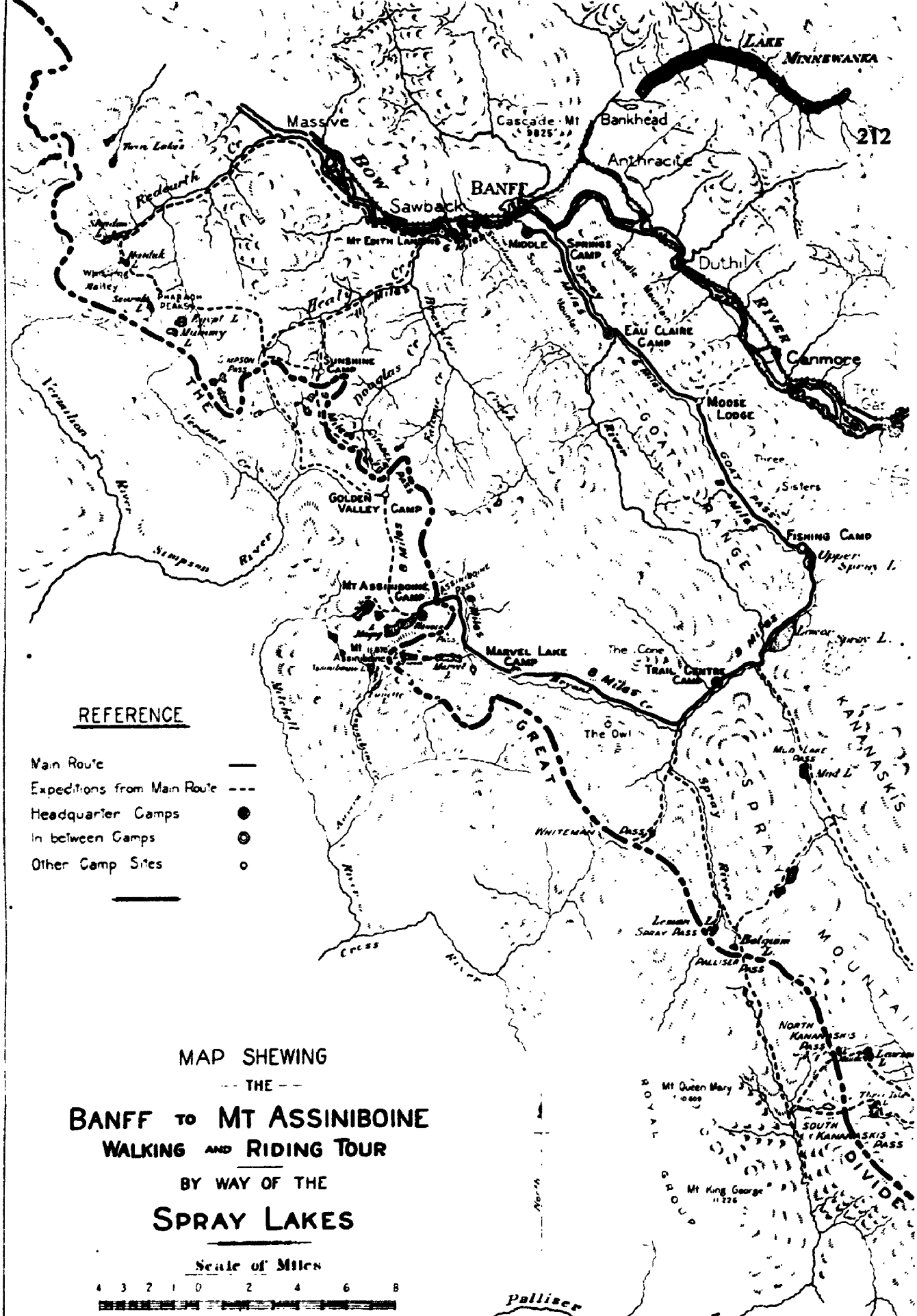
Banff to Mt. Assiniboine and Return

A Round Trip of Seventy-five miles, via: Spray River, Eau Claire Camp, Spray Lakes, Trail Centre Camp, Bryant Creek, Marvel Lake, Lakes Terrapin and Gloria, Wonder Pass, Wonder Lodge and Mt. Assiniboine—Valley of the Rocks, Golden Valley, Citadel Pass, Alplands of the Great Divide, Sunshine Camp, Sunshine Creek, Healy Creek, Bow River to Banff, Middle Springs Camp.

PERMANENT CAMPS:

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Middle Springs Camp, Banff | 4 Trail Centre Camp |
| 2 Eau Claire Camp | 5 Palliser Pass Camp |
| 3 Goat Pass Camp | 6 Mt. Assiniboine Camp |
| 7 Sunshine Camp | |

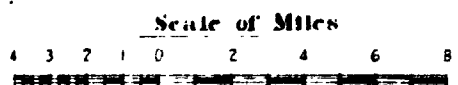
For full details apply to A. O. WHEELER, Director, Banff, Alberta, Canada



REFERENCE

- Main Route ———
- Expeditions from Main Route - - -
- Headquarter Camps ●
- in between Camps ○
- Other Camp Sites ○

MAP SHEWING
 -- THE --
BANFF TO MT ASSINIBOINE
WALKING AND RIDING TOUR
 BY WAY OF THE
SPRAY LAKES



Map 2: Route of Mt. Assiniboine Walking and Riding Tour, c. 1922. Source: NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, "Banff to Mt. Assiniboine" brochure.

camp near Wheeler's Banff summer residence at Middlesprings, adjacent to the ACC clubhouse, and traveled through Healey Creek, Sunshine Valley, Valley of the Rocks, and Spray Valley to and from Assiniboine.¹² Today, these valleys are more easily reached by hikers and skiers; to the great pleasure of Wheeler's clients, however, these areas were in the backcountry beyond the reach of the CPR. The tours made it possible for tourists of average means to visit the backcountry without engaging the services of more expensive private guides and outfitters.

Wheeler's concern that the Parks Branch might bow to the protests of Banff outfitters and discontinue its support of the Mt Assiniboine Tour brewed into a tempest in a teapot over the public right to national parks. It appears Wheeler and ACC President W.W. Foster began to notify the chairmen of the regional club sections about the possibility that the tours might falter due to local in-fighting among outfitters and discontinued federal support. Late in 1921, ACC chairmen sent forth letters written on behalf of club sections in Vancouver, Victoria, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, and New York addressed to the Minister of the Interior—Calgary's Sir James Lougheed—under the Union government of Arthur Meighen.

Without the affordable camps provided by Wheeler, they argued, the hidden beauties of the Rockies would remain inaccessible to the majority of Canadians. The chairman of the ACC Vancouver Island section, R.D. McCaul, advocated the continuation

¹²See NAC, RG84, vol 102, file U36-1, part 2, Wheeler to Harkin, 26 March 1921. For the route map of these tours and the form of promotional material used by Wheeler, see NAC, RG 84, vol 102, file U36-1, part 3, *Banff to Mt Assiniboine: A Public Walking and Riding Tour Amidst Magnificent Mountain Scenery*, (n.d., c. 1920-22)

of the tour because it put "the Canadian Rockies within reach of all."¹³ Dr. C.E. Fortin, chairman of the ACC Winnipeg section, reasoned that the tour exemplified patriotism and egalitarianism:

The Tour originated by Mr. A.O. Wheeler is a splendid farseeing and patriotic move. It is a fine thing for Canada that the wonders and beauties of our mountains should be opened up to all, be they either rich or in moderate circumstances.¹⁴

The ACC executive—including Lt. Col. W.W. Foster, ACC President and influential British Columbia Deputy Minister of Public Works—made presentations to the federal minister in favour of retaining the Mt. Assiniboine Tours because they "opened" the mountain parks to the middle class. As they saw it, the principle of access to the public domain was at stake if participation in the national park system was based on wealth and limited in practice to those who could afford the CPR's luxury tourist resorts and the high-priced services of a small number of private operators.

Considering James Lougheed served as the CPR's Calgary-based corporate solicitor from 1883 until his partner R.B. Bennett later took over the portfolio, it is unlikely that these arguments fell on sympathetic ears. Lougheed's law practice represented several large corporate accounts, including the CPR, Hudson's Bay Company, and the Bank of Montreal. With his own substantial investments in real estate and

¹³NAC, RG 84, vol 102, file U36-1, part 2, R.D. McCaul to James Lougheed, 25 November 1921

¹⁴NAC, RG 84, vol 102, file U36-1, part 2, C.E. Fortin to James Lougheed, 6 December 1921.

industry, Lougheed was a well-known friend of Calgary business as well as a prominent Conservative Alberta politician and senator.¹⁵

Meanwhile, Wheeler exaggerated his conflict with local competitors to great effect. In an official 1922 New Year's greeting to members of the Alpine Club, he blew it up into a much larger issue: "There is a cloud upon our horizon that not only threatens the freedom, but the very existence of the Club and its life work of opening up the mountain areas of the Canadian Rockies." Aligning his business interests with those of the club, Wheeler again stressed the public right to access in the national parks as afforded by his tours for the middle class:

Our Club represents the large majority of those interested in such parts of the mountains as are yet little known. We people, who desire access to primitive Nature in the Great Hills of Canada for our revitalization . . . must be served. We look to a progressive Government to give us access in the way we want at a cost we can afford. It is necessary that administration of Canada's mountain playground should be in sympathy with the class we represent, in such manner as to place it on a par with similar playgrounds in Europe and elsewhere.¹⁶

Seemingly unconcerned by the conflict of interest inherent in his role as ACC director and as a private tour entrepreneur, Wheeler cast doubt on whether the ACC would be able to hold its 1922 annual camp in the Palliser Pass without the outfitting services of his tour.

Wheeler's 1922 New Year's greeting to the ACC membership provoked an avalanche of strongly worded letters from tour patrons to federal officials and the new Minister of the Interior, Charles Stewart, appointed under William Lyon Mackenzie King's

¹⁵James H. Gray, *R.B. Bennett: The Calgary Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1991), pp. 24-27, 138-39.

¹⁶NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 2, Arthur Wheeler to the Members of the Alpine Club of Canada, 1 January 1922.

incoming Liberal government, late in December 1921. School teachers, ministers, professors, lawyers, civil servants, physicians, and other urban professionals wrote to defend the Assiniboine Tours, the Alpine Club, and the general principle of public access to the national parks.¹⁷ The well-established recreational impulses of the club were easily redirected into a concerted attempt at lobbying public policymakers.

ACC members proved articulate, politically attuned, and reasonably well-heeled; they had the incentive and the means to bend the ear of government. At a general meeting in Victoria, for instance, the Alpine Club passed a resolution supporting the tour, citing it served the needs of middle-class travelers:

There is a large class of people at home and abroad, comprising educational, professional, clerical and business people who come for holiday and revitalization purposes, and who desire to travel to beauty spots of the Canadian Rockies at a cost within their means, and that such a class is debarred by the existing high charges and inadequate methods.¹⁸

Dr. Cora Best, a longtime ACC member from Minneapolis, described this situation in a letter to the minister decrying price gouging by private outfitters:

The charges at all times makes it about prohibitive for many fine people to see the Rockies. Teachers, men and women in educational work, doctors, and other professional men and women have told me they have never gone because they could not afford it.¹⁹

In some ways, state subsidization of the Mt. Assiniboine Tour was a mid-point between two perspectives on the development of the national parks with unbridled commercialism

¹⁷NAC, RG 84, vol 102, file U36-1, parts 2 and 3, passim. Ibid., A.O. Wheeler to R.A. Gibson, 8 March 1922, enclosure.

¹⁸NAC, RG 84, vol 102, file U36-1, part 3, Resolution, 11 February 1922

¹⁹NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, Cora J. Best to Minister of Interior, 17 January 1922

on the one hand and controlled state development on the other. In effect, Wheeler's call to arms through the Alpine Club launched a thorough campaign of middle-class, interest-group action aimed at the Department of the Interior in Ottawa.

Lobby pressure hit its mark. By February 1922, Harkin confided to his superior Deputy Minister of the Department of Interior W.W. Cory:

Mr. Wheeler . . . has commenced a vigorous propaganda with a view of altering the attitude of the Department The result of this action on his part has been that the Department has received letters from members of the Alpine Club of Canada and from people of the United States, who have visited Banff or taken the walking tours, urging that this Department remove its objections to the operation of the service as conducted last season²⁰

Meanwhile, Wheeler maintained the external pressure on Cory to retain the tours:

I have little doubt that, if necessary, the matter will be carried to Parliament and to the newspapers of the country, for I do not think that the suppression of the Walking Tour method is in the best interests of the Tourist business of Canada, or that the country will stand for the loss of prestige, both at home and abroad, by the Alpine Club that would follow the necessity of calling off its annual camp.²¹

Caught in the midst of this turmoil, Commissioner Harkin was aware Wheeler had manipulated the issue to his own advantage and refuted several of what he believed to be misconceptions on Wheeler's part. Harkin claimed that Wheeler had misrepresented the fundamental question at issue—subsidized versus nonsubsidized competition in the saddle-tour outfitting market.

On reading over the [New Year's] greeting, I am strongly of the opinion that not only does it cloud the issue but that it places this department in an

²⁰NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, J.B. Harkin to W.W. Cory, 14 February 1922.

²¹NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, A.O. Wheeler to W.W. Cory, 4 February 1922.

unfair light.... It is stated that the very existence of the Alpine Club of Canada is threatened. I do not see how this statement can be justified.²²

As Harkin pointed out to the disgruntled alpinists, the Department of the Interior was in sympathy with the goals of the Assiniboine Tours and had subsidized their operation from the start. For example, Harkin wrote in response to the concerns of one of the Alpine Club's new American members—tour proponent Marcus Morton of the Boston Superior Court—that:

The Department has been very generous to date in the matter of assistance to the Walking Tours. The sum of some \$3,300.00 has been paid out in wages and in the purchase of material by the Department since the commencement of the tours and in addition various equipment valued at \$3,450.00 has been issued from stock in the Government stores.... As I have already advised Mr. Wheeler I am strongly in favour of the continuance of the Walking Tours and am willing to recommend financial assistance for the 1922 operations as soon as the question of the saddle pony service is settled."²³

Within the Parks Branch, Harkin voiced a strong internal defence of the walking tour concept. He revealed his thoughts in a letter to Rocky Mountains Park Superintendent R.S. Stronach:

I do not know whether the guides look at the situation from the viewpoint that the walking tours should be killed or not. I think you fully appreciate the importance for Banff and the Park that the walking tours should be developed and so far as I am concerned I feel convinced that it is my duty to persistently fight for the maintenance and extension of walking tours. If the Wheeler scheme by any chance failed to operate I would deem it my

²²NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, Harkin to A.O. Wheeler, 16 February 1922.

²³NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, J.B. Harkin to Marcus Morton, 27 January 1922. Marcus Morton, Jr., was a new ACC member who had joined in 1921. His membership in the ACC may have been related to his enthusiasm for the walking tour. See *Constitution and List of Members*, 1922.

duty to make new arrangements which would ensure walking tours being available.²⁴

No doubt tired of Wheeler's overstated claims, Harkin and department officials sought to mediate the dispute at its source with the local outfitters and packers in Banff. At an open meeting on February 20, 1922, called by the Rocky Mountains Park Superintendent, it became clear that local competitors objected specifically to Wheeler's federally subsidized walking tour running saddle and packing services off the main Mt. Assiniboine circuit and, thus, allegedly cutting into their trade. The walking tour itself was acceptable, provided it did not compete with unsubsidized outfitters and packers in the regional saddle tour market.²⁵

In the end, the deputy minister concluded Wheeler possessed an unfair advantage over other private operators and would have to cease outfitting side trips from the Mt. Assiniboine Tours. The department estimated that the Walking Tours brought only 300 of 150,000 visitors to Banff, or "less than one quarter of one per cent" of the total visits from 1920 to 1921.²⁶ Once Wheeler agreed to withdraw saddle services, the Department of the Interior continued to subsidize the Mt. Assiniboine Tours, thus bringing an end to the tiny tempest.

However, the lessons gained from this foray by Canadian alpinists into the realm of public policy outlived the source of their provocation. The ACC was a highly motivated and broadly based interest group, committed to promoting its stake in the national parks.

²⁴NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, Harkin to Stronach, 3 February 1922.

²⁵BNP, RG 84, file 6.2/5-L3.1/A-11, vol 1, box 80, R.S. Stronach to J.B. Harkin, 21 February 1922.

²⁶NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, W.W. Cory to A.O. Wheeler, 8 March 1922.

As club director, Arthur Wheeler manoeuvred a well-sized, articulate membership of professional men and women accustomed to the machinery of politics and government. Notably, many of the most articulate ACC activists were foreigners from the United States and Britain who knew how to influence Canadian policymakers. The alpinists employed various tactics with refined skill—lobbying through collegial networks, formal resolutions, and political correspondence campaigns. The ACC's two-tiered structure, with communication channels at the national and local levels, benefitted the club's ability to lobby for its objectives as a special interest group. As a self-conscious class of recreational park users, the Alpine Club stood on guard for the civic right to the public domain as embodied by Canada's national parks. Here, the club's vigilance merged with the concerns of the national parks department. These lessons were not lost as hydro-development proposals sprang up through the 1920s.

Protecting the Public Domain—The Waterton Lakes Irrigation Debate

As the Mt. Assiniboine Tours issue wound down in March 1922, the Alpine Club of Canada was drawn into a long, drawn-out debate over the hydro-development potential of the eastern Rockies. The conflict created a divisive showdown between the friends of the national parks and the proponents of irrigation and hydro power. Not surprisingly, the Alpine Club stood on the side of the national parks. More revealing, however, was the cooperative alliance between Canada's National Parks Branch and the Alpine Club in the face of outside threats to Waterton Lakes National Park.

Following World War I, Alberta's burgeoning population, urban growth, and economic development expanded the provincial market for electric power and stimulated irrigation projects on the dry southern prairies. Under the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) through the 1920s and into the 1930s, the Alberta political climate favoured agriculture. In the southern region, irrigation was increasingly instrumental in improving the viability of seed crops and cattle ranching by reducing dependence on inconsistent rainfalls.

Three years of severe drought gave rise in 1919 to an irrigation movement supported by farmers, UFA locals, and many small towns situated in southwest Alberta. The Lethbridge Board of Trade convened a meeting that launched the Irrigation Development Association, formalized in March, to rally public support for irrigation. In August, pro-irrigationists, at a mass meeting in Pincher Creek, urged Ottawa to undertake studies relevant to the irrigation potential of the region. The momentum created by these meetings led to several proposed irrigation districts.²⁷ Federal control over western

²⁷Barry Potyandi, *Where the Rivers Meet. A History of the Upper Oldman River Basin to 1939* (Lethbridge: Robins Southern Printing, 1990), pp. 185-87, regarding 1919 Pincher Creek irrigation meeting, Leo G. Denis and J.B. Challies, *Water Powers of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta* (Ottawa: Commission of Conservation Canada, Committee on Waters and Water Powers, 1916), pp. 166-68, noted the Waterton Lakes Narrows as a potential power site; A.L. Ford and G.H. Whyte, *Hydrometric Surveys in the Provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan* (Ottawa: Department of Interior, Reclamation Service, 1921), pp. 193-217, for reports on the flow rates of the Waterton River, Belly River, and St. Mary River drainage basins, and diversions on the St. Mary River near Bab, Montana and Kimball, Alberta; Ian A.L. Getty, "A History of the Human Settlement at Waterton Lakes National Park, 1800-1937" (M.A. thesis, University of Calgary, March 1971), pp. 136-40, regarding the 1919 survey of Waterton Lake and the 1920 dam recommendation; Department of the Interior, *Annual Report, 1921-22* (Ottawa: Water Power Branch, 1923), p. 61, hydrometric

natural resources was a bone of western contention throughout this period.

The Department of the Interior's Irrigation Branch had been conducting hydrometric surveys to assess the power and irrigation potential of rivers in southern Alberta since 1911 and readily came up with several irrigation proposals. During summer 1919, the Irrigation Branch surveyed the Narrows on Waterton Lakes in Waterton Lakes National Park. Subsequently, in 1920, the Commissioner of Irrigation P.H. Peters recommended the area as an ideal site for a dam and water-storage reservoir as part of the proposed Lethbridge Southeast irrigation project. The project aimed to establish irrigation districts and supply water to farmers via private canal systems developed by the Canadian Pacific Railway and its subsidiary, the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company.²⁹

surveys in Alberta and Saskatchewan were conducted by the Canadian Irrigation Surveys from 1894 to 1909, from 1909 to 1911 by the Forestry and Irrigation Branch of the Department of the Interior, from 1911 to 1920 by the Irrigation Branch that was transferred with the Reclamation Service to the Dominion Water Power Branch in 1920, and reorganized as the Water Power and Hydrometric Bureau in 1924; E. Alyn Mitchner, "The Development of Western Waters 1885-1930" (Edmonton: University of Alberta, Department of History, 1973), p. 312, regarding the rise of the irrigation movement and the Lethbridge Southeast proposal.

²⁹The CPR took over the Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company in 1912, thus gaining entry into the Lethbridge-area irrigation market, see James G. MacGregor, *A History of Alberta* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1972), pp. 202-03, also see E. Alyn Mitchner, "The Development of Western Waters 1885-1930" (Edmonton: University of Alberta, Department of History, 1973), pp. 232-33; for a description of the Lethbridge Southeast project, see Department of the Interior, *Annual Report, 1923-24* (Ottawa: Water Power and Reclamation Service, 1925), pp. 90-91.

J.B. Harkin, the National Parks Commissioner, found his department squared off in an interdepartmental conflict with the Irrigation Branch. To counter Irrigation's claim to water rights in Waterton, Harkin's 1920-21 annual report restated the fundamental precepts of the national parks and enunciated for the first time the principle of inviolability:

The stand taken by the Parks Branch with regard to such applications is that the parks are the property of all the people of Canada and that consequently they should not be developed for the benefit of any one section of the country or of private interests; second, that such development constitutes an invasion of the fundamental principles upon which parks have been established, namely, the conservation of certain areas of primitive landscape with all their original conditions of plant and animal life and other natural features intact.²⁹

Thus Harkin challenged the irrigation interests and asserted that conservation of the public domain took priority as a management principle for the national parks.

Meanwhile, irrigation was showcased in the Alberta press as the only solution to the dry lands question. "Farmers In Dry Belt Abandon Their Farms . . . Irrigation the Only Solution" headlined the *Western Farmer and Weekly Albertan* in early 1922. Irrigation was depicted as the panacea for Alberta's dry-belt farmers.

Irrigation is the burning question in the south country . . . the only remedy for southern Alberta, the only thing that will put it on its feet and transfer a barren waste into a Garden of Eden.³⁰

The feasibility of irrigation was central to settlement and economic development in southern Alberta, as suggested by press coverage of the potential immigration of irrigation

²⁹Harkin cited in Taylor, "Legislating Nature," p 130

³⁰"Farmers In Dry Belt Abandon Their Farms," *Weekly Albertan*, 4 January 1922, p 2, also see "Industries for the Irrigation Districts," *Ibid.*, 21 February 1922, p 4, "Plan for Carrying Out Irrigation Legislation," *Ibid.*, 30 March 1922, p 1

farmers from the western U.S., provincial legislation destined to facilitate more irrigation works, and Premier Greenfield's emphasis that "colonization must keep pace with construction of irrigation projects." In some quarters, the construction of dams for irrigation works was also seen as a legitimate means to create work for distressed farmers.³¹ Despite the problems associated with irrigation agriculture in southern Alberta, the Waterton Lakes dam and Lethbridge Southeast project characterized many irrigation projects proposed during this era.³²

Still, regional public opinion divided on the issue of constructing an irrigation dam in Waterton Lakes National Park. On January 7, 1922, the *Lethbridge Herald* stated that "little progress had been made thus far in a movement started some time ago to block the converting of Waterton Lake into a storage reservoir for future irrigation purposes." Nonetheless, as the *Herald* reported, several petitions were circulating and resolutions had been dispatched to Ottawa by unnamed opponents of the dam requesting the government to preserve the Waterton townsite and "disallow any movement looking to the disfiguring of the national parks" by turning the lake into a reservoir. The *Herald* dismissed this opposition to the dam, insisting that generally southern Albertans believed that water was

³¹"Thousands of Irrigation Farmers in Western States Ready to Come to Southern Alberta," *Lethbridge Herald*, 6 January 1922, p. 7, "Influx of Settlers from Western States is Plainly Forecast," *Calgary Daily Herald*, 4 March 1922, p. 1, "Colonization Must Keep Pace With Construction of Irrigation Projects," *Ibid.*, 7 March 1922, p. 1; "Irrigation Projects in Alberta are Enumerated," *Ibid.*, 8 March 1922. "Legislation Aiming to Aid Colonization Where Irrigation is Proposed," *Ibid.*, 9 March 1922; "Interesting Comment on Survey Board Report," *Weekly Albertan*, 9 March 1922, p. 4

³²"Finishing a Big Job," *Lethbridge Herald*, 7 January 1922, p. 10, "Many Problems Face the Future of Irrigation," *Calgary Daily Herald*, 4 March 1922, p. 7, "Province Will Back MacLeod Irrigation Plan," *Ibid.*, 4 March 1922, p. 1; "Are We Irrigation Mad? Markets Great Problem," *Weekly Albertan*, 11 March 1922, p. 20; "Dominion Will Keep Irrigation Surveys Going," *Ibid.*, 6 March 1922, p. 2

"needed more on the lands of the prairies in producing crops than in the mountains serving only a few."³³

The pro-irrigationists mounted a strong offensive campaign to push the Waterton Lakes dam into existence. In February 1922, they paraded their forces:

The Civic Council of Fort MacLeod, the Lethbridge City Council, the Southern Irrigation District, and the New Dayton Irrigation District all submitted resolutions in favour of the scheme. Other communities that passed resolutions "endorsing the proposed plan of the Reclamation Service of damming the lakes at the Narrows are those from Milk River, Warner, Macleod, Cardston, Magrath, Raymond, Bow Island, Taber, Lucky Strike, Grassy Lake and New Dayton."³⁴

The organized irrigation lobby also included certain UFA locals in southern Alberta, the CPR, and the Western Canada Irrigation Association—which named the CPR's irrigation crusader William Pearce among its executive members. Pearce, a former public land surveyor with the Department of the Interior, was a longtime promoter of irrigation in the Canadian West and the "chief architect" of the western waters policy.³⁵ At the same time, the *Lethbridge Herald* and the *Weekly Albertan*—both southern Albertan newspapers—took editorial positions in favour of irrigation. Together, these forces insisted that the dam go ahead. Here alpinists faced a powerful opposition—the combination of western agrarianism and eastern corporate interest, each intent on irrigation despite their otherwise separate motives.

³³"Protest Against Big Reservoir at Waterton Lakes." *Lethbridge Herald*, 7 January 1922, p. 7

³⁴Getty, "Waterton," pp. 145-46

³⁵ William Pearce was a former Department of the Interior senior surveyor who became an outspoken proponent of irrigation in his later career with the CPR, see Mitchner, "The Development of Western Waters," chap. 2 passim, p. 374; Bella, *Parks for Profit*, pp. 39-49. UFA locals were quick to react to the irrigation movement in southern Alberta, see Potyandi, *Where the Rivers Meet*, p. 185-86

Oddly enough—although it had been at the center of the 1919 irrigation movement—Pincher Creek actively opposed the Waterton dam proposal. By January 1922, its town council had sent a resolution of protest to the Minister of the Interior.³⁶ The Pincher Creek UFA local also joined the protest and, in March, sent a resolution opposing the Waterton dam to the Acting Commissioner of Irrigation in Calgary. The Commissioner responded that the Waterton Lakes remained the "most economical and practically the only site available" and stated that "its use as a reservoir would not seriously affect the scenic approach to the park."³⁷ Dissenting voices, like those from Pincher Creek, found themselves poised on the defensive in battle over resource development in the national parks.

Thus, with the growing market for irrigation in southern Alberta after World War I, the demands of plains agriculture encroached on the mountains. Ultimately, the city's demand for power would further close the gap between prairie settlement and the mountain wilderness. With each step toward modernization, the Alpine Club's breathing space in the untamed mountain solitudes was slipping away. The year 1922 was shaping up to be a precedent-setting period for advocates of the Canadian national parks.

In the midst of the 1922 policy wrangle over the Mt. Assiniboine walking tours, federal Parks Commissioner J.B. Harkin drew Arthur Wheeler's attention to the irrigation proposals impinging on Waterton Lakes National Park, which bordered on Montana in the

³⁶Getty, "Waterton," p. 142, 145.

³⁷"An Irrigation Dam at Waterton Lakes," *Weekly Albertan*, 16 March 1922, p. 6.

extreme southwest corner of Alberta. Wheeler had been unaware of the issue, as was made clear in his response to Harkin in March 1922:

What you say about the clash between Parks and Irrigation interests at Waterton Lakes Park is quite new to me. If you will be so good as to put me wise, and let me know if the Alpine Club can help, I shall be glad to move in the matter. I think you know that our interests and sympathies lie with the parks.³⁸

As ACC Director, Wheeler was a great parks advocate and had pushed for the creation of Mt Robson Park and Mt Assiniboine Park. Despite irritants related to the Assiniboine Tours controversy, the "interests and sympathies" of the Alpine Club merged with the Parks Commissioner on the issue of stopping the dam planned for Waterton Lakes National Park

Harkin's summary of the Waterton dam proposal followed. A 60-foot (18.3 m) dam at the outlet of Upper Waterton Lake would block the Narrows between the lakes, submerge the existing townsite, and "almost entirely submerge Cameron Falls and do other damage to the lake which the Park Service considers will effectually destroy its beauty as a National Park."³⁹ The resulting reservoir was expected to supply irrigation to 75,000 acres (approximately 30,353 ha) of drought-stricken Alberta land under the federal Reclamation Service's proposed Lethbridge Southeast project.⁴⁰ Naturally, the federal Reclamation Service and the National Park Service held divergent views of the

³⁸NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, A. O. Wheeler to J. B. Harkin, 20 March 1922

³⁹NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, J. B. Harkin to A. O. Wheeler, 6 April 1922

⁴⁰Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks*, vol. III, p. 47

proposal—a problem accentuated by the fact that both agencies were housed within the Department of the Interior

According to Harkin, the Reclamation Service held the advantage of an organized lobby in favour of the Waterton dam proposal. Yet, as he lamented to Wheeler in spring 1922, there was "practically no publicity with respect to the Parks side" of the debate:

The reason I mentioned this matter in my previous letter to you was that the Alpine Club is so much concerned in the preservation of mountain scenery that I was surprised that, with all the publicity that has been given in the western newspapers to the irrigation side of this project, there was no action, as far as I could see on the part of Alpinists to present the other side publicly. I have some diffidence in writing to anyone upon a subject of this kind. Personally I believe in matters being settled on their merits and not as a result of propaganda.⁴¹

The Parks Commissioner and Waterton's Superintendent Bevan wished to turn public opinion in favour of retaining the park in its natural state.⁴² Here was an advocacy role for the Alpine Club, and the beginning of a larger, more persistent debate over national park protection.

Quick to pick up on the implications of the irrigation controversy, Sir James Outram—a renowned English mountaineer and senior ACC member—challenged the dam proposal in March 1922, during his address at the Alpine Club's 16th anniversary banquet in Calgary. Outram gave a speech, accompanied by lantern-slides, as reported in the *Calgary Herald*:

He mentioned that there is a danger of irrigation spoiling some of the beautiful playgrounds of Canada. Irrigation was a thing which must be

⁴¹NAC, RG 84, vol 102, file U36-1, part 3, J B Harkin to A O Wheeler, 6 April 1922

⁴²Getty, "Waterton," p 144

considered first, but yet he believed that the club could do a great deal in seeing to it that where water could be secured from other parts for irrigation purposes that it should not be taken from places where such action would ruin the beauty spots of the country ⁴³

Outram recommended that "the Alpine Club must make the people realize that the mountains are the heritage of all." The club subsequently acted on this philosophy.

In March 1922, the international dimension of the Waterton Lakes controversy also came into play. Canada's Waterton Lakes National Park adjoins Glacier National Park, U.S.A., along the Alberta-Montana border. The three inter-connected Waterton Lakes cross the international boundary line. Thus Canadian plans to dam a lake in this system became a cross-border concern relevant to international waters

American parks officials and conservationists frowned on the proposal. When the U.S. government refused entry to a Canadian irrigation survey crew in March 1922, it defied Canadian actions that might harm Glacier National Park. Prominent American conservationist George Bird Grinnell opposed the Waterton dam; the Ecological Society of America offered its assistance to J.B. Harkin to fight it, and the U S National Parks Association decried the project and the potential destruction that flooding could have on Glacier National Park. Canada's Commissioner of National Parks J.B. Harkin believed the Waterton issue would set a critical precedent and remarked that there was

the greatest need in Canada for an organization something along the lines of the American National Parks Association which, being independent of

⁴³NAC, RG 84, vol 102, file U36-1, part 3, "Unique Views of Mountains are Exhibited," *Calgary Herald*, 31 March 1922. For biographical background see "James Outram" CAJ (1925), pp 127-28.

the Government is free to actively carry on work in defence of National Parks.⁴⁴

As a case in point, the U.S. National Parks Association opposed an irrigation dam similar to the Waterton proposal that was planned for St. Mary's Lake in Glacier National Park. The executive secretary of the American association advised Wheeler on this confrontation in correspondence during March 1922.⁴⁵ Thus a well-defined coalition of American conservation interests actively opposed the dam proposals impinging on both national parks.

Meanwhile, the Alpine Club flew into the fray over the dam proposal on the Canadian side of the border. At the ACC's annual general meeting on August 5, 1922, at the Palliser Pass Camp in Rocky Mountains Park, the Waterton Lakes issue came before the club. The background of the issue was summarized as follows:

A letter had been received from the Commissioner of National Parks desiring an opinion from the Club on the matter of the raising of the water level of the Waterton lakes. A letter had also been received from the Secretary of the National Parks Association of the United States. It claimed that the beauty of the Park would be utterly spoiled. A circular had been sent to the various Sections enquiring their points of view, which had been very divergent. Some considered that the raising of the water level was an absolute necessity for economic reasons. Others considered the matter outside the jurisdiction of the Club.⁴⁶

When opened to debate before the general membership, the Waterton issue revealed a fragmented range of opinions within the club. This discourse suggests how the ACC, like

⁴⁴Harkin to A.O. Weese, Ecological Society of America, 1 June 1922, cited in Getty, "Waterton," pp 146-47, 149-50

⁴⁵*The Gazette* (June 1922), p. 5

⁴⁶*The Gazette* (December 1922), p. 17.

any special interest group, was subject to a series of internal cross currents that could shift the allegiance of its members in contrary directions. Despite their apparent homogeneity, conservationists came from various backgrounds, often accommodating an eclectic blend of values in unexpected and sometimes "teeth-gritting" harmony. As with any democratic group, the friction between these different views was part of the process of building consensus on conservation issues within the group.⁴⁷

Rancher Frederick W. Godsal of Cowley, Alberta, spoke of "the absolute necessity of the dam to keep the southern Alberta farmer from total ruin due to drought." Godsal's view of Waterton Park had made a drastic reverse. In the 1890s, he had led a conservationist drive to reserve the Waterton area as a national park, concerned by the effects of increased human population already witnessed in fish and wildlife depletion, and the need to protect the Waterton Lakes headwaters. In 1895, Ottawa responded by creating the Waterton Park Reserve. Commenting on its 139 km² area in 1905, Godsal said: "I doubt the reserve is large enough for its purpose." However, when it came to drought, Godsal the southern Alberta rancher took precedence over Godsal the conservationist. Invoking biblical parables on sharing water, Godsal argued staunchly in favour of the proposed Waterton dam.⁴⁸

⁴⁷For a discussion of similar social tensions, see David Robbins, "Sport Hegemony and the Middle Class: the Victorian Mountaineers" *Theory, Culture & Society* (1987), pp. 579-601.

⁴⁸*The Gazette* (December 1922), p. 17. When lobbying for the creation of the Waterton Park reserve, Godsal had argued to the Minister of the Interior that "the beauty and grandeur of the scenery there is unsurpassed.... It is therefore very essential that the interest of the public should be properly safeguarded in this 'beauty spot.'" See Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks*, vol. 1, p. 46. For further background on Godsal's role in the creation of Waterton National Park and the current ecological state of the park, see Kevin Van Tighem, "Waterton, Crown of the Continent" *Borealis* (May/July 1990), p. 26.

Among the opponents of the dam, James Outram rejoined that the Waterton Lakes "would be completely spoiled as a pleasure resort" if the dam went ahead. Wheeler admitted he thought the scheme would undoubtedly go ahead but maintained that a larger principle was at stake in the issue:

The point is, if the Mountain Parks are set aside for present and future generations they should be preserved untouched. The desire is to prevent the establishment of a precedent which will enable any corporation to go in and take away any part of the parks.⁴⁹

Like Harkin, Wheeler emphasized the principle of inviolability and believed the Waterton dam could set a dangerous precedent for public parks. T.B. Moffat, ACC Calgary Section Chairman, echoed this theme:

We realize the great importance of the scheme to the southern country, but we want to let the Department know that we are very much opposed to any destruction of our parks. The Government must not trespass upon the people's rights.⁵⁰

Finally, a resolution was passed to record the Alpine Club's dissatisfaction with the irrigation proposal:

With regard to the Waterton Lakes Irrigation Scheme, the Alpine Club of Canada, while it recognizes the undoubted economic value of the project, deplors the necessity of the action to be taken if it involves the destruction of the natural beauties of a park which the Government has already decided shall be set aside for the benefit of the public.

The Club considers it a necessity to affirm its stand on a principle which involves such a precedent and desires that it may be kept fully informed by the Government of the details of the development of the scheme.⁵¹

⁴⁹*The Gazette* (December 1922), p. 18

⁵⁰*The Gazette* (December 1922), p. 18.

⁵¹*The Gazette* (December 1922), p. 18

Thus the Alpine Club asserted the primacy of protecting the public domain from corporate exploitation. By joining Commissioner Harkin's campaign to stop the Waterton Lakes project, the club hoped to avoid a precedent threatening the sanctity of the national parks. Despite the club's acknowledgment of prairie agricultural economics, inviolability had emerged as a key principle in the protection of the public domain embodied by the mountain parks. Here the club was not alone, as Progressive M.P. for Macleod G.G. Coote indicated in the House of Commons:

As regards the case...of the Waterton Lakes, I think just as many people are opposed to the using of Waterton Lakes as an irrigation reservoir as there are who are in favour of that proposition. I hope that the minister will see that the water-powers in our parks are preserved.⁵²

By 1923, however, the Waterton Lakes dam proposal had died on the planning board. Washington's unyielding stance regarding Glacier National Park in Montana deterred Canada's Minister of the Interior from submitting the Waterton scheme to the International Waterways Commission. Under J.B. Harkin, the National Parks Branch summoned extensive arguments against dam construction. The Branch contended that permitting the project within the park boundaries would create an open season on the national parks, setting a dangerous precedent for invasive commercial exploitation. Finally, just as debate over the dam culminated, the need for expensive irrigation works diminished due to a rise in average precipitation that produced bumper harvests in the southern Alberta districts during the 1920s.⁵³

⁵²*House of Commons Debates*, 1 June 1923, p. 3442.

⁵³Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks*, vol. III, p. 47; Ian Getty, *A History of Human Settlement at Waterton Lakes National Park, 1800-1937* (Ottawa: National Parks Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1971), pp. 141-51; Barry Potyandi, *Where the Rivers Meet: A History of the Upper Oldman River Basin to 1939* (Lethbridge: Robins Southern Printing, 1990), pp. 185-87.

Historian Ian Getty has attributed the victory over the Waterton dam scheme to the strength of American opposition to the proposal more than the protests of Canadian park advocates. While the advanced state of American conservation advocacy benefited the Canadian national parks as far as the protection of Glacier National Park was concerned, the agency of Harkin and his staff in soliciting public support in Canada cannot be overlooked. That national parks administrators turned to the Alpine Club in the face of the well-organized irrigation lobby suggests the department considered the ACC a key park user group whose "interests and sympathies" were loyal to a shared vision of the national parks, a vision wherein the inviolability of the nation's natural heritage was paramount.

During the Waterton debate, the Alpine Club voted to protect the public domain and made a clear stand for park protection, albeit with a pragmatic awareness of the need for economic growth in western Canada. To the extent that the ACC allied itself with the federal Parks Branch during the Waterton debate, Commissioner Harkin succeeded in coopting his critics from the Mt. Assiniboine Tour situation by directing their ire away from the department toward a common adversary; despite his professed dislike for "propaganda," Harkin played his hand well. On the whole, the Alpine Club of Canada had found its own advantage being coopted and moved one step further as a political interest group defending the public domain. As a lobby group, the club expanded its tactics to include gala banquet speeches, press coverage, formal resolutions, internal contacts within

the civil service, and collegial networks. It had learned the art of alliance building. Fundamentally, the Alpine Club had enhanced its relationship with the Canadian National Parks Branch as a key stakeholder group with a kindred vision of the mountain parks. In the long run, victory over the Waterton dam proved to be effortless compared to the protracted debate over the future of rivers and lakes to the north in Rocky Mountains Park.

"Commercial Invasion"—Confronting the Minnewanka and Spray Lakes Dam Proposals, 1922-1930

The Calgary Power Company saw the watersheds on Alberta's eastern slopes as the great hydro-power warehouse of the Rockies. During the early 1900s, Calgary Power extended a web of electrical power stations driven by rivers and waterfalls through the mountains and foothills west of Calgary. Here on the advancing technological frontiers of hydro power, the urban needs of prairie towns and cities clashed with a more esoteric vision of the national mountain parks as a public trust. The corporate goals of Calgary Power conflicted with the vision of parks championed by nature lovers and recreational pleasure-seekers such as the Alpine Club of Canada.

In May 1911, Calgary Power's first hydro-electric plant went into operation on the Bow River's Horseshoe Falls, generating a total of 19,000 horsepower. Technology made it possible to combine the production of power from "run-of-the-river" systems with "high head" hydro plants that generated energy as water dropped in elevation through a turbine system, as with the Horseshoe Falls installation. At a rate of \$30 per horsepower,

Calgary's electrical supply could now sustain the development of a street railway system, stimulate urban growth, and attract industrial investments, such as the CPR's regional repair center. Horseshoe Falls was critical to the supply of inexpensive power to the city of Calgary, whose population soared from 4,398 in 1901 to 43,704 in 1911, and continued to grow to 63,305 by 1921.⁵⁴

In 1912, the Calgary Power Company first dammed a storage reservoir on Lake Minnewanka in Rocky Mountains National Park. In 1913, the company brought a dam and generating station at Kananaskis Falls into service, despite alleged infringements on the lands of the Stoney Indian Reservation and Rocky Mountains Park.⁵⁵ At this stage, the aggregate capacity of Calgary Power's water-power plants totalled 32,000 horsepower, and served Calgary, the Canada Cement Company at Exshaw, and the village of Cochrane west of Calgary.⁵⁶ During the peak of winter, however, flow rates on the Bow River dropped causing Calgary Power's run-of-the-river hydro plants to operate at one-sixth their total capacity. For this reason, engineers turned to the idea of creating

⁵⁴University of Calgary Special Collections, Calgary Power Ltd., *Report* (March 1930), pp. 2-6; for background on Calgary's electrical supply and urban growth, see Max Foran, *Calgary: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: Lorimer and Co., National Museums of Canada, 1978), p. 79; for Calgary population statistics, see *Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Calgary."

⁵⁵Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, "Competition vs. Convenience: Federal Administration of Bow River Waterpowers, 1906-13," in *The Canadian West: Social Change and Economic Development*, ed. Henry C. Klassen (Calgary: University of Calgary, Comprint Publishing, 1977), pp. 163-80; C. Ruth Oltmann, *The Valley of Rumours...the Kananaskis* (Seebe, AB: Ribbon Creek Publishing Co., 1976), pp. 37-50.

⁵⁶University of Calgary Special Collections, Calgary Power Ltd., *Report* (March 1930), pp. 2-6.

water storage reservoirs in the Rocky Mountains to augment the river's flow through high-head electrical plants and run-of-the-river generating stations.⁵⁷

When Nova Scotia financier Izaak Walton Killam took control of Calgary Power in 1919, it was already a profitable monopolistic Alberta utility company. Under the corporate leadership of well-known entrepreneur Max Aitken and Calgary lawyer and politician R.B. Bennett, Calgary Power had experienced rapid growth by 1919 and secured the contract to supply power to Calgary, along with franchises for Edmonton and Medicine Hat.⁵⁸ Eagerness to expand the company's power grid and increase its capabilities led inevitably to engineering plans to harness the full electrical potential of hydrological systems in the Rockies. Tributaries to the Bow River were central to these proposals, and Calgary Power doggedly pursued its interests in damming Lake Minnewanka and the Spray Lakes valley as storage reservoirs to boost the dry-season flows through its power plants.⁵⁹

As the federal Water Power Branch of the Department of the Interior reported in 1920, harnessing the full potential of the Bow River promised to generate enough power

⁵⁷Christopher Armstrong and H V Nelles, *Monopoly's Moment: The Organization and Regulation of Canadian Utilities, 1830-1930* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), pp 303-09

⁵⁸Sue Andruschuk, *TransAlta Utilities: 75 Years of Progress* (TransAlta Utilities, May 1986), p 8. R B Bennett served on the Calgary Power board of directors from 1909-1919, and held shares in Calgary Power as well as the Canada Cement Company at Exshaw, see James H Gray, *R.B. Bennett. The Calgary Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), pp 107-8, 136, 191; Aitken and Bennett were business partners who established successful mergers including the Canada Cement Company, the Calgary Light and Power Company, and the Alberta Pacific Grain Company, see Richard Wilbur, *The Bennett Administration, 1930-1935* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1969), p 5

⁵⁹For historical background on Calgary Power's hydro-power developments on the Bow River and their significance to Alberta's economic growth, see University of Calgary Special Collections, *Calgary Power Ltd. Report* (March 1930), and insert, *Calgary Power Ltd. Alberta: Province of Opportunity* (Calgary: Calgary Power, 1958)

for the ordinary needs of 300,000 people. With populations escalating across the prairie provinces, manufacturing and industrial growth would "inevitably result in a rapidly increasing demand for cheap and dependable power." Along with transportation links, optimum reliable power capacity was a fundamental requirement in attracting this type of business diversification to prairie cities.⁶⁰ In 1923, Calgary Power negotiated a new contract with Calgary to combine the generating capacity of its municipally owned steam plants with the company's own hydro-electric stations, thus increasing output to carry a much higher load. Following the success of an experimental transmission line to supply smaller centers south of Calgary in 1926, Calgary Power launched a rapid expansion of urban and rural electrification.⁶¹

Thus, through the 1920s, Calgary Power made repeated proposals to dam lakes in Rocky Mountains Park to generate more power to service Alberta's growing market for urban and rural electrification. The proximity of the national park did not deter Calgary Power's plans for developing hydro-power dams on Lake Minnewanka, near the resort town of Banff, and on the Spray Lakes, south of the coal-mining town of Canmore. Reacting strongly in favour of preserving the national park in an inviolate state free from industrial exploitation, the Alpine Club of Canada joined the National Parks Branch in resisting Calgary Power's initiatives for over a decade.

⁶⁰Department of the Interior, *Annual Report*, 1917-18 and 1918-1919 (Ottawa: Water Power Branch, 1920), pp. 58-60.

⁶¹University of Calgary Special Collections, Calgary Power Ltd., *Report* (March 1930), pp. 2-4.

In 1921, Charles Stewart, Minister of the Interior, was unreceptive to Calgary Power's request for permission to raise the water level of Lake Minnewanka beyond the height of an existing dam built in 1912.⁶² The company claimed that the additional water storage capacity to be gained from a new dam would alleviate the problem of low winter flow rates on the Bow River; supply power to the nearby towns of Canmore, Banff, and Bankhead; and improve the scrubby shoreline of the lake. On the other hand, federal parks officials defended the public right to pristine national parks unspoiled by industrial landmarks. Despite the fact that his ministry included responsibility for water power resources in the West, Stewart remained unsympathetic to the proposed Minnewanka dam project and was thus receptive to advisors within the National Parks Branch.⁶³ As Stewart later explained, he was "keen on scenic beauty" and felt that Lake Minnewanka was an aesthetic attraction within close proximity to Banff townsite that would be marred by changing water levels.⁶⁴

Federal policies on resource extraction in the national parks were becoming less permissive during this period. For example, controls on logging and mining were strengthened. In 1912, the Parks Branch had offered little resistance to the construction of dams at Kananaskis Falls and Lake Minnewanka; by 1921, the Branch strongly opposed

⁶²Charles Stewart was a central Alberta farmer who began his political career as a Liberal member of the Alberta legislature. He stood as the premier of Alberta from 1917 until defeated by Herbert Greenfield's United Farmers of Alberta in 1921. He then entered King's federal cabinet as Minister of the Interior. See *Canadian Encyclopedia*, 1988 ed., s.v. "Stewart, Charles," Carl Betke.

⁶³Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park*, pp. 170-177. C. J. Taylor, "Legislating Nature: The National Parks Act of 1930," in *To see ourselves to save ourselves: Ecology and Culture in Canada*, eds. Rowland Lorimer et al., (Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1991), p. 129.

⁶⁴*House of Commons Debates*, 14 June 1923, p. 3940.

further hydro plans for Minnewanka and sought to protect the natural environment from excessive resource extraction that might threaten the natural state of the park. Dam proposals in the 1920s thus became a rallying point for Canadian national parks advocates set on the conservation of "scenic beauty." In many ways, the magnitude and political ramifications of the Minnewanka dam project resembled the turn-of-the-century Hetch Hetchy dam debate in Yosemite National Park, California, which gave rise to organized national parks advocacy in the United States.

In 1922, hard on the heels of the Minnewanka proposal, Calgary Power renewed a 1920 request to dam the entire chain of Spray Lakes. The plan aimed to engineer a water-storage reservoir by flooding the Spray Lakes Valley between the Goat and Kananaskis ranges in southeastern Rocky Mountains Park. Squeezed by this corporate power play, the Canadian National Parks Branch suspected the spectre of the huge Spray project was devised to wrest approval of the Minnewanka application from the minister.⁶⁵

A strong lobby of proconservation national parks supporters emerged to oppose the dam proposals. In 1922 and 1923, J.B. Harkin's office was flooded with letters and telegrams protesting hydro development in Rocky Mountains Park. Even groups such as the Calgary Automobile Club voiced concern that the mountain scenery would be marred.

⁶⁵Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park*, pp. 170-177. C J Taylor, "Legislating Nature The National Parks Act of 1930," in *To see ourselves to save ourselves: Ecology and Culture in Canada*, eds Rowland Lorimer et al., (Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1991), p. 129

The Banff Citizens' Council opposed "any attempt on [the] part of irrigation or water power interests to invade national parks" and disrupt their natural beauty⁶⁶

Some of the strongest statements in favour of national park preservation were made by the Alpine Club of Canada. Conditioned by debates over development in the national parks through the early 1920s, the club quickly sprang to the defence of the Spray Lakes. The Toronto ACC Section went on record to defend the national parks

We are of the opinion that the principle should be laid down and accepted once and for all that our national parks, which belong to the people of Canada, should be preserved for the whole people, and not destroyed or exploited for commercial purposes for the benefit of a few.⁶⁷

Here the Alpine Club was in harmony with J.B. Harkin's populist vision of the national parks as an inviolable public domain

As in the case of the Waterton irrigation scheme, Arthur Wheeler and Sir James Outram again balked at the proposal to dam lakes in the national parks. At the Victoria ACC section's annual dinner in March 1923, Wheeler condemned the Spray Lakes plan, as reported in the *Daily Colonist*:

Such [a] scheme would, in his opinion, completely destroy the beautiful valley, which is a main thoroughfare to many of the most scenic centres of the Southern Canadian Rockies⁶⁸

⁶⁶Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park*, pp. 173-74, NAC, RG 84, vol. 491, file R39-5-2, Banff Citizens Council to Park Commissioner Harkin, telegram, 12 September 1922. Ibid., "Will Not Permit Minnewanka Levels Changed," *Morning Albertan*, 29 January 1923. Ibid., "Banff Objects to Lake Minnewanka's Level Being Raised," *Calgary Daily Herald*, 27 July 1922

⁶⁷Cited in Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park*, pp. 173-74

⁶⁸NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3, "Alpine Club at Annual Dinner," *Daily Colonist*, 29 March 1913

Because his Mt. Assiniboine tour business passed through the area, Wheeler was well aware of the dam's potential impact on the environment and on tourism.

At the Calgary section's annual dinner in April 1923, Outram emphasized the duty of the club to oppose damming the Spray Lakes and uphold the preservation of the valley in its natural state, as reported in *The Gazette*:

He hoped that every single member would oppose to the last the proposed scheme of turning the Spray Lake district into a reservoir to generate electricity for Calgary, thus ruining a spot of wonderful beauty forever.⁶⁹

These statements to a crowd of 125—including National Parks Administrator J.C. Campbell—were echoed by the local club secretary T.O. West, who protested "the infraction of the rights of the Canadian people . . . in the damming up of the Spray Lakes."⁷⁰

F.W. Godsal was one of the only recorded dam proponents in the Alpine Club. He argued that the needs of the prairie farmer should take precedence over preserving the national parks in their natural state. Characteristic of many Canadians, Godsal believed in the superabundance of wilderness:

I do not consider that it is the business of the Alpine Club Considering the *vast* area of mountains and lakes in Alberta and B.C., it is positively hoggish to trouble about 2 or 3 lakes, or half a dozen, and thereby hinder the progress of the chief and main industry of the country, upon which all other wealth depends.⁷¹

⁶⁹*The Gazette* (June 1923), p. 20-21

⁷⁰*The Gazette* (June 1923), pp. 20-21

⁷¹University of Alberta Archives, accn. 74-169-421, F.W. Godsal to William Pearce, 19 May 1923, regarding the myth of nature's abundance see, Altmeyer, "Three ideas of nature in Canada," pp. 27-31, 34

As in the case of the Waterton dam, Godsal put his faith in God and hydro with his appeal "to think of the needs of the prairies, whether for water, or for power generated by water . . . and help Calgary and other towns to prosperity again . . . as intended by a wise Creator." Godsal was convinced that ACC members had bowed to Wheeler on the matter of hydro development in the Rockies, a belief he disclosed to William Pearce—a key proponent of hydro development who worked for the CPR. Judging by the lack of other dissenters, it appears that Godsal's internal campaign to persuade the Calgary and Edmonton ACC sections to oppose Wheeler met with little enthusiasm.⁷²

Through spring and summer 1923, Arthur Wheeler devoted considerable energy to publicizing the dam controversy in western newspapers and Alpine Club publications, as he laid the ground for the formation of a national parks advocacy association. In response to criticism from former Department of Interior colleague William Pearce, Wheeler stated that his primary concern was to safeguard "the general principle that the mountain parks are reserved for the benefit of all the people and should not be subject to violation" by commercial ventures.⁷³ With prescient insight regarding Rocky Mountains Park, he warned Pearce against the erosion of the national parks through cumulative demands for development:

⁷²University of Alberta Archives, accn 74-169-421, Godsal to T O West, Calgary ACC Chair, 29 May 1923, Ibid., Pearce to Godsal, 14 May 1923. Ibid., accn 74-169-421 2, Godsal to Pearce, 24 June 1923

⁷³University of Alberta Archives, accn 74-169-421, A O Wheeler to W Pearce, 18 May 1923. For background to William Pearce's activities also see Bella, *Parks for Profit*, pp. 13, 40, 51-56; E.A. Mitchner, "William Pearce and Federal Government Activity in the West, 1874-1904" *Canadian Public Administration* (June 1967), pp. 235-43. Ibid., "William Pearce and Federal Government Activity in Western Canada 1882-1904" (Ph.D) dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971

As a club, we are opposed to commercial invasion of our National Parks, which are reserved for the people for their especial (sic) benefit. The Spray project is one particular case, as also the Waterton Lakes scheme and the Lake Minnewanka scheme, in which you are particularly interested. There will be assuredly, in the course of time, hundreds of other cases of varying types, all of which will have the same general grounds for argument as this particular one, and if not checked the ultimate result will be ruination to the National Parks of Canada. This has been amply proved by the experience of the United States, and the desperate fight that has been waged there for many years to save such public park reserves intact for the people.⁷⁴

Taking issue with Pearce's letters to the *Calgary Daily Herald*, Wheeler refuted the case for the Spray Lakes dam and urged Canadians to guard against the erosion of the national parks by insisting on their inviolability.⁷⁵ A public advocacy association was just the watchdog to prevent "commercial invasion" in the national parks.

In the June 1923 edition of the club's national newsletter *The Gazette*, Wheeler primed club members to form a Canadian National Parks Association in order to play this role. The U.S. National Parks Association was his model for a nongovernment national parks advocacy group. Formed as an offshoot of the Sierra Club in 1909 by the Sierra Club's William Colby and John Muir, the American association known as the Society for the Preservation of National Parks challenged the Hetch Hetchy dam proposal as an affront to the inviolability of the U.S. national parks. Its supporters were drawn from several alpine clubs, walking clubs, women's clubs, and civic societies. Notably, the new

⁷⁴University of Alberta Archives, accn 74-169-421, A O Wheeler to W. Pearce, 24 May 1923.

⁷⁵University of Alberta Archives, accn 74-169-421, Wheeler to *Calgary Daily Herald*, 8 June 1923.

society shared its directors, as well as its San Francisco offices, with the Sierra Club, which was itself originally established as a "guardian for the Yosemite" in 1892.⁷⁶

Similarly, Wheeler thought a Canadian parks association would ensure that power companies kept their "Hands Off Our National Parks":

All lovers of Nature as found amidst the Great Hills of Canada, and especially mountain enthusiasts, are deeply concerned to prevent the invasion of the National Parks of Canada by commercial interests, to their destruction. In creating these reservations for the joy and lasting benefit of millions of people, the Government of Canada has followed a wise policy, not alone for the present generation but for generations to come. In the recent past commercial interests have endeavoured to encroach upon our park reserves, and utilize their scenic beauties to pay dividends to power companies. The greatest good to the greatest number is a universal law, and in this case particularly it applies. When one thinks of the undiluted joy and happiness that is given yearly by our scenic parks to thousands of workers of Canada and from other lands . . . interest in dividend paying stocks sinks into insignificance. The slogan "Hands Off Our National Parks" is a good one to adopt and to take measures to maintain.⁷⁷

Based on these arguments, Wheeler proposed that the Alpine Club form a Canadian association dedicated to parks advocacy at its upcoming summer camp. The ACC, meanwhile, would carry on its role as the non-political recreational base of Canadian alpinism. Wheeler's instinct to build a lobbying instrument and follow up with publicity campaigns and slogans showed a shrewd sense of political tactics.

⁷⁶Holway R. Jones, *John Muir and the Sierra Club: the battle for Yosemite* (San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1965), pp 11, 94-99, 119-121, 182, Stephen R. Fox, *The American conservation movement: John Muir and his legacy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), p 144. Groups that supported the creation of the U.S. National Parks Association included the Boston Appalachian Mountain Club, the Seattle Mountaineers, the Portland Mazamas club, the American Civic Association, the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, and the General Federation of Women's Clubs

⁷⁷*The Gazette* (June 1923), pp 4-5

The Alpine Club's annual general meeting held in Larch Valley on August 2, 1923, devoted considerable time to the formation of a national parks advocacy organization. National Parks Commissioner J.B. Harkin attended, along with the chief park engineer J.M. Wardle. Since the Waterton dam crisis, Harkin had seen a need for the formation of a Canadian national parks association like that in the U.S.A. The Commissioner's attendance at the meeting suggests Harkin wished to encourage the Alpine Club's initiative, and, one speculates, he may have explored the idea of an advocacy body with Wheeler leading up to the 1923 summer camp since they knew each other through collegial channels in the Department of the Interior.

True to its organizational origins, the ACC stood for the Canadian "mountain heritage." ACC President William Foster appealed to posterity in his call for the club to take action to protect the "scenic assets" of the Rocky Mountain parks:

The National Parks were for the perpetual benefit of the people and no encroachments, merely benefitting a small minority should be allowed Science may some day solve the problem of utilities, but the great scenic assets can never be improved upon and must be preserved for all time. If the Club takes part in this conservation and resistance to encroachment, it will be doing something of real national value and will be known for its vision—it should look ahead.⁷⁸

Thus Foster urged the Alpine Club to resist hydro development and promote a populist vision of the national parks as Canada's scenic natural playgrounds preserved for the good of the people and generations to come.

Arthur Wheeler proposed that the ACC form the Canadian National Parks Association, as the club was "vitaly interested in defending the entire system of national

⁷⁸*The Gazette* (Dec. 1923), pp 17-18.



Illustration 25. ACC leaders, left to right, J. D. Patterson, A. O. Wheeler, A. H. McCarthy, W. W. Foster, anon., G. W. Smith, H. B. Mitchell, T. B. Moffat, W. J. S. Walker, S. H. Mitchell, c. 1920-21. Source: CAJ (1956), p. 25.

parks from commercial encroachment and despoliation of their beautiful scenery."⁷⁹ He called on Commissioner Harkin to explain the government's policy on national parks, as was summarized in the club's 1923 *Gazette*:

Mr. Harkin said the policy of the parks was the policy of the Alpine Club of Canada, the preservation of the natural beauties of Canada for the people of Canada, free from all monopolies and special privileges. The general opinion was that the parks were a sort of frill, of no especial value. From a commercial standpoint, however, they were a great asset to the nation, bringing enormous amounts of money into the country and paying a huge dividend on the outlay. In 1921 the revenue that the National Parks brought into Canada was at least \$15,000,000. The output that year was \$850,000 There were also the human dividends to be considered . . . greater mental, physical and spiritual efficiency.⁸⁰

Harkin's statements about the the importance of the parks bore a striking similarity to the philosophy expressed by the ACC—one that allied Parks bureaucrats and alpinists in support of mutual goals.

Section representatives then spoke out "against the spoliation of the parks," which they saw inherent in the Spray Lakes hydro proposals, and threw their support behind the motion to form a national parks conservation body. Saskatoon member Andrew Sibbald moved the proposal be accepted, seconded by Vancouver's Dr. Fred C. Bell, thus creating the Canadian National Parks Association (CNPA).

During its early years, the ACC parent organization fostered development of the nascent CNPA behind the scenes while maintaining its formal role as Canada's national mountaineering group. Just as the U.S. National Parks Association had shared its

⁷⁹*The Gazette* (Dec 1923), pp. 21-22

⁸⁰*The Gazette* (Dec 1923), pp. 21-22

directorship and offices with the Sierra Club during the Hetch Hetchy debate, the ACC's executive and membership overlapped with that of the CNPA, and the ACC offered the CNPA organizational and financial assistance during the Spray Lakes and Minnewanka controversies. In 1924, all but one of the CNPA officers were ACC leaders: W.W. Foster was the CNPA president; A.A. McCoubrey, central vice president, Selby Walker, western vice president; A.O. Wheeler secretary; and Andrew Sibbald, treasurer. The ACC was also well-represented on the 1924 CNPA executive committee with members such as Dr. W.J. Hickson of Montreal, H.E. Sampson of Regina, and Vancouver's Julia Henshaw, Dr. Fred Bell, and Major F.V. Longstaff. In 1930, only four members of the CNPA executive were not members of the Alpine Club.⁸¹ In 1934, ACC President A.A. McCoubrey ran for the position of CNPA vice president. In the same year, the ACC was allowed five votes in the CNPA elections.⁸² Because of these practical overlaps, the CNPA held its first general meetings at the ACC camps.

The goals and constitution of the Canadian National Parks Association (CNPA) were set in 1923 by members of the Alpine Club, therefore, it is not surprising to notice certain similarities between the goals and structure of the CNPA and its parent organization. The CNPA constitution set forth three major objectives:

- a) The preservation of the National Parks of Canada in their entirety for the use of the people of Canada and of the world, and the prevention of detriment to them through the invasion of commercial interests

⁸¹*The Gazette* (December 1923), p. 8. In 1924, Charles Hanbury-Williams, the CNPA eastern vice president, was an exception in that he did not belong to the ACC. WMCR, AC 00M/008, Tweedy to Moffat, 27 May 1930.

⁸²WMCR, AC 00M/017, Tweedy to McCoubrey, 6 February 1934.

- b) The spreading abroad of propaganda with the object of attracting people to them.
- c) The preservation of their natural beauties for the benefit of mankind, and of the fauna and the flora intact, for educational, scientific, artistic and recreational purposes. To maintain them inviolate as symbols of the great heritage we possess in this wide-spreading Dominion of Canada.⁸³

The last objective bore striking similarity to the objectives of the Alpine Club's 1906 constitution, which reflected the all-embracing Victorian philosophy of alpinism as envisioned by Elizabeth Parker and Arthur Wheeler.

Major J.W. Selby Walker (1879-1952)—the Calgary conservationist who founded Inglewood Bird Sanctuary on the banks of the Bow River—became the CNPA's long-standing executive secretary and most vocal member. As an ACC founding member, he held various leadership roles in the club, notably the honorary treasurership from 1914 to 1922 and a position on the clubhouse management committee. He was also involved in the formative years of the Canadian Youth Hostels Association.⁸⁴

Walker became the predominant figure in the CNPA; some critics suggested the group was a "one-man show" under his leadership.⁸⁵ To his credit, Walker raised

⁸³*The Gazette* (Dec 1923), pp. 6-11.

⁸⁴"Major W J. Selby Walker" CAJ (1953), p. 128. "W J Selby Walker, Sanctuary Founder Dies" *The Calgary Herald*, 22 July 1952, p. 1-2; Canadian Hostelling Association, *Fifty Years of Canadian Hostelling* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1988), pp. 20, 31-39, 52, 60. Grant MacEwan, *Colonel James Walker. Man of the Western Frontier* (Saskatoon: Western Prairie Books, 1989), p. 159.

⁸⁵NAC, RG 84, vol. 189, file U36-1, part 1, H.S. Robinson to J. Smart, 23 August 1948. Robinson claimed that the CNPA had not held a meeting since 1923 and Selby Walker was a one-man show. Although his claim was not factually correct, he nonetheless believed the ACC should distance itself from the CNPA because they no longer shared the same views. NAC, RG 84, vol. 171, file U125-17, part 1, H. Robinson to J. Smart, 9 December 1946. Clearly as Supt. of Parks and Resources Information, Robinson held a jaundiced impression of Walker: "Mr. Walker seems to have been running an almost 'one-man' show for some years largely devoted to criticising Canada's National Parks administration because it does not equal that of the United States."

consistent opposition to industrial encroachments in the national parks and would keep the CNPA going through the Depression. Emphasizing the advanced policies of the U S. national parks in CNPA bulletins, Walker recommended similar public policies be adopted in Canada. In contrast to the Alpine Club's social focus on mountaineering, the CNPA was dedicated to a politicized focus on national parks advocacy and preservation and brought this focus to bear on hydro-development controversies over the next 20 years.

Following the 1923 ACC camp, the CNPA publicly announced its stand against the proposed power developments. Calgarians Selby Walker and Thomas Moffat proclaimed the creation of the CNPA and its manifesto in the Alberta press:

There are those who look enviously upon our parks and who believe that any enterprise profitable to themselves should be allowed in the parks, while the members of the National Parks Association believe that when a park is once set aside for the recreation of the Canadian nation, the Park Act should not be tampered with and no individual or community should obtain rights within these parks to the detriment of the remainder of the people of Canada.⁸⁶

Like Commissioner Harkin, the CNPA voiced a combination of economic arguments against the proposals, which stressed the tourism potential of the national parks. The CNPA advised: "The Dominion government has nothing to gain by granting a concession within one of the National parks, which by the precedent established jeopardizes all of the parks."

In August 1923, Andrew Sibbald notified the Minister of the Interior of the formation of the CNPA and corresponded with Commissioner Harkin as to how the new

⁸⁶University of Alberta Archives, William Pearce Collection, accn 74-169-421 2, W J S Walker and T.B. Moffat, "National Parks And Power Sites," newsclipping, n d

association could best assist the Parks Branch. A barrage of form letters to the minister from CNPA supporters followed—many from Sibbald's hometown of Saskatoon and all opposed to the Calgary Power application.⁸⁷ The CNPA's battle against power development in Canada's national parks attracted the support of many other groups: the Banff Citizen's Council; the Calgary Good Roads Association; the Edmonton Automobile and Good Roads Association; the Women's Canadian Club; the National Council of Women; the American Association for the Advancement of Science; boards of trade; the Alberta Provincial Liberal Association; and various clubs devoted to natural history, fishing, and community service.⁸⁸ Together, they formed a broad-based coalition, much like the union of national park supporters that had gathered around the U.S. parks association to stop the Hetch Hetchy dam, which might not have been possible under the ACC banner since many of the partners had very different motivations. Emulating this American example, Wheeler and Harkin integrated a workable model for national parks advocacy into the process of Canadian public policy formation.

In June 1923, Ottawa rejected Calgary Power's Cascade Power project and application to raise the water level of Lake Minnewanka. Noting that the Water Powers

⁸⁷NAC, RG 84, vol. 107, file U125, part 1, A Sibbald to Minister of the Interior, 14 August 1923. Ibid., Sibbald to Harkin, 9 August 1923; Ibid., W.J. Campbell to Minister, 29 August 1923; Ibid., Harold Parr to Minister, 30 August 1923; Ibid., A. McKay to Minister, n.d.; D.J.M. McGeary to Minister, 10 October 1923. Ibid., E.J. MacKenzie to Minister, 8 November 1923. Ibid., Christina E. Henry, 21 November 1923. Ibid., Rupert Reid to Minister, n.d. Among these CNPA correspondents, Campbell, Henry, and McGeary were also ACC members. See WMCR, *Constitution and List of Members* (1920-1922) and (1924-1926).

⁸⁸Leslie Bella and Susan Markham, "Parks First: Patriotic Canadians from Coast to Coast in Support of National Parks" *Canadian Parks/Recreation Association* (December 1984), pp. 15-16. Bella, *Parks for Profit*, p. 54.

Branch and the Parks Branch were "widely at variance" on this issue, Minister of the Interior Charles Stewart provided the following rationale for his decision:

Anybody who has been at Banff knows that Lake Minnewanka is within a few miles of the centre of the attractive portion of the park. The Calgary Power Company already have a concession on that lake, and they have increased the lake level, and their application . . . was for the purpose of raising it by another ten or fifteen feet. After looking it over I came to the conclusion that it would absolutely destroy the scenic properties of that particular lake. It was very close to where all sightseers of the park come, and obviously if we are to get any return for our investment in our national parks we must keep them attractive enough to draw tourists, and on these grounds, I refused the application of the company.⁸⁹

At the same time, the Spray Lakes application remained before the department, and Stewart intended to visit the Spray valley during the summer of 1923 in order to make his assessment:

I am not an engineer and cannot tell from a study of the maps just what the effect of raising the level of the Spray lakes would be. However, it is rather an expensive undertaking, and in fact would cost a great deal more than the company would feel warranted in expending at the moment in view of the amount of power they could sell.⁹⁰

The leader of the Progressive Party M.P. Robert Forke called the minister's attention to the fact that the issue of power applications affecting the national parks was a "very lively question in the prairie provinces" and he had received telegrams protesting against "granting any further power privileges."⁹¹ Aware of the potential political fallout of

⁸⁹*House of Commons Debates*, 14 June 1923, p. 3940, *Ibid.*, 1 June 1923, p. 3442

⁹⁰*House of Commons Debates*, 14 June 1923, p. 3939-40

⁹¹*House of Commons Debates*, 14 June 1923, p. 3939, W.L. Morton, *The Progressive Party in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), pp. 161, 164, 171, 188

seeming to cater to business tycoons in Calgary and Montreal in the face of scrutiny from the Progressives, the federal Liberals continued to move carefully on the issue

Although the Minnewanka proposal was turned down in June 1923, the victory for the conservationists opposed to the dams was short-lived. Calgary Power merely withdrew its proposals until a more opportune time. The company could afford to play a waiting game knowing that the demand for power was growing just as certainly as political factors would shift with time

In 1922, federal-provincial negotiations over the transfer of natural resources to the western provinces had started anew, this time between Prime Minister King and Alberta's Premier Greenfield. The political context of decisions made by the Department of the Interior was coloured by these negotiations.⁹² The Spray Lakes question was held in abeyance until the matter of resource allocation along the eastern slopes of the Rockies was determined. In any case, Calgary Power's application for the Spray Lakes project may well have been premature in the 1920s, considering market demands for power, slow industrial growth in the West, and competition with the flourishing oil and gas sector for energy provision.

Following the Lake Minnewanka victory, Wheeler continued to publicly promote the National Parks Association.⁹³ Gradually, however, he succumbed to the belief that

⁹²"King Offers Natural Resources to Prairie Provinces," *Weekly Albertan*, 1 March 1922, p. 1. "Take the Resources, Give Up Subsidies, Offer of Dominion," *Ibid.*, 2 March 1922, p. 1. "Legislators Will Talk over the Policy of the Resources," *Ibid.*, 7 March 1922, p. 1. "Debate Tame on Question of Transfer of Resources," *Ibid.*, 9 March 1922, pp. 1, 5; E. Alvin Mitchner, "The Development of Western Waters," pp. 104-106, 170

⁹³NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 3. "Alpine Club of Canada Plans to Climb Mt. Logan," *Calgary Herald*, 5 February 1924, on promoting CNPA.

Calgary Power would win out in the long run. The long-term interests of big business were entrenched in the Spray Lakes Valley and thus augured the transfer of this area to the province. Minister Stewart visited the Spray Lakes in summer 1923, and by April 1924 he seemed to view Calgary Power's need to supply power to Calgary in a more sympathetic light. By 1924, the Progressive threat in Ottawa had eased as the party began to disintegrate. At the same time, the national and regional economy began to accelerate. By now, the Province of Alberta had also applied to develop the Spray Lakes as a storage basin and commenced hydrological studies hoping to block private development of a key water power resource.⁹⁴ The Minister of the Interior publicly stated in April 1924 that that he was keeping "a perfectly open mind" on the issue. "I do not think the development would interfere very materially with the park as such, in view of the fact that it comprises so many hundreds of thousands of acres." M.P.s from Saskatoon and Vancouver cautioned the minister to deal with the issue carefully. Saskatoon Progressive M.P. John Evans voiced the disapproval of the Alpine Club of Canada:

I should like to inform the minister that the whole Alpine Club of Canada is watching this application with jealous eyes. They believe there should be no interference with Spray river park such as would detract in any way from the attractive and pleasurable features which make these national parks so desirable as playgrounds for the people. I think the government should formulate a policy respecting the national parks so that no unfortunate precedent would be created for the future.⁹⁵

⁹⁴E. Alyn Mitchner, "The Development of Western Waters," p. 104-06

⁹⁵*House of Commons Debates*, 10 April 1924, p. 1260

"Jealous eyes" were everywhere and the minister stated that the issue was of such importance he would not deal with it hastily.⁹⁶ Meanwhile, intergovernmental negotiations over natural resource transfers continued.

As a good tactician, Arthur Wheeler read the board and knew when to change his game. In March 1925, Wheeler shifted direction and advised J.B. Harkin to withdraw territory from the park rather than risk setting a precedent for the commercial violation of the national parks:

I am in hopes that the franchise will not be given, but it is possible that the pressure may be too strong to overcome. Should it be decided to grant the franchise and withdraw the area from the Banff National Park, as I think would be wise to avoid the precedent, then, in such case also, a good road should be insisted upon in order to maintain access to the Assiniboine area.⁹⁷

As in the case of the 1922 Waterton debate, Wheeler was conscious of avoiding precedents for "commercial invasion" of the parks. He argued for a vision of parks based on the principle of inviolability, preserving the national parks unimpaired for present and future generations. Maintaining inviolability, in this case, justified the alienation of certain national park lands to prevent setting a precedent for commercial development within their boundaries.

Calgary Power's hydro-development plans for the Rockies were rekindled as federal-provincial negotiations over the transfer of natural resources picked up in 1928. At the same time, the western economy was hitting a prosperous stride again as wheat

⁹⁶*House of Commons Debates*, 10 April 1924, p. 1259

⁹⁷NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 4, A.O. Wheeler to J.B. Harkin, 23 March 1925. The request for a road to the Assiniboine area was likely pertinent to the Mt. Assiniboine tour business.

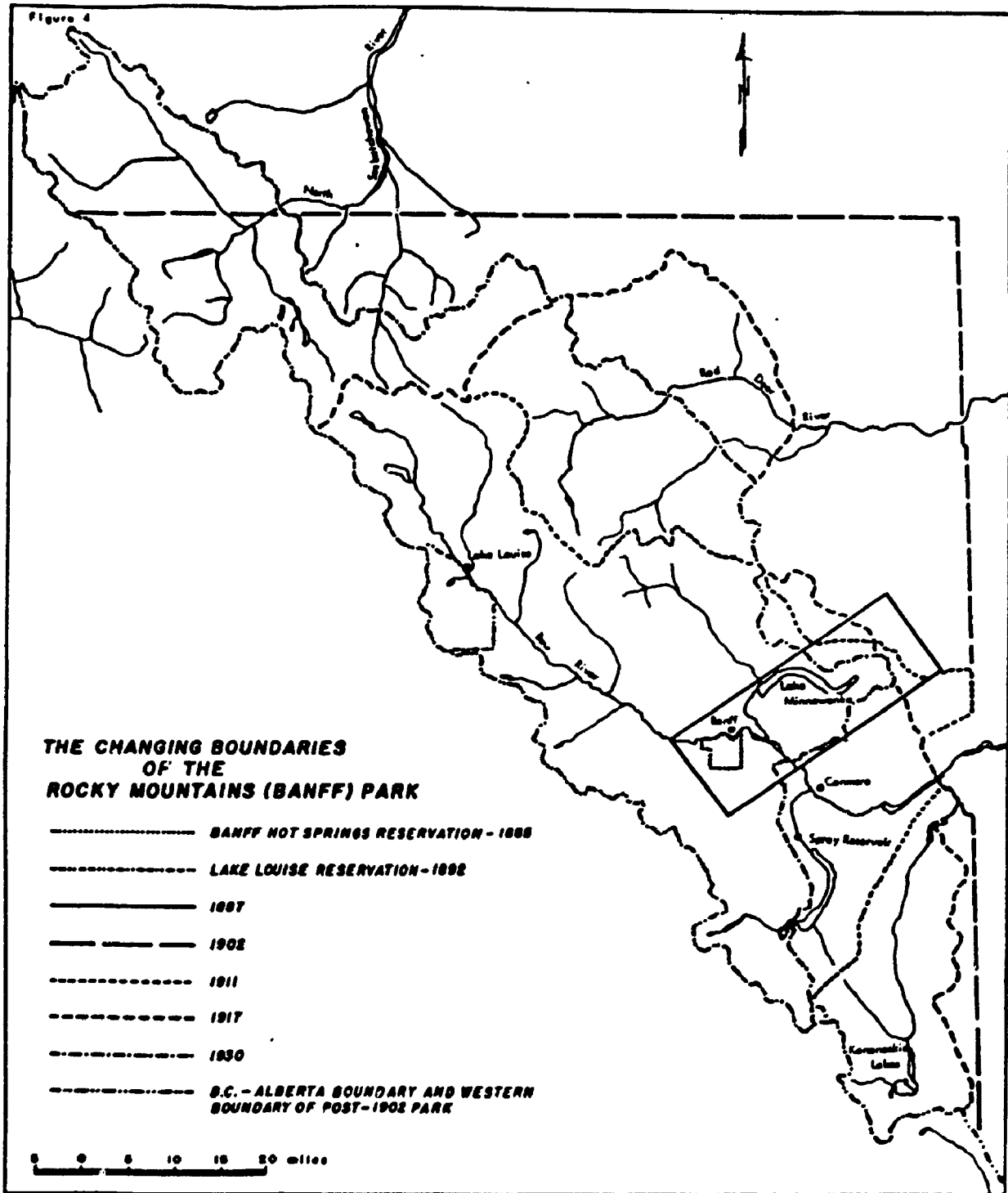
sales regained the levels of the Laurier boom. Urban and rural demand for power surged. Again, the Spray Lakes dam proposal came to the fore. Bolstered by opposition to dams in the national parks from Western cities as far away from the Rockies as Winnipeg, Saskatoon, and Vancouver, the Minister of the Interior refused to acquiesce to Calgary Power's pressure to allow the Spray Lakes proposal to go ahead. Planning under way in the Parks Branch, however, suggests that J.B. Harkin suspected as early as 1927 that the *size* of Rocky Mountains Park would ultimately have to be sacrificed to safeguard the principle of national park inviolability.⁹⁸ Here was a crucial tactical shift in keeping with Arthur Wheeler's 1925 strategy to protect the park from hydro development.

Anticipating provincial demands for the excision of resource-rich areas from the national parks, the Parks Branch prepared for an alienation of lands. The 1929 R.W. Cautley Report suggested new boundaries for Rocky Mountains Park that included new territory around Malloch Mountain and Jasper National Park and excluded areas ripe for resource extraction, primarily the Spray Lakes, Kananaskis, Exshaw, and Canmore.⁹⁹

In 1930, the natural resources transfer acts were decreed, along with the new *National Parks Act*. The new federal park legislation changed the name of Rocky Mountains Park to Banff National Park, formalized Banff's boundary changes, and enshrined the principle of national parks inviolability. The *Act* stated

⁹⁸Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park*, pp. 177-80.

⁹⁹C.J. Taylor, "Legislating Nature," pp. 131-32, Great Plains Consultants, *Banff National Park*, p. 182. New area added to Rocky Mountains Park included 268 km² around Malloch Mountain, and a 2538 km² chunk of Jasper National Park.



(Source: R.C. Scace, *Banff: A Cultural-Historical Study of Land Use and Management in a National Park Community to 1945* (Calgary: University of Calgary, 1968))

Map 3. Changing Boundaries of Rocky Mountains (Banff) National Park, 1835 - 1930. Source: R. C. Scace map reproduced in Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park, 1792-1965 A History* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1984), microfiche report series 196, p. 325

The Parks are hereby dedicated to the people of Canada for their benefit, education and enjoyment, subject to the provisions of this Act and Regulations, and such Parks shall be maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations ¹⁰⁰

The area of Rocky Mountains Park was reduced to 6695 km².¹⁰¹ Despite its Faustian quality, Harkin's boundary surgery proved effective in warding off immediate industrial encroachment on Banff National Park and placed the principle of inviolability firmly in legislation. In the long run, the principle of inviolability would prove to be a far more pragmatically defined concept than national parks supporters like the Alpine Club and the CNPA had expected

The Vision of Parks—Ideals and Realities

Friction between western economic development and the established mandate of Canadian alpinism during the 1920s brought the Alpine Club's vision of national parks into a sharper, more pragmatic focus. Rapid settlement, the growth of regional consciousness, and technological change in western Canada meant the mountain parks were no longer an isolated wilderness far from the reach of economic growth. As development pressures increased, the club rallied support for its vision of the national parks as a public domain to be preserved in a natural state for the benefit of future generations, rather than exploited for corporate gain. Middle-class tourism was central to the club's vision and underscored

¹⁰⁰*The National Parks Act*, May 30, 1930, ch. 33, sec. 4

¹⁰¹Great Plains Consultants, *Banff National Park*, p. 183

the "Hands Off Our National Parks" lobby. Although the club espoused a populist vision of the parks, the word "our" in this slogan resounded a proprietary middle-class ring.

Due to an escalating crisis over hydro developments in the Rockies, conservation rose to a higher priority on the club's agenda. As outside threats heightened an awareness of the need to safeguard the public domain, the club's internal discourse weighed in favour of park protection. In this atmosphere, Arthur Wheeler proved to be a shrewd and adept political tactician. Wheeler argued pragmatically that the potential precedent for "commercial invasion" of the national parks put the "general principle" of public parks at stake. Over the years, the ACC had shared an operative partnership with the Parks Branch, as well as a common vision of the national mountain parks. As a committed group of longstanding park users, the ACC was a ready ally to the National Parks Branch.

The *National Parks Act* (1930) was Ottawa's response to calls to protect the public domain and strengthened the principle of inviolability in national parks legislation. Under the new legislation several changes were highlighted. national park lands could be created or amended only by an act of Parliament, wildlife was fully protected, and commercial mineral and timber exploitation was to be phased out. The *Act* also authorized the establishment of National Historic Parks by order in council ¹⁰² Although the national parks were better protected under this act, resolution came at the expense of alienating sizable tracts of park lands. This resolution to resource-use conflicts was only one of the many compromises that would continue to trouble Canada's national parks

¹⁰²C.J. Taylor, "Legislating Nature: The National Parks Act of 1930," in *To see ourselves to save ourselves*, ed. Rowland Lorimer et al (Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies, 1991), pp 131-34, W F Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks*, vol. II, (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1977), pp 10-17

administration. Calgary Power's foothold in Banff National Park opened the way to future disputes over utilities, later seen in the case of the Lake Minnewanka dam project during World War II and the resulting TransAlta Utilities' enduring right of way through Banff National Park.¹⁰³

Following the 1920s dam conflicts, the Alpine Club lost its federal funding. If it had friends in the Parks Branch, the ACC had also acquired enemies in Ottawa's higher corridors of power. In 1930, the federal Conservatives swept to power, led by the favourite son of Calgary capitalism. As Prime Minister, R. B. Bennett was slow to forget the ACC's opposition to Calgary Power and purportedly had "no use for the Alpine Club."¹⁰⁴ To Bennett, the Alpine Club was an impediment to corporations—such as Calgary Power, the CPR, and the Canada Cement Plant—in which he held substantial personal investments. Bennett was a friend of business, not of maverick conservationists who put obstacles in the path of "progress", this reality was made clear when the ACC's federal funding was terminated after Bennett became prime minister.

During the 1930s, the Alpine Club moved away from active national parks conservation advocacy toward a narrowly defined focus on mountain recreation. The CNPA was intended to take over the ACC's earlier role in political activism. As it looked ahead to expanding recreational tourism in the Rockies, the ACC seemed unaware that the forces of urbanization, commercial agriculture, and technological change were inexorable and would return in other guises. In its own way, mass tourism would eventually

¹⁰³Calgary Power became TransAlta Utilities in 1981, see Andruschuk, *TransAlta*, p. 44

¹⁰⁴WMCR, AC 00M/010, Mitchell to Sampson, 18 October 1930

jeopardize park values and the inviolability of the public domain, just as irrigation and dam projects had done in the 1920s and 1930s.

CHAPTER 5

Changing Frontiers:

The ACC Faces the Depression and War, 1930-1945

The Nature of Mountain Sport

Where the Pacific seacoast curves to meet the Alaskan panhandle, the land folds, buckles, and turns on end, stretching eastward into Canada's Yukon along the St. Elias mountains. Here rises the highest point in Canada—Mount Logan. At 5959 m, Logan is the highest elevation in Canada and the second highest in North America after Alaska's Mt. McKinley. Named after the nineteenth-century founder of the Geological Survey of Canada, Sir William Logan, Mt. Logan is one of the world's most immense mountains. Three peaks rise from a domain of perpetual winter to Logan's glacial tiara, yet, despite its massive size, the mountain remained unsighted by modern explorers until 1890. Thus the 1925 Mount Logan ascent in Canada's Yukon became a mountaineering landmark for the Alpine Club of Canada. Public attention—captivated by the series of British attempts on Mt. Everest through the early 1920s—led inevitably to comparisons between Everest and Logan. As a result, the 1925 ACC expedition elicited dramatic press coverage across Canada and the United States as newspapers queried: "Will Mount Logan Be Conquered?" Rhetoric reminiscent of a military campaign followed the team's progress as

headlines reported: "Mount Logan: The attack begins on Canada's mighty peak," "The Assault on 'The Canadian Everest' Mount Logan," "Off to Attack King of Canadian Peaks," and "Mt. Logan Conquered! An epic of Canadian heroism—victory over fearful odds."¹ In many ways, the "conquest" of Canada's highest peak proved a turning point in the history of Canada's Alpine Club, as well as a newsroom battle of nationalism and human triumph over the power of nature.

From 1913—when ACC climbers Albert MacCarthy, William Foster, and Austrian guide Conrad Kain succeeded in the first recognized ascent of Mt. Robson, the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies—the Alpine Club of Canada set its sights on the first ascent of Mt. Logan in the Yukon's St. Elias Range.² An expedition to Logan was delayed by the outbreak of World War I and awaited the return of peacetime. In 1925, the ACC coordinated the expedition to Mt. Logan under Captain Albert H. MacCarthy's direction. "Mack" was a retired American naval officer, who ranched in British Columbia's Windermere Valley, and a longtime member of the ACC, the American Alpine Club, and

¹*Canadian Encyclopedia*, 1st ed., s.v. "Logan, Mount" by Glen Boles; *Ibid.*, s.v. "Logan, Sir William Edmond" by Suzanne E. Zeller. A joint 1992 expedition of the Canadian Geographical Society, the Geological Survey of Canada, and the Canadian Parks Service using GPS determined the altitude of Mt. Logan to be approximately 5959 m (19,545 feet), see Andrew Lawrence, "Kluane National Park Reserve Climbing Summary—1992" CAJ (1993), pp. 68-69. See newspaper clippings, NAC, RG 84, vol. 102, file U36-1, part 4, passim; news coverage was widely featured in the press, including the *Montreal Daily Star*, *Toronto Star*, *Edmonton Journal*, *Calgary Daily Herald*, and *New York Times Magazine*; Mt. McKinley is also known as "Denali"—an aboriginal name which means the great one.

²At the 1913 ACC campfire, A.O. Wheeler noted the Robson ascent and reportedly said: "And now for Canada's highest, Mt. Logan!" See "The Story of the Expedition" CAJ (1925), p. 47. For an account of the 1913 Mt. Robson ascent see: W.W. Foster, "Mt. Robson, 1913" CAJ (1914-15), pp. 11-28; Conrad Kain, "The First Ascent of Mt. Robson," in *The Canadian Mountaineering Anthology*, ed. Bruce Fairley (Edmonton: Lone Pine Publishing, 1994), pp. 123-29.

The Alpine Club of London, England.³ Although organized by the Alpine Club of Canada, the American press tended to portray the expedition as an "international" effort led by Americans. Canadians, meanwhile, sought out their own heroes—for example, the Group of Seven painters and insulin researchers Drs. Banting and Best—to attest to a newfound sense of nationalism after World War I. While the Group of Seven implanted the distinctiveness of the Canadian landscape in the national consciousness, the Alpine Club instilled the sacredness of the park system in the national identity at a time when nature and "progress" collided.

In spring 1925, the expedition went by sea from Seattle up the Inside Passage to Alaska, and inland by rail and pack train. A 50-mile backpacking trip over rough moraines continued with sled-pulling across the icefields to the base of Mt. Logan. Altogether, the men hauled 4,000 pounds of equipment, supplies, and provisions 308 miles by relay to base camp and camped for 44 days on ice and snow. The climb was a classic short-rope ascent, hampered by heavy snowstorms, cold temperatures, frostbite, and altitude sickness. The party used a combination of snowshoes and crampons—heavy strap-on boot spikes—to cross the mountainous terrain. Under MacCarthy's direction, a combined party of Canadian and American climbers reached the summits of Mt. Logan on June 23, 1925, during a prolonged 34-hour final episode on the mountain. As the front page of *The Globe* reported, "Mount Logan, the highest peak in Canada, has been conquered by an

³"Albert H. MacCarthy" CAJ (1957), pp. 64-65.

expedition of the Canadian Alpine Club composed entirely of amateur members."⁴ The 1925 issue of the *Canadian Alpine Journal* was devoted to recounting the saga, and the Alpine Club added another triumph to its chronicle of Canadian mountaineering.⁵

Despite the contemporary acclaim over the success of this expedition, more recent critics have suggested the club pursued an outdated style of climbing on this trip more characteristic of the 1910 to 1912 Mt. McKinley Alaskan expeditions than the 1920s state of the art. Mountaineering historian Chris Jones remarked in 1976 that the MacCarthy team may have exaggerated its difficulties on Mt. Logan:

Perhaps the suffering was as much due to the slow pace and the party's state of mind as to the intrinsic difficulties of the mountain. The nub of the problem may be that the climbers approached Mount Logan as if it were a Mount Everest.⁶

Historian Gina LaForce argued that the Logan expedition illustrated the club's ossified approach to advancing technical innovations in climbing.⁷ Despite these criticisms, the question is, how else could the ACC have put a summit team on Logan in 1925?

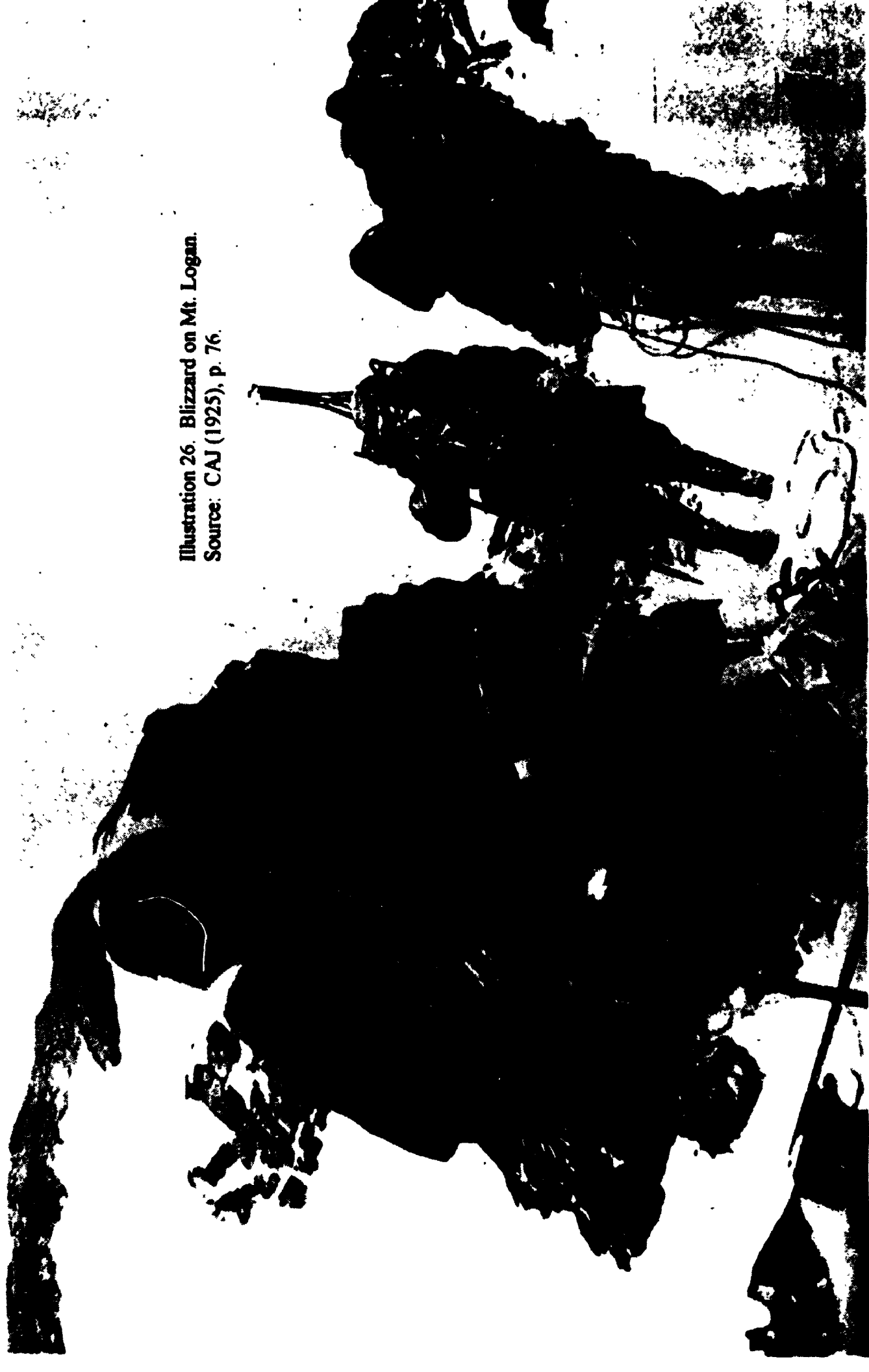
⁴"Highest of Canadian Rockies Is Conquered by Expedition of Amateur Alpine Climbers," *The Globe*, 15 July 1925, p. 1.

⁵See W W Foster, "The Story of the Expedition" CAJ (1925), pp. 47-58, A.H. MacCarthy "The Climb" *Ibid*, pp. 59-80. The 1925 issue included several articles on the Mt. Logan expedition. see pp. 1-121

⁶Chris Jones, *Climbing in North America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, American Alpine Club, 1976), pp. 86

⁷Gina LaForce, pp. 26-27. LaForce cites Chris Jones, *Climbing in North America*, p. 86, regarding the psychological challenges that faced the 1925 Mt. Logan expedition. regarding the battle for McKinley see, Belmore Browne, *The Conquest of Mount McKinley* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956).

Illustration 26. Blizzard on Mt. Logan.
Source: CAJ (1925), p. 76.



Lead

PARTY ON HURRICANE HILL, IN LEE OF GRANITE RIDGE BEHIND THE 18,500-FT. CAMP

July 26th, the Date of Fierce Blizzard

L. to R.:—Taylor, Foster, Carpe, Lambert, MacCarthy, Read Taking Picture

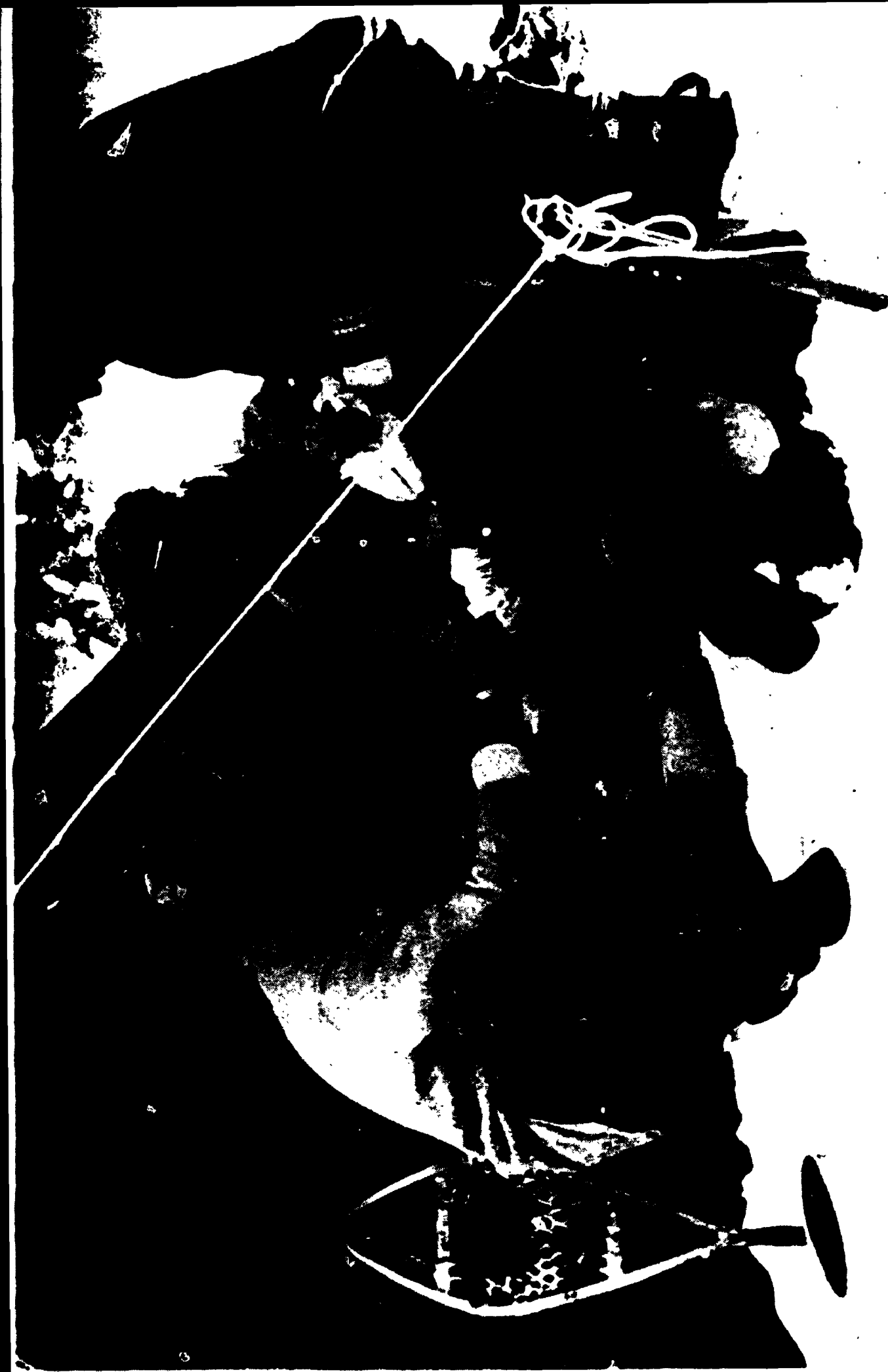


Illustration 27. Medical treatment following the Mt. Logan ascent. Source: CAJ (1925), p. 80.

The difficulties of approaching the mountain in 1925 were substantial! While the overall logistics and climbing methods on the Logan expedition were similar to the early attempts on McKinley,⁸ the logistical effort required for the Mt. Logan attempt was unprecedented for a North American expedition, and not unlike a smaller-scale version of a high-altitude Everest attempt. Considering the work involved to stage each successive camp farther up the mountain, the 1925 team progressed from the base to the summit in three weeks, which still compares well with today's attempts on Logan. The 1925 King Trench route up Mt. Logan remains the most popular, and high winds and bad weather continue to be determinants of success. In 1992, for example, a total of 49 climbers successfully reached a summit on Logan, while 52 did not.⁹ The route chosen in 1925 is still the classic line for an alpine ascent.

Essentially, what 1970s critics objected to regarding the 1925 Logan expedition was its style of ascent. Classic short-rope alpine mountaineering was unfashionable in the 1970s among climbers who stressed the use of "artificial aids"—such as pitons and camming devices—for "technical climbs" on vertical faces, overhangs, and acute slopes with high-risk exposure.¹⁰ The Logan ascent was typical of the style of alpine

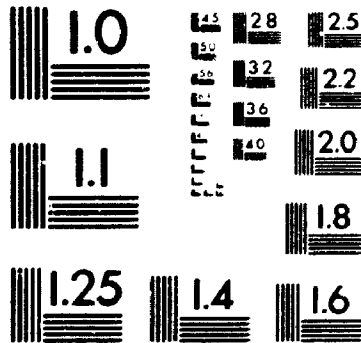
⁸Herschel C. Fisher, "Conquering Mt. McKinley: the Parker-Browne Expedition of 1912" CAJ (1913), pp. 11-19.

⁹In the 1992 climbing season, eight out of 16 groups of climbers attempting the ascent of Mt. Logan were successful. 12 of the 16 went by the King Trench route, see Andrew Lawrence, "Kluane National Park Reserve Climbing Summary—1992" CAJ (1993), pp. 68-69. Currently, most expeditions fly onto the Logan Glacier with their supplies and climb King Trench or the East Ridge, see Michael R. Kelsey, *Climbers and Hikers Guide to the World's Mountains* (Springville, Utah: Kelsey Publishing Co., 1984), pp. 376-77.

¹⁰A thorough discussion of the evolution and application of climbing hardware, tools, and equipment is found in Steven Schneider, *High Technology* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, Inc., 1980).

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**PM-1 3 1/2"x4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
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mountaineering pioneered by the ACC with Swiss and Austrian guides in the turn-of-the-century Rockies on mountains with steep ice, exposure to the elements, and alpine avalanche hazards. In this classic tradition of mountaineering, little equipment is required other than hobnailed boots, a rope, and an ice axe. Routes follow the "lines of weakness"—ridge lines and moderately sloped pitches interspersed with resting places. This style was practiced through the interwar years in Canada and continues to draw adherents today, particularly among climbing purists.

Jones considered the 1925 Mt. Logan expedition old-fashioned compared to the innovative technical climb of Mt. Alberta in the Rockies by a Japanese party in the same year. Unlike these climbers who had converted to the new postwar-European style of technical climbing with artificial aids, the ACC was slow to integrate the new style. Although the 1925 Logan party did make several mistakes—such as losing the route near the top thereby prolonging exposure to the elements—"the nub of the problem" concerning criticisms by Jones and LaForce appears to be their bias in favour of technical climbing, rather than a real deficiency on the part of the MacCarthy team's classical ascent.

One observation that these critics did not make regarding adaptations in mountaineering during this time relates to the development of ski mountaineering. As the 1920s progressed, the ACC made increased use of skis, but this was not the case on Logan. The use of skis or snowshoes on the moderately inclined aspects of the route is possible to and from the Logan summit. Ski mountaineering—like technical climbing—had not been integrated into the ACC approach to high-altitude climbing by the mid-1920s.

In any case, the ACC was clearly impressed by its own achievement in 1925 Mt. Logan marked an apogee of amateur climbing in Canada and thus the culmination of one of the original goals of the ACC—to promote the art of climbing among Canadians. The greater the exertion required to accomplish the goal, the greater the glory to be had on the return. In this respect, the first Mt. Logan summit was like many climbs that followed, for instance, Tyrolian-superstar Reinhold Messner's 1980 Everest solo without contained oxygen support.¹¹ The mystique of mountaineering lies in the exhilaration of pushing and surpassing the existing limits of prowess, technique, and personal challenge on the mountain. As a classic alpine ascent under difficult conditions, Mt. Logan met all three counts.

In the long run, the 1925 Mt. Logan ascent was destined to be a landmark in Canadian mountaineering. Following the success on Logan in 1925, the first series of great alpine ascents of Canada's highest mountains had been made. First ascents became increasingly difficult to find. Mountaineers had traveled north to summit the highest peak in the country; the Rockies and Columbia Mountains were no longer the mysterious untrammelled wilderness of the nineteenth century; and climbers were moving their sport into the British Columbia interior and coastal ranges. The Alpine Club had awakened the appreciation of Canadians for what Elizabeth Parker had called their "mountain heritage "

¹¹Reinhold Messner, *Crystal Horizon* (Seattle: Mountaineers, 1989). Messner made an earlier expedition to Everest with the Austrian Alpine Club in 1978 and, along with Peter Habeler, made the first ever summit without contained oxygen for breathing, see Reinhold Messner, *Everest: Expedition to the Ultimate* (London: Kaye & Ward, 1979), *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., s.v. "Messner, Reinhold "

The ACC had achieved many of the great "firsts" in Canadian mountaineering. Canada's "Golden Age" of climbing was over.

In essence, when the Alpine Club conquered Mt. Logan, it attained the Victorian-Canadian ideal of alpinism. The "conquest" of Logan was a pinnacle of change, for if Canadian climbers were no longer limited by the country's highest mountain, they would have to seek out different challenges to test their limitations on ice, snow, and rock. The central Rockies—once unknown—were now the ACC's home territory. For exotic firsts, the club would have to look elsewhere. Climbing was changing, as was the case with the club itself as new challenges arose. Following the turmoil of World War I, modern, democratic tourism advanced in the mountain parks, stimulated by affordable auto-transportation and middle-class recreation. While the Depression and World War II would effectively curb expensive expeditions and exploration through the 1930s and 1940s, the introduction of artificial aids, winter mountaineering, guideless climbing, and backcountry huts transformed the nature of mountain sport. Thus members of the ACC unfurled the horizons of mountaineering and, ultimately, redefined the scope of alpinism.

Taking Stock—The ACC Confronts Hard Times

In the wake of elation over the success on Mt. Logan and uneasiness over hydro dams in the Rockies, the economic decline brought on by the Great Depression caused the Alpine Club to rethink its organizational direction. The ACC had a predominantly western Canadian membership that was hard hit in Alberta and Saskatchewan by a severe drop in personal disposable income. The discontinuation of annual federal grant funding to the

club in 1931, combined with a falloff in membership in the early 1930s, affected many issues of club administration. Consequently, the ACC deliberately reevaluated its function and the size of its membership from the late 1920s to the late 1930s to ensure the club's survival through hard and changing times.

Austerity policies under the Conservative government of Prime Minister R.B. Bennett shook the Alpine Club's financial structure. As a regular recipient of an annual \$1,000 federal grant from the Parks Branch since 1906, the ACC's finances were destabilized by the cancellation of funding in 1931 as a result of retrenchment. The grant from Ottawa had composed roughly 10 percent of the club's annual income. The ACC's official reaction to funding cutbacks understated the extent of this blow

Since the Club was formed in 1906 it has been in receipt yearly of a grant of \$1,000.00 from the Dominion Government. This grant has been made more particularly to assist the Club in the publication of the Journal and generally as a recognition of the splendid work done by the Club in bringing to the attention of the world the beauties of the Canadian Mountains. It is with great regret that we have to inform you that the grant has not been renewed this year, the reason given that all Government Departments have to retrench and that our Club has to suffer as a consequence. We trust that the withholding of the grant is merely temporary and that in any event next year it will be restored and possibly the amount that we lose this year will be recouped to us later ¹²

However, outward optimism turned to dismay. Federal grants to the ACC were not restored in the short term. ACC President H.E. Sampson appealed to Minister of the Interior T.G. Murphy for renewal of the grant. In December 1931, Sampson indicated to Secretary Tweedy that he wished to have "influence brought to bear upon the Minister of

¹²*The Gazette* (October 1931), p. 7. the federal grant in 1930 had been \$1,000, see *The Gazette* (June 1931), p. 20

the Interior" by well-connected club members, such as Colonel W W Foster, Deputy Minister of British Columbia Public Works and former ACC President¹³ These efforts were unsuccessful Club executives soon found it necessary to find other sources of revenue to support the club's activities, in particular the annual publication of the journal

The timing of the grant's cancellation coincided with R.B Bennett's rise to power in Ottawa in 1930 and followed hard on the heels of ACC interventions against Calgary Power in hydro-development controversies in the Rockies Funding allocated to the Department of the Interior for loans, subsidies, and grants actually increased from \$134,255.75 in fiscal 1928 to \$158,708.41 in 1931 While the ACC totally lost its \$1000 grant—less than one percent of the total 1928 grant budget—organizations such as the Canadian Forestry Association and the Dominion Land Surveyors' Association continued to receive funding¹⁴ It appears that the ACC was a specific target of funding cutbacks. Club members such as Secretary Mitchell held that Bennett was penalizing the ACC for its political activism:

Mr. Bennett has told many people I believe that he has no use for the Alpine Club. We opposed the Calgary Power Co. in which he was and may still be interested . . . Mr. Harkin and the Parks Department generally are strongly in our favour but we cannot tell how they may be affected by the possible change of view of the present Government in their own affairs.¹⁵

¹³NAC, RG 84, A.2 a, vol. 189, file U-50-1-1, HE Sampson to T.G. Murphy, n.d., WMCR, AC 00M/012, Sampson to Tweedy, 31 December 1931.

¹⁴*Auditor General's Report, 1928*, p. 222; *Auditor General's Report, 1931-32*, p. 175. Grants to the Dominion Land Surveyors' Association remained steady at \$125 per annum, while grants to the Canadian Forestry Association were reduced 50 percent from \$4,000 in 1928 to \$2,000 in 1931. Other allocations were made to relieve needy settlers in Alberta and Saskatchewan, to N.W.T. schools and hospitals, to wildlife conservation, to individuals, and to the Yukon local council.

¹⁵WMCR, AC 00M/010, Mitchell to Sampson, 18 October 1930.

Bennett's alleged antagonism put the club's activism in a new light. The inviolability of the national parks was a divisive public-policy issue. Defending the parks from "commercial invasion" levied serious consequences on a publicly funded interest group like the ACC, when contending against politically well-connected big business. Whether Bennett called for the axe to drop on the ACC's federal funding is difficult to ascertain. Clearly, certain ACC members were convinced that Bennett had blacklisted the club for opposing Calgary Power—a company in which he held sizable investments. Terminating the annual grant leveled a serious blow to the club's finances just as the effects of the Depression were starting to be felt.

The loss of federal grant funding combined with the deepening impact of economic depression caused the ACC to take stock of its position. In 1933, ACC President A.A. McCoubrey's annual address to the club focused on the club's adaptation to changing economic circumstances. With astute management and loyal members, the ACC was surviving better than many clubs:

Despite the depression which has affected so many clubs adversely we continue to hold our own both in membership and effort in a manner that is gratifying to the Executive and must also be to our members. Times like these tend to make organizations take stock and ours is no exception to the rule. The necessity for economical management is recognized and your club executive is doing all possible to conduct the affairs of the Club in a way that will secure the maximum effort with the minimum outlay. To accomplish this some changes are inevitable but we feel that you will cooperate as loyally as you have in the past.¹⁶

General belt-tightening measures—such as economizing on club publications, office operations, mailing, and camp costs—were introduced to streamline the club's operational

¹⁶*The Gazette* (October 1933), p. 7

budget.¹⁷ In 1933, for example, camp planners prepared for only 70 registrants, consolidated the camp at one site at Paradise Valley rather than staging multiple sites, and drove a hard bargain with the outfitters to reduce expenses.¹⁸ The net profit of the ACC camps dropped from \$912.35 in 1932 to a meagre \$148.01 in 1933, fluctuated to \$391.20 in 1934, and recovered to \$1,071.25 in 1935.¹⁹ Despite efforts to economize, however, membership revenues still fell as the total ACC membership dropped from 652 in 1930 to 510 in 1939.²⁰

Beyond these operational implications, another dimension of the club's move to "take stock" was a discussion relative to the size of the membership and the nature of the club. Few of the original 1906 ACC members remained by 1930, their number having dwindled due to death and dropouts.²¹ President McCoubrey drew attention to two opposing lines of thought on the issue of the club's future. In 1911, Arthur Wheeler had stated the ACC was a multidimensional "mountain climbing organization"—with

¹⁷WMCR, AC 00M/010, Sampson to Tweedy, 26 August 1930. Sampson noted "Any method you adopt for the saving of expense will be satisfactory to the Treasurer and myself. We are anxious to keep expense down as much as possible." WMCR, 00M/015, ACC Camp Costs Summary 1930-1932. Ibid. McCoubrey to Tweedy, 5 May 1933, Ibid., Tweedy to McCoubrey, 26 May 1933. WMCR, AC 00M/019, Sibbald to Tweedy, 17 August 1934.

¹⁸WMCR, AC 00M/015, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 5 May 1933. McCoubrey noted "Mr. Wheeler's thought was to have a large camp at O'Hara in addition to the Paradise Valley camp but this would nullify any thought of economy as well as hurt the Paradise camp."

¹⁹"Report of Auditor" *The Gazette* (May 1936), p. 16-17, the budgets for these camps were \$3,330.17 income to \$2,417.82 expenditure (1932), \$2,679.64 income to \$2,531.63 expenditure (1933), \$3,250.21 income to \$2,859.01 expenditure (1934), \$7,101.28 income to \$6,030.03 expenditure (1935).

²⁰See Table 1.

²¹WMCR, AC 00M/010, Sampson to Tweedy, 3 October 1930. According to the club secretary, many loyal club members could no longer afford the annual membership fees, see, WMCR, AC 00M/003, Mitchell to Bell, 1 February 1928.

educational, scientific, literary, and artistic goals—and not merely a sport-centered "climbing club" strictly dedicated to mountain recreation. This distinction was clear in the objectives stated in the first ACC constitution. By 1933, younger members, along with some old-timers, had become critical of this assumption and preferred to implement more demanding climbing standards that would result in a small membership of athletically oriented climbers. On the other hand, other members favoured a broadly based membership that admitted a wider range of bikers, trekkers, and mountain enthusiasts, along with climbers, in the style of the Swiss and French alpine clubs, which had broad memberships and extensive systems of alpine huts. A larger membership, they argued, put more funds at the club's disposal for "alpine projects, including huts which are of assistance to those to whom climbing per se is the beginning and end of membership in a mountaineering club" and trips like the 1925 Mt. Logan expedition.²² McCoubrey invited the membership to express its views on the matter to the executive as part of the club's adaptation to economic and demographic change: "Which viewpoint the Alpine Club of Canada will adopt in the future, is a matter for you, ladies and gentlemen, to settle."²³ Ultimately, the latter approach to participation prevailed within the ACC.

At the same time, greater emphasis was placed on the responsibility of local ACC sections to ensure that new recruits were trained and brought up to the class of active graduating membership according to the national club's standards. Membership in the club

²²"President's Address" *The Gazette* (October 1933), p. 8

²³"President's Address" *The Gazette* (October 1933), p. 8. The cost of the 1925 Mt. Logan expedition totaled \$12,793.48, which was financed by contributions from club members and corporate donors, see "Annual Meeting 1926" *CAJ* (1926 & 1927), p. 248. "Contributions to Mt. Logan Expedition" *The Gazette* (January 1926), p. 24.

was categorized by several standards and fee rates, most notably 1) active members, 2) graduates who had been newly certified, and 3) subscribing members who received the club journal. As the economy ebbed in the late 1920s, subscribing memberships—predominantly concentrated in British Columbia—had become a point of contention as revenues dwindled due to a drop in active membership fees. National secretary Stanley Mitchell was piqued that some active climbers tried to get a cut rate by taking out subscribing memberships.²⁴ British Columbia sections also tended to allow participants without active memberships to attend regional outings—a sign that local club practice diverged from national club standards.

A resolution to encourage club sections to bring local members up to national standards of membership was passed at the 1933 annual general meeting. Members F. V. Longstaff of Victoria and C. A. Richardson of Calgary urged the club to bring up the number of certified club graduates.

We do not seem to have been able to make the progress we should in bringing forward members for graduation in the number that we think is very urgently required. This is a very serious condition and it seems to me that it is up to each of us to try to do something extra, even at a sacrifice to ourselves. We must try to bring forward graduating members who have been hardened up to a considerable extent through Section activities.²⁵

²⁴WMCR, 00M/008, ACC Candidates for Election, n.d., c. March 1930. Notes subscribing members by region. WMCR, 00M/005, Mitchell to Moffat, 8 December 1928. "Mr. Wheeler himself admitted at the Executive meeting in Camp that this class was instituted for elderly and weakly people who were physically incapable of taking active part in the work of the Club. The difference between the fee of Subscribing and Graduating membership is only \$4.50. Cut out a few movies and joyrides and learn to save for something worthwhile. Subscribing members have never proved a good recruiting ground. They want everything reduced to their level." Moffat agreed.

²⁵*The Gazette* (October 1933), p. 26.

The resolution was closely tied to club finances and increasing the size of the membership.

Honourary Treasurer Andrew Sibbald (1888-1945) threw his support behind it.

I think this Resolution is important. I think the time has come when some definite proposal should be drafted with a view to increasing the membership of the Club. I am becoming a little concerned about our financial condition. If we can increase our membership 50% the financial problem of the Club would be automatically met.²⁶

The size of the club membership was a serious concern because of its link to revenue.

The ACC's 1933 gross income totalled \$10,109.95. However, the club's main source of income, membership dues and entrance fees, declined from 1931 to 1933. From 1931 to 1933, 54 members had fallen off from a combined total of 526 active, graduating, and subscribing members in 1931, to 472 in 1933, amounting to a \$330 decrease in potential annual gross income. During the Depression, members were slow to pay club fees. Individuals like the assistant leader of 1925 Mt. Logan expedition Fred Lambart, a federal surveyor laid off from the Department of the Interior in 1933, found it difficult to make payment on ACC dues during these hard times. Even the Calgary ACC section chair and secretary were in arrears for their 1934 membership dues. The total ACC dues charged in 1933 amounted to \$3,285 but actual cash receipts from membership fees totalled only \$2,551.50, resulting in a shortfall. The annual auditor's report for 1933 recommended the Banff Clubhouse and annual camp become self-supporting considering the club's diminished membership revenues, and emphasized that the general operating

²⁶*The Gazette* (October 1933), p. 25-26

expenses—including publication of the annual edition of the journal—would have to be budgeted within the income from 1934 membership revenues.²⁷

By the close of 1934, the club's finances showed considerable improvement over the preceding year but still drew attention to the declining membership base. The club's 1934 surplus of \$1,168.71, compared to a 1933 deficit of \$737.09, was achieved due to increased income from camp and clubhouse operations and the executive's decision to publish only one issue of the journal for 1933 and 1934. Revenues generated from the camp and clubhouse most likely added credence to arguments in favour of a large membership. The cost of publishing the journal was substantial—\$2,000 in 1933—and skipping an issue afforded some economies. A small \$391.20 profit from the 1934 camp in Eremite Valley added to club revenues, along with \$800 realized from bonds. Furthermore, Honourary Treasurer Andrew Sibbald gained control over the liability of the club's outstanding debentures. However, the auditor reported a continued slide in membership revenues, noting an additional decline of 70 members, which reduced the ACC membership from 526 in 1931 to 402 in 1934.²⁸

²⁷WMCR, AC 00M/016. List of Members in Arrears, 1 October 1933. The bulk of membership was Canadian, centered in Calgary, Vancouver Island, and Vancouver. WMCR, AC 00M/016. McCoubrey to Tweedy, 1 December 1933. McCoubrey noted of Lambart "As soon as he is on his feet he will pay up" and advised that he should still receive the journal in recognition of his "invaluable service to the club." According to McCoubrey, the Department of the Interior had treated Lambart poorly. WMCR, AC 00M/019. Tweedy to Sibbald, 28 December 1934, re Calgary section executives in arrears. Auditor's figures from *The Gazette* (June 1934), pp. 20-23.

²⁸*The Gazette* (June 1935), pp. 13-15, 18.

Walter T. Read, a Regina accountant and ACC member, pointed out in his 1934 auditor's report that the club had to confront the problem of its eroding membership base. Club executives were acutely aware of this challenge:

It is evident that the Club has been holding its own purely because the cash profits from the Club House and Camp operations and the saving through the suspension of the Journal for one year have offset the falling-off in income from members' fees to some extent. The membership situation, as you will note from the Auditor's Report is quite serious, particularly due to the large amount outstanding in arrears of dues.²⁹

Consequently, Sibbald—who moved from his position as honorary treasurer to national president in 1934—redoubled his efforts to increase the club's membership and called for "a little missionary work by each member" to deal with "the necessity of increasing our membership, or at any rate of conserving our membership and having them indulge in paying their fees each year."³⁰

This theme carried through 1936 when Sibbald proposed actively recruiting more members. Greater attendance at the 1935 camp at Magog Lake in Assiniboine Provincial Park, British Columbia, had generated a \$1,071.25 profit, compared to \$391.20 in 1934 and \$148.01 in 1933.³¹ Aware of the bottom line, Sibbald argued that the annual camps could attract more people:

Now, let me say at once that on the whole we have not been disappointed with our camps and with our Club membership during the very arduous six or seven years which the Club, in common with all other groups and persons has been through. We have had very good camps—last year over

²⁹Andrew Sibbald in *The Gazette* (October 1935), p. 18

³⁰*The Gazette* (October 1935), p. 18

³¹*The Gazette* (May 1936), pp. 16-17

140 persons, this year well over eighty but the fact remains that a camp of this magnitude with the great expense which it involves is a camp which could accommodate and give pleasure to a great many more people than it does at present.³²

He recommended each section and all members make contacts with other organizations interested in sport, adventure, travel, and exploration to "acquaint[] them with what we have to offer." He suggested making wider contacts by broadening the interests of the club to geology, botany, and whatever types of field research could be carried out at camp. Finally, in a departure, Sibbald proposed youth members be recruited and admitted to the camps, which had until then been reserved for adults. "In a general way it has been considered before, and to a certain extent perhaps frowned upon it is to the younger people that we have to look primarily for our recruits."³³ Broadening the club's membership was highlighted in a quest for revenues.

In 1936, the nominating committee asked Sibbald to stand for a second two-year term as national president. He emphasized that expanding the membership would be the cornerstone of his re-election agenda. "I would feel it to be my chief work for the Club during the next two years to put the membership on a much broader basis."³⁴ Clearly, the executive had confidence in Sibbald's policies to keep the club afloat. Symbolic of the club's efforts to adapt to changing economic circumstances, the 1937 Yoho Camp

³²*The Gazette* (October 1936), pp. 5-6

³³*The Gazette*, (October 1936), pp. 5-7

³⁴*The Gazette*, (October 1936), pp. 5-7

officially admitted youth campers for the first time³⁵ By the end of 1937, the club's financial status had stabilized, although Honourary Treasurer R.J. Cuthbertson—a Saskatoon Royal Bank manager—noted: "We are still handicapped by the omission of the Government grant, particularly in the carrying out of new exploratory work " Since 1934, Cuthbertson had continued an ongoing lobby with Ottawa to have the \$1,000 grant to the ACC renewed, reiterating the rationale that the club brought a "desirable class of tourists" to Canada and opened up "new territories in the National Parks . . . in the mountains " Parks Commissioner J.B. Harkin supported the ACC requests and argued to his assistant deputy minister that an annual grant to the Alpine Club was "a good business investment" because the club's promotion of the national parks had "greater publicity value than paid advertising." Despite these attempts, the grant was not renewed by the minister.³⁶ Nonetheless, by the end of Sibbald's second term as president, the 1938 audit revealed a "very satisfactory financial condition" and a membership gain from 501 in March 1937 to 521 by December 1938.³⁷ Careful management yielded modest gains. Sibbald's initiative had nearly restored the membership total to the 1931 level

³⁵*The Gazette* (October 1937), p. 12. Candidates for ACC membership were still required to have attained the age of 18, see *Constitution and List of Members* (1907 through 1958)

³⁶NAC, RG 84, series A.2.a, vol. 189, file U-50-1-1, R.J. Cuthbertson to J.B. Harkin, 28 March 1935. *Ibid.*, Cuthbertson to Parks Branch, 7 September 1934. *Ibid.*, Harkin to R.A. Gibson, 27 June 1931. Harkin wrote that "the Club is a unique organization inasmuch as practically every member of it on the return to his home town or city or foreign country almost invariably delivers lectures or writes articles for magazines and newspapers describing the beauties of our National Parks and advertising to the fullest extent the park areas as one of the most important fields for mountaineering in the world". for further discussion of grant renewal see, *Ibid.*, Harkin to Cuthbertson, 19 September 1934. *Ibid.*, Cuthbertson to Murphy, 16 August 1934. *Ibid.*, Harkin to Gibson, 29 August 1934. *Ibid.*, Assistant Deputy Minister to Harkin, 31 August 1934. *Ibid.*, Harkin to Cuthbertson, 15 July 1935

³⁷"Report of Auditor" *The Gazette* (June 1938), pp. 19-21. *Ibid.*, (June 1939), pp. 15-17. "Honorary Treasurer" *The Gazette* (November 1938), p. 12

Sibbald's management and financial skills—first as honorary treasurer and then as national president—kept the club solvent through the depression years. At the end of his second term as president, the Regina lawyer left the ACC in a much improved position. As incoming president Cyril G. Wates observed in 1938:

Mr. Sibbald took over the leadership at a very critical time. The depression had seriously depleted our membership roll, from the same cause, our finances were at a low ebb, and there were pessimists who believed that it would be impossible for the Club to carry on all its activities.³⁸

Arthur Wheeler credited Sibbald for doing "much to keep the Club solvent and progressive during the hard times that have depressed everyone more or less."³⁹

Throughout the economic crunch, one of the most valuable assets to the club proved to be the middle-class professional training of leaders like lawyer Andrew Sibbald, accountant Walter Read, and banker R.J. Cuthbertson, all careful business managers and competent "organization men." By the late 1930s, Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King's government invested in national parks spending as one of the first cautious attempts to bring Canada out of the Depression.

At the regional level, the economic downturn brought on by the Depression tested the vitality of the local ACC sections. Some sections simply fizzled out as problems related to leadership and membership were exacerbated by economic pressures. As early as 1929, signs of weakness had started showing in the Toronto section. Secretary Mitchell observed: "The older Toronto members who should help will not bother with the

³⁸"New President" *The Gazette* (November 1938), p. 19

³⁹Wheeler's comments cited in *The Gazette* (October 1934), p. 8

Section at all. We badly want a 'Revival' there " In the absence of such a revival, the Toronto section was disbanded after 1935 due to lack of leadership, which resulted in a lull of ACC activity in Canada east of Manitoba.⁴⁰ In 1930, the club scrambled to find someone willing to accept the chair of the Winnipeg section after A.A McCoubrey stepped down. A committee composed entirely of women managed the section during the interim between chairmen⁴¹ Following the demise of the Victorian generation of club leadership, the British section of the ACC went into decline and resisted reanimation from across the Atlantic.⁴² ACC sections in the United States did not fold. In fact, roughly a third of the total ACC membership was American during the 1930s, comprising 33.2 percent in 1930 and 36.1 percent in 1939. Nonetheless, Secretary Mitchell considered the Minneapolis section "more or less a fraud" with "just a few real people." The American ACC members from large cities such as New York tended to be affluent and, therefore, more economically resilient.⁴³

The majority of the club membership lived in western Canada. Members from Alberta and British Columbia together formed approximately 43 percent of the club's total membership in 1930 and 41.9 percent in 1939. This group lived nearest the great western

⁴⁰WMCR, AC 00M/007, Mitchell to Moffat, 16 September 1929. Ibid., 10 October 1929. Ibid., 4 December 1929; Ibid., 27 December 1929. Mitchell's increasing frustration with the lack of leadership in the Toronto section is evident from his letters to the ACC national president

⁴¹WMCR, AC 00M/007, Mitchell to Moffat, 4 December 1929. Ibid., 21 January 1930

⁴²WMCR, AC 00M/003, Mitchell to Bell, 15 February 1928. Mitchell noted that A.L. Mumm was dead, and a new contact was needed for the English section. WMCR, AC 00M/016, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 8 December 1933. McCoubrey noted the need to revitalize the ACC's English section. "It is a rather ticklish matter telling Sections that they are delinquent "

⁴³See Table 3 and Table 4. WMCR, AC 00M/007, Mitchell to Moffat, 10 October 1929

mountain ranges and within closest proximity to national parks in Alberta and British Columbia where the club staged its activities. In keeping with the club's earliest membership patterns, western Canadians from these two provinces were well situated to participate in mountain sport. Throughout the interwar period, Albertans and British Columbians were the regional mainstay of the Alpine Club.⁴⁴

Effective national administration and a strong membership base in western Canada and the eastern United States sustained the Alpine Club of Canada as it took stock of its assets and organizational direction during the 1930s economic crisis. Despite the Depression, club loyalty remained reasonably high among members. By encouraging a broadly based membership during hard economic times, President Andrew Sibbald ensured the Alpine Club's future vitality. In the style of the French and Swiss alpine clubs, the ACC decided to keep its doors open to a broad spectrum of general mountain enthusiasts along with a corps of elite climbers and thus secured a financial base for ventures such as recreational huts. At the same time, members began to place increasing emphasis on sport activity. The ACC coped well with the pressures of the Depression and, overall, emerged with a renewed sense of direction to carry into the 1940s. As the Alpine Club adapted its membership and activities through the 1930s, however, it was also obliged to face a shift in its principles.

As the Depression deepened through the 1930s, the total attendance in Canada's national parks gradually increased. The most heavily visited parks were Banff, Point Pelee, Riding Mountain, Kootenay, and Waterton Lakes. While visitation in Banff fell

⁴⁴See Table 3

from 236,801 in 1928-29 to 188,443 in 1930-31, national parks within closer proximity of population centers remained popular. Point Pelee on Lake Erie experienced a slight attendance drop-off and visitation at Riding Mountain near Winnipeg actually rose to new highs.⁴⁵ Outdoor recreation like camping, fishing, swimming, and hiking was relatively inexpensive to those who could travel by car or train to a national park in their region. While 1930 to 1945 has been characterized as a slow period for park development in Canada—the "Years of Repose" that left the parks in a sorry state of neglect due to a lack of maintenance and operational funding⁴⁶—several capital projects were initiated in the larger western parks during this period in an effort to alleviate unemployment. In total, \$7,840,000 was invested in unemployment relief works in the national parks that included building, highway, and campground construction. Symbolically, the Golden-Revelstoke and the Banff-Jasper highways begun during this period paved the way to postwar tourism.⁴⁷

New Frontiers: Climbing Between the Wars

Following the upheaval of WWI, great changes affected the international world of climbing. The 1920s and 1930s were a period of metamorphosis as German, Austrian,

⁴⁵*Annual Report* (Ottawa Department of the Interior, 1931), p 99, *Ibid* , (1932), p 8. Geoffrey Wall, "Recreational Lands," *Historical Atlas of Canada*, eds Donald Kerr and Deryck W Holdsworth (Toronto University of Toronto Press, 1990), plate 36.

⁴⁶Jack Wright, "Urban Space in Transition," *Proceedings of the Third Canadian Congress on Leisure Research*, eds Thomas L. Burton and Jan Taylor, (Canadian Association for Leisure Studies, 1983), p 449.

⁴⁷W.F. Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks*, vol. II, (Ottawa Parks Canada, 1977), p 18. the national parks Engineering Service in Ottawa and Banff directed these highway projects

Italian, French, and eastern European climbers made startling innovations that forever altered the boundaries between the possible and the impossible. Technical climbing—engineering difficult routes up a mountain with artificial aids—became the new trend among climbers bent on solving the last of the "great problems" posed by the Alps. The dark, north faces of the Matterhorn, the Grandes Jorasses, and the Eiger were subject to daring first ascents in the 1930s undertaken by Germans and Austrians. While British mountaineers trained in the classical school refuted the use of carabiners, pitons, and other aids as an unethical assault on impossible mountain routes, the ideologically charged death-or-glory approach of the Munich school and Italian climbers active in the Dolomites and western alps made technical climbing a reality. At the same time, the men and women of the French Groupe de Haute Montagne (GHM), formed after WWI, created their own stylized aesthetic of elegant free climbing without aids.⁴⁸ Nationalism infused the sport of mountaineering, as climbing styles in Europe became closely associated with the alleged superiority of competing nation states and contending political ideologies.

Another change in the mountaineering world was the crumbling class boundary that had once characterized alpinism as a middle- and upper-class sport. Following World War I, increasing numbers of the working class began walking and climbing for recreation in the hills of Europe and Britain, bringing a new spirit of competition and higher standards of climbing difficulty. O. G. Jones, a late-nineteenth-century carpenter and

⁴⁸Ronald W. Clark, *Men, Myths & Mountains* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976), pp. 144-48, 150; Francis Keenleyside, *Peaks and Pioneers: The Story of Mountaineering* (London: Paul Elek Ltd., 1976), pp. 64, 74; Walt Unsworth, *Hold the Heights: The Foundations of Mountaineering* (Seattle: Mountaineers, 1994), pp. 286-87; R.L.G. Irving, "Trends in Mountaineering" *CAJ* (1957), pp. 53-63.

builder, originated gritstone rock climbing in the U.K., an early precursor to modern rock climbing. Rock climbing, which alpinists had considered a second-rate gymnastic compared to classical mountaineering, gained new adherents among the working-class climbers who took to their local crags and hills, as illustrated by the rugged men of the Glasgow climbing clubs. In the U.K., working-class climbers remained a minority next to the "university men" of The Alpine Club, but they foreshadowed the dramatic social shift and democratization in worldwide mountaineering after WWII.⁴⁹

As the last great problems were being solved in the Alps, climbers sought new challenges in other parts of the globe. During the interwar period, Britain's Alpine Club and the Royal Geographical Society launched a series of expeditions to reach Everest—the highest mountain in the world—thus siphoning off much of its mountaineering talent and energy to the Himalayan enclave of the British Empire. To the international climbing fraternity, mountains in the Caucasuses, the South American Andes, Norway, New Zealand, Africa, and the many North American ranges attracted greater attention once the Alps had been mastered. In 1920, Sir Arnold Lunn authored the first ski-mountaineering guidebook, thus adding to the popularization of skiing in the Alps.⁵⁰ The use of skis and winter ascents added novel variations to the challenges of mountaineering.

In Canada and the United States, climbing was evolving in two main directions. First, great unclimbed wilderness alpine ascents were still a possibility in the Yukon,

⁴⁹Ronald W. Clark, *Men, Myths & Mountains* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976), p. 155-56, 214, Peter Donnelly, "The Invention of Tradition and the (Re)invention of Mountaineering," 7th Annual Canadian Symposium on the History of Sport, 1994; Peter Donnelly, "The Paradox of parks: Politics of recreational land use before and after the mass trespasses" *Leisure Studies* 5, 1986, pp. 189-99

⁵⁰Walt Unsworth, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mountaineering* (London: Robert Hale, 1975), pp. 211, 148

British Columbia, and Alaska—as demonstrated by the first ascents of the Yukon's Mt. Logan (1925) and Mt. Steele (1935), Mt. Waddington on the British Columbia coast (1935), Alaska's Mt. Bona in the Wrangell-St. Elias Range (1930), Mt. Fairweather on the Alaskan panhandle (1931), and the first aircraft-assisted climbs on Alaska's Mt. McKinley (1930s). Second, rock climbing forged its own schools in North America, influenced by the development of technical climbing in Europe and modified for the demands of unique formations such as Yosemite's granite cliffs in the Sierra Nevada and the pillar-like Devil's Tower in Wyoming. Following World War II, the Yosemite Valley became a new mecca of technical climbing, and the techniques engineered there circled back to the European cradle of mountaineering.⁵¹ The proliferation and cross-fertilization of styles further illustrated climbing was an international arena of concepts, techniques, and practitioners

What role did Canada's national alpine organization play in this global exchange? Amid international changes in climbing, the Alpine Club of Canada built on its Victorian origins to adapt new approaches to mountain sport. While the classical style of mountaineering exemplified by the Mt. Logan ascent dominated within the club, innovations associated with backcountry huts, winter sports, rock climbing, and amateur guiding emerged through the interwar period and made a mark on the ACC.

⁵¹Ronald W. Clark, *Men, Myths & Mountains*, pp 157-161. Keenlyside, *Peaks*, p 144. Michael R. Kelsey, *Climbers and Hikers Guide to the World's Mountains* (Springville, Utah: Kelsey, 1984), pp 506-15.

The Sport Agenda

High over Prospectors Valley, Fay Hut perches near the crown of waterfalls streaming down to Tokumn Creek in Kootenay National Park. Here the days flicker over rock headwalls chiseled from ancient seabeds, and the sound of glacier melt plummets into the night. In summer 1927, a construction party trailing a string of loaded pack ponies set out up the valley to build Fay Hut. It was situated to shelter climbers heading over the spine of the Ten Peaks dividing Alberta and British Columbia, the site on the back of the old Canadian \$20 bill. Discussions at the ACC's 1925 Lake O'Hara camp had precipitated the idea of building a climber's hut. Construction cost \$1,450, financed by donations from club members. Named after Prof. Charles Fay, founder of the American Alpine Club, Fay Hut was the first in a series of ACC backcountry huts built to shelter and protect climbers in the tradition of the Swiss alpine huts.⁵²

In the late 1920s, the ACC embarked on a program of hut expansion, which it hoped would eventually form a network of shelters throughout the mountains. The 1927 Fay Hut was followed by the 1930 construction of the stone Memorial Hut in the Tonquin Valley, Jasper National Park, funded in part by the Edmonton section to establish a center for mountaineering the northern Rockies. It was named in honour of ACC members who had died in WWI and climbers who had lost their lives in accidents. In 1931, the club acquired two log cabins in the meadow near Lake O'Hara in Yoho National Park, donated

⁵²Herb Kariel and Pat Kariel, *Alpine Huts in the Rockies, Selkirks and Purcells* (Banff Alpine Club of Canada, 1986), pp. 9, 24-27; "Report of the Hut Fund Committee" *The Gazette* (June 1926), pp. 13-14; "Annual Meeting, 1926" *CAJ* (1926 & 27), p. 247.

Photo, A. A. McCoubrey

THE ELIZABETH PARKER CABIN

Illustration 28. Elizabeth Parker Hut, exterior and interior views. Source: CAJ (1931), p. 160.



by the CPR and renamed the Elizabeth Parker Hut to honour this ACC founder.

Restoration of the cabins was paid for by the Winnipeg section and the Club Hut Fund. T.B. Moffat, Chair of the Hut Committee, reported in 1934 that further plans for hut construction were on hold due to financial constraints because of the Depression. The next ACC hut did not proceed until 1939, when the log Stanley Mitchell Hut was built in the Little Yoho Valley of Yoho National Park, at a cost of \$3,200, of which \$1,500 was donated by Montreal ACC member Miss Helen M. Trenholme.⁵³

During the Depression, club managers steered the ACC toward generating revenue from its camps and clubhouse facilities. While the camps and clubhouse brought in the bulk of revenue from facility operation, backcountry huts generated modest revenues from overnight fees.⁵⁴ For example, the Fay, Memorial, and Parker huts together produced a profit of \$89.97 in 1934 and \$63.33 in 1935, despite low visitation at the Fay Hut.⁵⁵ At a rate of 50 cents per night for members and 75 cents for nonmembers (accompanied by a member), the ACC huts offered shelters for affordable mountain holidays, an increasingly

⁵³Herb and Pat Kariel, *Alpine Huts in the Rockies, Selkirks and Purcells* (Banff: Alpine Club of Canada, 1986), pp. 17-23, 28-34, 72-77; Edna H. Greer, "The Elizabeth Parker Cabin—Lake O'Hara" *CAJ* (1931), pp 159-161, with photos; "The Hut Committee Report" *The Gazette* (October 1935), p. 20; "Stanley Mitchell Hut Fund" *The Gazette* (June 1938), p. 13; "The Stanley Mitchell Hut" *The Gazette* (November 1938), p. 8, illustration of hut design on facing page; "Stanley Mitchell Hut Fund" *The Gazette* (November 1938), p. 26; "Business Arising" *The Gazette* (November 1939), p. 5; NAC, RG 84, vol. 2243, file Y16-3. Lake O'Hara—Elizabeth Parker Hut 1908-54, passim; NAC, RG 84, vol. 2248, file Y16-26. Lake O'Hara—Elizabeth Parker Hut, 1928-56, passim; NAC, RG 84, vol. 2249, file Y16-40, part 1, Upper Little Yoho Valley—Stanley Mitchell Hut, 1937-58, passim

⁵⁴"Schedules and Report of Auditors" *The Gazette* (June 1934), pp. 20-23

⁵⁵"The Hut Committee Report" *The Gazette* (October 1935), p. 20; "Hut Committee" *The Gazette* (October 1936), p. 12

popular recreation as reflected by the contemporaneous development of the Canadian hostelling movement in the Alberta foothills and Rockies ⁵⁶

Because the ACC huts were to be located on national park lands, the ACC first had to obtain federal licenses for site occupation. The ACC's preferred partner status with the Parks Branch came into play in these dealings. The club was granted licenses to occupy land on the basis that it was a well-recognized authority on mountain recreation and an institution that opened up the mountains and offered excellent free publicity to the national parks. As a director of the National Parks Branch commented in hindsight. "The Alpine Club of Canada, in years past has been granted strictly preferential treatment, especially in so far as rentals and licenses are concerned" ⁵⁷ Historically, the ACC stood out among other non-profit, recreational groups as a concessionaire occupying land in the national parks system. Holding properties in turn reinforced the club's foothold within the national parks and ensured the renewal of future licenses and the approval of subsequent huts.

Meanwhile, winter became a new frontier of mountain recreation during this period, as members of the ACC looked to Europe and embarked on skiing, ski mountaineering, and ice climbing ⁵⁸ The ACC sections in Vancouver and Winnipeg took

⁵⁶"Hut Committee" *The Gazette* (October 1936), p. 13, by comparison, overnight hostel accommodation in Bragg Creek, Alberta, cost 25 cents a night in 1933, Canadian Hostelling Association, *Fifty Years of Canadian Hostelling* (Calgary: Detselig, 1988), pp. 1-25

⁵⁷NAC, RG 84, vol. 2249, file Y16-40, part 1, J. Smart to Oliver Wheeler, 18 February 1953

⁵⁸For background on skiing in Canada, see Everett J. Fee, "Manitobans in the Mountains—Fifty Years of Ski Mountaineering" CAJ (1983), pp. 19-20; John Baldwin, "A History of Ski Mountaineering in the Coast Mountains" CAJ (1983), pp. 24-25; A. A. McCoubrey, "A Contribution to the History of Winter Climbing, Ski-Mountaineering and Ski-ing in Canada" CAJ (1941), pp. 116-19; Ferris Neave, "Spring Snows of the Yoho"

the lead. Manitobans in the ACC had an early affinity for skis and made winter trips to the Rockies and Selkirks as early as 1911, 1914, and 1922. Encouraged by trend-setter Alexander McCoubrey, who taught his friends how to ski on the banks of the Assiniboine River, the Winnipeg ACC section boasted a dedicated corps of male and female skiers by the 1930s, among them the outstanding ski mountaineers Roger Neave and his brother Ferris. In British Columbia, the coastal mountains offered ski slopes near Vancouver—Grouse, Seymour, Hollyburn, and Strachan—and north into the Mt. Garibaldi district. The Vancouver section constructed Mt. Seymour Hut in 1931 as a base for ski mountaineering on the west coast. In an account of the 1930 ACC ski ascent of Mt. Baker southeast of Vancouver, Don Munday observed that "ski-climbing" was an innovation in Canada, which "like most new things, is eyed askance by some climbers."⁵⁹ Nonetheless, times were changing, and ski mountaineering found its way onto the ACC sport roster as easily as Canadians took to hockey, just as one Vancouver member anticipated in 1930:

The Alpine Club has an opportunity to attract to its membership a type of Canadian of which it may be justly proud and which with the change of seasons would undoubtedly alternate skis with hobnailed boots. The sport

CAJ (1932), pp 122-27. H J Graves, "Ski Climbing" *The Gazette* (June 1930), pp 5-7. Don Munday, "A Ski Trip to Mt. Baker" *The Gazette* (June 1930), pp 7-10. A.H. d'Egville, "Ski-mountaineering" CAJ (1931), pp 96-99. Miss M.E. O'Brien "Monte Rosa from the South" CAJ (1931), pp 100-06. Russell H Bennett, "The Ski Ascent of Snow Dome" CAJ (1931), pp 107-10. E.R. Gibson, "A Winter Ascent of Mt. Resplendent" CAJ (1931), pp 111-13. Henry S. Kingman, "Ski Climbs at Skoki" CAJ (1931), pp 114-16. Don Munday, "Seymour Hut of the Vancouver Section" CAJ (1931), pp 117-19, regarding the Scandinavian roots of Manitoba skiing see, Rolf Tonning Lund, "A History of Skiing in Canada Prior to 1940" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Calgary, 1971), pp 214-20; Rolf T. Lund, "Skiing in Canada. The Early Years," *The Beaver*, Winter 1977, pp. 48-53; for a U.S. example of female skiing see, E. John B. Allen, "Sierra 'Ladies' on Skis in Gold Rush California" *Journal of Sport History* 17 (Winter 1990), pp. 347-53. an ACC ski camp is described in "High Mountain Holiday," *Weekend Picture Magazine*, 7 February 1953, pp 1-5.

⁵⁹Don Munday, "A Ski Trip to Mt. Baker" *The Gazette* (June 1930), pp 7-10.

of mountaineering may develop a new phase by the prompt introduction of winter expeditions and ascents by skis, thereby providing a field of activity throughout the whole cycle of the year ⁶⁰

During the 1930s, camps for skiing and ski mountaineering were introduced as ACC activities. Skiing was particularly popular among younger people, whom the ACC sought to attract to renew its flagging membership ⁶¹ The ACC risked losing some of its members to ski clubs if it did not adopt winter sports ⁶² Fostered by active regional activities among the sections, winter sports breathed fresh life into the club

In 1931, the ACC formed a national Ski Committee under the direction of A A McCoubrey. The committee set out five objectives (1) preparing a paper on the history of skiing in Canada; (2) disseminating information about suitable mountain districts for skiing in Canada through the *Canadian Alpine Journal's* "Ski Mountaineering Section", (3) gathering information for a skier's guide book, (4) amassing data to map avalanche hazards; and (5) "doing pioneer work in the mountains in order to develop this side of mountaineering." ⁶³

For the ACC, skiing completed a year-round calendar of mountain sport and formed another leading edge of tourism in the mountain national parks By 1930, winter

⁶⁰H J Graves, "Ski Climbing" *The Gazette* (June 1930), p. 7

⁶¹WMCR, AC 00M/008, Mitchell to Moffat, 29 April 1930 Mitchell reported "The stalwarts of the Local Section are planning a ski ascent of Mt Baker on May 24 This ski idea has kindled much enthusiasm among our younger members "

⁶²Selby Walker reported that 15 Calgary section members had joined the Calgary Ski Club and encouraged the ACC to engage in winter sports and to open its Banff Clubhouse for winter use. see "The Management Committee" *The Gazette* (October 1934), p. 14

⁶³"Interim Report of the Ski Committee" CAJ (1933), p. 240 The Ski Mountaineering Section in the CAJ was started in 1930 under McCoubrey's editorship

events such as carnivals, skiing, and ski mountaineering were transforming Banff and Jasper national parks into attractive year-round tourist destinations.⁶⁴ The ACC played an active role in this transformation. In 1934, following an accident-ridden season, the Commissioner of National Parks J.B. Harkin requested the club's assistance "in the framing of regulations that would tend to prevent ski-ing accidents in the mountains." Harkin's request for policy input on ski safety was noted as the "most important question to come before the Committee."⁶⁵ In effect, this consultation between the Parks Branch and the ACC symbolized a longstanding partnership between park policymakers and a key park-user group. Skiing added a new dimension to this old relationship, reinforcing the club's status as an all-around pioneer in the field of mountain recreation.

As part of the trend toward winter sports, the ACC also promoted ice climbing—the sport of ascending frozen waterfalls. In 1933, the *Canadian Alpine Journal* committed 19 pages to debate on recent developments in equipment for this sport. Robert L.M. Underhill's article "Modern Ice Climbing Equipment" articulated a sophisticated understanding of the relative design merits of crampons, crampon bindings, ice axes, ice-axe slings, ice-pitons, boot nails, tent sacks, and the practical applications of this equipment in Europe and North America.⁶⁶ Ice climbing offered another variety of ascent to all-season Canadian climbers.

⁶⁴Department of the Interior, *Annual Report* (1929-30), pp. 107-09; William B. Yeo, "Making Banff a Year-Round Park" in *Winter Sports in the West*, ed. E.A. Corbett and A.W. Rasporich (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta, 1990), pp. 87-98.

⁶⁵"Report of Ski-ing Committee" *The Gazette* (October 1934), p. 15.

⁶⁶Robert L.M. Underhill, "Modern Ice Climbing Equipment" *CAJ* (1933), pp. 116-32.

As in the case of skiing, experimentation with the growing sport of rock climbing emerged at the ACC's section level. This type of climbing could be practiced near home—even in Manitoba, for example, where the steep walls of the Gunton dolomite quarries north of Winnipeg served as a training ground for later climbs in the Rockies and Purcells.⁶⁷ On the west coast, climbers such as Emmie Brooks were noted for their rock climbing ability.⁶⁸ According to an article on "Modern Rock Climbing Equipment" in the 1932 *Canadian Alpine Journal*, disparaging technical climbing as a "questionable mountaineering form" was outdated:

Since the war . . . the actual progress of rock climbing technique and experience, in which the standard of difficulty has been lifted amazingly within comparatively few years, has quietly rendered these views obsolete. The lead in this development has been taken by climbers in the Austrian Kaisergebirge and the Dolomites, and with both groups the piton has become a cornerstone of advanced technique, now looked upon as no more artificial than the ice-axe.⁶⁹

Here again, the relative merits of state-of-the-art equipment, such as ring pitons, eye pitons, carabiners, snap-rings, piton hammers, and rock climbing shoes were knowledgeably discussed with reference to European and North American practices. Thus, while alpine mountaineering remained a constant denominator, Canada's national mountaineering organization was no stranger to new worldwide climbing trends as it embraced an all-season cycle of mountain sports.

⁶⁷Robert L. M. Underhill, "Modern Ice Climbing Equipment" CAJ (1933), pp. 116-32

⁶⁸"Emmie Brooks" CAJ (1990), p. 92. Brooks eventually climbed in the Dolomites while visiting Europe in 1949.

⁶⁹Robert L.M. Underhill, "Modern Rock Climbing Equipment" CAJ (1932), p. 165

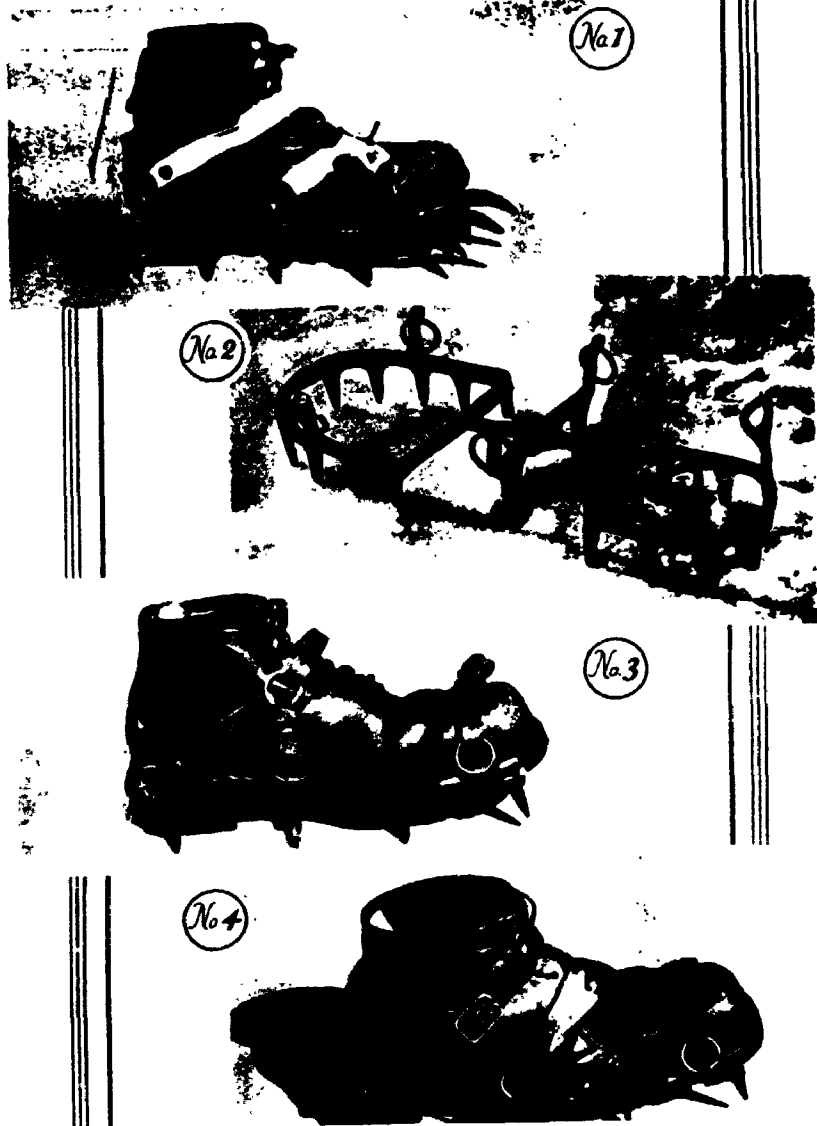
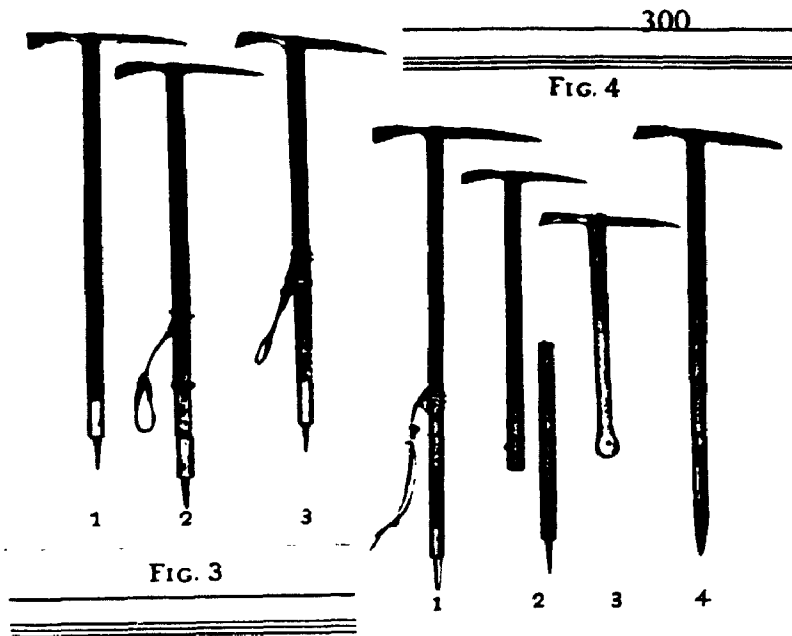


Illustration 29. Crampons, crampon bindings, and boots. Source: CAJ (1933), p. 122.

Illustration 30. Ice axes and ice pitons (right). Source: CAJ (1933), p. 12.



170

Canadian Alpine Journal

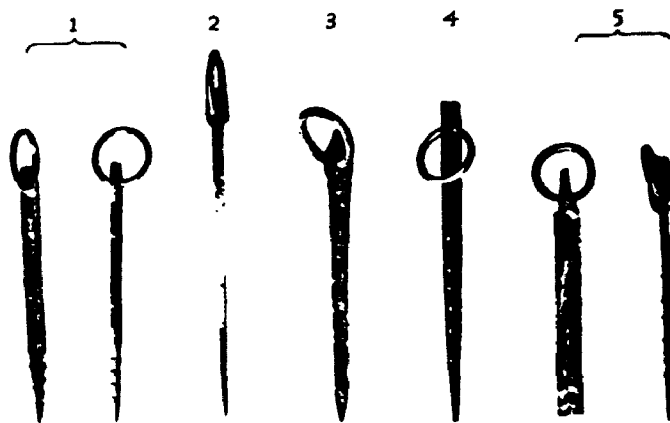
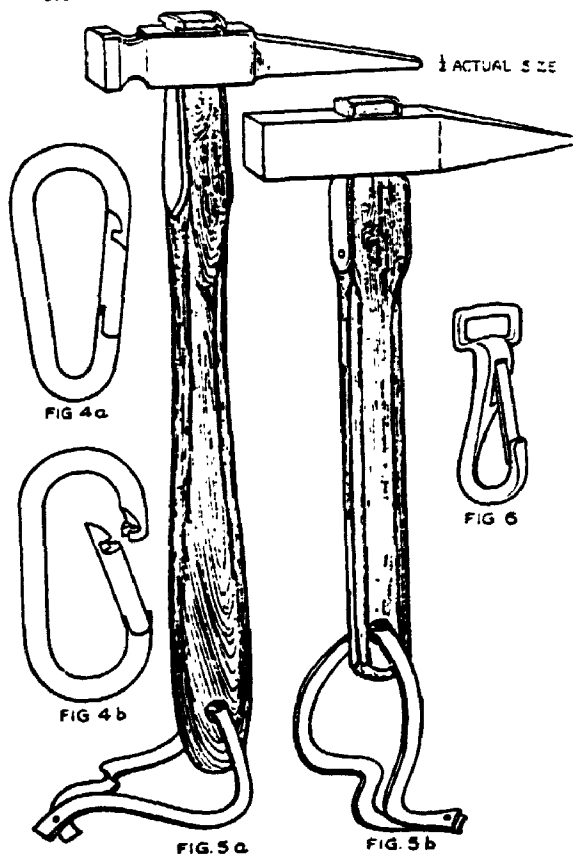


Illustration 31. Carabiners, piton hammers, and piton catcher (left). Source: CAJ (1932), p. 170.

During the 1930s, a trend emerged within the ACC toward amateur guiding. Amateur guides among the club increasingly took the place of the professional Swiss and Austrian mountaineering guides at the annual club camps. In 1933, the CPR employed only three mountaineering guides, and by 1934—as a "measure of economy"—the CNR no longer retained any guides.⁷⁰ The railways were phasing out this element of grand hotel service in the Rockies. Alpine Club executives worried that a shortage of "good guides" at camp might "cripple [their] climbing activities." In the absence of services provided by professional Swiss guides, club executives called on experienced leaders from among the ACC members to guide climbing parties during the 1934 camp—notably Alex Dalglish, Bill Cleveland, Rex Gibson, Roger Neave, and Lawrence Grassi.⁷¹ In later reviewing the camp held at Chrome Lake, Jasper National Park, R.J. Cuthbertson, a Saskatoon bank manager, observed:

Contrary to the usual practice of the Club, guiding was done entirely by volunteer guides and on frequent occasions 95% of the membership were out of Camp. The arrangement called for a great deal of personal initiative and proved to be very satisfactory.⁷²

⁷⁰The CPR provided three Swiss guides and a \$200 grant to the 1933 camp, see, WMCR, AC 00M/015, McCoubrey to Management Committee, 31 May 1933. Ibid., 5 June 1933. the CNR was not able to supply guides to the 1934 ACC camp, but provided a \$200 contribution toward the cost of railway freight between Calgary and Jasper, see WMCR, AC 00M/018, Osborne Scott to A.A. McCoubrey, 13 March 1934

⁷¹As early as 1930, the ACC requested Lawrence Grassi to attend camp as a mountaineering guide, see WMCR, AC 00M/008, Mitchell to Grassi, n.d., c. April 1930. WMCR, AC 00M/009, Mt. Little Climb, 30 July 1930; regarding the 1934 amateur guides see, WMCR, AC 00M/018, McCoubrey to Tweedy, 7 June 1934; Lawrence Grassi did not want to be paid in money or in kind for his guiding services to the ACC, see Ibid., 27 June 1934.

⁷²R.J. Cuthbertson, "Alpine Club Activities," *The Royal Bank Magazine* (May 1935), p. 4

On a personal level, activities such as guiding empowered the ACC members by heightening their sense of self-reliance and ability.

The fact that the ACC could support its own camp with amateur mountaineering guides attested to the mature expertise within the club by the mid-1930s. In contrast to earlier days, the club no longer depended on professional staff supplied by the railway to conduct its camps successfully. Just as Elizabeth Parker had foreseen the ACC as a leader in Canadian mountaineering, experienced ACC guides now led recruits to and from the summits to inculcate Canada's mountain heritage.

While its sports activities diversified, the ACC still retained a mountain focus. As early as 1928, when the Associated Mountaineering Clubs of North America branched out to become the Associated Outdoor Clubs of America, the ACC declined to continue its membership in the umbrella group. ACC Secretary Stanley Mitchell drew a distinction between omnibus outdoor "gangs" and the Alpine Club.⁷³ The ACC was not keen to affiliate with a generalized American outdoor association, preferring to retain the cachet of a specialized national mountaineering organization

Thus, throughout the interwar period, the ACC broadened its recreational agenda. Whereas the classical style of professionally guided alpine mountaineering characterized the ACC's approach to sport at the turn of the century, a broader spectrum of outdoor sports evolved during the interwar years, influenced by developments in Europe and

⁷³WMCR, AC 00M/003, Mitchell to Bell, 2 March 1928. The Associated Mountaineering Clubs of North America was an umbrella body formed in 1916 by Leroy Jeffers of the New York Public Library. The ACC joined in 1917, and in 1919 Toronto ACC member Frank Yeigh encouraged J.B. Harkin to have the Dominion Parks Branch join, which it did from 1921 to 1931. During the 1920s, the organization rang out as a pro-park advocacy group, for example, opposing hydro developments in Yellowstone National Park. See NAC, RG 84, vol. 170, file U125-5, part 1, passim.

elsewhere in North America. Many changes were related to regional differences within the ACC. While the ACC's roster of activities diversified into a year-round cycle of outdoor recreation, mountains remained the focus of the organization, as befitted a true alpine club. Despite regionalization and climbing opportunities in other parts of Canada, the national camp remained the club's yearly highlight, and the mountain parks in the Rockies and Selkirks continued to be the preferred location of the ACC camps.

Contrary to critical assessments made by Chris Jones and Gina Laforce, the ACC was not an unchanging citadel of tradition that rejected the new age of technical climbing in the 1920s. Although the classical style of mountaineering remained dominant within the club and its ethos until the post-World-War-II era, the ACC demonstrated adaptability through a difficult period of economic and organizational adjustment. Following the Mt. Logan ascent, the club parted from its Victorian approach to mountaineering and sought out new forms of climbing. If change did not occur overnight, it nonetheless affected the ACC, which began to conceive of multifaceted mountain sports as falling within its sphere of action. This transition ultimately led to a new set of priorities, as sport emerged as the Alpine Club's major preoccupation.

War, Power, and Parks—The Recurring Dilemma of the Minnewanka and Spray Lakes Dams, 1930-1942

The proclamation of the 1930 *National Parks Act* legislated that Canada's national parks were inviolable public domains to remain unimpaired for future generations, but the fight against hydro development in the parks was far from over. The major challenge to

the 1930 park legislation centered on Lake Minnewanka northeast of the town of Banff, which proved to be Calgary Power's lasting foothold in Banff National Park. As the Alpine Club and the Canadian National Parks Association discovered, inviolability was a principle subject to pragmatic definition.

On December 19, 1929, Calgary Power resumed its campaign to gain approval of the Lake Minnewanka dam project. From 1926 to the start of the Depression, Calgary's power load nearly doubled, surging from 12,000 to 20,000 kilowatts. As Calgary Power's Ghost River hydro project about 50 km west of Calgary neared completion, the company suggested that the layoffs of 400 men might be avoided by activating a new dam project on Minnewanka. Just west of the Ghost River system, within the Banff National Park boundaries, Lake Minnewanka had long been the source of debate between those who sought to preserve its natural scenic beauty and those who wished to enhance its potential to produce hydro power on the Bow River. It was even suggested that Minnewanka be excised from Banff National Park territory. Federal parks officials saw the move as an opportunistic propaganda campaign that took advantage of the worsening unemployment crisis of the early Depression.⁷⁴

The Alpine Club, meanwhile, decried the move as an assault on the new Banff National Park boundaries as determined by the *National Parks Act* (1930). In a burst of grass-roots activism characteristic of western populism, the middle-class ACC spoke out

⁷⁴W.E. Hawkins, *Electrifying Calgary: a century of public & private power* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1987), p. 208; "Minnewanka Dam Discussed," *Calgary Daily Herald*, 22 August 1930, p. 13; Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park*, pp. 183-84; "Power Development in Alberta: Rapid Progress Made with Construction of Ghost Plant on Bow River," *Natural Resources Canada*, May 1929, p. 4.

against the ostensible threat of elites eroding the public domain. At the annual ACC summer camp in 1930, the membership passed a resolution protesting the Minnewanka dam proposal and any further reduction in national park lands:

The Alpine Club of Canada requests the Government and Parliament of Canada to refuse any further cutting down of the areas of Canada's National Parks. In particular the Club asks that the present suggestion that the Lake Minnewanka area be taken out of the Banff National Park be not acceded to.⁷⁵

The resolution, moved by ACC stalwart and CNPA treasurer Andrew Sibbald, made several pointed arguments against the proposal: the park boundaries had been revised as recently as 1929 on "what purported to be a permanent basis"; the vicinity of Banff townsite was "the most congested Tourist district in the Park" and required more, not fewer, tourist facilities; park conditions and public safety could be impaired near Banff town if Park authorities lost control over fire suppression, forestry, and game protection in the Minnewanka area; there were means of "dealing with unemployment other than cutting down our Park areas"; and, finally, tourism statistics showed "the growing appreciation of thousands of people of the Canadian Rockies, and of the National Parks," which ought to have been Parliament's key priority, overriding "private interests and private applications." Following a decade-long fight to keep hydro development out of the Rocky Mountain national parks, the Alpine Club was wary of the creeping erosion of the public domain represented by another proposal to raise the waters of Lake Minnewanka.

At the same camp, the Canadian National Parks Association (CNPA)—created by the ACC in 1923 as a political lobby group—held an annual general meeting and

⁷⁵"Resolution re. Lake Minnewanka" *The Gazette* (October 1930), pp 20-21.

condemned the Minnewanka dam proposal. By 1930, the CNPA claimed to represent 60 other associations, clubs, and organizations, representing 205,000 people across Canada. A.O. Wheeler reported the CNPA's stand on the Minnewanka issue in a press release to Banff's local newspaper on August 22, 1930:

The Canadian National Parks Association views with amazement the report that the Lake Minnewanka area is to be eliminated from the Banff National Park as a solution to the unemployment problem We trust that the feasibilities of utilizing waste gas or coal will be investigated before an area which was the cause of Canada's first National Park will be turned over for commercial exploitation.⁷⁶

The development of fossil fuels was recommended as a superior means of economic diversification that would create year-round employment, as illustrated by European examples. CNPA Central Vice President H.E. Sampson, who was also the incumbent ACC president, was quoted along with Andrew Sibbald in opposition to cutting any more area from Banff National Park. They argued from a national standpoint that the parks were "the property of all the people and belonged as much to Saskatchewan as to Alberta." Thus national park lands were a national public domain, and a private corporation had no authority to cause their alienation, whether in whole or in part. Wheeler reported in the Banff paper that copies of the CNPA resolution would be circulated to all members of Parliament.

On August 20, 1930, the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* published the ACC resolution regarding Minnewanka and backed the club's stand against monopolistic power

⁷⁶A. O. Wheeler, "Resent proposal to exploit Lake Minnewanka," *Crag and Canyon*, 22 August 1930, p. 1.

developments in the national parks. A line had to be drawn when it came to power dams in the national parks:

There is only one way to preserve a national park from destruction, and that is to make a rigid rule for its protection and admit no exceptions whatever regardless of the exigencies. Several bites have already been taken out of the Banff park. If another bite is to be allowed every time a power company so desires, the park will not be a playground but a hive of industry in twenty or thirty years.⁷⁷

The editorial argued that Calgary Power was selling only "a fraction" of the energy it was producing and speculated that additional power would be sold to the American market.

Soon afterward, an editorial in the *Calgary Albertan* headlined that the ACC and the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* were "Making Themselves Ridiculous." The pro-irrigation farmers' newspaper argued that their ill-informed statements against the Minnewanka project had shown an "appalling ignorance" and revived "time-worn phrases as to the sanctity of the national public parks and other such platitudinous parallels." The *Albertan* argued that there was no alternative to damming Minnewanka. Because there was already a dam in place, the lake would not be spoiled and need not be removed from Banff National Park. It took sharp aim at the ACC:

By their interference in this matter the Alpine Club, in the eyes of those who know the facts, has put itself into a perfectly ridiculous position. It has plunged into the affairs of Calgary and the district in a totally unjustifiable manner; it has made itself the butt of scorn and derision that will hang to it for years to come.⁷⁸

⁷⁷"Industry in National Parks," *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, 20 August 1930, p. 13.

⁷⁸"Making Themselves Ridiculous," *The Calgary Albertan*, 25 August 1930, p. 4.

The *Star Phoenix's* apprehensions about degrading the lake and power exports to the United States were baseless, and the very idea of coal and gas power development was ridiculed. Furthermore, the Saskatoon *Star* was repudiated for intervening in national park issues in Calgary's backyard:

Minnewanka is one of our chief resorts; it is a favored fishing ground for anglers, campers, [and] summer dwellers. We are far more interested in its reservation both in an aesthetic and practical sense than are the dwellers in the city on the South Saskatchewan. Calgary supports this scheme because, while not marring the lake, it will give an added security to our power supply and remove us from the fear of such a shortage as overtook Vancouver within the past two years.⁷⁹

Interfering in local affairs was a weighty transgression that provoked a vehement attempt to discredit environmental concerns

The Alpine Club responded quickly to this stinging attack. Within days, a delegation of ACC Calgary section members visited the offices of the *Albertan* to set the record straight regarding the club mandate. The paper then published the ACC objectives in full and devoted another editorial to the Minnewanka question. The CNPA's resolution on the Minnewanka dam had been misconstrued as the ACC's resolution, a discrepancy that the ACC Honourary Treasurer Andrew Sibbald was quick to address. It appears the Alpine Club did not wish to be implicated with the proposals of its political wing, the CNPA. Considering that the two bodies had met at the same time and place, shared many of the same members and executives, and exercised a populist political style, it was a

⁷⁹Ibid

distinction that may have been more apparent to the ACC and CNPA than to outsiders.⁸⁰

Like the Social Credit movement sweeping through Alberta in these years, these pro-conservation groups distrusted elites—especially eastern elites—and relied on grass-roots activism to fight their cause.

Meanwhile, Selby Walker, CNPA executive secretary, did not let the *Albertan's* biting criticism go unchallenged. In populist tones, he retorted that the CNPA hoped that many other clubs and newspapers would also "make themselves ridiculous" by standing up against monopolistic power development in the national parks:

The people of the other provinces of Canada feel themselves justified in "making themselves ridiculous" by questioning the bland assumption by anyone of a proprietary interest in the Banff National Park Canada's natural resources have been exploited long enough for the enrichment of the few. It is high time they were developed for the best interests of the people.⁸¹

The "hydro monopoly"—represented by Calgary Power—was not committed to an integrated Canadian energy policy or employment strategy, Walker argued. Pointing to the United States, where national park creation required land purchases in many states, Walker stressed the importance of "agitating for an adequate parks system for Canada" while it could still be "procured free of cost and unspoiled." In contrast to its parent organization, the CNPA articulated polemic arguments in resource-use debates stemming from national park issues.

⁸⁰"Alpine Club Has Wide Objective—Members Point Out That it is Not Close Limited in Scope," *The Calgary Albertan*, 30 August 1930, p. 3. "Alpine Club Denies," *Ibid.*, p. 4

⁸¹"Making Themselves Ridiculous," *Crag and Canyon*, 29 August 1930, p. 4

On September 16, 1930, Calgary Power filed a formal application with the federal Department of Mines and Resources for permission to proceed with a new dam on Lake Minnewanka. Ultimately, the application was set aside without action, and Calgary Power gave up its demands.⁸² For the next decade, the Minnewanka scheme lay dormant

Calgary Power's 1930 attempt to secure approval for the Minnewanka project appears to have been another gambit in the ongoing game of resource development in Banff National Park. The company may have speculated that the Minnewanka application would gain momentum as the Ghost River layoffs approached and the Spray Lakes were excised from the park as part of the 1930 natural resources transfers. If it failed to get through this window of opportunity, the company could afford to bide its time until its next chance to push Minnewanka ahead.

In any case, it is questionable whether Calgary Power would have commenced a project on Minnewanka during the deepening Depression. The expense of the Ghost project plunged the company into the red at the outset of the crash, as former Calgary Power executive W.E. Hawkins remarked

The Great Depression hit the Calgary Power Company as severely as it did the city and, in fact, the company barely managed to survive as the Ghost project saddled it with additional capital financing costs with little additional revenue to offset those costs because power demand leveled off.⁸³

⁸²NAC, RG84, vol. 539, file B39-8, part 9. Revised Memorandum, Spray Lakes Hydro Electric Development and the Calgary Power Limited, Ottawa, 14 January 1949. Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park*, pp. 236-40.

⁸³Hawkins, *Electrifying Calgary*, p. 169.

Through the late 1920s, the federal Department of the Interior observed a rapid growth in water-power capacity across Canada, but the demand for power dropped as the nation sank into economic depression.⁸⁴ As the floundering Beauharnois hydro project on the St. Lawrence River illustrated in 1931 to 1932, it was difficult to capitalize a large hydro development in the face of national power surpluses:

The economic depression had led to numerous industrial plant closings with a resulting sharp reduction in hydroelectric requirements. Yet, across Canada facilities to generate an additional 546,650 horsepower were put into operation in 1931, and an additional 1.4 million horsepower, including the 500,000 at Beauharnois, were under construction. Instead of a power shortage the country faced serious power surpluses.⁸⁵

In western Canada, falling demands for power during the Depression corresponded to a weakened agricultural economy with a small industrial base. Even though it was legally feasible for Calgary Power to go ahead with the Spray Lakes project as early as 1930, that project did not proceed until the 1950s. It would have been folly for Calgary Power to expand its hydro works in the midst of a surplus power market and serious depression. These considerations figured in the company's declining interest in the 1930 Minnewanka application.

While the Minnewanka issue cooled down through the 1930s, the CNPA turned its attention to promoting health and fitness through outdoor recreation. Lauding the German outdoor movement, the association recommended walking. Its letterhead

⁸⁴"Mid-Season Review of Power Development in Canada," *Natural Resources Canada*, August 1928. "Power Development in Alberta," *Ibid*, May 1929, p. 4, "Mid-Year Water-Power Review," *Ibid*, August 1929, p. 1, 3, "Hydro-electric Development in Canadian West Great Activity in Prairie Provinces," *Ibid*, December 1929, pp. 1, 3.

⁸⁵T D Regehr, *The Beauharnois Scandal: A Story of Canadian Entrepreneurship and Politics* (Toronto University of Toronto Press, 1990), p. 169, also see pp. 4, 85, 163-78, 180.

featured drawings of men and women walking throughout history with the motto "an hour a day every day in the open air." Paradoxically, the CNPA also promoted the construction of highways through the national parks, such as the Trans-Canada and the Yellowhead, in conjunction with the Canadian Automobile Association.⁸⁶ Highways were considered essential for park lovers to reach their public recreation grounds. Despite its hostile reaction toward hydro development, the CNPA encouraged the trend toward commercial tourism in Canada's national parks. After all, tourism was an appropriate industry in the parks according to the principles of the CNPA and the ACC.

The next attempt to push ahead with a new dam on Lake Minnewanka came during World War II under dramatically different regional economic conditions. In October 1940, based on the grounds of wartime exigency and the need to power the Alberta Nitrogen Company of Calgary operating under the British-Canadian Explosives Programme, Calgary Power applied for authority to expand the Minnewanka hydro system under the *War Measures Act*. The federal emergency powers granted under the *Act* provided a unique opportunity to override any law, including the parks legislation that had to date prevented the dam. On this occasion, the dam was approved. Because permission was requested under a separate act of Parliament and licensed by Minister of Munitions and Supply C.D. Howe, the 1930 national parks legislation regarding inviolability was ineffectual. As had been proposed in 1922 and 1930, Calgary Power's engineers diverted the Ghost River, constructed a new dam, raised the lake level by approximately 19.8 m

⁸⁶Leslie Bella and Susan Markham, "Parks First: Patriotic Canadians from Coast to Coast in Support of National Parks," *Recreation Canada* 42 (December 1984), pp. 15-16

(65 feet), flooded the community at Minnewanka Landing, and, by 1942, had transformed the contour lines of the shores around the lake.⁸⁷ As a result, Minnewanka's depth sounded over 91.4 m (300 feet); artificially, it was now the deepest lake in Banff National Park. Other than scrutinizing landscaping procedures, the Lands, Parks and Forests Branch was left without recourse to this serious infraction of national parks legislation.

Where was the Alpine Club when Calgary Power advanced on Lake Minnewanka in 1940? Silent in the face of wartime hydro construction in the national parks, the club failed to raise this issue in either its gazette or journal. Several factors precipitated this silence.⁸⁸

By the time the Minnewanka issue arose in 1940, the ACC's prime mover in the 1920s and 1930s conservation debates had retired. A.O. Wheeler was in his eighties and no longer spry enough to lead a fight against Calgary Power. In any case, such a protest was secondary to Wheeler's respect for patriotism, loyalty, and the wartime demands of British imperialism—just as it would have been to most of the patriotic British nationals among the ACC membership who, in Wheeler's words, commended their clubmates serving in the armed forces for their "splendid patriotism and loyalty to the Empire." In his 1940 address to the ACC, Wheeler admitted his mind was "totally preoccupied with

⁸⁷NAC, RG 84, series A.2.a, vol. 539, file B39-5A, Account of Cascade Power Development 1941, NAC, RG 84, series A.2, vol. 238, file 33-4-4, part 3, Banff Electric Power-Lake Minnewanka Power Project Calgary Power 1941-48; C.J. Taylor, "Legislating Nature," p. 135, Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park*, pp. 236-40; the Alberta Nitrogen Plant in southeast Calgary produced anhydrous ammonia for explosives and consumed as much power as the entire city of Calgary during World War II, Hawkins, *Electrifying Calgary*, p. 171.

⁸⁸Johnston and Marsh first speculated on reasons for the ACC's declining involvement in conservation after 1930, see Margaret Johnston and John Marsh, "The Alpine Club of Canada, Conservation and Parks, 1906 to 1930" CAJ (1986), p. 19.

the European situation" and emphasized his sympathy for the "British Empire in her fight for existence to maintain christianity, civilization and freedom . . . against barbaric, inhuman hordes that seek to dominate the world."⁸⁹

Moreover, Wheeler's ally in the Parks Branch, Commisisoner J.B. Harkin, had retired in 1936 at the age of 61 and was no longer active in national parks policy. Thus the closely knit collegial network that had existed between Wheeler and Harkin no longer bonded the relationship between the club and the national parks administration in Ottawa when it came to conservation advocacy.

The worldly politics of conservation advocacy through the 1920s had not left the ACC unscathed. The termination of the ACC's federal grant under R.B. Bennett introduced the club to the real politics of resource use. The *National Parks Act* had ostensibly legislated the principle of inviolability, yet resource use dilemmas continually called into question the integrity of inviolability in day-to-day park management. Pro-hydro newspaper editorials in 1930 ridiculed the club for its tenacious arguments against development. The club's new leadership may have realized that—when it came to hydro development in Banff National Park—they were fighting a losing battle against powerful forces. Through the 1930s and early 1940s, careful business management preoccupied much of the club executives' time during a period marked by falling revenues and declining membership. Moreover, the imperatives of broad, participatory sport had emerged as the dominant preoccupation of the club. By the early 1940s, the Alpine Club's interest in

⁸⁹"Honourary President's Address," *The Gazette*, November 1943, pp. 6-7, *Ibid.*, November 1940, p. 7.

conservation had declined in proportion to its growing participation in Canada's war effort.

When Canada went to war, the ACC patriotically fell into step. The club mobilized on several fronts. ACC President Eric Brooks observed that maintaining the club's tradition was an essential means of contributing to the national war effort on the home front:

We are living in momentous times and it is difficult to foresee with any degree of certainty what course events may take in the next few years, or even months. It behooves us then to "Carry On"; to preserve those traditions and ideals of comradeship and tolerance which have been so evident in the Club. Quite a number of our members are now on active service . . . and many more will undoubtedly follow. Probably *our* greatest contribution, those of us who are left behind, is to make sure that the Club's activities and all they stand for are maintained. So that when the present conflict is over we may do our share in furthering the cause of international brotherhood which seems lacking in the world at large and yet is so evident around these campfires.⁹⁰

Approximately 80 members dropped out of the club during wartime, leaving a membership of about 450 in November 1944. Among these 450 members, 70 enlisted people were carried without payment of club dues. By 1944-45, 18 ACC women and 76 men were serving in the allied forces, many among the officer corps. Those members "left behind" formed a valuable pool of expertise when it came to mobilizing mountain troops for the Department of National Defence, and during wartime they found new ways to carry on the ACC's tradition as the national alpine club.⁹¹

⁹⁰"E.C. Brooks takes the Chair," *The Gazette*, January 1942, p. 14

⁹¹"A Letter from the President," *The Gazette*, November 1944, p. 3, "Members on War Service" CAJ (1944 & 45), pp. 175-76

From 1942 to 1944, the ACC embarked on a major undertaking instructing members of the allied forces in mountain warfare. In response to the needs of national defence, the ACC turned its camps into troop-training exercises for the Canadian Army. The 1942 ACC camp in Consolation Valley, Alberta, trained 17 officers in mountaineering for military operations. A series of courses in mountain warfare for several hundred men and officers was held at the 1943 camp in the Little Yoho Valley, British Columbia. ACC members designed and instructed these training programs and were commended by the commanding officers for their proficiency. During winter 1943-44, the ACC organized a secret camp in Jasper National Park to teach skiing and high-mountain warfare to a British regiment known as the Lovat Scouts.⁹² The ACC huts were also used as military training bases and other mountain cabins used by the military later reverted to the ACC.⁹³ For the club, one benefit of the military training program was that men who had trained at the war camps joined the ACC to continue mountaineering after the war.⁹⁴ The success of the military training programs—"a bold experiment"—was a point of pride for the club:

Besides teaching the Army, the [ACC] members themselves learned a great deal. They have done a good job and proved themselves capable of giving instruction in the basic elements of mountaineering. At the same time the Alpine Club of Canada has justified its claim to be the leader in Canadian

⁹²See H.J. Graves, "Little Yoho Valley Military Camp" CAJ (1942-43), pp. 230-46. Rex Gibson, "Troop Training in the Rockies" CAJ (1946), pp. 177-191, "1943 Summer Camp," *The Gazette*, January 1943, p. 2, "A Letter from the President," *The Gazette*, November 1944, p. 4

⁹³Herb and Pat Kariel, *Alpine Huts*, pp. 28-34, 92-93. Shangri-la and Watchtower cabins are examples of the latter

⁹⁴"A Letter from the President," *The Gazette*, November 1944, p. 4. In assessing the ACC troop training programs, E.C. Brooks commented: "Another important outcome of the scheme which will bear fruit as time goes on is the fact that many of the boys whom we were privileged to train have developed a true love of the 'hills,' and some have already become valuable members of the Club."

Mountaineering affairs and has shown that ability to advance which its founders foresaw.⁹⁵

By responding to the demands of the national war effort, the Alpine Club reasserted itself as the national mountaineering body, even if it meant turning a blind eye to the other aspects of its traditional mandate.

During World War II, the Alpine Club of Canada drew on its nationalistic tradition as Canada's national mountaineering organization to focus on serving the war effort. The club considered the war effort of utmost importance during this period, as shown by its leading role in military training exercises. This single-minded focus dominated the ACC through the early 1940s. Nationalistic militarism precluded much opposition to the Lake Minnewanka dam scheme, which proceeded in a national park under the rationale of providing power for Canada's war effort.

In effect, the ACC withdrew from contentious conservation debates during the 1940s to concentrate on mountaineering, knowing that its offshoot—the Canadian National Parks Association—would enter the fray over hydro development in Banff National Park. Unlike its parent organization, the CNPA maintained a loud, political outcry against the Minnewanka project throughout the 1940s. In 1940, Selby Walker's letters to western newspapers and federal officials argued that Calgary Power should use Alberta's coal, oil, and natural gas reserves to generate power, rather than desecrate the national parks under the guise of wartime urgency.⁹⁶ At the same time, forces such as the

⁹⁵H.J. Graves, "Little Yoho Valley Military Camp" CAJ (1942-43), pp 245-46

⁹⁶NAC, RG 84, vol. 931, file B39-5NC, Walker to *Calgary Herald*, 5 September 1940. Ibid., Walker to *The Albertan*, 11 September 1940

Banff Town Advisory Council, the Calgary Board of Trade, *The Albertan* newspaper, and Calgary-West M.P. Manley Edwards supported the dam.⁹⁷ By April 1941, alienated by the ongoing conflicts over Minnewanka, Walker implied that Calgary Power—controlled by the Montreal Engineering Company—was wringing natural resources out of the West:

How long must this suicidal exploitation of the natural resources of Western Canada for the benefit of the eastern capitalists and the votes of the eastern majority be carried on?⁹⁸

This rhetorical question remained to be answered, but westerners were not exonerated from responsibility. By fading out of active conservation advocacy during the recurrent hydro dilemmas, the western-based Alpine Club conceded the fight for the public domain and turned its attention inward to the recreational needs of its members, thereby strengthening its own chances of survival.

After 1940, there was persistent pressure for economic development in Canada and little denying its imperatives. The same forces would change the nature of mountain tourism in the postwar auto parks. Despite its vigorous political opposition to Calgary Power, the CNPA was, like the ACC, transforming its view of appropriate activities in the national mountain parks. If dams were unwelcome, tourists were not. The Alpine Club of Canada would soon identify a postwar park ideal based on a changed notion of Canadian alpinism that would result in a "hive of industry" in the national mountain parks emerging beyond the frontiers of the Depression and war

⁹⁷NAC, RG 84, Vol 931, file B39-5NC, "Banff Council Urges Power Plant Support," *Calgary Herald*, 29 November 1940; "Banff Power Proposal Backed by Trade Board," *Ibid*, 4 December 1940, p. 1. "Advisory Council Receive Letter On Lake Minnewanka Dam," *Crag and Canyon*, 6 December 1940

⁹⁸NAC, RG 22, series A.2, vol 238, file 33-4-4, part 3, W.J.S. Walker to J. Smart, 25 April 1941

CHAPTER 6

Limitless Playgrounds? Canada's Postwar Mountain Parks

As World War II drew to a close, the Alpine Club of Canada lost its two most influential founders. Winnipeg's lady of letters Elizabeth Parker died on October 26, 1944 at the age of 88. The *Canadian Alpine Journal* noted that the "circle of the Canadian Alpine Club had lost a devoted friend" and "one of its most loyal supporters." On March 20, 1945, Arthur Wheeler died suddenly at the age of 85. He remained a grand figure even in death. As he had requested, Wheeler was laid out in his Tyrolean cape, the green, white, and grey colours of the Alpine Club were draped over the casket, wreathed by his Tyrolean hat, ice axe, and climbing rope, and he was buried in the Banff cemetery. Wheeler's obituary observed that "the familiar figure of Alpine cape and Tyrolean hat is gone but none who knew him can forget his genuine friendship or his broad vision and high objectives." The death of the Alpine Club of Canada founders signified the passing of an era.¹

Nearly forty years after the creation of the ACC, the literal and conceptual landscape of Canada was vastly transformed. Canada had emerged as a nation with a

¹"Elizabeth Parker" CAJ (1944-45), pp 122-27. "Arthur Oliver Wheeler" CAJ (1944-45), pp 140-46. Esther Fraser, *Wheeler* (Banff: Summerthought, 1978), p 156



Illustration 32. Arthur Oliver Wheeler in later years Source: Esther Fraser, *Wheeler*, (Banff: Summerthought, 1978), p. 154.

predominantly urban, industrialized core and regional economic hinterlands based on the exploitation of raw resources. In 1945, the country had a population of 12.07 million people and a gross national product of \$10.5 billion. By 1951, the urban population of Canada totaled 7,511,539 or 62.9 percent of the total population.² The Canadian west was no longer a frontier. The prairies had been broken by agriculture and formerly inaccessible mountain ranges had been opened by railways, roads, and highways. Between 1901 and 1941, population from Manitoba west to British Columbia had increased from 598,200 to 3,239,700.³ The national parks stood out as recreational green spaces on an increasingly populated, industrial, agricultural, and urban landscape.

In March 1945, 23 national parks and national historic parks existed across Canada. Under the *National Parks Act*, the Lands, Parks and Forests Branch of the federal Department of Mines and Resources administered 16 national parks—from Cape Breton Highlands, Nova Scotia, to Mount Revelstoke, British Columbia—and seven national historic parks. As the war effort peaked and the return of peace seemed more likely, total national park attendance rose by 42,041, from 415,351 tourists in 1943-44 to 457,392 in 1944-45—approximately the same number of people as the entire 1941

²For census data, see J.L. Finlay and D.N. Sprague, *The Structure of Canadian History* (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1984), p. 481-84, J. Arthur Lower, *Western Canada: An Outline History* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1983), p. 317.

³J. Arthur Lower, *Western Canada: An Outline History* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1983), p. 316.

population of New Brunswick.⁴ This change began an accelerated trend toward increased attendance in Canada's national parks. Postwar tourism was made possible by a successful transition to peacetime social and economic growth. The postwar national parks were planned, just as Canadian social and economic growth after the war was a "planned" product of government policy and private initiative. Throughout this time, the ACC was a constant presence in the mountain parks and, as the war came to a close, it looked ahead to planning the national parks. New leaders with new priorities would guide the club's vision, which would, in turn, contribute to shaping the postwar parks

Reconstruction and Canada's Postwar Playgrounds

Even before World War II ended, attention had turned to Canada's postwar reconstruction. Federal and provincial governments focused on social and economic planning characterized by positive state involvement to rebuild and expand the country. The federal Advisory Committee on Reconstruction, appointed in 1943, set up a natural resources subcommittee that laid out several recommendations, including "the extension and improvement of National Parks facilities; study of methods for widening the economic basis for travel; [and] improvement of highways." Recommendations related to national

⁴The national parks were Banff, Cape Breton Highlands, Elk Island, Georgian Bay Islands, Glacier, Jasper, Kootenay, Mount Revelstoke, Nemiskam, Point Pelee, Prince Albert, Prince Edward Island, Riding Mountain, St. Lawrence Islands, Waterton Lakes, and Yoho. For reference to park attendance, see Canada, *Report of the Department of Mines and Resources for the Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 1945* (Ottawa, 1946), pp. 81, 84. The 1941 population of New Brunswick was 457,401. See J. L. Finlay and D. N. Sprague, *The Structure of Canadian History* (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall, 1984), p. 481.

parks showed up under tourism, linking parks to the ethos of postwar growth.⁵ In 1944, Minister of Mines and Resources T. A. Crerar advised the head of the Ontario Parks Association that the Committee anticipated a rising need for parks at all levels of government—national, provincial, and municipal.⁶

In preparation for the 1945 Dominion-Provincial Conference on Reconstruction, the National Parks Bureau outlined an extensive "Post War Rehabilitation Programme." This five-year plan for capital investment and employment, amounting to \$16,875,000, emphasized the role of the national parks in the Canadian economy: "The possibilities . . . are almost unlimited."⁷ The conference reaffirmed the federal centralization evident in the 1940 Rowell-Sirois Report on Dominion-Provincial Relations. In an attempt to thwart another recession after the war, Ottawa wove a social safety net composed of health, education, and social benefits, while Minister of Reconstruction C.D. Howe's "superpush" approach to economic development sought to ensure a "high and stable level of employment and income."⁸

Following years of stagnation and slowed consumption due to depression and war, Canada was ready to invest in rebuilding. Parks became one focal point of public

⁵F.J. Thorpe, "Historical Perspective on the 'Resources for Tomorrow' Conference" in *Resources for Tomorrow*, (Ottawa: Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, 1961), vol. 1, pp. 9-10.

⁶NAC, RG 84, vol. 171, file U125-17, part 1, T. A. Crerar to Mr. Whitaker, 28 July 1944.

⁷NAC, RG 22, series A 2, vol. 78, file 490 "Post War Rehabilitation Programme—National Parks Bureau," revised 21 July 1945.

⁸R. Douglas Francis et al., eds., *Destines: Canadian History Since Confederation* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1988), pp. 298-308; Robert Bothwell and William Kilbourn, *C.D. Howe: a biography* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980), pp. 180-96; Desmond Morton, *1945 When Canada Won the War* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1995), pp. 3, 14-18.

spending, underpinned by policies that highlighted the social and economic values of tourism, recreation, and leisure. Wall and Wallis argued that a social impetus existed for state involvement in outdoor recreation during this period:

Following the Second World War, North American governments greatly expanded their supply of land and facilities for outdoor recreation. There was a surge in demand for camping and outdoor recreation had become an accepted government responsibility, due in part to the social utility associated with leisure and recreation as a necessary and enriching aspect of life.⁹

Beginning in the 1930s, annual holidays became more common as state-regulated labour codes in western countries provided for two weeks of paid vacation time. In Canada, provincial labour standards and the Canada Labour Code mandated paid holidays.¹⁰ Holidays offered the social and economic utility of revitalizing the workforce.

While the Canadian national parks matured into a regionally representative system, other levels of government also increased their involvement in outdoor recreation. The provinces spurred the development of their park systems after the war. For example, Ontario, which had established eight parks from 1883 to 1954, added 86 new parks between 1954 and 1967, most including campgrounds.¹¹

⁹G. Wall and R. Wallis, "Camping for Fun: A Brief History of Camping in North America" in *Recreational Land Use: Perspectives on its evolution in Canada*, eds. Geoffrey Wall and John S. Marsh (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1982), pp. 349, 341-53.

¹⁰Britain passed the *Holidays with Pay Act* (1938) as a result of the Amolree Report, see J.A.R. Pimlott, *The Englishman's Holiday: A Social History* (London: Faber & Faber, 1947), pp. 217-222, A.J. Norval, *The Tourist Industry: A National and International Survey* (London: Pitman and Sons, 1936), chapter 4; *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Employment Law," by Inus Christie

¹¹Wall and Wallis, "Camping for Fun," p. 341-53; Gerald Killan, *Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Provincial Parks System* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), pp. 74, 121.

In Canada's overall reconstruction scheme, public parks were considered an important component of economic diversification, as well as egalitarian social development. Economic prosperity in North America boosted opportunities for travel. After a decade and a half of denied and repressed spending, the car became the darling of North American consumers. Commercial airliners boosted international tourism. From 1950 to 1960 international tourist "arrivals" more than doubled from 25.3 million to 69.3 million.¹² The exclusivity of the railway parks was completely overthrown by postwar mass tourism. The middle-class market for tourism expanded rapidly with postwar prosperity through the 1950s and 1960s. Tourism was considered a limitless industry in an international marketplace; thus national parks were seen as a valuable asset to national and regional economic growth. J.G. Perdue of the National Parks Bureau made this clear to the Parks and Recreation Association of Canada in 1947:

The National Parks of Canada, besides providing for wildlife and preserving the natural beauty of the landscape, have become popular recreational areas for Canadians and are playing an important role in the tourist industry About 20 percent of this year's million visitors were from other lands, particularly the United States.¹³

It was not coincidence that the national parks were reorganized in 1950 as a branch of the Department of Resources and Development.¹⁴

¹²*Yearbook of Tourism Statistics* (Madrid: World Tourism Organization, 1993), p. 2

¹³NAC, RG 84, vol. 171, file U125-17, part 1, J.G. Perdue to the Parks and Recreation Association Annual Convention at Fort William, 11 September 1947

¹⁴W.F. Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks*, vol. II (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1977), p. 19

As the Alpine Club's elders passed away, a new vision of parks was taking shape. As Jack Wright has observed, great pressures were put on the Canadian parks during what has been termed the "Facility Period" from 1945 to the late 1960s:

The post World War II period brought a tremendous resurgence to the development of parks and recreational facilities. There had been a virtual no-growth condition in park development for a period of almost thirty years. As a result, there were extraordinary pressures to not only develop new properties, but to renovate and up-grade the older but outmoded existing parklands and facilities.¹⁵

Here, the ACC exerted its recreational demands on the mountain parks—the cradle of the Canadian national park system—favoured by alpinists and other tourists since the 1880s.

Late in 1944, the ACC submitted a list of formal recommendations entitled "Post-war Development of National Parks" to the Lands, Parks and Forests Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources. The club recommended "the development and greater utilization of the National Parks of Canada by the general public." In its brief, the ACC claimed special authority for making recommendations related to the national mountain parks:

Inasmuch as two of the objectives of the Alpine Club of Canada as stated in the Constitution are: "a) The promotion of scientific study and exploration of Canadian alpine and glacial regions" and "d) The encouragement of mountain craft and the opening up of new regions as national playgrounds," and inasmuch as we have held over forty consecutive camps in the various mountain regions of Canada to further these objectives, we feel especially qualified to submit the recommendations attached hereto.¹⁶

¹⁵Jack Wright, "Urban Open Space in Transition" in *Proceedings of the Third Canadian Congress on Leisure Research* eds., Thomas L. Burton and Ian Taylor (Canadian Association for Leisure Studies, 1983), pp. 440-452.

¹⁶"Post-war Development of National Parks" CAJ (1944-45), pp. 168-69

For four decades, the ACC had participated as a recreational user group in the national mountain parks, a fact highlighted to policymakers to enhance the club's status as a partner in park planning. The proposal contended that "the time is ripe for the Canadian Government to do more to provide facilities for healthy outdoor recreation in its National Parks." Here, the club seconded the CPR's recommendations to the department regarding "Postwar Planning for Tourist Travel in Canada."¹⁷

The ACC submission emphasized opening the parks to mass tourism. It went beyond recommendations regarding climbers to suggest changes relative to "tourists in general":

Since the first concern of our Club is with mountaineering, it should not be construed that the recommendations concern only greater facilities for climbing, such as the opening or reconditioning of trails leading to good climbing areas, and the erection of huts or shelters at strategic points. We recognize the desirability of making more readily accessible many fine beauty spots, recreational and fishing areas in our National Parks, to *tourists in general* The potentialities of the inner recesses of the Parks should be shared by a larger number of our citizens, and those from other countries. To achieve this greater accessibility is necessary.¹⁸

Access was the watchword of the postwar park ideal and the club's historic role in opening up "new regions as national playgrounds" for the middle class resurfaced in the auto age of mass tourism.

According to the club's postwar vision, the function of parks was two-fold. First, Canada stood to gain socially by deriving recreational benefits from its national parks:

¹⁷Ibid., pp 168-69.

¹⁸Ibid , p 169, italicized in original source

The recreational value of our parks cannot be too greatly stressed, for to people who spend the greater portion of their lives in cities and towns, they afford opportunities for exercise, rest and refreshment to both body and mind. But unless they are made readily accessible and the public is encouraged to make use of them their value is lost.¹⁹

The argument that parks enhanced the urbanite's health and productivity echoed late nineteenth-century social reform movements and resounded the turn-of-the-century philosophy of guiding lights A.O. Wheeler, Elizabeth Parker, and J.B. Harkin. The suggestion that parks were without value unless the public used them implied a utilitarian ideal of material use. This assertion differed subtly from the turn-of-the-century approach to parks that—although anthropocentric—placed a high value on the intangible qualities of the parks, such as the spirituality of nature and the inspirational power of beauty. In essence, it was implied that mountain recreation was becoming a more consumption-oriented activity that required a substantial infrastructure

Second, as the club argued, parks could add to the local and national economies. For 40 years, the ACC had participated in this tourist economy in the Rockies and Selkirks and, by its presence, encouraged the growth of businesses such as railways, outfitters, hotels, and purveyors of various goods and supplies.

Opportunities for occupational activity are also presented by such development, for whenever tourist travel is encouraged, services of various kinds will be required, and people will always be found who are ready to provide such services in a greater or lesser degree, and benefits will derive therefrom both to the individual and to the country at large.²⁰

¹⁹"Post-war Development of National Parks" CAJ (1944-45), p. 169

²⁰Ibid., p. 169

Just as the ACC camps and the Mt. Assiniboine Walking Tours had opened up the mountains to the middle classes prior to World War II, the auto age carried mass tourism into the national parks. The ACC recognized the national parks as an economic asset as did postwar public policy.

The ACC's submission contained five pages of recommendations requesting specific "improvements" in Banff, Jasper, Yoho, Kootenay, and Glacier national parks, along with the provincial park at Mt. Robson. Most of these recommendations pertained to the construction of highways, roads, bridges, trails, and huts. The club was particularly interested in developing linked systems of backcountry trails, huts, and shelters to allow more people into the "inner recesses" of the parks. Extending telephone lines for communication and distributing new trail maps were proposed to prepare for a postwar increase in park use. Cooperation between the federal and provincial levels of government was urged to integrate access routes between national parks and provincial lands. Notably, in its only recommendation bearing on park creation, the club recommended that certain areas of British Columbia's Purcell Range—including the Bugaboos—be designated as parks. Finally, the ACC argued that its proposals would benefit a wide range of recreational users, including the "walking tourist," "fisherman," hiker, mountaineer, trail-rider, photographer, climber, hunter, and "tourists in general."

What was missing from the ACC's rationale for postwar park development?

Although it gave full consideration to the objectives of the ACC constitution bearing on promoting, exploring, and opening Canada's mountains as a national playground, objective (e) "the preservation of the natural beauties of the mountain places and of the fauna and

flora in their habitat" had slipped out of sight²¹ The ACC wanted roads, trails, and facilities constructed to serve an expanding population of recreation seekers. Years of meagre park budgets and delays through depression and war had given rise to strong pressures for rapid postwar infrastructure development even on the part of the ACC. As the ACC looked ahead to expanding postwar mountain recreation, conservation was no longer a foremost concern. As the end of World War II approached, the club veered away from the philosophy of its founders Elizabeth Parker and Arthur Wheeler. In fact, the Alpine Club proposed that the mountains could support limitless tourism.

This premise was evident in the 1944 proposals regarding Mt. Robson Park in British Columbia. The club laid out various recommendations, such as improving the road between Mt. Robson station and Kinney Lake, improving and bridging the trail from Kinney Lake to Berg Lake and Lake Adolphus, and building shelters at each lake. The value of these developments was explained: "The whole of this majestic region, containing the highest mountains in the Canadian Rockies, could be visited by *unlimited* numbers of tourists and travelers."²² While "unlimited" numbers of tourists and travelers may have been considered desirable at the end of World War II, the parks and the mountain environment could not withstand limitless human demands.

ACC founder Elizabeth Parker had commented on this uneven balance as early as 1929 when she reflected on the popularization of Lake Louise, Emerald Lake, and Yoho

²¹The key objectives with respect to park use were "(a) The promotion of scientific study and exploration of Canadian alpine and glacial regions" and "(d) The encouragement of the mountain craft and the opening of new regions as a national playground". see "Constitution" CAJ (1907), p. 178

²²"Post-war Development of National Parks" CAJ (1944-45), p. 169, emphasis added

Pass. Since her visits in the 1880s, she perceived that the sense of solitude had been lost to commercialization and that the meadow wildflowers had been destroyed by tourists who were "miserable vandals."²³ In reality, the ACC had played a direct role in this transformation by publicizing the mountains as tourist destinations. Wilderness could not sustain limitless use, a realization easily forgotten in the days of vigorous prosperity that followed the war. As years of financial restraint and restricted development during the Depression and war came to an end, pressures for recreational development expanded to dominate the parks agenda.

The ACC's proposals for postwar development were well received by the Department of Mines and Resources. Ottawa Director R.A. Gibson stated:

This information is very useful to us at the present time when we are considering plans for postwar development. The Club's recommendations have been forwarded to the various Park Superintendents for consideration. You will be glad to know that many of the ideas are in line with the suggestions which the Park Superintendents have made themselves.²⁴

Subsequently, many of the 1944 proposals were realized. Moving with the times into the postwar period, the ACC continued to share many ideas "in line" with the Parks Branch when it came to managing the national parks and thus perpetuated the shared symmetry of their policies.

During the 1940s, the national parks launched a publicity campaign with a series of tourism booklets, including "Playgrounds of the Prairies" and "Canada's Mountain

²³Elizabeth Parker, "Some Memories of the Mountains" CAJ (1929), pp 56-60

²⁴R.A. Gibson, "Department of Mines and Resources Ottawa" CAJ (1944-45), p 174

Playgrounds." The latter, circa 1947, publicized the mountain parks by featuring ACC activities in Banff, Jasper, Yoho, and Glacier. Photos of climbers at Abbott Pass, Illecillewaet Glacier, Mt. Macdonald, and camps in the Eremite Valley added glamor and excitement to park publicity.²⁵ References to the ACC climbing programs, camps, huts, and Banff clubhouse distinguished the group as the mountaineering authority in Canada's national parks. Because recreational tourism was the central theme of the postwar park ideal envisioned by the national park administration and the ACC, the playground image was particularly apt. The gates were open to Canada's postwar playgrounds.

Millions of people swept through the gates of the national parks as visitation rose steadily from 1944 through the 1960s. From March 1944 to March 1945, a total of 457,392 people visited Canada's national parks and national historic parks. In 1945-46, this total had grown to 602,409. By the close of 1949-50, total attendance reached 1,840,636 visitors. In 1959-60, total visitation climbed to 5,241,952. In 1969-70, attendance totalled 12,629,101 in the 18 national parks, *excluding* the national historic parks. Banff National Park typically took the largest share of tourism, for example, 148,113 visitors in 1945-46; 458,864 in 1949-50, 980,069 in 1959-60, and 2,346,030 in 1969-70.²⁶ Postwar improvements to the Trans-Canada Highway—began in the 1940s

²⁵NAC, RG 84, vol 178, file U113-108, part 1, "Canada's Mountain Playgrounds," c 1947

²⁶*Report of the Department of Mines and Resources* March 31, 1945, p 84. *Ibid*, March 31, 1946, p 100. *Department of Resources and Development* March 31, 1950, p 36. *Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources Annual Report* 1959-60, p 100. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, *Annual Report*, 1969-70, p 4

Figure 1 – Visitor Attendance – National Parks – 1953-54 to 1969-70

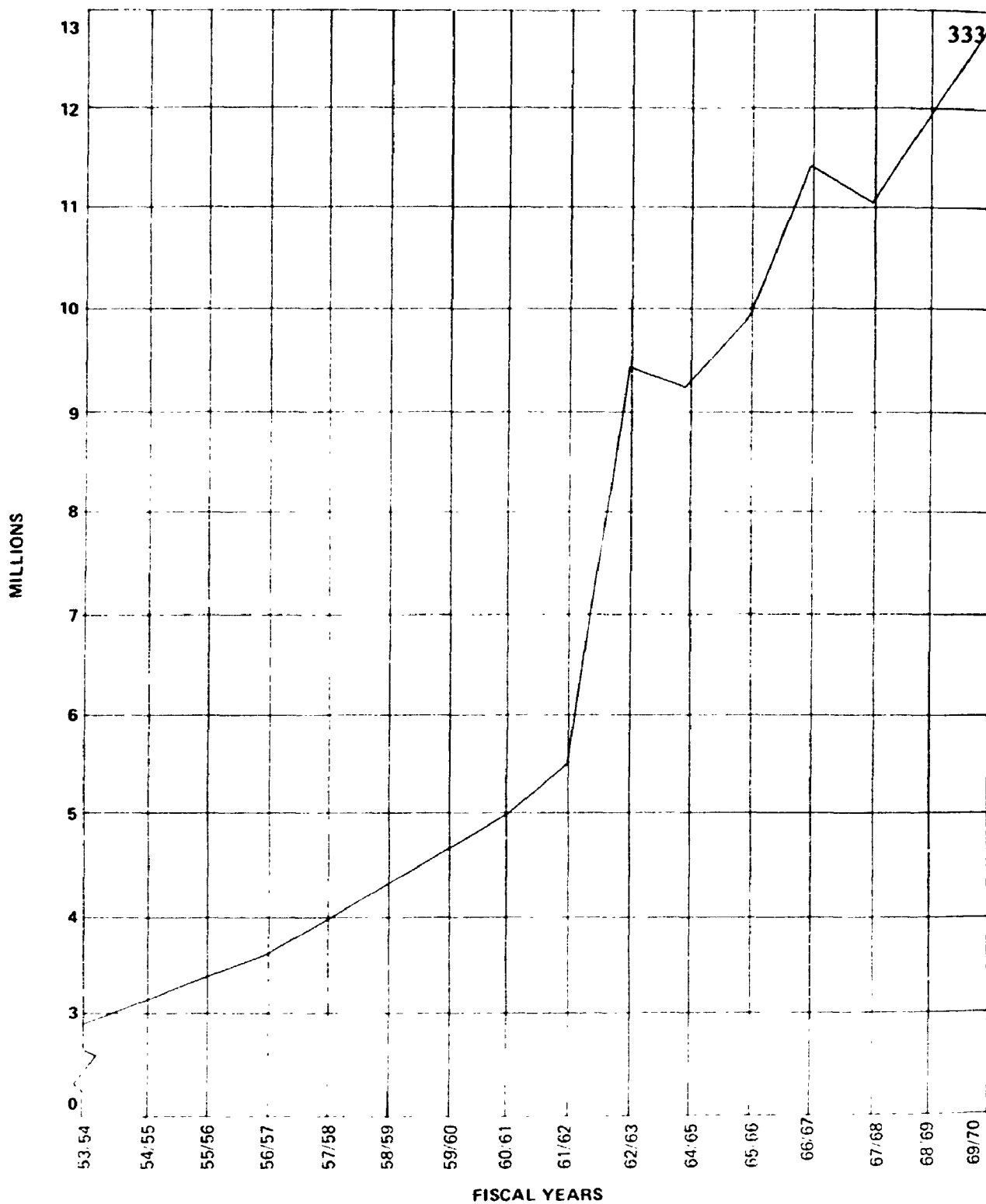


Figure 2. Postwar Visitor Attendance in Canada's National Parks, 1953-1970. Source: *Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1969 - 1970* (Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1970), p. 6.

and officially opened through the mountain parks in British Columbia and Alberta in 1962—further encouraged the autotourism trend in the national parks ²⁷

By the beginning of 1960, Canada's national parks were reported to offer 791.22 miles of motor roads, 117.54 miles of secondary roads, 599.14 miles of fire roads, and 2,446.02 miles of trail. Banff and Jasper were the leaders in this development. In Banff, there were 216.5 miles of motor road and 704.75 miles of trail; in Jasper, 146.5 and 620.55 respectively.²⁸ Between the end of the war and 1966, camping in the Canadian national parks increased at a rate of 10 to 15 percent per year.²⁹ The rising popularity of recreational camping was also evident in the marketplace. "In 1965 an average of more than \$40 per Canadian family was spent on camping equipment." Sales of recreational vehicles and trailers also rose substantially.³⁰ And when millions of holiday travelers left home on summer vacation, many drove down the highway into Canada's national parks.

The period of rapid transformation Canada entered after World War II had dramatic implications for the national parks. As geographer J.G. Nelson described, several factors were at work. Postwar immigration and rising birth rates led to rapid population growth, while urbanization increased the size of cities and suburbs. The overall gross national product rose as Canadian industries expanded and diversified

²⁷Robert Bothwell and William Kilbourn, *C.D. Howe: a biography* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980), pp 244-45, Lothian, *A History of Canada's National Parks*, vol II, pp 14, 32-33, W.F. Lothian, *A Brief History of Canada's National Parks* (Ottawa: Environment Canada, Parks, 1987), p 41

²⁸*Annual Report*, 1959-60, p 100

²⁹"Number of Campers in National Parks Increasing Steadily" *Parks and Recreation Canada*, March/April 1966, p 21.

³⁰Wall and Wallis, "Camping for Fun," p 348

alongside technological advancements such as computerization and automation. In Canada and other western countries, unions and other groups bargained for their share of increased prosperity and won higher wages, more holidays, longer vacations, and greater leisure. Cars and airplanes improved transportation and mobility, particularly for middle- and upper-income earners. Nelson concluded that these factors "combined to put more and more pressure on recreational land and opportunities in Canada and the United States in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s"—a trend evident in Banff and Canada's other western mountain parks.³¹

The ACC's Postwar Approach to Conservation and Recreation

After the war, the Alpine Club entered a period of growth and consolidation. Membership figures gradually surpassed prewar levels. From 510 in 1939 and 450 in 1944, the club's total membership recovered to 472 in 1946 and rose to 871 by 1956. In 1946, the ACC's income swelled from around \$3,500 to \$9,641 as a club members returned from the war.³² The shift to recreational expansion favoured the Alpine Club's growth, however, the club was increasingly outnumbered by the sheer mass of overall visitor attendance in the mountain parks.

Membership distribution by sex in 1946 remained comparable to the prewar pattern, with 42 percent women and 58 percent men. By 1956, however, female

³¹J.G. Nelson, "Canada's National Parks: Past, Present and Future" in *Recreational Land Use: Perspectives on its evolution in Canada*, eds. Geoffrey Wall and John S. Marsh (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1982), pp. 41-61; regarding postwar American tourism, see Daniel Boorstin, *The Image or What Happened to the American Dream* (New York: Atheneum, 1962), pp. 77-117.

³²See Table 1: "Statement of Income and Expenditure." *The Gazette* (November 1949), p. 27.

representation had dropped to 36.9 percent, while male representation had increased to 63.14 percent of the 871 members, approximating the 1907 sexual distribution ratio of one woman to every two men. There were proportionally fewer women in the club in 1956 than there were in samples between 1922 to 1946. Speculatively, this shift may have related to the changing nature of climbing, and shifting ACC marital demographics. Regionally, the ACC's core group in British Columbia and Alberta expanded from 41.9 percent in 1939 to 48.7 percent in 1946, and held at 48.5 in 1956. Other regional trends included a drop in proportional representation from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, the U.S.A., and the U.K. between 1939 and 1956.³³

Some membership changes were due to the restructuring of the ACC sections. The British section disappeared after 1950, and the Saskatoon section was eliminated in 1952-53. American sections in Chicago and Minneapolis had consolidated by 1955. New sections were created after the war—Montreal in 1945 and Ottawa in 1949—and the defunct Toronto section was revived under new leadership in 1957. By 1957, ACC sections existed in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, New York, and the American Mid-West.³⁴ Thus, after World War II, the ACC entered a period of rationalization and revitalization at the section level that was reflected in the national membership. The postwar Alpine Club gradually became a more regionally and nationally representative Canadian organization.

³³"A Letter from the President," *The Gazette*, January 1942, p. 14; see Tables 1, 3, and 4.

³⁴"Local Section Officers" CAJ (1957), p. vii; for lists of sections, see CAJ (1944 & 1945) to (1957), opening pages.

Shifting membership within the ACC correlated with shifting attitudes about conservation and recreation. This change was evident in the ongoing saga of hydro developments in Banff National Park. The 1930 park boundary changes had left the Alberta government free to negotiate with Calgary Power over the Spray Lakes water powers, but until 1950 the project waited on the drawing board.

In the late 1940s, Calgary Power again requested the alienation of more Banff National Park lands in the area of the Spray Lakes. During negotiations, Selby Walker of the Canadian National Parks Association opposed the alienation of more national park lands. The CNPA, formed by the ACC in 1923 to oppose hydro projects on the Spray Lakes and Lake Minnewanka, continued to play a political role in conservation advocacy. Minister of Mines and Resources J.A. MacKinnon responded to Walker that "I, as an Albertan, am deeply concerned regarding the maintenance of the attractions of our National Parks."³⁵ Meanwhile, federal Parks Director R.A. Gibson expressed his department's exasperation with MacKinnon's failure to protect the principle of national park inviolability:

The Minister is fully aware and, I understand, has advised council that the officials concerned with National Parks administration are unfavourable to the proposed action as they consider it a violation of Section 4 of the National Parks Act. It is particularly unfortunate that a move of this kind should be made when there seems to be good ground for believing that the required power could be developed otherwise. However, we have failed in our argument on the general question of principle, and it seems to be our responsibility to recommend the course that will afford the maximum

³⁵NAC, RG 84, series A.2.a, vol. 539, file B39-8, part 9, Selby Walker to R.A. Gibson, 15 November 1948. Ibid., J.A. MacKinnon to Walker, 22 November 1948

protection to the park interests that will be possible under the course of action which the Minister has decided to follow³⁶

Pressure from Alberta Premier Ernest Manning and C D Howe, now federal Minister of Trade and Commerce, led to the excision of further Banff National Park lands preceding the construction of the Spray Lakes dam system in 1950. Manning advised MacKinnon that "the power situation in the Province is such that unless some new development is commenced almost immediately, there is a grave danger of a serious power shortage developing in the next few years." Howe emphasized to his fellow minister that "Alberta is having a spectacular industrial expansion, and I would be sorry to see anything happen that would interfere with this very desirable development."³⁷

By this time, civic and business leaders in southern Alberta were staunch dam boosters, and the ACC had few comments on the issue. Ideologically, Manning's Social Credit government believed in a "minimum of interference" with business and, in practice, leaned hard toward natural resource exploitation, particularly in the growing energy sector. Ironically, the Spray Lakes were one of the last potential hydro sites within economic reach of major demand centers, after 1951. Calgary Power turned its sights to

³⁶NAC, RG 84, series A 2 a, vol. 539, file B39-8, part 9, R A Gibson to Acting Deputy Minister, 2 November 1948

³⁷NAC, RG 84, series A 2 a, vol. 539, file B39-8, part 9, Ernest Manning to James A. MacKinnon, 21 May 1948, Ibid., C D Howe to MacKinnon, 15 June 1948, Ibid., Manning to W L M King, 23 June 1948, Ibid., Manning to James A. MacKinnon, 18 June 1948, Ibid., MacKinnon to Howe, 25 May 1948, Ibid., Manning to MacKinnon, 19 October 1948, MacKinnon to Manning, 30 October 1948, Ibid., R A Gibson to J. Smart, 26 October 1948, NAC, RG 84, vol. 539, file B39-8, part 1, Spray Lakes Power Development Water Diversion 1948-1955, NAC, RG 84, series A 2 a, vol. 505, file B39-8, part 1, Spray Lakes Power Development 1946-1949, Great Plains Research Consultants, *Banff National Park*, pp. 183-84, Sue Andruschuk, *Trans. Alta.*, p. 35-36

integrating coal-fired generating plants into electrical production, much as Selby Walker and the CNPA had urged 10 years earlier.³⁸

Walker's 1941 question as to how long western natural resources would be exploited by eastern Canada had been answered. The fact was westerners were responsible for the exploitation of their watersheds more than any "eastern capitalists."³⁹ By stepping out of hydro debates to focus on recreational sport and the national war effort, the Alpine Club had surrendered its stand on national park inviolability. Calgary Power attracted strong allies in a long-term waiting game that outmanoeuvred all opponents on the chess board of resource use in Banff National Park. The CNPA could not resist the forces of industrial capital, especially when it could find little leverage in Ottawa, and when Ottawa and Edmonton shared the same development perspectives, there was little hope for conservationists.

Through the 1950s, the ACC was far more concerned with developing recreational access to the national mountain parks than with fighting battles against industry. As far as the club was concerned, the Spray Valley had been lost in the 1930 Banff National Park boundary changes. Although the ACC's conservation mandate would be rediscovered periodically, recreation was the new order of the day.

Brigadier Sir Edward Oliver Wheeler (1890-1962) exemplified the outlook of the Alpine Club during this period. From 1950 to 1954, Oliver Wheeler followed in his father

³⁸For background on the Social Credit government in Alberta during this period, see Alvin Finkel, *The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), pp. 99-140, 166. Sue Andruschuk, *TransAlta*, p. 38.

³⁹NAC, RG 22, series A.2, vol. 238, file 33-4-4, part 3, W J S Walker to J. Smart, 25 April 1941.

Arthur's footsteps as the ACC president. Oliver Wheeler was a strong organizer, but he was not a conservation activist like his father.⁴⁰ The younger Wheeler's term in office focused on opening remote regions of the mountain parks to increased use, standardizing a process of advance ACC campsite selection, and streamlining leasing procedures for ACC properties in national parks.⁴¹

During this period, ACC reconnaissance delved into new climbing territories and publicized wilderness areas in Alberta and British Columbia, such as the Hooker Icefield, the French Military Group, and the Bugaboos. Camps in the northern Rockies promoted tourism in Jasper National Park. Knowing the federal inclination toward commercial tourism, Wheeler attempted to convince the National Parks Branch that "the tourists bring the large money, but the Alpine Climber opens up the region for the tourist"⁴² However, Wheeler considered himself unsuccessful in this respect, perhaps because of failed efforts in 1952 and 1953 to renew the club's annual \$1,000 federal grant. While the Parks Branch cooperated by assisting the club with facilities and services, policy in the 1950s rejected funding specific groups in favour of providing infrastructure support to all interested

⁴⁰Interview with John Wheeler, Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Banff, Alberta, 11 August 1993. Sir Oliver Wheeler was Dr. John Wheeler's father.

⁴¹NAC, RG 84, vol 2249, file Y16-40, part 1, E O Wheeler to J. Smart, 11 February 1953. Ibid., Smart to Wheeler, 18 February 1953. Ibid., Wheeler to Smart, 27 February 1953, NAC, RG 84, vol 189, file U36-1, part 1, Oliver Wheeler to J. Smart, 19 March 1951, Ibid., J. Smart to Wheeler, 28 March 1951. Ibid., Smart to Superintendents, 28 March 1951. Ibid., J.R.B. Coleman to Smart, 4 May 1951, NAC, RG 84, vol 2248, file Y16-26, J. Smart to Superintendent Steeves, 28 December 1951. Ibid., Wheeler to Steeves, 31 January 1953; Oliver Wheeler, "Foreward" CAJ (1954), pp 1-6

⁴²NAC, RG 84, vol 2243, file Y16-3, part 1, E O Wheeler to J.A. Hutchinson, 30 April 1953

users.⁴³ Wheeler insisted that "the mountaineer . . . is also the pioneer, the forerunner of the tourist dollar," but this argument became more difficult to sustain as other recreational users infiltrated the parks. The power of mass tourism fueled commercial tourism. The Alpine Club was just one of many recreational stakeholder groups in the postwar national parks. The ACC's days as "the" pioneer in the mountain playgrounds were over.

While acknowledging that an "increasingly heavy drain" was being put on limited natural resources by a proliferation of outdoor groups, Wheeler nonetheless stressed that there was great pressure within his club to open up new areas to climbers and backpackers who were reluctant to return to the same locations year after year. Access to the backcountry was all-important. Demand for easy access was not unanimous, however, as revealed by his comment that some ACC members opposed more bridges, roads, and trails because these links would "put us more in sightseers' hands." A certain amount of debate existed within the club regarding access to remote areas, but the dominant element in this discourse favoured developments to open the "inner recesses" of the parks to human use.⁴⁴

The flourishing ACC hut program was one example of the postwar trend toward providing more facilities in the backcountry. The Arthur Wheeler Hut in Glacier National Park, first proposed in 1938 and delayed due to the war, was constructed from 1945 to

⁴³NAC, RG 84, A.2.a, vol 189, file U50-1-1, H A Young to Superintendents of Banff, Jasper, and Yoho, 26 May 1952. Deputy Minister Young reported that Col. W W Foster of the ACC had visited him in Ottawa to request the restoration of a \$1,000 annual grant to the club. Young reasoned that "present policy was to provide facilities in the Parks for the different agencies and people interested, but not . . . to give any financial assistance." Parks continued to assist the ACC by clearing out trails and maintaining campsites. Also see NAC, RG 84, A.2.a, vol 189, file U50-1-1, L C Wilson to Robert Winters, 17 February 1953.

⁴⁴For biographical background, see "Brigadier Sir Edward Oliver Wheeler" CAJ (1962), pp 160-63, for Wheeler's reflections on his term of office see Oliver Wheeler, "Foreward" CAJ (1954), pp 1-6.

1946, despite postwar shortages of building supplies, and opened officially in 1947. A new log cabin on Outpost Lake in Jasper National Park also opened in 1947. Named after C.G. Wates, it replaced the badly eroded 1930 stone Memorial Hut. More huts fell under the control of the ACC as a result of various leasing arrangements: the Naiset Cabins at Mt. Assiniboine (1944), the Saskatchewan Glacier Hut (1944), and Hermit Hut in Rogers Pass (1946). In addition, local sections also established club huts in different mountain regions, particularly in British Columbia. Modern architectural designs, such as fibreglass igloos and prefabricated shelters, emerged in the 1960s and 1970s.⁴⁵

The property foothold secured by the ACC huts perpetuated the club's continuing high profile in the mountain parks, despite the 1964 Parks policy to disallow private organizations to "lease land or construct permanent buildings" in national parks.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, the ACC hut program persisted as senior national parks officials noted in 1967:

There is no organization comparable to the Alpine Club that is building shelters in the Central or Atlantic Regional parks. The Alpine Club is the only organization that seems willing to go to the expense and trouble of building shelters which benefit the public and club members, even though these shelters become Crown property.⁴⁷

The government's 1964 policy was asserted in 1972 when the ACC Fay and Hermit huts were relinquished to the Parks Branch. It appeared that other ACC huts would be taken

⁴⁵Herb Karel and Pat Karel, *Alpine Huts* (Banff: the Alpine Club of Canada, 1986), pp. 72-77, 124-28, 171.

⁴⁶Karel, *Alpine Huts*, p. 172.

⁴⁷NAC, RG 84, vol. 2019, file U36-1, part 8, S.F. Kun, Assistant Chief of National Park Operations to A.J. Reeve, National Parks Assistant Director, 10 August 1967.

over or be removed by the Crown, to control negative environmental effects associated with overuse. British Columbia also pursued this avenue of state control with the Naiset Cabins in Mt. Assiniboine Provincial Park. Following 10 years of discussion during the Four Mountain Parks Planning Program, the club was allowed to maintain control of its huts in the national parks. These shifts reflected the expansion and contraction of government through the buoyant late 1960s to the recessionary 1980s, as well as differing political ideologies:

With increased restrictions on government spending, both national and provincial parks have found it difficult to maintain the huts at a desirable standard, and so have turned back to the voluntary organizations for help.⁴⁸

Today, the backcountry huts in Canada's national parks endure as a strong ACC tradition—as of 1995, the ACC held 15 of its 18 national huts in Banff, Jasper, Yoho, Kootenay, and Glacier national parks—and the club continues to be a high-profile partner in park management.⁴⁹

Recreational climbing gained popularity in Canada after World War II. The trend toward technical climbing evident prior to the war strengthened as the ACC participated in the 1950s' brave new world of sport. Continuing debates over the ethics of "hardware climbing" provoked the reaction of technical climbers, who contended that a natural progression was at work:

Most people will be content to go up mountains the easy way as some do today, but there will be others who feel that unclimbed faces should be explored and vertical spires climbed regardless of their forbidding

⁴⁸Herb Kariel and Pat Kariel, *Alpine Huts* (Banff: the Alpine Club of Canada, 1986), pp 171-74

⁴⁹Keith Haberl, *Alpine Huts* (Canmore: the Alpine Club of Canada, 1995), passim

appearance. It is simply a matter of mountaineering evolution, or that which has happened in the Alps will in due time happen here.⁵⁰

The expectation that "within a few years there will not be an unclimbed mountain left on the whole face of North America" made technical climbing inevitable in the minds of its proponents. The use of aids was commonly supported.

In climbing, the term "artificial aid" has a very wide meaning, not fully understood by all people, especially those not pioneering new mountains and routes. A man may look down on pitons, bolts and all other paraphernalia that the fanatics are supposed to carry, but never stop to ponder that he himself may be climbing in boots which have tricouni or vibram soles, or using an ice axe or crampons to help him move freely over ice. These and many other things are aids, artificial though not considered so, which help the climber to make his ascent easier and safer. Where are we to draw the line? If we were to take away all aids we would be tackling a mountain with bare hands and feet regardless of circumstances or conditions.⁵¹

The ethical debate over technical climbing in the 1950s can be compared to current issues regarding the ethics of fixed bolts or the merits of sport climbing. Technical climbing was the latest development in the evolution of a diverse worldwide sport that provoked critical commentary from all sides of the debate. After World War II, this form of climbing took off in Canada as it did elsewhere in North America and Europe

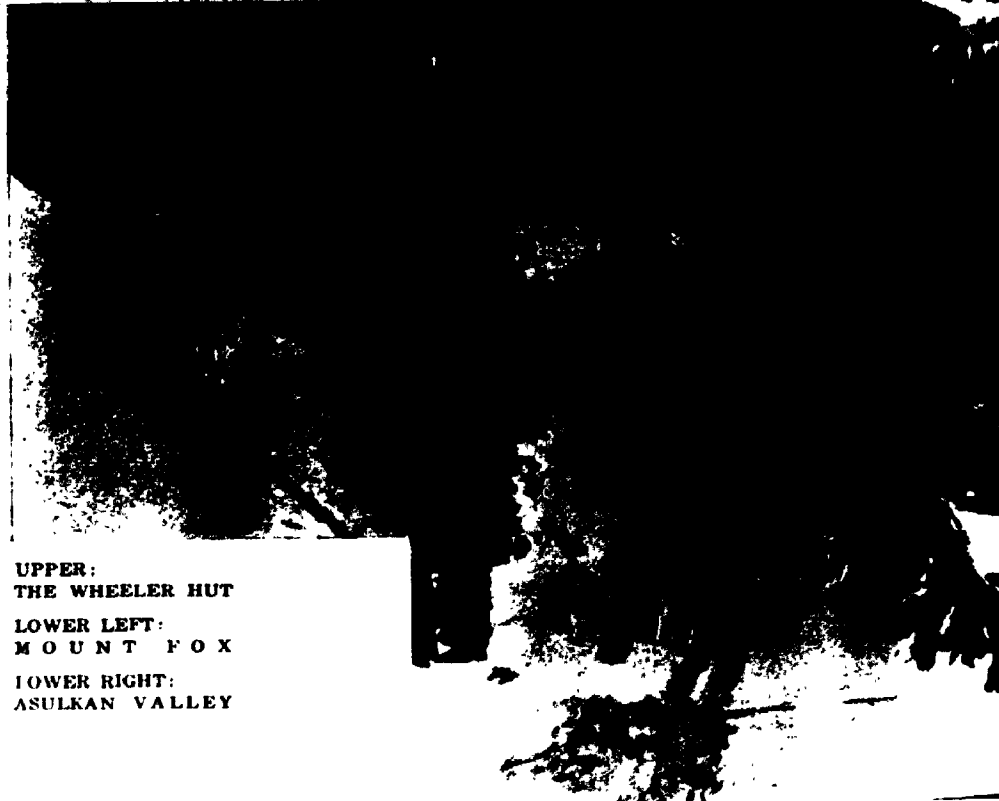
Rock climbing, ice climbing, and skiing also continued to grow in popularity after the war. Regional ACC sections discovered local niches for rock-climbing practice, for example, the cliffs of Val David near Montreal and the western escarpments of the

⁵⁰J.L. Dudra, "In Defence of a Piton" CAJ (1953), pp 150-51. one example of the 1950s' anti-piton sentiment was Englishman F S Smythe's remark that he felt like a criminal for using a piton on Mt. Colm in the Canadian Rockies because "to knock pitons in all the way up a mountain in order merely to get to the top, is a profanation of that mountain and of the sport of mountaineering", see Gwyn Lewis, "Climbs in the Canadian Rockies" CAJ (1952), pp 153-54

⁵¹J.L. Dudra, "In Defence of a Piton" CAJ (1953), pp 150-51



Dow



UPPER:
THE WHEELER HUT
LOWER LEFT:
MOUNT FOX
LOWER RIGHT:
ASULKAN VALLEY

Illustration 33. ACC Ski Camp at Wheeler Hut, Selkirk Mountains, March 1978. Source: CAJ, p. 137.

Laurentians along the Ottawa River. In 1956, for example, several climbers canoed the Ottawa River from Deep River to search out rock-climbing routes on the cliffs. Precambrian cliffs afforded "most satisfactory climbing," and they puzzled passing sailboaters with "whoops and yodels" while rappeling, concluding that "the crisp echoes from our yodels reminded us of Moraine Lake as we paddled home in a magnificent sunset."⁵² The 1952 *Canadian Alpine Journal* reported on new ice-climbing routes being developed in the Rockies with the use of ice pitons.⁵³ In 1945, the ACC launched winter ski camps that continued annually through the postwar period in regions of Yoho, Jasper, Glacier, Banff, and Mt. Robson.⁵⁴ Mountain sport as practiced by the ACC continued to diversify in form and style as the club became a niche interest group of dedicated mountaineers surrounded by a sea of mass tourism in the mountain parks

Enhanced by wartime research, climbing equipment was continually revamped and improved. New synthetic materials became available for equipment, tents, and light-weight clothing. Nylon rope was one such innovation, and Viking nylon climbing rope manufactured by the Dominion Wire Rope & Cable Company of Lachine, Quebec, was advertised in the 1953 *Canadian Alpine Journal*. The journal also discussed testing standards for manufactured rope that had been introduced by the British Mountaineering

⁵²Pat Duffy, "Climbing over the Ottawa" CAJ (1957), pp 81-84. Moraine Lake lies in the Valley of Ten Peaks, Alberta, near Lake Louise

⁵³C.H. Wilts, "Unusual Ice Climbing" CAJ (1952), p 160

⁵⁴Alpine Club of Canada, *List of Members*, 1976, p 151

Council in 1947 to gauge the tensile strength, stretch, and elastic recovery of manila and sisal mountaineering ropes.⁵⁵ Even gasoline backpacking stoves were being refined:

O hail the little mountain stove
To thee we give our deepest love
Because 'tis you that melts our snow
And cooks our food at ten below...

'Tis you that makes our Jello hot
And burns the bottom from the pot...

And so this tribute we pay to you
To little Primus and Svea too
And wish for you, on this occasion
Long life and clog free operation.⁵⁶

In 1949, a specialized Calgary shop called Alpine Equipment offered ACC members a full range of camping and mountaineering supplies--Andenmatten mountaineering products, ice axes, crampons, pitons, boots, tents, English manila climbing ropes, Swiss avalanche cord, and Canadian nylon rope. Its advertising boasted that: "Now! Your climbing equipment can be purchased in Canada."⁵⁷ In contrast to the ACC's early days when equipment often had to be ordered from abroad, Canadian shops and manufacturers now served the domestic mountaineering market--another sign of the growing popularity of climbing as a recreational activity in Canada.

After World War II, the ACC embarked on the certification of professional mountaineering guides. Following the success of ACC mountain warfare training camps,

⁵⁵"Viking Nylon Climbing Rope" CAJ (1953), advertising end pages; R.P. Mears, "The Climbing Rope Defined" CAJ (1951), pp. 129-45.

⁵⁶Paul Calcaterra, "Ode to a Mountain Stove" CAJ (1957), p. 81.

⁵⁷"Alpine Equipment" CAJ (1949), advertising end pages; Alpine Equipment was located at 3530 15 Street SW, Calgary, in 1949, and advertised regularly in the CAJ for many years.

the federal parks department solicited the club's assistance in qualifying, examining, and licensing mountain guides active in the national parks. New, younger guides were needed to replace the older generation of Swiss guides formerly employed by the railways. The ACC cooperated with the national parks by certifying guides to set professional standards and ensure a higher degree of public safety. With postwar tourism, the department anticipated increased demand for guides. This ACC involvement was the precursor to the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides⁵⁸ Canadian mountaineering no longer relied on imported guides

Thus the sport dimension of climbing preoccupied the Alpine Club of Canada during the immediate postwar period. Despite a predominant interest in mass recreation, however, the ACC's conservation impulse did not entirely disappear. As the great-grandparent of an organizational family tree of advocacy groups, the Alpine Club of Canada fostered the growth of Canada's twentieth-century parks and conservation movement through other bodies. The Canadian National Parks Association, formed by the ACC in 1923, gave way to the National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada (NPPAC) in 1963, which was in turn revitalized as the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) in 1986.⁵⁹ These specialized agencies played a key advocacy role for parks and wilderness and continued to pursue the conservation and parks ethic that had first motivated the ACC.

⁵⁸NAC, RG 84, vol 189, file U36-1, part 1, Homer Robinson to J A Hutchinson, 25 July 1948. Ibid, J Smart to Mr. Sinclair, 7 September 1948. NAC, RG 84, vol 189, file U36-1, part 1. J Smart to Banff Superintendent, 21 August 1948, NAC, RG 84, series A 2 a, vol 2019, file U36-1, part 8, Re Testing Guides, 4 January 1967

⁵⁹Leslie Bella, *Parks for Profit*, pp 112-13, 155

The Alpine Club periodically rediscovered its own conservationist roots. In March 1956, the ACC, led by Vancouver lawyer Fred H.H. Parkes, urged the British Columbia government to protect provincial park lands from forestry harvesting, to separate the administration of parks from forests, and to reserve park lands solely for recreational use. In a brief to the Sloan Royal Commission on Forestry in British Columbia, Parkes raised concerns about the need to prevent forestry encroachments on provincial park lands, to safeguard the unspoiled character of areas adjacent to parks, and "to preserve the inviolability of Park areas." This last note resurrected the central principle of park management from the ACC in the 1920s. Parkes argued further that remote alpine and subalpine districts in larger British Columbia parks should be left as wilderness:

Roads, lifts, tramways and other means of access to these areas with lodges, chalets and other public facilities are extremely costly to provide and maintain. The alpine areas will of necessity remain undeveloped for many years. We trust that the greater portions will so remain forever.

Present use of these areas is mainly by mountaineers and naturalists. These relatively small groups of parks users ask for the very minimum by way of public services, in fact desire that these areas be left in their natural state.⁶⁰

According to this park management scheme, the ACC requested that emphasis be placed on walking trails and that outdoor groups be allowed to build backcountry cabins and shelters. The ACC's participation in the Sloan Commission on B.C. Forestry offered an interesting blend of rationales for preserving provincial parks as wilderness for recreational use. The club's conservation ethic had not died after World War II, it simply lay dormant to rise again when dilemmas surfaced over resource extraction in the parks.

⁶⁰Fred H.H. Parkes, "Commission Brief" CAJ (1956), pp. 125-28; "Fred H.H. Parkes" CAJ (1962), pp. 164-65.

Awakened by concerns about overpopulation, toxic pollutants, and the bomb, the growing 1960s environmental movement activated a global interest in ecology and conservation. In Canada, burgeoning interest in the environment was evident in a proliferation of government and nongovernment organizations focused on environmental protection, ecological reserves, and wilderness conservation.⁶¹ One such body was the ACC Conservation Committee, formed in 1969 when the club was acquiring a growing awareness of its role in environmental protection. By the late 1960s, the ACC realized that its eagerness to accommodate mass tourism after 1944 had contributed to serious side effects in the mountain parks and the club began to revive its conservationist roots. Witnessing the cumulative effects of overuse in the mountain parks through the 1950s and 1960s in areas such as Lake Louise, the Alpine Club and the Parks Branch reevaluated the postwar park ideal to come up with strategies to better manage resource use.⁶²

The ACC Conservation Committee recognized the paradoxical aims inherent in the club's mandate. To reconcile the goals of mountain use and preservation, the committee stressed the importance of environmentally sensitive conduct to safeguard ecosystem survival:

⁶¹Paul R. and Anne Ehrlich, *Population, Resources, Environment: Issues in Human Ecology* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1970), Paul R. Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968), Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), Frank B. Golley, *A History of the Ecosystem Concept: More Than the Sum of the Parts* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993), Richard White, "American Environmental History: The Development of a New Historical Field" *Pacific Historical Review*, August 1985, pp. 297-335, Yorke Edwards, "Wilderness Parks: A Concept with Conflicts," and Harold Eidsvik, "Canada in a Global Context," in *Endangered Spaces: The Future for Canada's Wilderness*, ed. Monte Hummel (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1989), pp. 21-29, 30-45. *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Environmental and Conservation Movements," by Monte Hummel.

⁶²For an example of backcountry degradation, see Garry C. Trotter and George W. Scotter, *A Survey of Backcountry Use and the resulting impact near Lake Louise, Banff National Park* (Edmonton: Canadian Wildlife Service, 1973).

The Alpine Club of Canada includes among its objectives the encouragement of mountaineering and also the preservation of the natural beauties of the mountain places and of the fauna and flora in their habitat. These objectives tend to be contradictory because, by his very presence, man alters the environment and most of his activities are damaging in some degree and to some aspects of the flora and fauna. A conservation policy for the Club, therefore, must be a set of guidelines whereby we can pursue mountaineering with minimum effect upon the mountain ecology. This policy is intended as a basis for our own activities and as a guide to the Club in its attitudes and policy statements concerning the actions of others including governments and corporations.⁶³

The committee encouraged "Canadians to enjoy their mountain regions in ways that have minimum ecological effect on the Alpine wilderness" and recommended that ACC members set a good example of conservation practices for other backcountry users. It laid out several internal management principles in 1969 to mitigate the negative effects of the postwar park ideal:

1. While we recognize that society may require the exploitation of natural resources such as timber and minerals in the mountain regions, we support efforts to set aside portions of these areas in which such exploitation is not allowed. In areas where development does take place, it must be regulated towards minimum impact on the surroundings.
2. National Parks are, in general, committed to the preservation of natural environments; hence we support the establishment of National Parks, especially in rocky and alpine regions.
3. The presence of a large number of people in a wilderness area can cause irreparable damage to the environment; hence we believe that the system of public roads in the mountains should leave major areas untouched as a discouragement to excessive visitation within these areas.
4. We believe that the maximum in human satisfaction combined with the minimum in ecological damage is achieved when the mountains are visited on foot, particularly on carefully made walking trails. We therefore support the development of a network of walking trails in mountain regions and

⁶³"Conservation Committee" *The Gazette* (November 1969), pp. 3-4

feel that roads and horse trails should be limited to those required for reasonable access.

5. We urge our members to exercise care and restraint both on the trail and in camp.⁶⁴

Awakened to ideas about ecology, minimum impact was the latest concept to guide wilderness recreation, as the ACC—and the Parks Branch—attempted to undo the damage caused by increased human activity in the mountain parks. Minimum impact recreation attempted to strike a middle ground between mass tourism overuse and untouched wilderness.

This trend was evident within the national parks administration through the 1970s as new, precedent-setting master plans for the four mountain parks—Banff, Jasper, Yoho, and Kootenay—were formulated. Public consultation was emphasized in a planning exercise, an exercise that hinged on drafting explicit management principles and zoning park areas for specific uses. Many recreational and commercial stakeholder groups were involved, representing interests as varied as wilderness preservation groups, skiers, and recreational vehicle users. The ACC Conservation Committee submission advocated “a general philosophy that would permit high use in some areas with high protection in others.” As one ACC member reflected, conservation was a rising priority in the club:

Public opinion is changing, and Club policy is likewise shifting to give greater emphasis to preserving the park unimpaired for future generations while encouraging present use in ways that we think are most appropriate to the alpine wilderness and are relatively undemanding on the environment.... The Club submission on the provisional master plans was coordinated by the Conservation Committee so perhaps a conservationist point of view was to be expected. But there was a surprisingly broad and

⁶⁴“Conservation Committee” *The Gazette* (November 1969), pp. 3-4.

intense participation extending from the Board through the various committees, local sections, to individual members. The emphasis was on encouraging greater foot travel throughout the park by development of carefully sited trails, shelters, and huts. At the same time, while admitting that members enjoyed the use of roads, the submission opposed most of the suggested new roads as "any small gains in convenience of access that might result from additional roads would be outweighed by the loss of wilderness values."⁶⁵

Having witnessed the damage incurred by postwar overuse, the ACC had in some ways returned to its 1920s' spirit with a heightened sensitivity to the environmental limits of wilderness recreation. Its power in the public policy fray was diminished, however, as a single voice in a chorus of outdoor users.

Advocacy for the creation of mountain parks also made a comeback. In 1969 and 1970, the ACC Conservation Committee effectively lobbied Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development responsible for the National and Historic Parks Branch, to support the creation of three mountain parks in northern Canada: Kluane in the Yukon Territory's St. Elias Range; Nahanni in the Northwest Territories' Mackenzie Mountains; and Auyuittuq in Baffin Island's Cumberland Range. These areas were designated national park reserves between 1972 and 1976.⁶⁶ Pushing to create national parks in the north was in keeping with the Alpine Club tradition of opening Canada's

⁶⁵Harry Habgood, "Preservation vs. Use in the National Parks" CAJ (1972), pp. 67-68. Alpine Club of Canada, "Brief to the Four Mountain Parks Planning Programme," Edmonton, 30 May 1983, in "Letters and Briefs from Four Mountain Parks Planning Program 1983 Public Session," Parks Canada Western Regional Office, Calgary.

⁶⁶NAC, RG 22, A-1-a, vol. 977, file 300-66, part 2. Fred E. Vermeulen to Jean Chrétien, 25 March 1970. Ibid., Chrétien to Vermeulen, 8 May 1970. Harry Habgood, "Preservation vs. Use in the National Parks" CAJ (1972), pp. 67-68. Kluane was designated in 1972, followed by Nahanni and Auyuittuq in 1976. see Finkelstein, *National Parks System Plan*, pp. 23, 27, 71.

mountain playgrounds but it also reflected a desire to reach beyond mass tourism and rediscover wilderness.

From 1969 to 1973, the Alpine Club's honorary vice president was none other than Jean Chrétien. The practice of appointing federal and provincial ministers responsible for parks as the ACC honorary vice presidents continued until 1989 and included such well-known politicians as Judd Buchanan, Warren Allmand, Hugh Faulkner, John Roberts, Tom McMillan, Lucien Bouchard, and Alberta's Allen Adair and Peter Trynchy⁶⁷ Such appointments underline how the ACC played up its political connections in an attempt to maintain close ties with the federal and provincial governments responsible for parks in the Rockies. However, even these political ties did not avert power struggles between the club and the state induced by Ottawa's parks initiatives

In the late 1960s, the future of the Banff Alpine Clubhouse on Sulphur Mountain was in question. The aging facility, built in 1909, required substantial renovation. At the same time, Parks Canada decided to eliminate private leaseholds that fell outside the Banff townsite boundaries, namely, the ACC clubhouse and the Rimrock Hotel leaseholds. Faced with this dilemma, the club voted in favour of building a new clubhouse elsewhere and transferred the lease back to the Crown after considerable internal debate. The clubhouse issue was divisive and the decision to move did not sit well with many club members, especially longtime members like Roger Neave who valued the clubhouse's

⁶⁷See CAJ (1969) to (1990), opening pages

history and tradition.⁶⁸ Nonetheless, the building was abandoned with the approval of a majority of ACC members who favoured a new facility over restoring an old one. In September 1974, Parks Canada demolished the structure that had been the prominent symbol of Canada's national alpine club in Banff National Park for over 60 years.⁶⁹ The demolition of the Alpine Clubhouse removed one of the great landmarks of Victorian idealism in Banff National Park. The new ACC clubhouse was constructed on a hillside overlooking the town of Canmore—outside national park boundaries

Why did Parks Canada get rid of the ACC clubhouse? This question is open to speculation. The explanation given regarding the Banff townsite planning boundaries does not explain why the lease for the Rimrock Hotel just up the road from the ACC clubhouse site was never eliminated. Once a modest slab structure, today's Rimrock is a luxury resort and conference center following extensive expansion in 1992. This inconsistency suggests that Parks Canada wanted to move the club off of its leasehold property during a period of expansive government spending and control, and that the ACC did not oppose Parks Canada loudly enough to avoid losing its lease. It appears that the hotel wielded more clout than the Alpine Club, reflecting the club's diminished stature in federal eyes. Whatever the case, the elimination of the ACC clubhouse deviated from the long record of

⁶⁸Interview with Gil Parker. Lake Louise Hostel, Lake Louise, Alberta, 23 October 1993. Gil Parker was Neave's climbing partner.

⁶⁹Edmonton Federal Records Center, RG 84, acc. S876-S881, box 16, file 62/5-L2 1/V Block 20, Vol 1, Realty file on Alpine Club of Canada Banff Clubhouse property, passim. NAC, RG 84, acc. S876-S881 box 16, file 62/5-L2 1/V Block 20, Vol II, Realty file on Alpine Club of Canada Banff Clubhouse property, Villa Block 20, passim, Doug Cowell, "The Old Lady of Sulphur Mountain: A History of the Alpine Club Banff Clubhouse," *Banff Crag and Canyon*, 24 December 1975.

cooperation between the club and the national park authorities and reversed the club's preferential status.

The former site of the historic Banff Alpine Clubhouse is now a grassy plateau marked by a bronze plaque on Sulphur Mountain. The Lake Louise International Hostel and Canadian Alpine Center, opened jointly by the Alpine Club of Canada and the Alberta Hostelling Association in 1991, now fulfills much of the same role that the Banff Alpine Clubhouse once did as a gathering point for alpine enthusiasts and travelers in Banff National Park. While Parks Canada was willing to push the ACC out of its clubhouse in the 1970s, curtailed government spending has returned partnerships with nongovernment groups to the forefront of national park initiatives. In a case of "plus ça change," increased reliance on partnerships with private sector groups has again cast the ACC as a key player in the national mountain parks, particularly regarding the management of backcountry alpine huts.

Reaching the Limit—Finding the Balance

The history of the Alpine Club after 1945 is a paradigm of Canada's dilemma over the paradoxical aims of national parks. In the wake of postwar consumerism and escalating tourism, there was a growing realization that the national parks could not sustain limitless demands as a recreational playground. Climbers in the Alpine Club became sensitized to this dilemma but were reluctant to give up access to the backcountry in the mountain parks. After World War II, the ACC continually rebalanced its internal equilibrium between use and preservation based on changing circumstances and priorities;

in this manner, the club continued to redefine its vision of the national parks. As the postwar parks became host to a multiplying number of recreational stakeholders, the role of the ACC diminished relative to the expanding population of recreationists.

Nonetheless, the ACC's longstanding involvement in the region and its commitment to the mountain parks continued to shape the national park idea. While recreation dominated the club agenda, conservationism continued to evolve and surface in the ACC discourse until it again gained prominence on the public policy front in the late 1960s. Meanwhile, specialized conservation organizations succeeded the Alpine Club as the guardians of parks and wilderness. As state planning strategies attempted to balance the competing objectives of use and preservation, the national mountain parks became increasingly managed wilderness spaces. As a voluntary partner in the mountain parks, the Alpine Club was party to the enigmatic link between wilderness and management within the confines of Canada's national parks.

CHAPTER 7

From Vantage Point on Mountain Top

Imagine that one afternoon a July rainstorm blows in suddenly from the west, causing guests at the ACC clubhouse on Sulphur Mountain to gather on the veranda. It rains while the sun shines down the valley in the manner of mountain showers. As the club members look out at the view, each one sees something different—the curve of the slopes hugged in shadow, the rays of dappled light, the wet lodgepole forest, the cloud-covered rock faces. There is no one way to see the mountains. They reflect the dynamic, subjective perceptions of the observer.

Changing parks reflect a changing human culture. Just as Canada's national parks are subject to the conflicting dual mandate of use and preservation, the Alpine Club embodied an ongoing struggle between the values of recreation and conservation. As the ACC evolved, it reinvented its national park vision to fit the balance of these values within the club. The Alpine Club's changing vision of the mountain parks corresponded to its own changing culture and the nature of Canadian society. Thus when the club looked at the mountains, the mountains reflected the Alpine Club of Canada.

Although there is a tendency to think of national parks as "natural" spaces, parks are human artifacts on a cultural landscape made by boundaries as conceptual as they are physical. Nature did not make parks, people did. A park boundary line is alien to a grizzly, who can range in and out of several parks and jurisdictions in the course of a year,

and the forest does not recognize clear-cut logging outside the imaginary map line running around a park. Parks are a human invention, a human construct. As historian Simon Schama observed, "even the landscapes that we suppose to be most free of our culture may turn out, on closer inspection, to be its product."¹

In the Alpine Club of Canada's early years, a Victorian-inspired sense of fascination with nature pervaded the national park vision. The parks were an unknown and unlimited wilderness for exploration in the name of science, God, nature, and nationalism.² The Victorian inspiration behind the ACC—modeled after Britain's Alpine Club formed in 1857—motivated an integrated pursuit of every facet of mountain life—science, sport, art, spirituality, and aesthetics. Along with the railways and the Geological Survey, the ACC was an elite pioneer that initiated Euro-American exploration in the Canadian Rockies. Alpinism offered a means to discover the mountain wilderness and thus invent the map of an unknown land.

By the 1920s, breathing space between the city and the mountain solitudes constricted as the forces of rapid settlement, urbanization, economic growth, technological change, and regionalism transformed the Canadian West from a wilderness to an agricultural hinterland. Due to glaring conflicts over resource use, the Alpine Club sharpened its focus on a vision of the mountain parks as an inviolable public domain to be preserved in perpetuity as the natural heritage of all Canadians. This emphasis on public

¹Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1995), p. 9-10.

²Carl Berger, *Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985); Suzanne Zeller, *Inventing Canada: early Victorian science and the idea of a transcontinental nation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

domain rang a chord with the American Progressive conservation movement.³ Fearing "commercial invasion," the ACC defended their populist image of the parks as recreational nature reserves open to middle-class tourists like themselves and established a political lobby organization—the Canadian National Parks Association—to defend the inviolability of the parks. Like the Sierra Club in the turn-of-the-century American battle of the Hetch Hetchy dam, conflicts over hydro dams in the Canadian Rockies led the Alpine Club to crystalize a conservationist vision of the national parks as an inviolable public domain.

Throughout the Depression and World War II, the vision of inviolability was eclipsed by the Alpine Club's expanding emphasis on sport and rising demand for infrastructure development that had been stalled for nearly two decades. The club began to redefine its ethos in terms of consumer affluence, technology, and wartime growth. Recreation rose to the forefront of the club's agenda to open the "inner recesses" of the parks as tourist playgrounds throughout the 1950s and into the early 1960s. At the same time, ACC climbers traveled farther into the backcountry to find "new ground" for the pursuit of wilderness mountain sport. As baby-boom visitation skyrocketed, the popularity of Canada's national parks rose dramatically.⁴ Ultimately, burgeoning postwar recreational land use had severe ecological consequences, particularly in the tremendously popular mountain parks.

³Samuel Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1959)

⁴J.G. Nelson, "Canada's National Parks: Past, Present and Future" in *Recreational Land Use: Perspectives on its evolution in Canada*, eds. Geoffrey Wall and John S. Marsh (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1982), pp. 41-61

By the late 1960s, growing awareness of environmental degradation and the finite limits of wilderness to sustain recreational use called the postwar vision of parks into question. Reassessment caused the Alpine Club to rediscover some of its earlier conservation impulses, for example, advocating the creation of more national mountain parks, this time in the Canadian north. Again, the ACC adjusted its ongoing, internal balancing act between conservation and recreation. In keeping with changes in its own subculture, as well as in society and the natural environment at large, the club continually reinvented its vision of Canada's national parks.

The Alpine Club of Canada was one sphere wherein twentieth-century attitudes toward nature and the Canadian national parks were created and perpetuated by an urban, middle-class elite.⁵ The club was keenly interested in the outdoors and pursued an active, informed interest in the mountains. Alpinism informed Canadians of the value of nature and the nationalist grandeur of the mountains. Alpinism in Canada was, in many ways, invented in the west and communicated to the rest of the nation.

Tensions within the club caused a constant rebalancing of values to establish a contemporary equilibrium between recreation and conservation, city and wilderness, use and preservation, commerce and the public good. While club members did not always agree on these issues, they engaged in a dynamic discourse, and the consensus represented by the club as a whole was reflected in the predominant ACC vision of mountain parks from generation to generation. The club's attitudes toward nature and the parks were

⁵George Altmeyer, "Three ideas of nature in Canada, 1893-1914" *Journal of Canadian Studies* (August 1976), pp. 21-36, David Robbins, "Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class: the Victorian Mountaineers" *Theory, Culture & Society* (1987), pp. 579-601

broadcast to an external audience and influenced a wider sphere of thought, as seen through the 1920s with the Mt. Assiniboine Tours in opening the parks to middle-class tourists and the "Hands Off Our National Parks" anti-hydro campaign that instilled the inviolability of the Canadian parks in the national consciousness. As with the British Alpine Club, the ACC did not simply reflect social phenomena created somewhere outside the boundaries of recreation. Leisure was, as David Robbins has argued, one of the many sites where culture was constituted.⁶

Like the nineteenth-century British Alpine Club, the ACC forged a common class identification among its members through sport and recreation.⁷ The ACC brought together men and women from middle-class professional and affluent upper-class Anglo backgrounds from Canada, the United States, Britain, and other parts of the world and served to amalgamate their shared interest in the Canadian mountain parks. The annual ACC camp was one ritual shared within a distinct club culture. The Alpine Club united these people based on their passion for climbing and the mountains, and together they formed a vision common to the hegemony of Anglo-Saxon mountaineering.

As a social group, the club represented an articulate constituency that had leverage over public policy that was, at times, disproportionate to its numbers. The Alpine Club incubated public debate over recreation and conservation, acting as a microcosm of the continuous dilemma presented by human interaction with nature. Whether advancing

⁶David Robbins, "Sport, Hegemony and the Middle Class: the Victorian Mountaineers" *Theory, Culture & Society* (1987), pp. 597

⁷Robbins, p. 580

middle-class tourism, fighting dams, or building the postwar parks, the Alpine Club shared common objectives with national park administrators. It articulated its vision of the parks; it knew how to influence public policy; and its vision guided policymakers and politicians.

As a voluntary, nongovernment organization, the ACC was an influential friend of the Rocky Mountain national parks during their formative years. The club's role as a key stakeholder in park development was particularly important during the first 75 years of national park evolution, which set in place the policy and legislative structures that governed an expanding system of national parks across Canada. The club was particularly active in Banff, Jasper, Yoho, Kootenay, and Glacier national parks. The ACC and the national parks incorporated a similar dual mandate in their objectives, and a shared symmetry characterized their policies. As Arthur Wheeler stated with respect to the ACC in 1922, "our interests and sympathies lie with the parks," and as Ottawa director of Parks R.A. Gibson observed as late as 1945, many of the ACC's management ideas were "in line" with those of his department. As a preferred partner group active in the parks, this middle-class recreational organization allied with federal policymakers to create national institutions for public benefit.

In the club's dealings with government, a two-way process of public policy formation was at work. The ACC necessitated policies to manage mountaineering, trail use, group camping, and backcountry huts. Meanwhile, the club responded to federal needs to set safety standards, publicize the parks, and defend them from outside forces. The personal rapport between A.O. Wheeler and J.B. Harkin was particularly instrumental in forging a cooperative bond between the club and the Parks Branch for the 25 years

between the creation of a distinct Parks office in 1911 and Harkin's retirement in 1936. It was an era when two strong-minded people could make a large impact on building national institutions. The first 50 years of the ACC's history were characterized by this partnership that lasted while the club remained one of the most prominent recreational user groups in the mountain parks.

In later years, the club continued to nurture its rapport with parks officials and participate in policy formation through formal public consultation programs and direct links to government. As government expanded and the number of recreational stakeholders in the postwar parks multiplied, the relative importance of the ACC diminished. This shift was evident in the case of the demolition of the Banff Alpine Clubhouse and the transfer of ACC backcountry huts to the Crown in the late 1960s and early 1970s. When the federal government began to contract its role in the parks in the 1980s, this process was reversed and the Alpine Club again rose in status as a partner group, in keeping with its longheld cachet as a friend of the national parks.

Canada's national parks cannot be all things to all stakeholders. Common vision is hard to find. The fundamental question is what do we want from national parks and can we reach a "teeth-gritting harmony" long enough to sustain our mutual goals? This quandary may have prompted J.B. Harkin's observation that "the battle for the establishment of National Parks is long since over but the battle to keep them inviolate is never won."⁸

⁸J.B. Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada*, p. 14

Every generation must debate this fundamental question and fight the battle to balance conservation and use. It is a constant dilemma inherent to the national park idea. Canada's national parks are a standard bearer of wilderness conservation. When they succeed, they inspire; when they fail, they set a poor example. The ACC periodically confronted this debate and set a model of environmental citizenship in its own backyard. When civic responsibility to the public domain is abrogated, however, no one stands guard over the national parks. As Arthur Wheeler observed as early as 1923, "there will be assuredly in the course of time, hundreds of other cases of varying types" to challenge the inviolability of the national parks.⁹ For places overwhelmed by their own popularity, such as Banff National Park, it may be too late. Although it resisted the development pressure of Calgary Power through the 1920s, what the Alpine Club failed to see coming in the postwar years was the possibility that tourism might ultimately turn the national parks into a "hive of industry."

The Alpine Club of Canada internalized these quandaries in partnership with the Canadian state. The history of the Alpine Club is an enduring organizational success story of an agile, national organization built on middle-class recreational interests. The club shared a dynamic vision of the national mountain parks with the Canadian national parks administration during a public policy dialogue that has lasted through almost 90 years of vast change in Canadian society. Today, ACC membership numbers over 5,000. Although national parks have changed and park-user groups have proliferated over time, the ACC is still a partner in the use and management of Canada's national mountain parks.

⁹University of Alberta Archives, accn. 74-169-421, A.O. Wheeler to W. Pearce, 18 May 1923.

The founders of Canada's Alpine Club have gone but their legacy carries on in an organization that continues to reinvent its vision of the national mountain parks. In the eyes of the Alpine Club of Canada, the peaks still summon realities beyond the visionary mountains:

L'Envoi

A few short days I tramp the hills,
Watch sunrise light each silvery slope
Find studies new in ice and snow,
And learn the art of axe and rope.

From vantage point on mountain top,
I see new worlds not known before
And hear the crack of breaking ice
Whilst down below the waters roar.

Adieu, I will not say goodbye,
Of you each year is greater need,
Your strength inspires the finer thought,
And finer thought the better deed

Rogers Pass 1929¹⁰

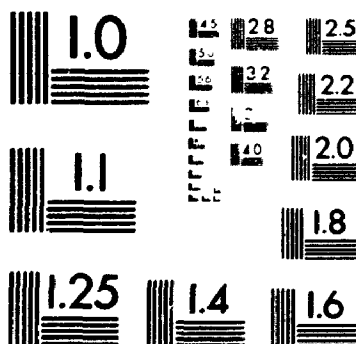
¹⁰ Anonymous, "L'Envoi" *The Gazette*, June 1930, p. 4.

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APPENDIX A

Statistical Methodology

The Alpine Club of Canada membership was enumerated based on "Redbook" membership lists contained in the *Constitution and List of Members*. This ACC publication was issued on an irregular basis to members of the club. Copies are now found in the Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies Archives.

Six sample periods were chosen: 1907, 1922, 1930, 1939, 1946, and 1956. These time periods were selected to represent the club membership after its first year of operation, after World War I, during the Depression, at the outset of World War II, at the end of World War II, and during the mid-1950s' postwar period. Because the "Redbook" was published on an irregular basis, sample years also reflect the availability of data for a given period.

The "Redbook" entries listed members by name, title, address, membership classification, and recruitment year. The membership lists were analyzed according to sex distribution, female marital distribution, membership classification distribution, and regional distribution. Female marital status was determined by the prefix Miss or Mrs. Females with the prefix Dr. were enumerated as single for the purpose of analysis. In some instances, addresses were not provided for certain individuals and they were excluded from the regional analysis. The results of the membership analysis are presented in statistical tables and figures in Appendix B.

APPENDIX B

Statistical Portrait of Alpine Club of Canada 1907 to 1956

TABLE 1: Gender Distribution and Female Marital Status

Year	1907	1922	1930	1939	1946	1956
Total Membership	201	599	652	510	472	871
Total Women	63	245	273	211	198	321
Total Men	137	354	379	297	274	550
% Female	31.3	40.9	41.9	41.4	42	36.9
% Male	68.2	59.1	58.1	58.2	58	63.14
Total Women Married	16	87	96	62	63	146
Total Women Single	47	158	177	148	135	175
% Women Married	25.4	35.5	35.2	29.4	31.8	45.5
% Women Single	74.6	64.5	64.8	70.1	68.2	54.5

Note 1: Marital status determined by prefix Miss or Mrs. in membership lists. Women listed as Dr. with female first name enumerated as single.

Note 2: Gina LaForce (1978) reported the 1917 female distribution of total ACC membership was over 40%.

Table 1 Summary of Female Distribution of Membership and Gender Ratios:

Mean Average of % Female Distribution of Totals 1922 to 1946 = 41.6%

Mean Average of % Female Distribution of Totals 1922 to 1956 = 40.6%

Ratio of Women to Men on Average 1907 = 1:2

Ratio of Women to Men on Average 1922 to 1956 = 2:3

TABLE 2 Membership Distribution by Category

Year	1907	1922	1930	1939	1946	1956
Active	93	549	341	336	300	644
Life Active	NA	NA	113	102	91	108
Graduating	90	NA	59	NA	22	61
Subscribing	2	39	126	60	49	48
Honourary	6	9	9	9	7	7
Associate	10	2	NA	NA	NA	NA
War	NA	NA	4	3	3	3
Total	201	599	652	510	472	871

Note: Abbreviation "NA" indicates membership classification was not mentioned in the list for a given year. War memberships were granted to veterans and mothers of ACC war dead.

TABLE 3: Membership Distribution by Region in Actual Numbers

Year	1907	1922	1930	1939	1946	1956
B.C.	37	67	154	132	145	229
Alberta	79	149	101	79	79	193
Saskatchewan	3	35	17	13	12	11
Manitoba	30	52	29	17	12	13
Ontario	19	60	47	38	30	69
Quebec	2	10	10	6	29	50
Maritimes	1	2	4	1	0	1
Yukon	0	0	0	0	0	1
U.S.A.	16	124	197	182	129	263
U.K.	5	23	27	29	22	31
Other	3	6	7	7	3	9
Total	195 ¹	528	593	504	461	870

TABLE 4: Membership Distribution by Region in Percentages

Year	1907	1922	1930	1939	1946	1956
B.C.	19	12.7	26	26.2	31.6	26.3
Alberta	40.5	28.2	17	15.7	17.1	22.2
Saskatchewan	01.5	06.6	02.9	02.6	02.6	01.3
Manitoba	15.4	09.8	04.9	03.4	02.6	01.5
Ontario	09.7	11.4	07.9	07.5	06.5	07.9
Quebec	01	01.9	01.7	01.2	06.3	05.7
Maritimes	00.5	00.4	00.7	00.2	0	00.1
Yukon	0	0	0	0	0	00.1
U.S.A.	08.2	23.5	33.2	36.1	28	30.2
U.K.	02.6	04.4	04.6	05.8	04.8	03.6
Other	01.5	01.1	01.2	01.4	00.7	01
Total	195 ²	528	593	504	461	870

1 These totals show a discrepancy with the actual annual membership totals, due to members listed by name without an address. Total membership in 1907 was 201, in 1922 was 599, in 1930 was 652, in 1939 was 510, in 1946 was 472, in 1956 was 871.

2 These totals show a discrepancy with the actual annual membership totals due to members listed by name without an address. Total membership in 1907 was 201, in 1922 was 599, in 1930 was 652, in 1939 was 510, in 1946 was 472, in 1956 was 871.

Membership Distribution by Sex

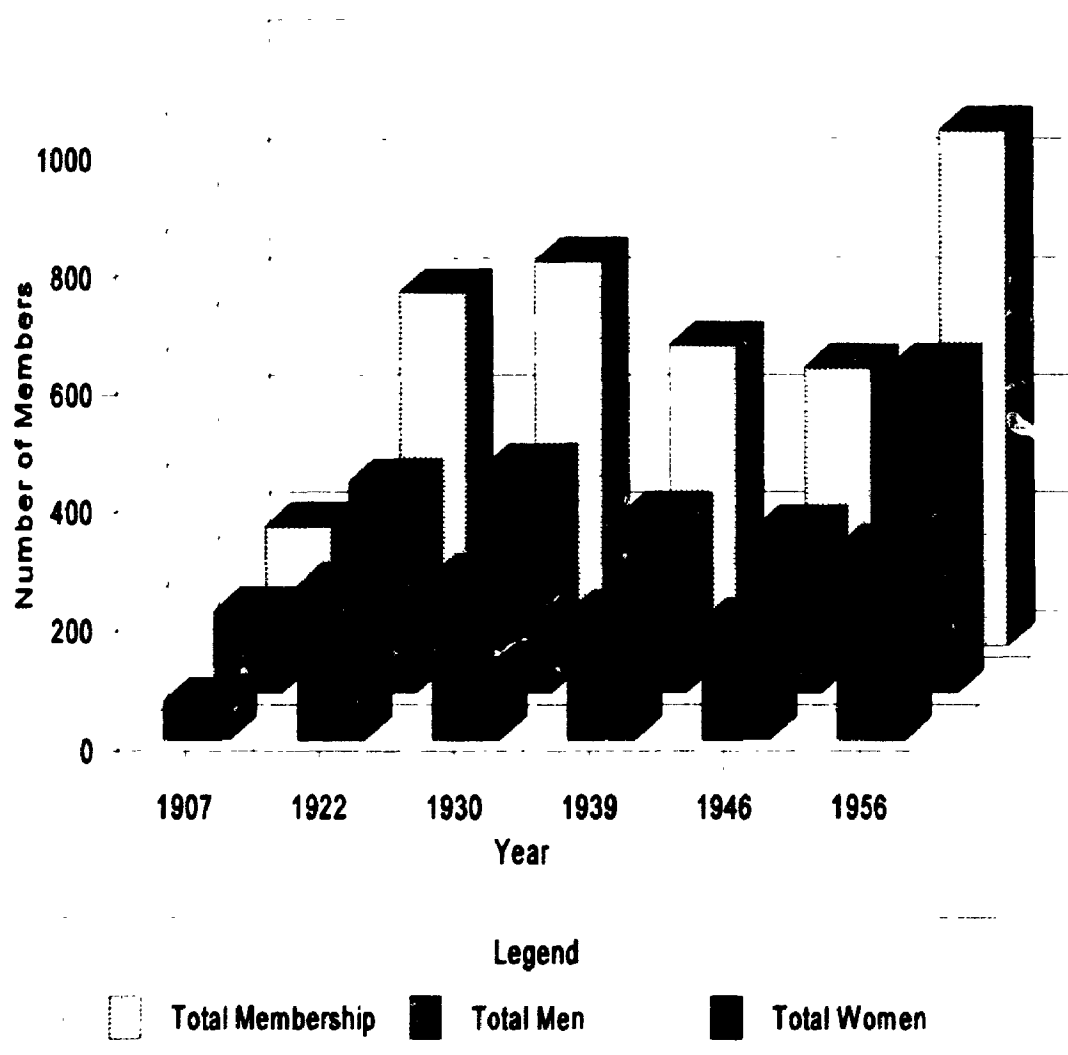


Figure 3

Membership Distribution by Sex in %

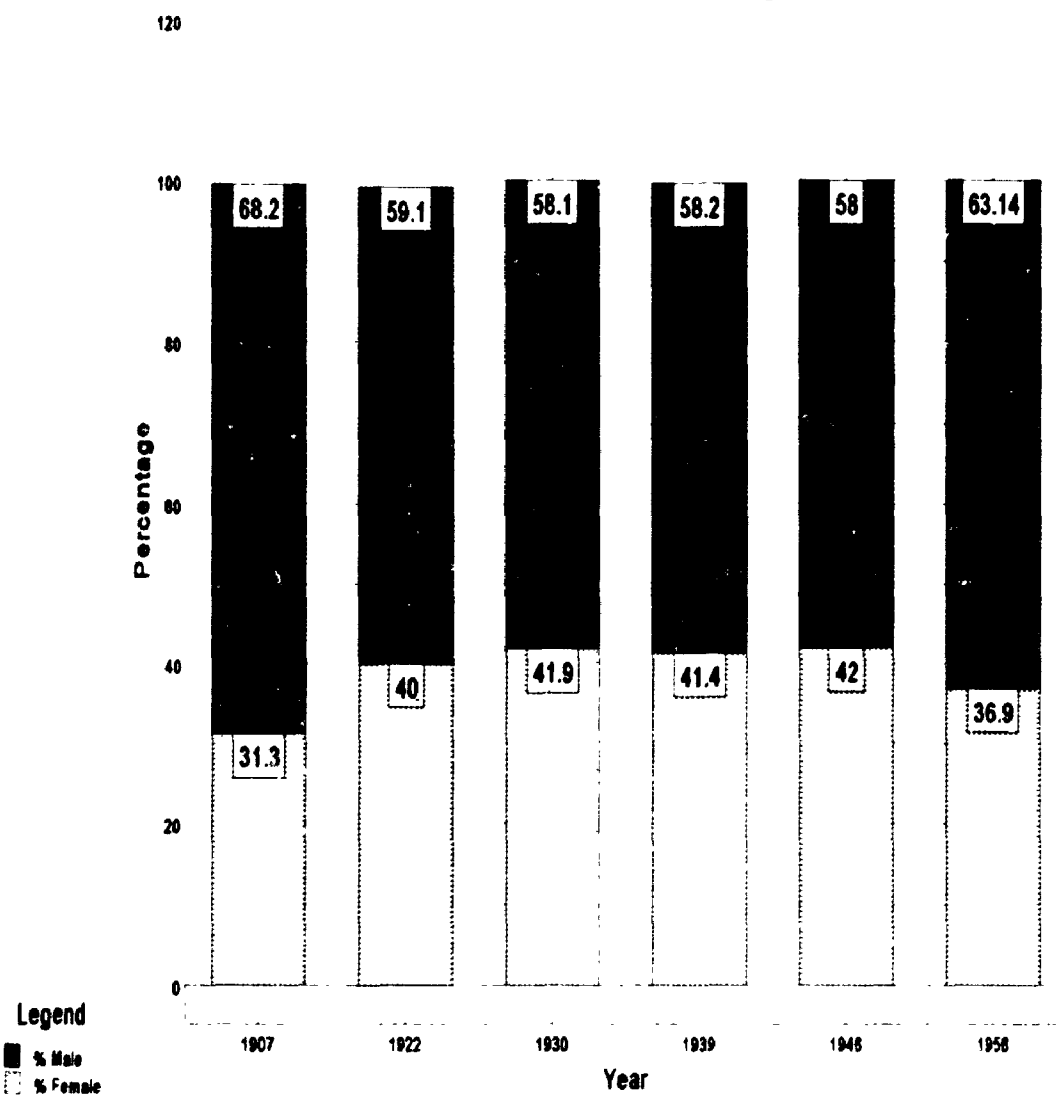
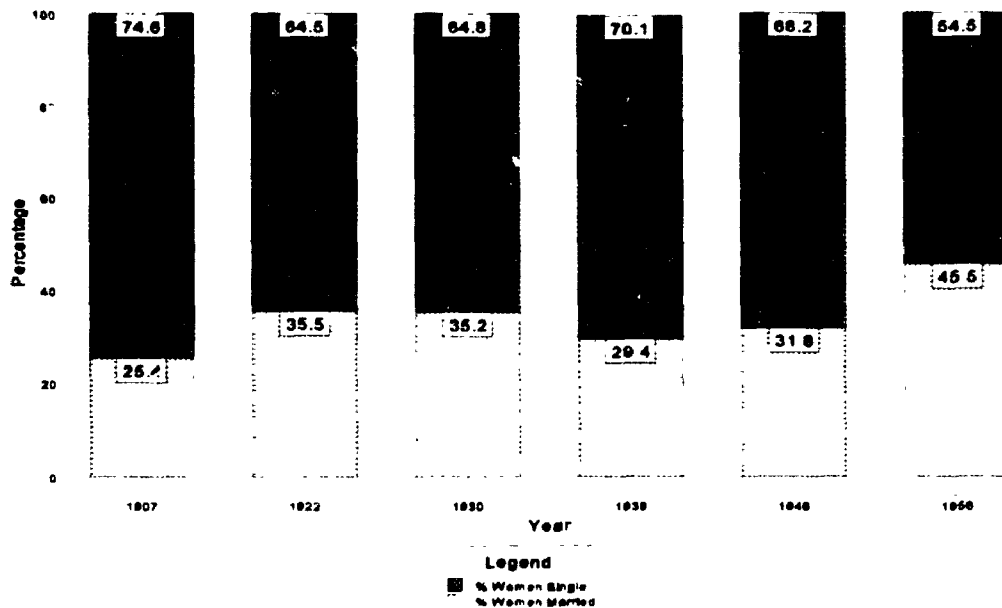


Figure 4

Female Marital Status in %



Female Marital Status in Numbers

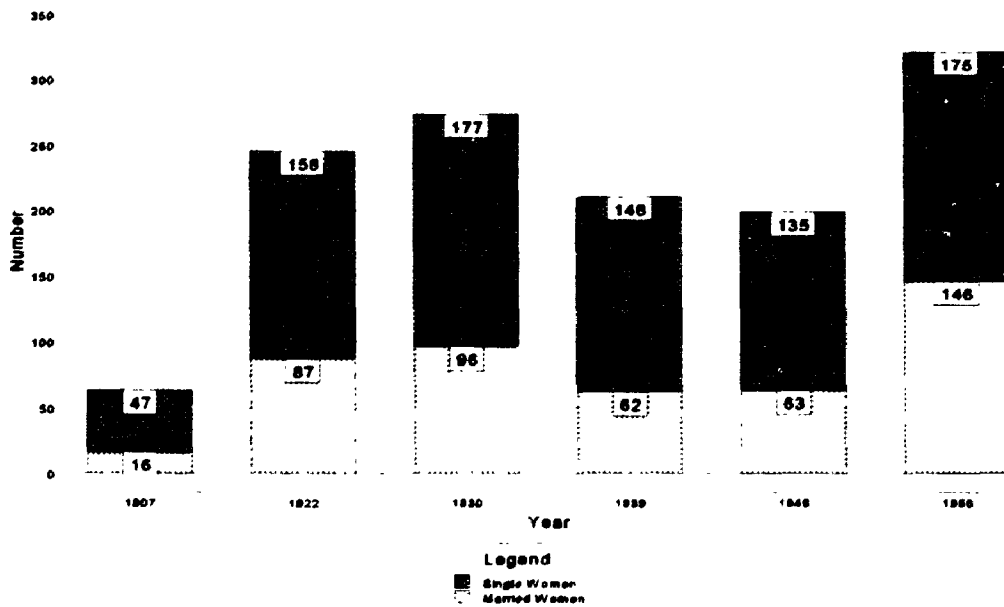


Figure 5

Membership Distribution by Region in Numbers

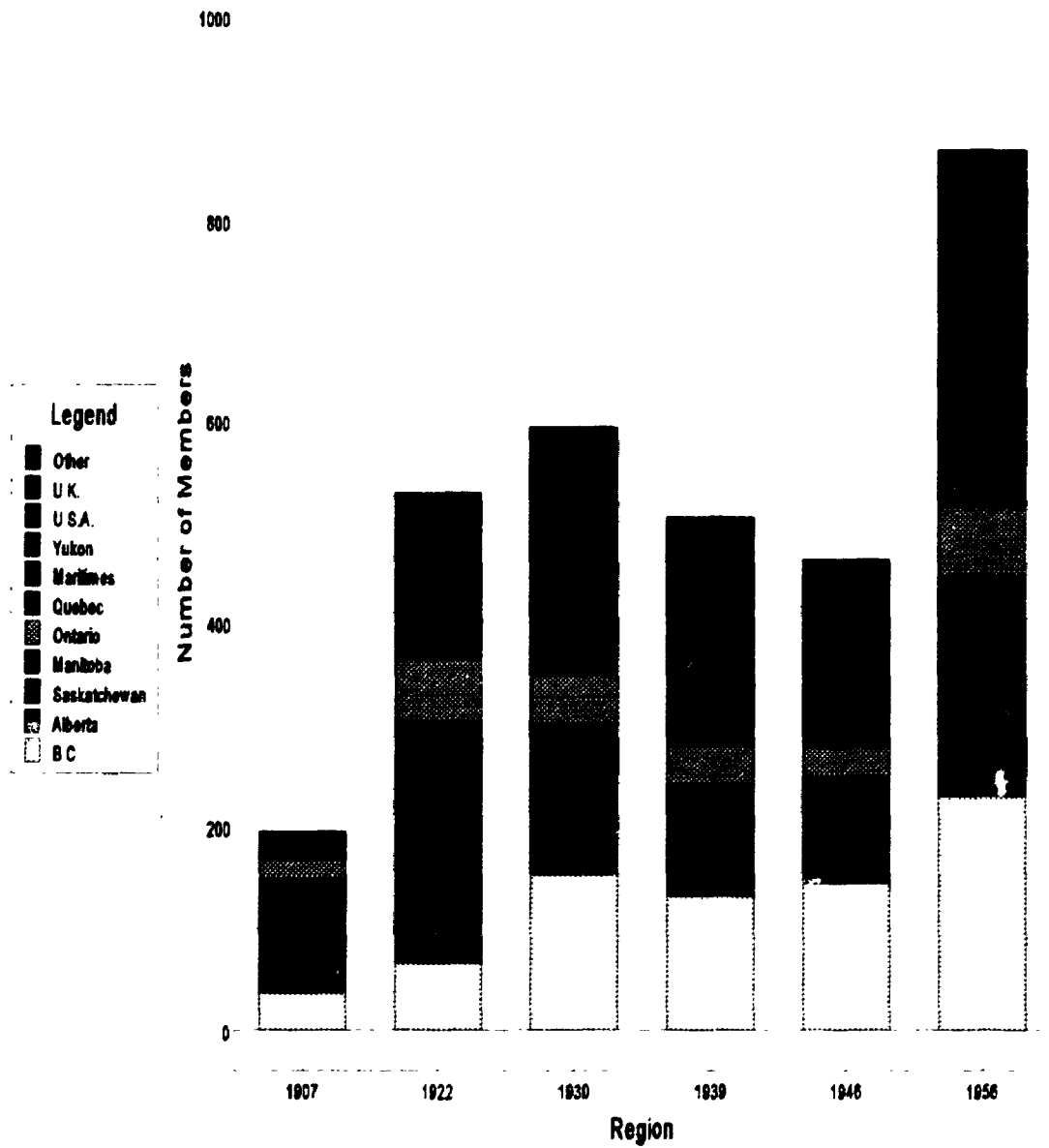


Figure 6

Membership Distribution by Region in %

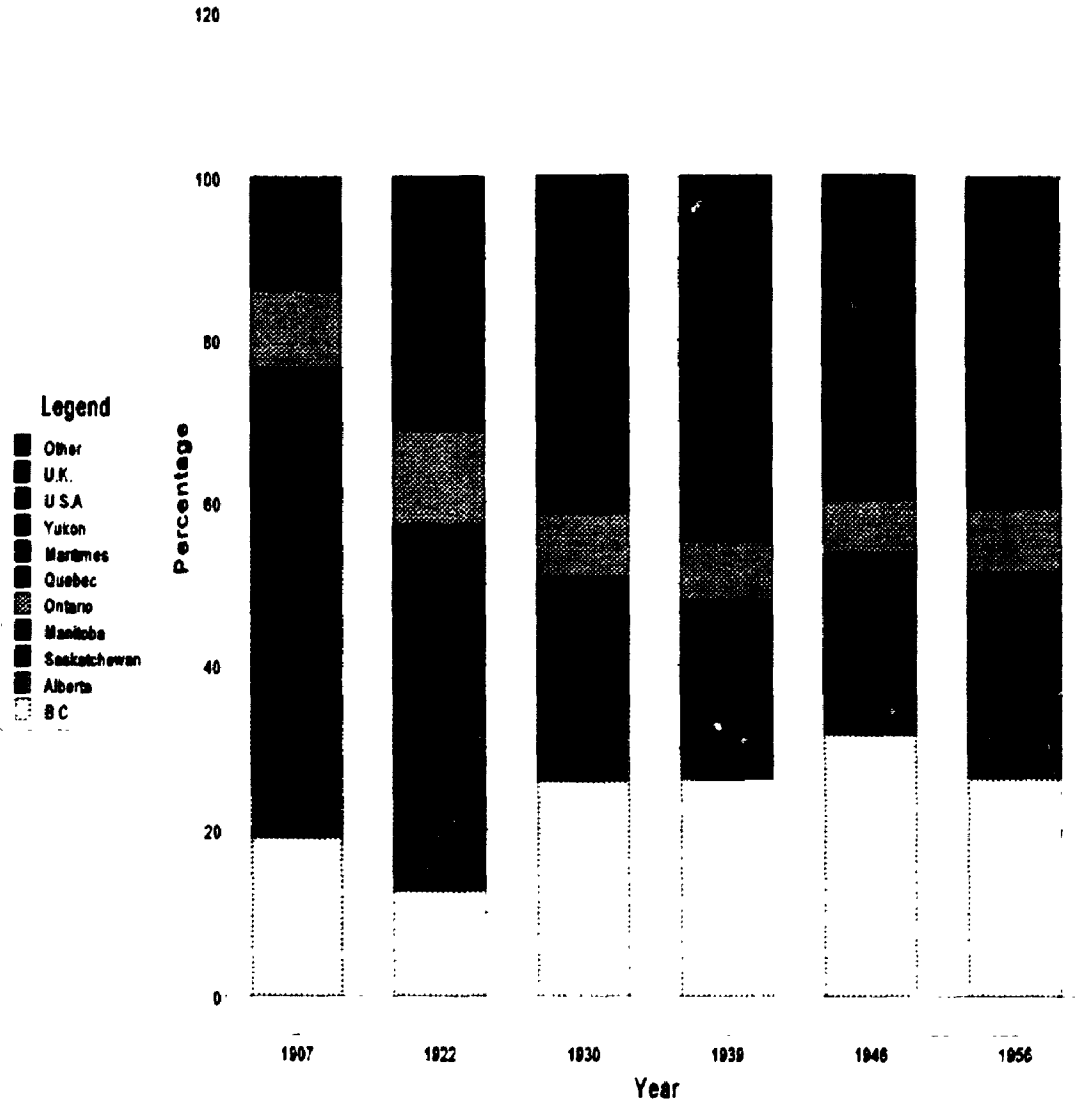


Figure 7

Membership Distribution by Category

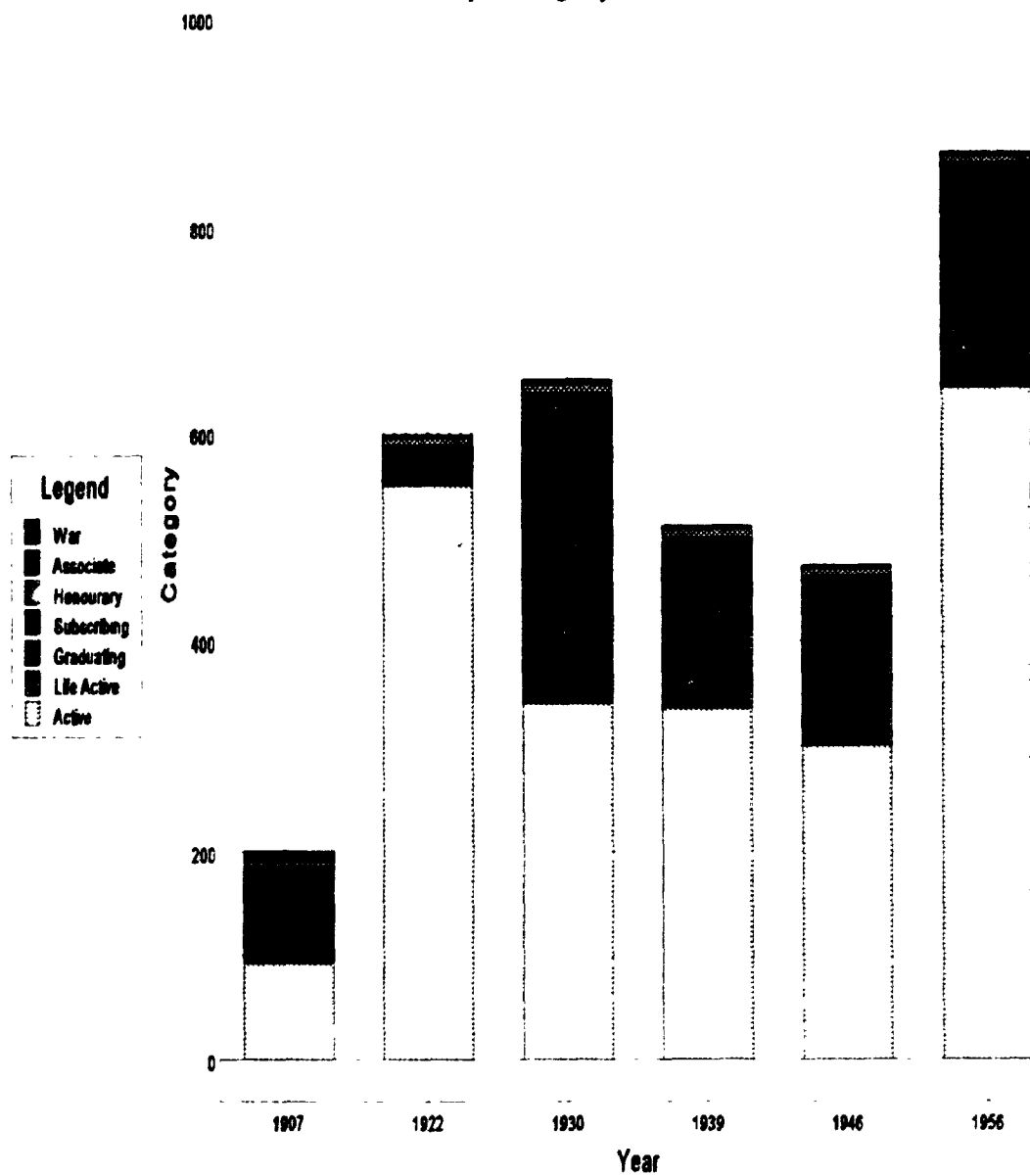


Figure 8

LIST OF SOURCES

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File B-07.15, John Murray Gibbon

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RG 84, Vol. 102, File U36-1, Part 2

RG 84, Vol. 102, File U36-1, Part 3

RG 84, Vol 102, File U36-1, Part 4

RG 84, Vol. 102, File U36-1, Part 5.

RG 84, Vol. 107, File U125, Part 1

RG 84, Vol. 170, File U125-5, Part 1

RG 84, Vol. 171, File U125-17, Part 1

RG 84, Vol 178, File U113-108, Part 1

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