

# Defining Uncle Sam's Playgrounds: Railroad Advertising and the National Parks, 1917-1941

*Peter Blodgett*

Deep in Yellowstone National Park, wilderness and civilization meet almost nose to nose. Four smartly-dressed travelers peer out from the backseat of their touring car while a pair of the park's ursine inhabitants amble up to satisfy their curiosity about the four-wheeled intruder. Two of the visitors stare down from their perch apprehensively as mother bear and her cub sniff inquisitively at a tire. Behind this tableau, evergreens tower out of sight in the middle distance against the backdrop of a mirror-still lake lying below a range of mountains that fill the far horizon. With the exception of the automobile, the landscape is devoid of any human presence and rests undisturbed by movement of any sort.<sup>1</sup>

In such fashion did the Northern Pacific Railroad celebrate the glories of Yellowstone in 1917. That advertisement and others like it had one very obvious purpose: to increase passenger travel on the sponsoring railroads. To do so, they conjured up the most attractive visions possible to catch the potential traveler's eye. Many railroads, for example, echoed the praises of unspoiled nature sung by the Northern Pacific in 1917. At the precise moment when America entered World War I, railroads serving the trans-Mississippi West were extolling the magnificent charms of such destinations as Yellowstone and Glacier national parks. Repeatedly, advertisements stressed the confrontation between the "savage" and the "civilized" or, in the words of the Great Northern's advertising copy for Glacier National Park (Figure 1), the contrast between the "refined" comforts of thoroughly "modern" hotels and "Nature's wildest, most tremendous sights."<sup>2</sup> Poised in many cases just beyond the windowpane, all of Nature's wonders were within the grasp of any traveler who cared to step off the train or out of the lodge. Every visitor in the Rockies could find an "endless panorama...where all Nature is radiant and her titanic works most grand."<sup>3</sup>

By the early twentieth century, railroads serving all sections of the trans-Mississippi West adopted this kind of imagery as part of their enduring efforts to make passenger traffic a lucrative dimension of their business. But in the substance and the style of each advertisement, a careful observer can discover a number of underlying messages. Those messages reveal much about common images of tourist travel in general and about the changing

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Peter Blodgett is the H. Russell Smith Foundation Curator of Western Historical Manuscripts in Huntington Library, San Marino CA. *Historical Geography* Volume 35(2007): 80-113. ©2007 Geoscience Publications.

*In*  
GLACIER  
NATIONAL PARK

**A**T GLACIER NATIONAL PARK refined hotel comforts contrast with Nature's wildest, most tremendous sights.

Last year thousands more tourists than in any previous year scaled its Alpine heights—fished its tumbling streams—rode by launch on its azure lakes—motored through its pine-laden valleys. Modern hotels-in-the-forest and chalets. Tepee camps. Vacations \$1 to \$5 per day.

Glacier Park is on the main trans-continental line of the Great Northern Railway. Visit Glacier National Park, the Spokane Country, and the wonderful Lake Chelan Region, directly en route to the Pacific Northwest.

A camping tour 'long the shores of Lake Chelan is a big experience. Then go on to Seattle, Tacoma, Puget Sound, Portland, Astoria, Vancouver, Victoria—each with a delightful resort-country of its own—and Alaska.

The twin Palaces of the Pacific—S. S. "Great Northern" and S. S. "Northern Pacific"—three times weekly between Portland, Astoria and San Francisco. Folder on request.

**C. E. STONE, Pass. Traffic Manager**  
Dept. 30  
St. Paul, Minn.

**C. W. PITTS**  
Asst. General Passenger Agent  
210 South Clark Street  
Chicago

**S. LOUNSBERY**  
General Agent Passenger Dept.  
1184 Broadway  
New York

**See America First**  
**GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
Glacier National Park

*Recounting the Day's Thrills*

Special round trip fares to Glacier National Park, to the Pacific Northwest, Puget Sound and Alaska. Write for Aeroplane map folder and illustrated descriptive Glacier National Park and Lake Chelan literature.

**C. E. STONE, Pass. Traffic Mgr., Great Northern Ry.**  
Dept. 30, St. Paul, Minn.

Please send me Aeroplane map folder and descriptive Glacier National Park and Lake Chelan literature free.

Name.....  
Address.....  
City.....State.....

Figure 1. "In Glacier National Park" highlights the compelling contrast between the comfortably "refined" settings of grand hotels and the scenic magnificence of wild lands that the Great Northern Railway promised tourists would encounter in the park. (*Sunset* 38:5 [May 1917]: 93).

character of public interest in and use of the national parks that had been established in the West. They also reflect a significant influence exerted in the early twentieth century, through the mechanism of advertising, upon the American public's understanding of an essential national park identity.

While the evolution of the national park concept in the United States is a complex saga, stemming from changing American attitudes about undeveloped landscapes, national cultural identity and scenic beauty across the nineteenth century, recent scholarship reveals the crucial role played by rail-

roads employed their lobbying skills and political influence on behalf of national park proposals from the formation of Yellowstone in 1872 to the designation of Glacier National Park nearly four decades later. Thereafter, they also mobilized their support behind the ultimately successful attempt during the presidential administrations of William Howard Taft and Woodrow Wilson to institute an agency within the Federal government that would be responsible for management of the burgeoning national park system. Such endeavors often had the endorsement of prominent figures in the corporate hierarchies as well as the active support of the small but growing community of preservationists who sought to forestall unchecked exploitation of all natural resources, including scenic wonders, for solely commercial purposes.<sup>4</sup>

The financial and political weight that western railroads deployed on behalf of individual parks and a formal national parks bureau alike proved quite considerable in the years immediately preceding passage of the legislation that founded the National Park Service. Western railroads, for example, were amply represented at the various conferences convened by the Interior Department in 1911, 1912 and 1915 to discuss the future of the national parks. In 1916 alone, a group of seventeen major railroads contributed \$43,000 toward the publication and distribution of *The National Parks Portfolio*, an attractively illustrated volume intended to build political and popular support for the parks. Even after all railroads came under federal control during World War I and leisure travel went into a severe decline, many of these companies spent significant sums of money to promote tourism in the Far West (including national parks) through the Western Lines Bureau of Service, created under the auspices of the United States Railroad Administration to ensure that the railroads would be able to revive their passenger traffic after they returned to private management.<sup>5</sup>

Having made such a substantial investment in the future of the national parks, the railroads took a substantial interest in the character of the nascent federal guardian of them as the National Park Service began to take shape. Under the energetic leadership of founding director Stephen T. Mather and his youthful assistant Horace M. Albright, building this bureau began with the development of a body of policies and procedures intended to coordinate all those reserves brought under NPS authority in 1916 and 1917. An enthusiastic advocate of national park landscapes and outdoor recreation himself, Mather realized that only public awareness of and active use of the parks he oversaw could ensure the current existence of and eventual expansion of a system of parks. That realization, in turn, led Mather and his colleagues to emphasize policies that would facilitate what they considered to be, in the appraisal of one current scholar, “the wise use of scenic lands...to foster tourism and public enjoyment” of what could be described as “scenic pleasuring grounds.” In its administration of the national parks, therefore, NPS lead-

ership strove to balance the protection of their scenic magnificence with projects undertaken either by the bureau or by its allies in the private sector such as the western railroads that would enhance the opportunities of visitors to enjoy recreation and leisure in these sites. Such projects included efforts on the part of Mather's bureau in its early years to counteract the persistent resistance of the United States Forest Service, which frequently opposed the incorporation of national forest lands into new or existing national parks. Despite Forest Service attempts to enhance its involvement with recreation and preservation of wilderness, the Park Service maintained its primacy in these fields.<sup>6</sup> For the railroads, in turn, such an approach fit admirably into the vision of national parks that their advertising efforts already had been propounding of landscapes that combined scenic marvels with recreational pleasures.

In examining the efforts of leading western railroads to attract patronage by heightening the allure of travel on their trains in the early twentieth century, we can observe many similarities with the basic approaches they had taken since at least the rise of the first trans-continental lines in the 1870s and 1880s. Especially for their first-class passengers, larger railroads by 1900 emphasized comfort and even luxury to make a virtue out of the often-tiresome necessity of long-distance travel. Crack trains, filled with stylish conveniences and flocks of deferential attendants, conveyed travelers with elegance and grace to their destinations. However luxurious their settings or their service, though, no railroad ever forgot that every passenger did have a *destination* in mind when buying a ticket. In their advertising, the railroads routinely linked the quality of their service with the variety of the destinations they served. In the names railroad executives chose for their crack trains, they frequently evoked the romance of far-away places such as the "Golden State" or the land of "Sunset."<sup>7</sup> Not coincidentally, many of those romantic places would be associated with the still-exotic American West, a region through which comparatively few Americans had yet traveled even by 1917.

Although railroads on the whole earned their keep from the revenues generated by freight traffic and the short-haul passenger business, few failed to give pride of place in their advertising to the long-distance runs so beloved of excursionists. For those companies serving the West, that privileging of the leisure traveler encouraged the celebration of the region's scenic wonders which led, in turn, to an enthusiastic embrace of the national parks in the West as supremely enticing destinations. By the 1880s, for instance, the Northern Pacific Railroad had staked out its claim to the "wonderland" of Yellowstone while the Southern Pacific made frequent, if less all-encompassing use of the Yosemite Valley. With the creation before World War I of other national parks such as Mt. Rainier, Crater Lake, Glacier and Rocky Mountain, other railroads seized their opportunities to align themselves with

one or more scenic treasures. Often under the patronage of the railroads themselves, painters and photographers flocked to those national parks. From their brushes and cameras flowed a steady stream of images that would be incorporated into the bales of calendars, timetables, brochures, post cards, posters, menu covers and other ephemera published by the sponsoring railroads to attract riders.<sup>8</sup>

However small the scale on which individual railroads began such advertising efforts, the dollars spent and the materials produced reached impressive totals by the beginning of the twentieth century. The Southern Pacific, for example, published and distributed 10 million pieces to promote the Far West as a whole during one three-year period soon after 1900 while its Passenger Department in 1898 founded a monthly magazine it christened *Sunset* to proclaim the attractions of tourism in the region the SP served. From an early circulation of 15,000, its production grew to more than 100,000 copies per month by 1911. The railroad produced hundreds of different brochures on behalf of as many communities to encourage visitation, investment and settlement, spending millions of dollars in the process while also organizing displays at fairs and festivals, professional speakers' bureaus and, in the 1920s, the creation of motion pictures, all intended to sing the praises of the West. Flyers, pamphlets and broadsides aimed at tourists highlighted the delightful possibilities of the remarkable Yosemite Valley or Oregon's stunning Crater Lake National Park (established in 1902). By 1911, the SP's advertising budget had risen nearly tenfold over the amount spent in 1892 to \$1.8 million. During the same period, several Southern Pacific officials lent their whole-hearted support to attempts led by John Muir and Robert Underwood Johnson to expand the national parks in California's Sierra Nevadas. Similarly, the Great Northern, in boosting the prospects of the Pacific Northwest, produced its own array of advertisements touting the various landscapes it served before and after the turn of the century. Seizing upon the opportunity offered by the Federal government's establishment of Glacier National Park in 1910, the GN soon created campaigns that included "newspapers, magazines, and booklets, billboards and window displays, as well as stereopticon lectures in more than a hundred cities and towns" just to promote Glacier National Park. In 1914 alone, such efforts cost the railroad more than \$300,000. And with the proclamation of Grand Canyon National Monument in 1908, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad's branch line through Williams, Arizona (completed in 1901) and its magnificent El Tovar Hotel on the canyon rim (built in 1905) could thereafter be associated with that federal endorsement of scenic splendor. The Santa Fe's hopes of not only recouping its construction costs but of profiting from the resulting passenger traffic inspired considerable promotional labors that made frequent use of the Canyon as a lure for tourists. Assessing the overall contributions

of the industry to the cause of national parks, one official of the aforementioned Western Lines Bureau of Service reported in 1918 that, in the previous year, twelve western railroads had spent a grand total of \$358,892.60 on booklets, brochures and advertising inserts in the popular media to promote the national parks, including over \$115,000 from the Burlington Route, almost \$80,000 from the Great Northern and nearly \$35,000 from the Santa Fe.<sup>9</sup>

As the era of federal operation of major railroads came to an end in 1920, private ownership readily resumed cultivating the tourist trade by these means. Writing on March 29, 1920 from aboard a New York Central train to his associate Ralph Budd, Great Northern President Louis Hill, for example, urged Budd to ensure that dissemination of the GN's brochures and flyers match those of their western competitors, even in the eastern states. Observing that lines like the Milwaukee Road had their publications available in resorts and travel bureaus wherever he traveled, Hill noted that "there is an endless number of places where we should make distribution in an economical way" and concluded optimistically that 1920 bore signs of "an exceptionally good year for American travel." Competition among the railroads serving the West, however, did not rule out collaboration for larger purposes, such as the national campaign sponsored by the Great Northern, the Northern Pacific and the Burlington Route on behalf of the Pacific Northwest in the early 1920s, intended to awaken Americans to "the Land of Opportunity ...its vast resources, its great development, its rich opportunities" (including the possibilities of tourist travel through which "business may be profitably combined with pleasure by utilizing the vacation to visit both the scenic and industrial points of interest"). Driven by such joint expenditures as well as the annual spending by each road, the sums invested by western railroads on advertising thus continued to climb throughout the 1920s. The Great Northern alone pushed its advertising budget from \$188,443.86 in 1921 to \$335,468.28 in 1923, cracked the half-million-dollar mark in 1924 and committed over \$660,000 in 1925. Year after year, tens of thousands of those dollars paid for printing vast quantities of brochures and publishing advertisements in major periodicals, ranging from the 100,000 copies of the Great Northern's *The Call of the Mountains* about Glacier National Park produced for the 1925 summer season to the appearance of its ads in such high-profile venues as *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Pictorial Review* in 1928 and 1929.<sup>10</sup> Only the steady erosion of the railroad industry's financial circumstances propelled by the nation's worsening economic conditions at decade's end eventually restrained such spending.

Even under the unrelenting pressure of the great collapse, however, western railroads persisted in their campaigns to capture a share of the surviving tourist travel to their region. As the Burlington Route prepared for the 1930 travel season, for instance, its Advertising Department alerted its vari-

ous representatives to expect a drive that would promote trips to Glacier and Yellowstone as well as Colorado and the Black Hills through ad copy placed in national magazines from *The Saturday Evening Post* and *World's Work* to *Collier's* and *Ladies' Home Journal*. The Great Northern, though hampered by its particular budgetary constraints, spread the word about its services in the same year across a spectrum of periodicals from *National Geographic* and *Time* to *Pictorial Review* and *The Literary Digest*. By year's end, passenger traffic managers and advertising agents from half a dozen of the western lines meeting in Chicago could only forecast bad news, with the Union Pacific proposing to cut its newspaper and magazine budget from \$525,000 in 1930 to \$385,000 in 1931, the Northern Pacific expecting to cut its 1930 budget of \$407,500 for such advertising to below \$350,000 in 1931 and both the Milwaukee Road and the Burlington Route presuming that their respective 1930 budgets of \$460,000 and \$480,000 for print advertising would each fall by 30% or more in the year ahead. Passenger traffic agents and advertising departments continued to cling to the possibilities of tourist travel, especially to the national parks, through such difficult stretches, however, relying upon such tools as the Great Northern's "Glacier Park Aeroplane Map" to impress and attract the potential traveler. In 1934 alone, Great Northern agents in Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento and San Francisco requisitioned nearly 4000 "Aeroplane Map" folders, 2000 Glacier Park brochures and almost 1500 leaflets promoting the "National Park Year" designated by the federal government. Hundreds of the same publications went to GN offices and agents all over the Pacific Northwest, from Seattle and Portland to Wenatchee, Washington and Fernie, British Columbia that year, and literally thousands of the "Aeroplane Map" were shipped to Eastern and Midwestern offices including Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago, Des Moines, Omaha and St. Louis just for the 1936 travel season. The Great Northern's 1937 pamphlet "Carefree National Parks Vacations," promoting trips to Yellowstone and Glacier as well as Waterton Lakes and Jasper national parks in Canada, probably put the case for railroad reliance on the allure of national parks best by first posing the question, "Want to be carefree this summer?" and then promising a "glimpse into that vast and beautiful mountain sanctuary, the Northern Rockies. Here in settings of rare scenic beauty you will find the rest, relaxation or play you have been searching for."<sup>11</sup>

Thus, we can see that throughout the two decades following World War I, railroad advertising capitalized upon the notion of romantic western landscapes, putting a particular focus upon the national parks. These appeals, however, also demonstrated that advertisers as a rule rarely fitted their bows with only one string. While the railroad literature of park promotion often emphasized excitement and adventure, it also enlisted other arguments tailored to the circumstances of individual locations. In the advertising cam-

paigns conducted by those railroads that spanned the region, travel in the national parks of the Far West usually held out the possibility of adventure, excitement or even romance. It could expose the vacationer to grand, exotic and inspirational scenes of natural beauty. It could allow the traveler to step back into a primitive, even savage, world, while never losing touch with the comforts of the modern age. In far greater detail and with considerable refinement over time, these notions encompassed the basic appeal to tourists crafted by railroads serving national parks between the world wars.

Returning to the advertisement on behalf of travel to Yellowstone that opens this essay, we see several of these themes already being employed. The illustration, with its undisturbed backdrop of forest and lake, depicts the peacefulness of untouched nature while the confrontation between bears and humans contrasts the primitive or the unspoiled and the modern or the civilized. The text elaborates upon these themes by stressing the “comfortable autos” (as pictured) in which to sightsee as well as the “enjoyable” and “educational” nature of a Yellowstone tour. Letting the illustration create a mood, the text then fleshes it out and provides all the essential details. Exemplifying an increasingly common trait in consumer advertising, this advertisement relies upon the intangible qualities of the product, in this case the pleasures inherent in experiencing the national parks.<sup>12</sup>

Copywriters and illustrators employed by railroads serving the Far West tried to intrigue readers with particular examples of the radiant wonders to be found in the realms of the national parks. In words and pictures, they captured vignettes of a world far different from and far removed from that of average men and women. As they imagined it, “lusty trout” darted about in “age-old” Colorado streams. Sleek white-tailed deer roamed a high mountain valley in Yellowstone. And, starkly silhouetted against the sky, a lone eagle soared over the magnificent emptiness of the Grand Canyon.<sup>13</sup> Even the blandly utilitarian advertising produced for the United States Railroad Administration following the government’s takeover of the railroads in December 1917 exhorted the readers to “Breathe a deep breath of the pine woods. Get the tang of the Sea,” to move out of their normal routines and “Live a while close to Nature.”<sup>14</sup>

To catch the eye of the venturesome traveler, railroad advertisements promoting travel to the national parks promised “the time of your life,” urging the prospective visitor to “come out and play” in a “vacation joyland” (Figure 2). Advertising copy spotlighted the virtues of different parks and the regions surrounding them with such catch phrases as “Colorado—the Playground of playgrounds” and “Glacier National Park, the wild heart of America.” In support of these assertions, accompanying illustrations pictured tourists vigorously at play.

Seeking to bolster the appeal of its favorite national park, for exam-

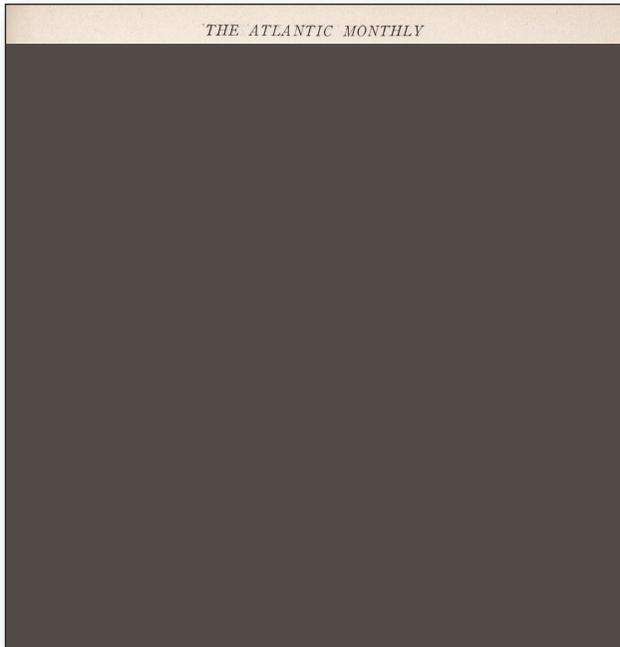


Figure 2. “Above Everything—Colorado!” exemplifies the alluring images of the Mountain West as America’s great “playland” that western railroads disseminated through their advertising. (*The Atlantic Monthly* 127:6 [June 1921]: 87)

ple, the Great Northern Railway sponsored a full-page ad in a 1922 issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Under the title, “Take a Scenic Vacation[—]Glacier National Park,” the designers supplemented the text liberally with line drawings above and to the left of their copy. The sketches showed visitors hiking up a snow-covered mountain slope, battling a reluctant finny catch while knee-deep in a mountain stream, or cantering along a wind-swept trail high above a deep canyon. In all cases, the tourists were hard at work relaxing, as their various entertainments took full advantage of the park’s unspoiled landscape. Even the tour bus in one sketch had only an awning to separate passengers from their surroundings. They could lean out to absorb the rugged setting of storm-battered evergreens and jagged mountain peaks. However they traveled about the park and whatever occupied their free time, these tourists were fully engaged in the pursuit of the unusual and the strenuous. Other designers, working in the arena of posters, refined this appeal to its most basic elements. San Francisco commercial artist Maurice Logan captured it in one of his many commissions for the Southern Pacific. In front of the towering gray mass of Yosemite’s Half Dome, a jauntily dressed young woman passes on mule back. Her profile illuminated by the sun and her cravat tossed by the breeze, she appears as confident and carefree as the eagles soaring above the pines to her

left.<sup>15</sup> Other than the word “Yosemite” emblazoned above Half Dome and “Southern Pacific” as the tag line at the poster’s foot, the illustration is innocent of text, the obvious implication being that nothing more need be said.

Tourist travel to the western national parks might entail more than the strenuous life, however, according to some advertisers. It might even lead to romance for the single woman. Visiting Glacier National Park, for example, could be a “new and romantic adventure.” Besides such standard entertainments as fishing, hiking or motor touring, it would also include “thrilling rides” along the “Romance Trails” and “magic moonlight nights” for women as healthy and attractive as the eager young rider whose picture illustrated one 1927 advertisement. Her bright smile and the buoyant wave of her arm embodied a zesty enjoyment of Glacier’s possibilities. Moonlit nights were especially fitting for romance; another advertisement for Glacier urged travelers to visit “When the Moonbeams Kiss the Mountains.” Like the young couple sketched by the illustrator, other Glacier Park tourists could be captured by long-ago Indian legends of love and the powerful “moon magic of the mountains.”<sup>16</sup>

Reviewing their approach, it becomes clear that these advertisements and their numerous contemporaries, however different their individual subjects, consistently reiterated the notion of “unrivaled” and unlimited possibilities. Adventure and excitement, they proclaimed, could take many forms, any one of which the eager tourist could find at a spot of her or his choosing somewhere “out West.” Vacationers could throw themselves into unfamiliar settings or activities and leave the routine behind, forsaking daily existence. Moreover, they would do so in places frequently described as “playgrounds,” conveying a clear impression of special places set aside for recreation safe from harm or care. No matter how exciting their prospective adventures, these Jazz Age tourists were not encouraged to confront landscapes unmitigated by the hand of civilization. Nor did advertisers resurrect older but still evocative images of a howling wilderness lying just beyond the edge of settlement. Instead, advertisements stressed that western mountains, forests, lakes and rivers comprised an environment peculiarly well adapted for “play,” lying at the disposal of the tourists. Set loose in such surroundings, visitors would be able to indulge almost any taste in outdoor recreation as a participant or a spectator.

For those to whom the strenuous life did not appeal but who still craved exposure to the unspoiled landscape, other advertisements released in the 1920s emphasized the awesome, inspirational scenery on every side in the premier national parks of the West. In large measure, such advertisements drew upon the heightened appreciation for wild scenery that had gradually evolved in popular taste through the nineteenth century. As Americans had grown more familiar with the grand spaces of the trans-Mississippi West, they

found its wonders to be ever more staggering and meaningful. Drawing cultural significance from the unique magnificence of the *American* wilderness, American artists and writers found in that wilderness a validation of the nation's tremendous artistic potential. Critics and philosophers began to speculate upon the influence wilderness exerted on the "national character." By the end of the nineteenth century, as a cult of admiration for wilderness established an increasingly strong foothold in the popular imagination, one facet of that cult regarded wilderness as, in one scholar's analysis, "a resuscitator of faith."<sup>17</sup> Writing about the meaning of American reactions to Yosemite, historian John Sears observed that it "matched the beauty of the great monuments of European architecture yet possessed the freshness and wildness of unspoiled American nature." Likewise, of Yellowstone he remarked that it "came to embody the vast, strange, exotic, wild, and even grotesquely comic qualities of the West."<sup>18</sup> By the 1920s, for instance, one Northern Pacific ad could characterize Yellowstone as "A magic carpet that is spread over the mighty shoulders of the Montana-Wyoming Rockies! Before your eyes Mother Nature outdoes the boldest fancies of the Arabian Nights, all in broad daylight and under the flooding western sun."<sup>19</sup>

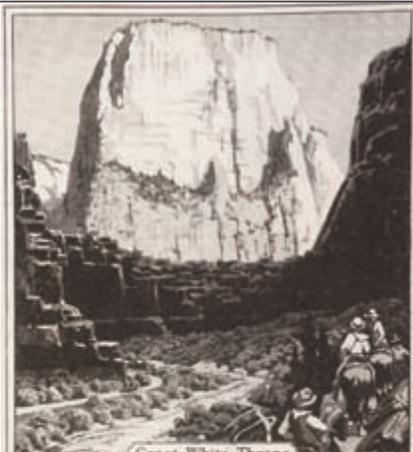
Travel advertising in the 1920s, therefore, could draw upon a whole variety of existing impressions about the emotional impact of wild landscapes. Although intended as vehicles to sell transportation or recreation, many advertisements chose to wrap their sales pitch in the sublime glories of wilderness beauty. The Northern Pacific, celebrating the joys of Yellowstone in 1922, would proclaim that "there is nothing in all the world like Yellowstone National Park, ...the real wonderland...embracing an aggregation of fantastic phenomena as weird as it is wild and remarkable" that none other than Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall could describe in his foreword as "scenery that not only is comparable to the best elsewhere" but also "unspoiled pieces of native America...reserved for you." In like fashion, the Union Pacific and Chicago & North Western, in their 1927 brochure, *Summer Tours under Escort*, could rhapsodize about Rocky Mountain National Park that "there is probably no other scenic neighborhood of the first order which combines mountain outlines so bold with a geology of beauty so intimate and refined."<sup>20</sup>

Inspiring beauty was found by promoters in many other guises than alpine meadows and glacier-fed streams, however. Even the arid reaches of western deserts yielded such treasures as the canyon country of southern Utah and northern Arizona, which the Union Pacific advertised in 1926 as a "Colorful Kingdom of Scenic Splendor" (Figure 3). Zion National Park, Cedar Breaks and Bryce Canyon national monuments, the Kaibab National Forest and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon National Park made up this "enchanted" kingdom marked with a particular magnificence described by one writer as "unique, incomparable, sublime." Not to be outdone, the advertis-

ing copy, beneath a drawing of Zion's famous landmark, the Great White Throne, elaborated on the visual wonders that the Union Pacific could make accessible to any traveler:

Mountains glowing red and shining white. Mile-deep canyons filled with mile-high temples! Canyons holding exquisite fairy cities with countless castles, cathedrals, mosques and pagodas of bewildering beauty, tinted with the colors of a glorious sunset.

In the accompanying illustration, the Great White Throne dominates the whole scene. Framing it on three sides, lesser slabs of dark stone rise up like ruined staircases leading up to the edge of the throne. Below it all lies a wide valley with a winding dirt trail leading off through the scrub brush towards the



Great White Throne  
Zion National Park

See This

## Colorful Kingdom of Scenic Splendor

Zion National Park—Bryce Canyon—Cedar Breaks  
Prismatic Plains—Kaibab Forest  
North Rim Grand Canyon

*Season June 1 to October 1*

"Unique, incomparable, sublime," says Hal Everts, the noted writer. Mountains glowing red and shining white. Mile-deep canyons filled with mile-high temples! Canyons holding exquisite fairy cities with countless castles, cathedrals, mosques and pagodas of bewildering beauty, tinted with the colors of a glorious sunset. Prismatic plains, wild horses, cliff dwellings, enchanting forests alive with deer.

Low fares. Through sleeping cars to Cedar City, then complete 5-day motor-bus tour including Kaibab Forest and North Rim Grand Canyon, or shorter 3 or 4-day tours to Zion, Bryce and Cedar Breaks only. Also escorted all-expense tours. Comfortable lodges. A memorable vacation, itself or an easy side trip en route to Salt Lake City, Yellowstone, California or the Pacific Northwest.

Reservations made in person, subject to availability. See our map, prospectus or ask your nearest Union Pacific Representative for details.

General Passenger Agent: Union P. R. Co., 1000 Broadway, New York, N. Y.

Chicago, Ill. — Salt Lake City, Utah — Portland, Ore. — Los Angeles, Cal.

# UNION PACIFIC

Figure 3. "See This Colorful Kingdom of Scenic Splendor" demonstrates the lush imagery that the Union Pacific used to promote travel to the national parks of the far Southwest. (*Sunset* 56:5 [May 1926]: 103)

great rock. Peering upwards from the lower-right hand corner, a mounted group of tourists, backs to the artist, contemplate the scene arrayed before them.<sup>21</sup>

For those who might delight in alpine meadows bedecked with wild flowers or in cerulean mountain lakes, the beauty of the Great White Throne and its arid setting might have been an elusive quality to grasp. Nonetheless, the artist engaged to reproduce that beauty on the printed page used several familiar techniques to impress the viewer even if he or she might not be instantly converted. Like his counterpart who had portrayed the Pacific Northwest, this artist effectively employed contrasting colors. Fixed in the middle of the sketch, the Great White Throne juttred up from its surroundings to present an alabaster escarpment to the viewer. The darker formations that enclosed it set it off like a pearl against black velvet and drew the viewer's attention directly to the massive formation. At the same time, the cluster of riders located in a corner of the foreground enhanced the visual impact

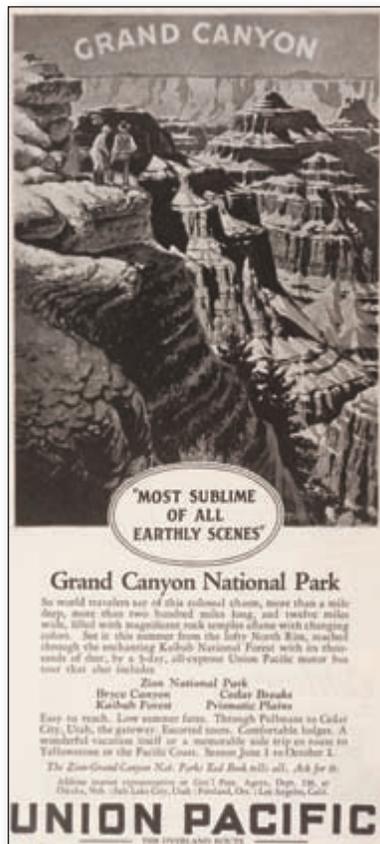


Figure 4. “Most Sublime of All Earthly Scenes” focuses upon the appeal of the Grand Canyon’s indescribably magnificent scenery as crafted for tourists by the Union Pacific Railroad. (*Sunset* 58:5 [May 1927]:95)

of the Throne by creating a measure of depth and height. As a black-and-white stand-in for the “colorful kingdom” of scenic glory, the artist’s rendition of the Throne was about as successful as possible in getting the message across.

The Union Pacific’s Passenger Department sponsored many such ads in the late 1920s to promote travel to southern Utah. An examination of numerous examples suggests that the lands of the “colorful kingdom” were excellent specimens of the superlative and deeply inspirational scenery many advertisers promised to westering tourists. One UP ad from 1927 on behalf of the Grand Canyon quoted the appraisal of unnamed but authoritative “world travelers”: “most sublime of all earthly scenes” (Figure 4). Not content to let it go at that and depend upon the artist’s talents, the copywriter went on to describe “this colossal chasm, more than a mile deep, more than two hundred miles long, and twelve miles wide, filled with magnificent rock temples aflame with changing colors.” Another advertisement exalting the “enchanted canyon country” in the spring of 1926 described “the new wonders” of the West. In the canyon lands between Zion National Park and the Grand Canyon’s North Rim, the visitor could delight in scenery “original in form, abysmal in depth, majestic in height and gorgeous in color.”<sup>22</sup>

Railroad travel advertising in the 1920s that emphasized the magnificent scenery of the national parks, while striving for a distinctive approach to promoting their subjects, usually fell into common patterns of presentation and description. Frequently, copywriters chose one term to represent the entire complex array of images and impression they sought to convey: that one word was “grandeur.” As one 1927 Union Pacific advertisement put it, the entire West possessed “America’s greatest grandeur.” A list of the West’s most notable scenic attributes followed: “Big trees, majestic mountains, tremendous canyons, geysers, waterfalls, glaciers...” contained in such “wonderlands” as Yellowstone, Zion and Grand Canyon national parks, the Pacific Northwest and Colorado’s mountain country. Visual interpretations by graphic designers such as Louis Treviso and Sam Hyde Harris of the Grand Canyon or Maurice Logan of Yosemite again caught the sense of such intangible qualities, presenting them solely through the use of contrasting colors or the play of light and shadows across great distances.<sup>23</sup> A consideration of how advertisers made use of “grandeur” to stimulate tourist travel helps us understand the critical role that scenic magnificence played in defining the unique character of national parks.

To begin with, “grandeur” certainly meant a fascination with size. The beauty and the attractiveness of any natural phenomenon increased many fold whenever it could be cited as the deepest, widest, highest, or just in general biggest. To that end, appropriately superlative superlatives such as “colossal,” “majestic,” “tremendous” and “abysmal” were routinely conscripted into

service as measures of the remarkable physical dimensions which made such locations as the Grand Canyon, Zion or the Colorado Rockies worth seeing.<sup>24</sup>

Closely related to that fascination with size was an equally compelling interest in exotic physical appearance. Especially in describing the attractions of the desert Southwest, advertising copy often focused upon vivid or unusual colors, peculiar shapes or unlikely combinations of hues. A Union Pacific advertisement christened the canyon country "Make-Believe Land" where "[e]very shade and tint of every color plays over the rock castles, cathedrals and galleries of sculpture crowded in the colossal chasms and canyons..." while another advertisement detailed Bryce Canyon's "mammoth amphitheatres" filled with "realistic, gorgeously colored sculpture and architecture: queens, princes and potentates, ogres and fairies, ruined Oriental cities, castles and cathedrals of the Middle Ages." Still other ads referred to "azure lakes," "glistening glaciers" and "valleys aflame in wild flowers" in promoting the mountain playgrounds of Colorado and Montana.<sup>25</sup> The copywriters who authored these descriptions obviously believed that potential travelers might be persuaded by appealing to their sense of awe when confronted by the remarkable and to their curiosity about the unknown. If an attraction, such as the Grand Canyon, was not only the biggest but also the most stunning or bizarre or sublime sight to be seen, it received an extra measure of diligent promotion.

If, as advertisers proposed, tourists visiting the western national parks could be excited, inspired or overwhelmed, they could also be amazed by the contrast in the new West between the utterly primitive and the consummately modern. The Great Northern, in a 1922 advertisement extolling the virtues of Glacier National Park, perfectly exemplified such advertising under the theme "Comfort in the Wilds" (Figure 5). Carefully matching text and illustrations, the ad encouraged travelers to plunge into the wilderness while promising them that they would never have to give up the delights of civilization. As the ad copy urged readers to "Climb up to high places and picnic on the edge of space in the wild heart of America," the accompanying photograph portrayed a small group of tourists gathered at that very edge. Spread out before them, there lay an unimpeded view of an enormous valley surrounded by steep cliffs giving way to steeper, barren mountain slopes. But lest it be misunderstood, the ad immediately assured interested parties that "rest and comfort, after a day of play" could be theirs "in modern hotel or rustic chalet camp." A second, smaller photograph strove to demonstrate as much by its clever composition. Shot in the dining room of the Many Glacier Hotel, it swept over a thoughtfully positioned table in the foreground to look out onto the lake beyond. Using a large picture window and a neighboring side window as picture frames, the photograph created a background of unspoiled natural magnificence including the wooded far shore of the lake and the gran-

ite ranges rising above it. In essence, the photograph creates a spectator's view of a spectator's view, enticing the tourist-to-be with the prospect of elegant dining within sight of unspoiled scenic splendor.<sup>26</sup>

Of course, the Great Northern had the particular good fortune of possessing the only direct rail link with Glacier National Park and its spectacular beauty. The park was, with much justice, the centerpiece of every advertising campaign sponsored by the railroad. Other western railroads, alone or in groups, tried to match it with their own contrasts between civilization and nature. As the Union Pacific began to encourage development of a tourist industry in southern Utah during the 1920s, it was able to adopt its own version of this argument. It incorporated the canyon country in "the Nation's

**Comfort in the Wilds**

Climb up to high places and picnic on the edge of space in the wild heart of America. Find rest and comfort, after a day of play, in modern hotel or rustic chalet camp. Ride horseback—fish—motor—camp—hike over scenic mountain trails in

**Glacier National Park**

**Greatly Reduced Railroad Rates This Summer**

Through steel trains from Chicago and Kansas City via Burlington Route—Great Northern Railway to Glacier Park, Spokane, Seattle, Tacoma and Portland stop at Glacier Park Hotel, Eastern entrance. En route to North Pacific Coast, Alaska or California visit Lake Chelan and Rainier and Crater Lake National Parks. "In all the world no trip like this." All-expense tours of one to seven days in Glacier Park or longer trips if desired.

For free information or booklets apply any travel or tourist agent or write Great Northern Railway

216 W. Adams Street Chicago, Ill. 280 Broadway New York, N. Y.  
118 Kansas Building Pittsburgh, Pa. 116 Railway Exchange Room 610, Minn.

Dining Room at Many Glacier Hotel

**See America First**  
**GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY**

Figure 5. "Comfort in the Wilds" emphasizes the marvelous possibilities for inspiration and relaxation to be found even in "the wild heart of America." (*The Outlook* 131:4 [May 23, 1922]:175)

Last Frontier” wrapped in “magic and mystery,” as yet unopened by the hardy vacationer. Out there, across the Continental Divide,

You’re still a pioneer—an explorer—a discoverer—and out West are places where your feet can find paths untrodden by modern men and at night turn into a comfortable hotel. Train and automobile will take you to places of romance and enchantment...<sup>27</sup>

Throughout the 1920s, though, advertisements promoting the contrast between the primitive and the modern out West in the Rocky Mountain states continued to focus upon the national parks. The mixture they presented of recreational facilities and untouched wilderness led advertisers to declare that park vacations meant “new and different” vacations.<sup>28</sup> Far from great cities or grand resorts, park visitors still did not need to give up luxury. Especially when they came to the national parks, tourists did not *have* to compromise their vacation desires. Those lucky tourists could hang on to the best of several possible worlds.

No matter how energetically or imaginatively western railroads pursued the national park visitors, though, the decade of the 1920s presented them with two critical challenges they could neither ignore nor solve. Even as the promotional activities of the National Park Service bore fruit with steadily rising attendance, the share of those numbers who came by train steadily declined (mirroring a similar falling-off of passenger traffic generally). In one striking example, the numbers reveal that among Yellowstone’s 51,895 visitors in 1915, 44, 417 came by train; in 1930, of more than 220,000 visitors, only 26,845 rode the iron horse to the park. With similar disparities developing in other parks, the railroads found little immediate reward for their devotion to the national park cause. The explosive rise of the private automobile, so significant throughout American society during the interwar years, had its impact here as well, draining off great chunks of the traveling public that might once have relied upon the train. Tourists took to the road in ever-growing numbers, making the national parks a premier destination in their motoring as they criss-crossed the continent in search of recreation, inspiration and relaxation. Moreover, while struggling with this chronic condition, the industry also fell victim to the traumatic effects of the nationwide economic collapse that grew into the Great Depression of the 1930s. Hammered by drastic reductions in freight as well as passenger traffic, hemorrhaging customers to competing modes of travel, railroads found the means to recovery elusive at best throughout the “depression decade.”<sup>29</sup>

As debilitating as the impact of the depression proved for the railroad industry, however, the reliance that many of the western lines placed upon the national parks as their lodestone for traffic showed no signs of di-

minishing as the 1930s unfolded. One 1931 Great Northern ad for Glacier National Park demonstrated that railroaders still put great faith in a popular love of adventure and excitement during vacation time. Urging the reader to "Scale the peaks of vacation pleasure" by visiting Glacier, it offered tourists a spot where they could "Get a taste of Montana camaraderie, a taste of clean sunlit air, of devil-may-care activity." Coming to Glacier, another ad promised, would "make your vacation bring you adventure" by giving the tourist a chance to do nearly anything he or she desired. Despite such civilized amenities as golf, bus tours and lake cruises, the park offered such opportunities for "roughing it" as camping, hiking and trail riding. The accompanying illustration of Glacier Park Hotel (Figure 6) emphasized that mixture of the rustic and the refined. In the foreground, a couple smartly attired in the latest sportswear tee off on the first hole of the hotel's golf course. As the young lady follows through on her swing, her companion (sartorially splendid in bow tie, V-neck pullover, knickers, argyles and saddle shoes) peers down the fairway after the ball. Behind them in the middle distance, a touring car filled with well-dressed men and women waits in front of the hotel as another one prepares to round the corner of the building onto the same driveway. Coming into the picture from the viewer's right, several sets of riders canter towards the hotel. Finally, dominating the background on the left and right margins of the illustration are the hotel itself and a series of barren peaks rising high above the open rolling plains that lead into the foothills.<sup>30</sup>

Both the hotel and its most prominently featured guests imply the relaxed informality and the vigorous recreations that these advertisements promised could be found in the park. Our golfing friends, as their outfits indicate, have foresworn the stiff formality of office wear for the softer and more colorful styles increasingly popular as active wear. Thus comfortably clad, they are ready for some stylish recreation on the links. Behind them, the hotel reinforces the understated air of informality with its shingled roofs, log railings and porticos fashioned from towering, unplanned tree trunks. The hotel's own physical structure represents the aforementioned mixture of rusticity and refinement.

A sharper and more revealing contrast, however, is that between the atmosphere exuded by the hotel complex and its natural surroundings. Informal dress or rustic construction notwithstanding, the hotel and its guests still represent elements of contemporary urban civilization plunked down in an unspoiled natural landscape. The grand touring car sitting in front of the hotel suggests how deeply that civilization has intruded into regions once wild. With long, sleek lines implying power and graceful motion, this vehicle points out unobtrusively but unmistakably how up-to-date the hotel (and thus its guests) must be. Conversely, the horseback vacationers riding towards the hotel leave only the sketchiest of impressions with the viewer.



**It's go-as-you-please and  
do-what-you-wish in  
Glacier Park**

Here's the Old West—carefree,  
informal. Come climb a switch-  
back trail, a glacier, or a mile-high  
peak—swim, fish, hike, golf, dream,  
worship the sun—get a close-up  
of Nature from bus, launch, or  
saddle. Just let your fancy guide  
you! Write Great Northern Vacations,  
St. Paul, about Escorted Tours.

The New  
**EMPIRE BUILDER**  
The Luxurious  
**ORIENTAL LIMITED**



**Where-To-Go for June closes April 25**

Figure 6. “It’s go-as-you-please and do-what-you-wish in Glacier Park” reflects the mixture of the rustic and the refined that railroads and other park concessionaires frequently promised their customers. (*Harper’s Magazine* 162:6 [May 1931]: n.p.)

Unlike the automobile and its passengers, seen at close range in considerable detail, the approaching riders themselves are completely anonymous, seen, it appears, from a significant distance. It is only after studying the entire sketch for a moment that the viewer realizes the riders and their mounts are disproportionately smaller than their immediate surroundings, which in turn creates an illusion of greater distance. Thus the riders resemble figures added to a painting as an afterthought, inserted for a different purpose. Trail riding actually remained an extremely popular pastime for many years at Glacier but, as here portrayed, it clearly took a back seat to more urbanized recreations such as golf or motor touring. Similarly, the illustrator threw into opposition the symbols of civilization and wilderness that composed his back-

ground. By carefully placing the Glacier Park Hotel along the left-hand margin of his composition, he ensured that its massive structure would catch the reader's eye immediately. The artist's mountain peaks, rising towards the right-hand margin, although drawn with an appreciation for their rugged terrain, are nearly dwarfed by the presence of the hotel so close at hand. In a subtle transformation, the mountains have become the backdrop for the hotel and the hotel has become the centerpiece for advertising Glacier National Park.

Glacier's attractive mixture of civilized amenities and unsullied outdoor splendor made it the centerpiece of Great Northern's travel advertising throughout the 1930s as seen in such published inducements as "Glacier National Park: I Wish You'd Come!" (Figure 7). Other railroads blessed with access to other crown jewels of the park system along their rights of way highlighted the same mix of qualities. In its 1934 flyer *Colorado Vacations*, for example, the Rock Island described Rocky Mountain National Park and its neighboring Estes Park as the "biggest out-of-doors in all America" while the accompanying illustrations portrayed hikers and motor tourists absorbing the striking glories of the Rockies that would offer "a wholly different life from everyday humdrum existence." The Santa Fe Railroad, in celebrating its service to the "awesome spectacle" of the Grand Canyon in 1938, could also tout the variety of "in-between-time" activities from the museums and observation points along the rim to the dances, motion pictures, "illustrated lectures [and] concerts by a cowboy orchestra" available for the edification or entertainment of the tourists in the park.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, when a railroad such as the Great Northern proclaimed that vacation in a national marvel such as Glacier National Park meant "adventure," its advertisements highlighted the mixture of frontier atmosphere with very civilized surroundings. In one of the most striking examples, the unpeeled log hotel and the horseback riders galloping into view from the background imply a pleasant rustic setting, in sharp contrast to the large open touring cars bearing away their loads of sightseers and the stylish young couple teeing off in the same sports clothes they would wear to the local country club back home. Obviously this happy young couple had not been forced to give up their familiar pastimes in coming to the park. The setting only enhanced the pleasures of whatever recreation they chose. The copy set off the occupations at hand in Glacier, "trailriding and golf, hiking, fishing, bus trips and launch cruises" to demonstrate that sophisticated relaxations such as golf and motoring could be found in such a wild location. A later advertisement from the Great Northern on behalf of travel to the same park, although couched in more matter-of-fact terms, also pointed out the range of possibilities at hand from "excellent hotels" to "hospitable chalets" to "tent camps" where the tourist could occupy the hours with everything from "great trout fishing" to "boating and golf," as well as the chance to see "friendly" Blackfoot Indians.<sup>32</sup>

As late as 1940, the Great Northern could confidently assert that Glacier offered the perfect location in which to enjoy a “Sublime Wilderness” of scenery while engaging in recreations that ranged from hiking and fishing to dancing, cruising and motoring. High in Glacier’s mountains, tourists could live “luxuriously” in the “fine” hotels and chalets of the park. Another advertisement for the park asserted that Glacier had great interest for the tourists because of the “amazing variety” of things to see and do, including such urbane ways to occupy their time as motor coach or motor boat tours, golf and “evening parties” in the “picturesque” accommodations. For

**Glacier National  
Park**



**I wish  
you'd come!**

• We'll show you trout fishing like you haven't had in years. We'll show you wild tops you can't equal anywhere else for scenery, variety, sport. We'll put you up at hotels along the beaten paths, or chalets and tent camps off the beaten path, and if you want a taste of real adventure we'll take you into the back country and make our own camps... If you like regular dude ranching—we have some of the finest right here in Montana along the G. N. Drop us a line now and let's start figuring how to make the most of your time off next summer.

**GREAT  
NORTHERN**

*From Portland, Tacoma,  
Seattle, to Twin Cities  
and Chicago—via  
Glacier Park*

*Ride the completely air-conditional*  
**EMPIRE BUILDER**

(Mail Coupon)  
**Ask Mr. McCormick . . .**  
W. E. McCormick, General Agent  
Great Northern Railway  
607 Central Building, Los Angeles

Tell me more about a grand and glorious vacation at small cost in Glacier National Park—send me the illustrated booklet.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 7. “I Wish You’d Come!” presents the prospect of adventurous outings reminiscent of the Wild West in the national parks of the Mountain West. (*Sunset* 74:4 [April 1935]:56)

tourists, a third ad argued, its varieties encouraged "the fun of living."<sup>33</sup>

Following the lead of the efforts produced in the 1920s, railroad advertising during the 1930s focused upon various physical and psychological characteristics that were frequently encapsulated in one term: "grandeur." Although advertisers were careful to describe the beauty of any given location as "unique," their common dependence upon such notions as "grandeur" and "magnificence" gave most of their arguments a familiar cast that facilitates comparison. Copywriters still hoped to touch the reader's sense of awe, to arouse wonderment and promise inspiration when confronting Nature's great works in the national parks. Every railroad that crossed the Rocky Mountain states rolled its cars along a "great scenic route," embellished with mile after mile of "fascinating vistas."<sup>34</sup>

Union Pacific advertisements for the desert national parks of Utah and northern Arizona, for example, picked up in the early 1930s exactly where they had left off before the Depression began. A 1931 brochure entitled *Zion Bryce Canyon Grand Canyon: 3 National Parks* tried to reproduce the "awesome grandeur" of the region, introducing seventeen examples of the new "natural color" photography to supplement its black and white illustrations and descriptive text. Designed to promote escorted motor tours of southwestern Utah and the Grand Canyon, this pamphlet underscored the singular character of the region that made it a land unto itself, a "matchless galaxy of natural wonders." It enticed tourists with a pledge of scenery "sublime" and "gorgeous" while taking pains to assure them that "there is no comparison between any two of these regions or between them and any other of the world's great marvels" in this country or elsewhere on the globe. A tourist's first view of Bryce Canyon was described as "one of the most Brilliant sights ever beheld by man," its "weird sculpture" of natural rock formations overtaxing the imagination and its lustrous colors changing to reflect the rising and the setting sun. Although conceding "the inadequacy of words to describe it," the brochure tackled the Grand Canyon verbally as well as visually, picturing it as "Earth's greatest chasm," "breath-taking" in its "immensity."<sup>35</sup>

Other travel advertising that accentuated scenic "grandeur" depended even more heavily upon a mixture of the written word and the striking image to carry its argument. The Union Pacific's own magazine advertisements for southern Utah and the Grand Canyon in the early 1930s could only reproduce a sketch of one scene from the Grand Canyon or Zion or Bryce. The copywriters had to rely upon two things to spark the interest of readers: each reader's own store of visual images associated with the name "Grand Canyon" and the ability of each advertisement's text to create, in very limited space, an alluring word-picture of its subject. Thus did Union Pacific ads claim that "In All the World You'll Never Find Another Tour Like This" to lands of "incredible" and "varied" beauty in the "most gorgeously colored part of the

West,” comprising “The World’s Most Startling Loveliness.” Other advertisements for other examples of national park beauty in these years struck the same notes, noting the lovely “vacation vistas” all through the Far West.<sup>36</sup>

Glacier National Park, embracing scenery in its own way as spectacular as that of Utah’s canyon country, remained a special favorite of railroads promoting travel to the scenic Rocky Mountains during the “Thirties. The “Land of Shining Mountain,” with its massive glaciers, hidden mountain lakes and “spectacular upthrust peaks,” offered innumerable instances of that elusive quality, “grandeur,” which might be used to successfully attract the summer visitor. To that end, advertising built upon the scenic majesty of the park routinely incorporated several elements into its illustrations. The black and white photographs, often cropped to enhance the verticality of the scene, would frame one of Glacier’s soaring peaks in the center of the composition. These great heights, barren of vegetation and encrusted in places by fields of ice and snow, would rise far above solid masses of evergreens that would stretch across the photographer’s field of vision. Those unbroken forests, in turn, bordered wide expanses of placid lakes, disturbed in some cases only by the passage of tour boats. The Great Northern’s advertisements, in capturing such scenes, endeavored to replicate images of unspoiled and extraordinary physical beauty that would excite the potential visitor. Like the advertising that featured the titanic geologic formations of Zion National Park or the gorges of the Grand Canyon, the advertising that portrayed Glacier’s primeval landscape aspired to create compelling images of scenic grandeur.<sup>37</sup>

During the 1930s, more frequent and more sophisticated use of photography in advertisements and promotional literature heightened the possibilities of scenic grandeur as an advertising theme. No longer dependent upon the “artist’s conception” or florid descriptions to approximate the actual landscape, advertisers could use a selection of carefully chosen photographs to state the case for travel. Of course, landscape photography, just like landscape painting, did not necessarily reproduce any vista with complete fidelity. All the technical processes of photography from the first exposure to the last print allowed photographers great leeway in composition, style, color and contrast. At the same time, though, the artistry displayed by many graphic designers gave the travel poster an enduring power to capture a moment of particularly intense scenic beauty. Gustav Krollmann’s 1930 “Rainier National Park,” dominated by the magnificent alabaster peak in the background, nonetheless also encapsulates the incredible power of the industrial world with its powerful locomotive hurtling across the foreground through a forest of towering trees that serve as a boundary between nature and civilization. By contrast, Sydney Laurence’s more contemplative view of “Rainier—from Yakima” in 1932 leaves the snow-covered giant of the Pacific Northwest in a

commanding position, with the dirt road leading to the park's Yakima Gateway just a scratch across the terrain.<sup>38</sup>

Other advertisers, always searching for that perfect evocation of the traveling instinct, also took to the notion of promoting the history of the Old West as seen in the national parks. Quite often, those advertisers cast about for a particular symbol of "the old West" that would possess familiar or even nostalgic associations for the reader. When, for example, the Great Northern decided to announce its "new low-cost 'stop-off tours'" for the 1936 season, it illustrated the text on railroad travel with a photograph of a half-dozen Blackfoot "chiefs" sitting on a log platform in front of a log depot. Resplendent in buckskins, feathered headdresses and Hudson's Bay blanket coats, they waited (a touch aimlessly, perhaps) for the arrival of the next trainload of visitors. For those visitors, they would undoubtedly represent a hundred years of western history and mythology. In like fashion, a Burlington Route ad for travel on joint Burlington/Great Northern trains to Glacier National Park inserted a pair of nattily dressed tourists into its foreground. Immediately before them on the shore of a magnificent mountain lake rose a large tepee, probably erected by some of the Blackfeet of the region. Devoid of any signs of life except the visitors who are clearly intrigued by the sight, the scene points out the persistence of a past concurrent with the present.<sup>39</sup>

The Burlington Route, finding such a theme equally attractive, grasped an opportunity to weave Yellowstone's scenic grandeur together with a page from Western history when it promoted "the CODY ROAD! Yellowstone's Greatest Thrill!" With the Burlington's trains serving most of the gateway communities to the national park, the railroad took advantage of the allusions created by the name "Cody" to promote use of that scenic highway. Thus its 1930 ad included both an insert photograph of the Cody Road, upon which the tourist could travel on a Burlington Route escorted tour, and a large sketch of a long-haired and goateed rider on a rearing charger who obviously represented the fabled Buffalo Bill himself. Here (the ad implied), one could experience the same sort of excitement that Buffalo Bill had felt in Wild West days.<sup>40</sup>

Choosing a similar tone to that of the Burlington Route, the great Northern advanced the notion that the evocation of the past could attract tourists in the present. In recounting the wonders of the crown jewel of its routes, Glacier National Park, one Great Northern ad christened the park "America's smartest dude ranch" and the perfect location of a "Vacation that's different." Once travelers had reached the park (on a Great Northern train, of course), they would discover a resort characterized by the rail fences and sprawling log cabins that recalled the frontier outposts of the last century. All around them, the copywriter observed, tourists would find the landmarks of the departed past. "Ride up a mile," urged the text, and one would "travel

back a century on the trails of Glacier Park....” Like an archaeologist discovering a long-dead civilization resurrected to life, the tourist in Glacier would “unearth the Old West of frontier days, gay, carefree, adventuresome, sporting!” Even more delightfully, this restored West lacked the dangers and hardships of the original edition, guaranteeing an experience dominated by such adjectives as “gay” and “carefree.”<sup>41</sup> Although “glamour” may have been no more likely a description for the Rocky Mountain frontier than “gay” or “care-free,” it had clearly struck some sort of responsive chord with travel promoters, if not with the tourists themselves.

Despite the financial poundings that the railroad industry endured throughout the 1930s, those lines that served the West never abandoned such portrayals of the national parks as a principal inducement for those travelers who still relied upon the train. The advertising campaigns they bankrolled continued to proclaim the opportunities for inspiration, recreation and relaxation that awaited any visitor who reached the national parks. Their carefully chosen words and images continued to render these landscapes as scenic spectacles and pleasuring grounds of rare distinction. An advertisement published in April 1939, for example, promised readers that visiting Glacier National Park, “the Alps of America,” ensured the “Perfect Vacation” because of the nearly unlimited choice of recreational pursuits at hand. “Every vigorous sport...every lazy pastime” any traveler might want from riding or hiking to “resting in cool, brisk air on sunny porches of modern hotels, chalets, camps!”<sup>42</sup>

The photographs selected to demonstrate the perfection attainable in a Glacier Park vacation attest to that variety of choices and to the careful balance between civilization and the wild country routinely presented by tourist advertising for the primeval parks of the West. Each of the two photographs used to illustrate the ad portrayed visitors to Glacier using park transportation to enjoy the magnificent scenery. The smaller photograph at the top of the page, however, harkened back to western traditions. It captured a well-dressed but anxious dude completing the task of saddling his transport under the watchful eye of one of Glacier’s dude wranglers. In contrast, the other photograph, occupying the lion’s share of the advertisement, freezes one of the park’s tour buses in the middle of a great landscape untouched by humans (except for the road upon which that bus travels). As the bus crosses the viewer’s line of sight, it is bracketed in the foreground by a splendid field of wild flowers and in the background by a weathered rock pile jutting up above the roadway. The advertisement thus assured its readers that they could devote as much or as little effort as they wished to enjoying themselves and that the advantages of mechanized civilization were never far away.<sup>43</sup>

The images of the national parks set out by those railroads who served the Far West of course do not begin to exhaust the visions that Amer-

icans held of those landscapes (though I would argue that they are eminently representative of those views propounded by national park concessionaires, enterprises that sought to profit from western tourism and many portions of the nation's mass media). As noted above, with an increasing national awareness of and interest in the monumental landscapes of the West, Americans in the nineteenth century regarded the "undeveloped" more and more often as the "unspoiled." By that century's conclusion, this enthusiasm for untamed vistas had spread widely enough to guarantee a sympathetic hearing in many quarters for John Muir when he urged his readers in his book *Our National Parks* to "wander here a whole summer, if you can. Thousands of God's wild blessings will search you and soak you as if you were a sponge, and the big days will go by uncounted." He noted the "delightful" trend of wandering in "wildernesses" as more and more Americans attempted "to mix and enrich their own little ongoings with those of Nature,..." Within another two decades, Robert Sterling Yard, chief publicist for the infant National Park Service, could write with conviction that beyond their recreational qualities, the pristine national parks possessed a spiritual dimension:

They are the gallery of masterpieces. Here the visitor enters in a holier spirit. Here is inspiration.... The spirit of the great places brooks nothing short of silent reverence.... It is the hour of the spirit. One returns to daily living with a springier step, a keener vision, and a broader horizon for having worshipped at the shrine of the Infinite.<sup>44</sup>

Unfortunately for those who held such sacramental interpretations of national parks, advertising that stressed more obvious elements of them such as their stunning physical characteristics more comfortably suited the taste of many tourists, as Yard discovered to his dismay. In his book about the parks, Yard wrote of an encounter he had with a tourist at the foot of Yosemite Falls. After assuring her that it was indeed the highest waterfall in the world, he proceeded to expound upon its geologic origins, its great antiquity and the many enormous forces that brought it into existence. As Yard noted wryly:

'I've seen the tallest building in the world,' she replied dreamily, 'and the longest railroad, and the largest lake, and the highest monument, and the biggest department store, and now I see the highest waterfall. Just think of it!'<sup>45</sup>

Of course, Yard conceived of the natural world as "inspiration" and "the shrine of the Infinite" (as noted above). Although lacking any denominational aspect, his enthusiasm for the beauty in wild places had a worshipful tone to it as if the story of "world making" which could be read in any chunk

of rock represented a sort of Holy Scripture. In it, he found recorded not the acts of a divinity but the consequences of immense natural processes unfolding over vast periods of time. Knowledge and comprehension, rather than faith and trust, were the path by which human beings approached Yard's "Infinite" through careful study of natural history.

The faith that Yard drew from his exposure to wilderness shared Muir's sense of wilderness as the great restorative where, in Muir's words, once-burdened humans could start "washing off sins and cobweb cares of the devil's spinning...rejoicing in deep, long-drawn breathes of pure wildness." Similarly, writing of the great peaks encompassed by Rocky Mountain National Park, Yard described the effect of the constant "call of the mountains" upon the average tourist: "In time they possess his spirit. They calm him, exalt him, ennoble him. Unconsciously he comes to know them in all their myriad moods." Seeing in such a vision of the national parks such a palpable sense of the divine, it is no surprise that Yard and others of a similar mindset eventually rejected the notion of national parks as playgrounds for the masses and fought instead, through organizations such as the National Parks Association, for a conception of national parks that one historian has described as "outstanding and nationally significant examples of unique American landscapes," with their "natural and primitive qualities" preserved and recreation excluded.<sup>46</sup>

Despite their unremitting opposition to national parks that incorporated opportunities for recreation and leisure with scenic preservation, however, Yard and his allies scored few victories in the 1920s and 1930s. In the words of historian Richard Sellars, "as [Stephen] Mather and his successors thoroughly understood, the public was hardly likely to have supported undeveloped, inaccessible national parks." That audience, as these advertisements amply demonstrate, included a significant constituency of white upper-middle and upper-class Americans whose fondness for the wonders of the national parks was matched by their possession of sufficient disposable income and free time to make such excursions possible. By no means, of course, did those individuals make up the entire universe of national park visitors; westerners of comparatively modest means also succumbed to the lure of these places, to be joined over time by growing numbers of cost-conscious travelers who came by excursion tickets, all-expense-paid package tours and, eventually, automobile. As their numbers increased, they established a distinctly more democratic character for national park tourism that culminated in the 1930s with unprecedented numbers of park visitors. Nonetheless, the vision of how to enjoy the national parks propounded by these advertisements during the 1920s and 1930s clearly imagined a realm of recreation and leisure, populated in comfort by the well-to-do who would enjoy robust encounters with the natural world.<sup>47</sup>

A most active ally in facilitating both development of *and* accessibility to national parks since the founding of Yellowstone in 1872, the western railroads thus constructed their own vision of a national park's identity. Although fashioned in response to the needs of promoting passenger travel, this elaborate set of images saturated the popular media of this period. Decorating the pages of those periodicals intended to reach the households of urban and suburban middle and upper class families all over the United States, the railroad advertising of national parks fashioned during the 1920s and 1930s reached precisely those people for whom vacation travel had become an increasingly important phenomenon. In doing so, these ebullient paeans to the marvels of those special places may well have contributed to fostering an enthusiasm for recreation and leisure in outdoor settings that would flourish beyond imagining in the post-World War II era. Certainly, in combination with other similar images generated by the National Park Service, park concessionaires, and various other travel entrepreneurs, railroad advertising of the interwar years helped to structure and disseminate an understanding of what constituted national parks and what deeper meanings those parks might hold for American society in the first half of the twentieth century.

### Acknowledgements

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### Notes

1. This paragraph summarizes in words the illustration accompanying the following advertisement; "See Yellowstone National Park," sponsored by the Northern Pacific Railroad (hereafter referred to as NP), in *The Outlook* 115:16 (April 18, 1917): 716.

2. The quotations are taken from an advertisement, "In Glacier National Park," sponsored by the Great Northern Railway (hereafter referred to as GN) in *Sunset* 38:5 (May 1917): 93.
3. The quotation is drawn from an advertisement, "Colorado," sponsored by the Rock Island Lines (hereafter referred to as Rock Island) in *The Outlook* 115:17 (April 25, 1917).
4. There is an extensive and steadily expanding body of scholarship that has focused upon the origins of America's national parks; for the purposes of this essay, the most useful examples have been Stanford E. Demars, *The Tourist in Yosemite, 1855-1985* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1991): 9-54; Richard J. Orsi, "'Wilderness Saint' and 'Robber Baron': The Anomalous Partnership of John Muir and the Southern Pacific Company for the Preservation of Yosemite National Park," *The Pacific Historian* 29: 2/3 (Summer/Fall 1985): 136-156; Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience*, 3rd Edition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Runte, *Trains of Discovery: Western Railroads and the National Parks*, Revised Edition (Niwot CO: Roberts Rinehart, 1990); and Richard West Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).
5. Further discussion of the role of railroads in the development of the national parks during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries may be found in Peter J. Blodgett, "Selling the Scenery: Advertising and the National Parks, 1916-1933," in David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long, eds., *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism and the American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001): 271-299; Kirby Lambert, "The Lure of the Parks," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 46:1 (Spring 1996): 42-55; Chris J. Magoc, *Yellowstone: The Creation and Selling of an American Landscape, 1870-1903* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999): 21-52; Runte, *National Parks*, 82-105; Runte, "Promoting Wonderland: Western Railroads and the Evolution of National Park Advertising," *Journal of the West* 31:1 (January 1992): 43-48 (especially pp. 45-46); Runte, *Trains of Discovery* (especially the essay entitled "Preservation Express: Glacier, Grand Canyon and the National Park Service," pp. 31-48); Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and the National Identity, 1880-1940* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001): 40-92; and Sellars, *Preserving Nature*, 9-12, 15-20, and 41-45.
6. Lary M. Dilsaver, "Stemming the Flow: The Evolution of Controls on Visitor Numbers and Impact in the National Parks" in Lary M. Dilsaver and Craig E. Colten, eds., *The American Environment: Interpretations of Past Geographies* (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1992), especially 235-240; Dennis Roth, "National Forests and the Campaign for Wilderness Legislation" in Char Miller, ed., *American Forests: Nature, Culture, and Politics* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), especially 229-234; Hal Rothman, "'A Regular Ding-Dong Fight': The Dynamics of Park Service-Forest Service Controversy during the 1920s and 1930s" in Miller, ed., *American Forests*, 109-124; Runte, *National Parks*, 82-108; and Sellars, *Preserving Nature*, 29-36.
7. John Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983): 45-71, discusses these issues in particularly valuable detail while Michael E. Zega and John E. Gruber, *Travel by Train: The American Railroad Poster, 1870-1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002): 21-32, includes examples of contemporary poster art portraying several of these points.
8. The development of the Northern Pacific Railroad's ties to Yellowstone National Park is discussed in Alfred Runte's essay, "The Northern Pacific Railroad: Yellowstone Park Line," in Runte, *Trains of Discovery*, 13-29. As scholarly attention to travel and tourism in the United States has grown over the last twenty years, the efforts of various railroads to capitalize upon the distinctive aspects of the trans-Mississippi West in their advertising campaigns have been the focus of various works; among the most useful for this essay in their discussions of advertising from the late nineteenth century through the First World War

- have been Victoria Dye, *All Aboard for Santa Fe: Railway Promotion of the Southwest, 1890s to 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005): 15-32; Richard J. Orsi, *Sunset Limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Development of the American West 1850-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005): 130-165; Alfred Runte, "Promoting Wonderland"; Carlos A. Schwantes, "Landscapes of Opportunity: Phases of Railroad Promotion of the Pacific Northwest," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 43:2 (Spring 1993): 38-51; Schwantes, *Railroad Signatures across the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993): 205-218; William Wyckoff and Lary M. Dilsaver, "Promotional Imagery of Glacier National Park," *The Geographical Review* 87:1 (January 1997): 1-26; Michael E. Zega, "Advertising the Southwest," *Journal of the Southwest* 33: 3 (Autumn 2001): 281-315; and Zega and Gruber, *Travel by Train*, 21-47.
9. Discussion of the promotional activities of these various railroads may be found in Blodgett, "Advertising and the National Parks"; Ralph W. Hidy, Muriel E. Hidy, Roy V. Scott and Don L. Hofsommer, *The Great Northern Railway: A History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004): 124-125; Orsi, *Sunset Limited*, 158-165; Runte, "Preservation Express"; and Schwantes, *Railroad Signatures*, 210-212. The figures on railroad advertising expenditures in 1917 quoted at the end of the paragraph are from endnote 13 for the Blodgett essay (*Seeing and Being Seen*, 294).
  10. Louis W. Hill to Ralph Budd, March 29, 1920, Louis W. Hill Papers, Glacier Park Correspondence, Box 1, James J. Hill Reference Library, St. Paul MN (hereafter cited as "Hill Papers, JJHL"); "Announcement No. 2 Pacific Northwest Advertising Campaign," c. 1923?, Louis W. Hill Papers, Glacier Park Correspondence, Box 1, JJHL; 1925 Expense Reports, Advertising Agent subject files, Box 3, Advertising and Publicity Department, Great Northern Railroad Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul MN (hereafter cited as "Adv. & Pub. Dept., GN Papers, MHS"); A. J. Dickinson (Great Northern RR) to F. A. Wadleigh (D & RG RR), February 9, 1928, Advertising Agent subject files, Box 3, Adv. & Pub. Dept., GN Papers, MHS; and H. G. Dow to O. J. McGillis, October 31, 1929, Advertising Agent subject files, Box 3, Adv. & Pub. Dept., GN Papers, MHS.
  11. H. F. McLaury to "All Representatives," January 7, 1930, Advertising Agent subject files, Box 5, Adv. & Pub. Dept., GN Papers, MHS; O. J. McGillis to H. G. Dow, January 27, 1930, Advertising Agent subject files, Box 5, Adv. & Pub. Dept., GN Papers, MHS; "Memorandum" from A. J. Dickinson, December 15, 1930, Adv. & Pub. Dept., GN Papers, MHS; 1934 *Travel East through Adventureland* brochure, Advertising Agent subject files, Box 4, Adv. & Pub. Dept., GN Papers, MHS; 1936 *Aeroplane Map* flyer, Advertising Agent subject files, Box 8, Adv. & Pub. Dept., GN Papers, MHS; and 1937 *Carefree Vacations* flyer, Advertising Agent subject files, Box 8, Adv. & Pub. Dept., GN Papers, MHS.
  12. For the full citation of this advertisement, please see endnote 1.
  13. The quotations and descriptions are drawn from the following advertisements: "Colorado" (see endnote 3); "A Scenic and Educational Vacation Trip" sponsored by NP, *The Outlook* 115:17 (April 25, 1917); and "Grand Canyon" sponsored by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad (hereafter referred to as Santa Fe) in *Sunset* 40:4 (April 1918): 78.
  14. The quotations are from an advertisement, "Take one!" sponsored by the United States Railroad Administration in *The Independent* 98 (June 7, 1919): 381.
  15. The first three quotations are from the following advertisements: "Above Everything—Colorado!" sponsored by the Rock Island in *The Outlook* 128:4 (May 25, 1921): 178; "Glacier National Park," sponsored by GN in *The Outlook* 128:4 (May 25, 1921); and "Follow this trail to vacation joyland" sponsored by the Burlington in *The Outlook* 128:4 (May 25, 1921): 179. The poster is reproduced in Zega and Gruber, 60. The GN ad in *The Saturday Evening Post* may be found in 194:47 (May 20, 1922): 55.
  16. "Great Northern Land is Adventure Land" sponsored by GN in *The Literary Digest* 93:6 (May 7, 1927): 75 and "When Moonbeams Kiss the Mountains in Glacier National Park"

- sponsored by GN in *The Literary Digest* 85:10 (June 6, 1925):70.
17. For a discussion in far greater depth of the development of nineteenth-century American thought about the wilderness, please see Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, Third Edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), chapters 3 and 4; Hans Huth, *Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990, Bison Books Edition), chapter 3; and Runte, *National Parks*, chapters 1 and 2.
  18. John Sears, *Sacred Places: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), chapters 6 and 7; the two quotations are from pages 122 and 156.
  19. Northern Pacific Railway, *Yellowstone Park for Your Vacation!* (Chicago, 1927).
  20. "A Free Book Descriptive of Yellowstone National Park" sponsored by the Burlington and NP in *The Outlook* 128:2 (May 11, 1921): 77; Northern Pacific Railway, *Yellowstone National Park* (Chicago, 1922): 1, 5, 7; Chicago & North Western Railway and the Union Pacific System, *Summer Tours under Escort* (Chicago, 1927): 11.
  21. "See this Colorful Kingdom of Scenic Splendor" sponsored by the Union Pacific Railroad (hereafter UP) in *Sunset* 36:5 (May 1926): 103. A similar use of a single overwhelming feature may be found in the many advertisements that focused upon an erupting Old Faithful geyser. By 1920, if not earlier, that image had become synonymous with Yellowstone National Park. See, for example, "Yellowstone Park" sponsored by the Northern Pacific Railway (c. 1923), published in *National Geographic* and now in the author's collection.
  22. "Grand Canyon National Park" in *Sunset* 56:5 (May 1927): 95 and "New Wonders of the West" in *The Saturday Evening Post* 198:45 (May 8, 1926): 210, both sponsored by UP. Other specimens of such advertising commissioned by the Union Pacific include "No Flight of Fancy Can Picture the Fascination of Bryce Canyon" in which the copywriter urged the reader to visit this site where he or she could "loose your imagination and you'll see thousands of fantastic giants and gnomes in bronze and onyx! ...Fairy cities fashioned with the most intricate artistry!—all gleaming with countless colors of celestial radiance!" (c. 1926), "Most Sublime of All Earthly Scenes" to celebrate Grand Canyon National Park (c. 1928), "Wonderlands of breath-Taking Beauty" with a depiction of Zion's Great White Throne (c. 1928), and "Bryce Canyon-Cedar Breaks-Kaibab Forest-Zion and Grand Canyon National Parks" (1928), all published in *National Geographic*, now in the author's collection.
  23. For the source of this quotation, see "Your Choice of Western Vacations via Union Pacific" sponsored by UP in *The Literary Digest* 93:6 (May 7, 1927): 71. For other examples of this type of advertising, see the following promotional brochures: *The Scenic Line of the World* (Denver and Rio Grande Western-Western Pacific Railroads, 1927); *The Scenic Northwest* (Great Northern Railroad, c. 1924); and *Scenic Colorado and Utah* (The Burlington Route, 1922). The posters of Grand Canyon and Yosemite are reproduced in Zega and Gruber, pp. 45, 51, and 63.
  24. Besides the advertisements cited in previous endnotes, see also the following: "The Pacific Northwest: America's Wonderland calls you" sponsored by the Burlington, GN and NP in *The Outlook* 137:5 (June 4, 1924): 197; "The Outstanding Scenic Way West" sponsored by the Missouri Pacific Railroad in *The Literary Digest* 85:10 (June 6, 1925): 81; and "Adventure Land on the Great Northern" sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 54:4 (April 1926): 90. Similar themes are advanced at greater length in such promotional brochures as the Burlington Route's *Scenic Colorado and Utah* (Chicago, 1922) and its *Vacations without a Care Burlington Escorted Tours* (Chicago, 1926).
  25. "Make-Believe Land Come True" sponsored by UP in *Sunset* 56:6 (June 1926): 89; "New—Amazing—Sublime" sponsored by UP in *Sunset* 58:4 (April 1927): 97; "Glacier National Park" sponsored by GN in *The Outlook* 128:4 (May 25, 1921): 176; and "Cruise the

- enchanting summer seas of Glacier National Park” sponsored by GN in *The Literary Digest* 93:10 (June 4, 1927): 101. For other examples of this approach to scenic advertising, please see the following brochures: Chicago & North Western Railway and the Union Pacific System, *Summer Tours under Escort* (Chicago, 1927), Seattle (Washington) Chamber of Commerce, *The Charmed Land of the American Continent* (Seattle, 1923) and Union Pacific System, *Zion, Bryce Canyon and Grand Canyon National Parks* (Chicago, 1926).
26. “Comfort in the Wilds,” sponsored by GN in *The Literary Digest* 73:6 (May 5, 1922): 71.
  27. “See the Magic and Mystery of the Nation’s Last Frontier” sponsored by UP in *The Literary Digest* 85:10 (June 6, 1925): 72.
  28. For two examples, see “Cruise the Enchanting Summer Seas of Glacier National Park” and “Glacier Park,” both sponsored by GN and appearing in *The Literary Digest* 93:10 (June 4, 1927): 101 and *Good Housekeeping* 86:4 (April 1928): 124, respectively.
  29. Discussion of the disappearing railroad passenger and the concomitant rise of the auto tourist may be found in Warren James Belasco, *Americans on the Road: from Autocamp to Motel 1910-1945* (1979; repr., Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997): 7-39; Blodgett, “Selling the Scenery,” 289-290; Demars, *Yosemite*, 81-84; John A. Jakle, *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth Century North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985): 120-170; Runte, *National Parks*, 156-157; Runte, *Trains of Discovery*, 28-29, 54, 57-58; Schwantes, *Railroad Signatures*, 259-261, 266-270, 279-285; Shaffer, *See America First*, 130-168; and John F. Stover, *American Railroads* (2nd edition) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997): 192-205.
  30. “Scale the peaks of vacation pleasure in Glacier Park” sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 66:4 (April 1931): 48, and “Make your vacation bring you adventure—come to Glacier Park!” sponsored by GN in *The Literary Digest* 109:10 (June 6, 1931): 47.
  31. “Glacier National Park: I Wish You’d Come!” sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 74:4 (April 1935): 56; Rock Island Lines, *Colorado Vacations* (Chicago, 1934); and Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway, *Grand Canyon Outings* (Chicago, 1938). The two brochures are unpaginated.
  32. “Make your vacation bring you adventure—come to Glacier Park!” sponsored by GN in *The Literary Digest* 109:10 (June 9, 1931): 47, and “Glacier Park on the Great Northern this summer...” sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 74:5 (May 1935): 50.
  33. “No wonder Californians Prefer GLACIER NATIONAL PARK” sponsored by GN in *The Literary Digest* 109:10 (June 9, 1931): 9; “Why Do They Say GLACIER PARK is so interesting?” sponsored by GN in *Time* 35:13 (March 25, 1940): 39; and “Come for the Fun ‘Vacation Paradise’” sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 84:4 (April 1940): 7. See also “Glacier National Park Ride for FUN and HEALTH” sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 84:5 (May 1940): 6; “Why do so many prefer GLACIER PARK?” sponsored by GN in *Time* 35:19 (May 6, 1940): 40; and “Glacier National Park Invites you to Play-Rest-Sightsee!” sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 84:6 (June 1940): 6. For similar appeals from the 1941 travel season, please see “On your trip East plan to see Glorious Glacier Park” sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 86:4 (April 1941): 6; “Glorious Glacier Park—For a Different Vacation” sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 86:5 (May 1941): 15; and “Vacation at ...Glorious GLACIER PARK” sponsored in *Sunset* 86:6 (June 1941): 9.
  34. For examples of this reliance upon a common theme and similar illustrations, please see “Different...Exciting...GO EAST via the PACIFIC NORTHWEST OVER THE GREAT Scenic Route” sponsored by the Milwaukee Road in *Sunset* 80: 5 (May 1938): 5; “Vacation DREAMS COME TRUE” sponsored by NP in *Sunset* 80: 5 (May 1938): 16; “THE SCENIC EVERGREEN ROUTE EAST!” sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 82: 2 (February 1939): 11; and “FOR THE HAPPIEST TRIP OF A LIFETIME GO EAST ON THE *Olympian*” sponsored by the Milwaukee Road in *Sunset* 82:4 (April 1939): 8.
  35. Union Pacific System, *Zion Bryce Canyon Grand Canyon: 3 National Parks* (Chicago, 1931).

36. "GRAND CANYON ZION AND BRYCE CANYON" sponsored by UP in *Sunset* 64:3 (March 1930): 71; "The World's Most Startling Loveliness Awaits You..." sponsored by UP in *Sunset* 64:4 (April 1930): 67. The term "vacation vistas" appears in "VACATION VISTAS through the EVERGREEN NORTHWEST" sponsored by NP in *Sunset* 66:5 (May 1931): 49. Other examples of such scenic advertising include "IT'S WORTH CROSSING THE OCEAN TO SEE YELLOWSTONE" sponsored by UP in *Sunset* 64:6 (June 1930): 67; "A Lot of Switzerlands as Near as Your Car" sponsored by the Colorado Association in *The Saturday Evening Post* 204:45 (April 1932): 102; and Union Pacific System, *Colorado Mountain Playgrounds* (Chicago, c. 1931).
37. "The Land of Shining Mountains" sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 75:1 (July 1935): 20. "Ride the Air-Conditioned EMPIRE BUILDER Thru Glacier Park on Your Way East" sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 76:2 (February 1936): 4; and "Ride the Air-Conditioned EMPIRE BUILDER" sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 76:3 (March 1936): 10. For other examples of the pursuit of scenic grandeur in travel advertising, please see Union Pacific System, *Western Wonderlands* (Chicago, 1934); "Tops in Vacations West" sponsored by UP in *The American Magazine* 121:5 (May 1936): 58; "Go Union Pacific to the Cool PACIFIC NORTHWEST" sponsored by UP in *Review of Reviews* 101:4 (April 1937): 42; and "COLORADO for your VACATION!" sponsored by UP in *The Literary Digest* 123:23 (June 5, 1937): 35.
38. Photography as an illustrative medium had effectively obliterated all other types by the late 1930s as seen in brochures such as *Grand Canyon Outings* or *Colorado: Perfect Vacationland*. The two examples of poster art described above are reproduced in Zega and Gruber, 84-85; other examples are reproduced in Kirby Lambert's essay, "The Lure of the Parks," *Montana* (Spring 1996).
39. "New low-cost 'stop-off tours' in Glacier Park" sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 76:5 (May 1936): 6; "We're going to Glacier Park economically, too!" sponsored by the Burlington Route in *Scribner's Magazine* 101:4 (April 1937): 67.
40. "The CODY ROAD! Yellowstone's Greatest Thrill!" sponsored by the Burlington Route in *Woman's Home Companion* 57:4 (April 1930): n.p.
41. "America's smartest dude ranch—that's Glacier Park!" sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 68:4 (April 1932): 39; "the Old West for a new vacation—Glacier Park!" sponsored by GN in *Fortune* 5:5 (May 1932): 104, which asserted "the glamour of frontier days still clings to this land of shining mountains—rough-and-ready sports, adventure, old-time hospitality." A similar perspective is presented in "You can't exaggerate the thrill of a Glacier Park vacation," sponsored by GN in *Scribner's Magazine* 89:6 (June 1931): 42.
42. "For the Perfect Vacation ...GLACIER NATIONAL PARK" sponsored by GN in *Sunset* 82:4 (April 1939): 15.
43. *Ibid.*
44. The quotations are from John Muir, *Our National Parks* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1901): 17 and 1 respectively, and from Robert Sterling Yard, *The Book of Our National Parks* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919): 20-21. See also Runte, *National Parks*, chapter 1.
45. Yard, *National Parks*, 4-5.
46. The quotations from Muir and Yard are drawn from *Our National Parks*, 2 and *National Parks*, 101, respectively. An illuminating discussion of the conflicts over national park "standards" during the 1920s and 1930s may be found in John C. Miles, *Guardian of the Parks: A History of the National Parks and Conservation Association* (Washington DC: Taylor & Francis in cooperation with National Parks and Conservation Association, 1995), chapters 3 and 4. The quotation from Miles may be found on page 72.
47. Sellars, *Preserving Nature*, 107. Chapter 3 of Sellars's volume, "Preserving Tradition," and chapter 4, "The Rise and Decline of Ecological Attitudes," offer particularly useful insights on the question of how Park Service officials viewed the parks they managed while the

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work of other scholars has informed our awareness of the populations who came to visit these special landscapes. See in particular Mark Barringer, *Selling Yellowstone: Capitalism and the Construction of Nature* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002): 51-53, 58, 61-63, 87-94; Richard A. Bartlett, *Yellowstone: A Wilderness Besieged* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985): 51-66, 82-98; Demars, *Yosemite*, 122-150; Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998): 21-22 and pp. 40-49.