



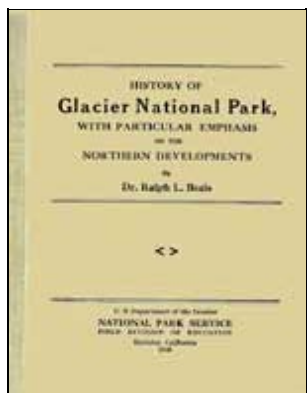
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HISTORY OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE NORTHERN DEVELOPMENTS

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Berkeley, California

1935

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FOREWORD

This paper, the History of Glacier National Park, was prepared to meet the needs of contemplated museum developments at Glacier National Park. It makes no pretense of adequately covering the entire field of history in the region of the Park and it lays particular stress on certain aspects and slights or omits others which might justly be considered of equal importance.

The dominating need which governed the preparation of the paper was the requirement of a succinct account of the activities of the northern fur trade and those phases of Canadian history which touched upon this area. No general summary of any major portion of this story was available as is the case with the developments further south. Prepared with this need in view and with a distinct time limitation, the study is necessarily uneven in its treatment of different portions of the historical background of the park.

In the main it is believed the principal objectives have been accomplished satisfactorily and that the paper provides a brief introduction to the history of the park, summarizing the available printed literature with a proper evaluation of sources, and presents a reasonably comprehensive bibliography. It is in response to numerous requests for additional copies and with the hope of extending the usefulness of the paper beyond its original purpose that it is here presented in this mimeographed form.

The preparation of the paper was carried out under the CWA program of 1933-34. The mimeographing of the paper was made possible by workers supplied by the State Emergency Relief Administration of California.

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HISTORY OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

The area now known as Glacier National Park and its immediate surroundings was for many years one of the least known regions of the Far West. Supposed to be, as it in fact was, one of the richest beaver regions of the Rockies, it was an El Dorado from which the fur traders and trappers were barred by the persistent hostility of the Blackfoot Indians. Although some daring parties may have penetrated the region at an early date, no record survives, and many of those who attempted an entry never returned.

The early history of Glacier National Park is primarily the history of fur trade expansion and efforts to tap this rich source of beaver. East, north, west, and finally, south, the tide of western expansion swirled up to the borders of Blackfoot territory but left it an island of unknown lands until mid-nineteenth century explorers visited it. French traders, the Hudson's Bay Company, the North-west Company, American Fur Company, and Rocky Mountain Fur Company, to mention only the better known and best organized efforts, all came near these "Shining Mountains." None entered or knew their character.

The rise and growth of the fur trade and the formation of the great companies has no real place in the history of Glacier National Park except incidentally as events and policies affected the explorations and efforts to penetrate the area commercially. For convenience in treatment, the early history can be divided into three movements, two major and one, the first, minor. The first minor thrust westward toward the Glacier region was that of the French fur traders. Out of this grew the English fur trade, first the Hudson's Bay Company as a competing movement, then the Scotch-English successors of the French, exemplified by the Northwest Company, and finally the new Hudson's Bay Company, formed of the merger of all these efforts. The other major movement was the latest, that of the American fur traders. Stimulated by the discoveries of Lewis and Clark, the St. Louis traders, the Missouri River Fur Company, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, and the American Fur Company, as well as transient "opposition" companies followed in rapid succession. The latter need not be considered in detail.

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I. The Northern Approach - The Fur Companies

Although it was early French enterprise to the west which led to the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company and the ultimate penetration of our area, it appears to have been left for a young employee of the Hudson's Bay Company to visit the great plains first, this being the first step toward the Glacier region. Pierre Esprit Radisson and Medard Chuoart Groseillers, two French adventurers seeking fur, were the first to visit the Mississippi River, perhaps even touched the Missouri, and first visited Hudson's Bay by land. Discredited and plundered by French officials, they turned to the English. After a successful voyage to Hudson's Bay, the Hudson's Bay Company was formed in 1670, although Radisson and Groseillers were given only the part of employees. The charter of the Hudson's Bay Company gave it title to all the land drained by waters flowing into Hudson's Bay and Hudson Strait. Thus, at a pen stroke by the dissolute Charles II, in 1670 the story of the Hudson's Bay Company is first linked to the history of Glacier National Park, for the northern streams of the Park flow into Hudson's Bay and are hence within the area granted to the company.

The desire of Radisson to penetrate and explore the interior was in large measure thwarted by the initial and long-enduring policy of the company to restrict its posts to the shoreline and wait for the Indians to bring in furs. It remained for a London gutter urchin, Henry Kelsey, who knew and perhaps was inspired by Radisson, to be the first Englishman to reach the plains, the time being 1691 and 1692. His journey was for many years in doubt, and only the recent discovery and publication of his journals makes it clear that he was also the first Englishman to see and shoot the buffalo and grizzly bear. Even yet it remains obscure whether Kelsey was sent by the company or took "French leave," but the probabilities appear to favor the first theory.

Kelsey, in his journey, was far from reaching the Glacier National Park area. He did not even see the Rocky Mountains. But for over half a century he was the only Englishman to reach as far as the Plains east of the Rockies. (Among sources for the preceding are: Burpee, Search for the Western Sea; Pinkerton, Hudson's Bay Company; Laut, Conquest of the Great Northwest; Kelsey Papers. So chaotic are the accounts of the area that both in this case and most of the rest of the paper it is impracticable to give detailed citations. While the various sources give more or less detailed accounts of events and places, no two seem to have singled out the same series, so the problem of detailed citation becomes

too complex to be handled in this type of paper.)

The next venture into the Plains was that of Pierre Caultier de La Verendrye. This zealous Frenchman spent his life and fortune in attempts to reach the western sea. With only the help of a trading license to finance his efforts, he built posts further and further into the wilderness. He eventually reached the Mandan villages in 1738. In 1742, his son, Pierre, with a younger brother, set out for the west from the Mandan villages. On January 1, 1743, they first saw the Rocky Mountains, reaching their base on January 15. Just where the brothers arrived is not certain, but the present weight of opinion places them furthest west at about the site of the city of Helena, Montana, several hundred miles further west than was formerly believed to be the case. This brought them within the region surrounding Glacier.

La Verendrye died in 1749 and his sons were not permitted to carry on his explorations. Instead, Captain Jacques Repentigny Legardeur de Saint-Pierre was sent to take over their posts. He ordered a party to ascend the Saskatchewan river. On their return they claimed to have built a post near the Rocky Mountains in 1751. There is no documentary evidence that this post was ever built and the fact that Hendry three years later heard nothing of Frenchmen anywhere near the mountains suggests that the whole story is a fabrication. See: Burpee, Search for the Western Sea; Stuart, Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana; MacInness, In the Shadow of the Rockies; Burpee, Pathfinders of the Great Plains.)

The next known visitors to approach the region were all representatives of the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1754-5, Anthony Hendry wintered with the Blackfoot, probably wandering the region of the Bow river in Alberta and passing down the Red Deer and South Forks of the Saskatchewan in the spring. He found a French post near the Grand Forks of the Saskatchewan. His journey brought no results, for his stories of Indians on horseback were not believed and his whole account was discredited.

In 1772 the competition from Montreal stirred the Hudson's Bay Company into activity and Mathew Cocking was sent to the Saskatchewan. Crossing the South Fork, he met some Blackfoot at the Eagle Hills and spent the winter with them, confirming Hendry's account. He found French traders who had married into the tribe and adopted native life. Some of these nameless personages were probably the first whites to visit the confines of Glacier National Park, but their doings must remain unknown to history. Cocking returned to the Bay in 1773. That same year the council of the Hudson's Bay Company had ordered establishments to be made on the Saskatchewan, and Cumberland House was built at Sturgeon Lake. From this time on "patroons of the woods" were engaged to live inland with the Indians. A staff of 51 men was kept regularly at Cumberland House. There is no record of how far west some of these men may have gone, but in 1799 Peter Fidler established a post at Lac La Biche above Edmonton, and a year later Chesterfield House was built at the junction of the South Saskatchewan and Red Deer rivers. (See: Hendry; Journal; Cocking; Journal; General sources cited above.)

The building of these inland posts was largely undertaken as a result of the competition of the traders from Montreal, who became the North-West Company. The year after Cumberland House was built, J. B. Cadotte built a post at the Forks of the Saskatchewan and the enterprising Canadians were, no doubt, in general ahead of the Hudson's Bay posts. In 1779 the first association leading to the formation of the Northwest Company took place. By 1783 the company was well established and gave constant and increasingly bitter competition to the Hudson's Bay Company. By 1787 the independents in Montreal had been largely absorbed and trade from that point was almost entirely in the hands of the North-West Company.

While there is a good deal of published materiel on the entry of the North-Westerners into the region north of the Saskatchewan, their activities in the direction of Glacier can only be inferred from the movement of the Hudson's Bay Company in that region. Of the independents and free traders we likewise have little data. In 1780 a free trader's post is mentioned at the Eagle Hills near Battleford. A curious note from the "Manuscript Journal of a Gentleman belonging to the army of General St. Clair" remarks on meeting a Mr. M-----, who about five years before (which would place the date as 1786) had visited the headwaters of the Missouri with a fur trading party from Montreal. The party consisted of 100 men and had come in contact with the "Great Belly, Blood, Blackfoot, Snake, Ossnobians (Assineboine?), Shiveytoon, Mandon, Paunee, and others." An attempt by this party to cross the "Shining Mountains" was frustrated by hostile Indians. Apparently no other record of this trip is known. The geographical and tribal information given is far beyond what one would expect at the time and, whether the particular expedition mentioned occurred or not, it is evident that there had been an expedition or expeditions to the headwaters of the Missouri before Lewis and Clark which came close to the Glacier Park country. (Massachusetts Historical Society, series 1, vol. 3, page 24.)

About 1786 David Thompson, most able of all the early explorers, was at Manchester House, 40 miles up the North Saskatchewan from Battleford, wintering with the Piegiens in the neighborhood of modern Calgary. This marked the approach of the fur trade to the Rockies on a permanent basis. By 1790 the Hudson's Bay Company had established the South Branch House on the South Saskatchewan. Two years later Peter Fidler left the Hudson's Bay post of Fort George on the North Saskatchewan, and wandered over the Bow and Little Bow rivers. The following year, 1793, he crossed the Red Deer at the mouth of the Rosebud, reached the Bow, and followed it to Chesterfield House at the South Saskatchewan and Red Deer rivers. Thompson, the same year found both a Hudson's Bay and a North-West Company post at the site of South Branch House, but in 1794 an important event occurred. Thompson left the Hudson's Bay Company and joined the North-Westerners. By winter of that year he had run a survey from Lake Superior to the Mandan villages on the Missouri. Here he found that free traders, outfitted by the Hudson's Bay Company, had been trading for several years. Insignificant bits such as this are the only hints we have that whites penetrated beyond the established fur company posts and had been nearer the Glacier region than the record shows at this time.

In 1800 Thompson went to the Upper Saskatchewan, spending two years wandering the country between the North and South Forks. Four men sent by him were probably the first whites to paddle down the South Fork of the Saskatchewan from near its headwaters. In 1801 Thompson passed over Howse Pass, discovered by Duncan McGillivray the year before, reaching the headwaters of the Columbia. Some of these parties must have been close to Glacier Park. In 1805 West Chesterfield House was built by John McDonald of Garth near the mouth of the Red Deer river. It was abandoned the following year and for 17 years there were no further efforts to penetrate the area with permanent establishments until the new Hudson's Bay Company reestablished the post in 1822, a venture continued only for a few years.

In the meantime David Thompson had been exploring in the region of the upper Columbia, evidently utilizing Howse Pass. In 1809 Joseph Howse (not Jasper Howse for whom the pass was named) followed Thompson over the pass, and in 1810 he took a Hudson's Bay party onto the Pacific slope. He was followed by James McMillan of the Northwest Company to see that he was not successful. This was the only effort of the Hudson's Bay Company to reach the Pacific Slope before the merger with the Northwest Company was made.

The Howse and McMillan parties in 1810 are usually said to have been in the Montana region west of the Rockies, and hence must have passed west of Glacier Park. In the Handbook of General Information regarding Glacier National Park published by the Department of the Interior, Washington, 1933, it is noted that the first whites crossed Marias Pass in 1810 but no authority is given. No evidence for this exists in any of the standard sources for the region. The only parties known to have been anywhere near the area are these two parties of Howse and McMillan, and while it is conceivable that they might have crossed the pass, lacking any detailed journals of the expeditions it is difficult to see how this fact could be determined.

This same year of 1810, Thompson was prevented from using Howse Pass by his old friends, the Piegan, who objected to Thompson furnishing arms to the Kootenay. Thompson then discovered and crossed the mountains by Athabasca Pass. This became the main route over the Rockies. But for the Blackfoot obstacle, the main routes would have been further south and closer to Glacier Park.

For the next few years the Northwest Company was occupied in developing the rich country west of the Rockies, building posts, and sending out trapping companies which reached far south of Glacier Park. They do not appear, however, to have worked back toward the Glacier region because of Blackfoot enmity, and perhaps because of the difficult nature of the country. The Hudson's Bay Company is not mentioned in this vicinity at all after 1810 until the merger was made with the Northwest Company in 1822, when, as noted above, an old Northwester reestablished Chesterfield House for a short time.

In 1832 the Hudson's Bay council ordered the abandonment of Rocky Mountain House "because of the defection of the Piegans", and also ordered the building of a post to be called Piegan House somewhere near

the 49th parallel, with the object of intercepting Indians who might be going across the border to trade with Americans. This is the first reference to American competition in the Plains region. In 1833 the Piegan House was established on the Bow River in what is now the Stony Indian Reserve, but after five months it was abandoned and Rocky Mountain House restored. The same year the council of the Hudson's Bay Company, alarmed by the diminution of the beaver, forbade the issuance of traps to any but the Piegan Indians. In 1848 the artist Paul Kane passed through Rocky Mountain House and noted it to be made unusually strong because of the danger from the Blackfoot.

Nine years later, in 1857, Father La Comb paid his first visit to Blackfoot territory, and in 1865 took up permanent residence there. In the years 1857 and 1858 the Imperial Palliser expedition apparently actually reached Glacier Park, or at least its northern Canadian extension, Waterton Park. In 1857 Palliser went up the South Saskatchewan to within sight of Chief Mountain, the earliest mention of the peak in British sources. He crossed the Kananaskis to the Kootenay river, and the following year crossed Kootenay or Blakiston Pass just north of Glacier Park. The expedition evidently saw Waterton Lake, giving it its name.

Them Palliser expedition marks the end of the period of the fur trade in this area from a Canadian viewpoint, although it lingered on for many years. The monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company was beginning to crumble. Settlers had been moving into the Red River Valley over whom the company could exercise no control. In 1866 American traders began to pour over the border from Fort Benton, establishing posts in Blackfoot territory. The most famous were Fort Whoop-up at the junction of the Belly and the St. Mary's rivers, Stand-off on the Belly river, and Pincher Creek.

Although there were exceptions, most of these traders were of a very low class. Liquor flowed freely and the Indians were hopelessly debauched. Gambling and lawlessness reached a true "wild west" pitch. Another class of Americans, the "wolvers," made their living by poisoning wolves and bitterly opposed the fur traders, who were encouraging the hunting of the buffalo for their hides. This added a further disordered element to a situation which endured eight years.

Such bad conditions in time created their own cure by causing the formation of the Northwestern Mounted Police. By 1874 the situation was radically changed. Law and order had arrived and the fur trade period was effectively ended. The later history of the area from a Canadian viewpoint is the story of the formation of reservations, the cattle industry, the coming of the settlers and the railroad. Discussion of these later phases will be reserved until after the story of the American fur trade has been presented. (The above story is presented mainly from two sources: MacInness; In the Shadow of the Rockies; Pinkerton; Hudson's Bay Company. Other good sources are: Laut; Conquest of the Great Northwest; Burpee; Search for the Western Sea; Inness; Fur Trade of Canada. Further details may be found in the works of these authors and in the many journals and other sources in the bibliography.)

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II. The Southern Approach - The Fur Traders

The approach to the Glacier National Park region from the south lagged far behind that from the north. The traders from St. Louis under Spanish control never penetrated any distance up the Missouri, although they were gaining experience nearer home which was to take them at one bound to the headwaters of the great river.

In Canada, a government expedition marked the closing period of the fur trade era. In the United States it was a government expedition which initiated it. Lewis and Clark went into a country which beyond the Mandan villages, had never been visited by American traders. On their return in 1807, Lewis made an overland trip from the Missouri along the base of the Rockies as far as the Marias River, and named Chief Mountain. A question has been raised whether he would not have discovered Marias Pass had he not been threatened with Indian troubles. In any case this is the earliest mention of a natural feature connected with the Park itself.

Near the Marias, Lewis and his small party fell in with a group of Gros Ventre who attempted to steal their guns and horses. Two Gros Ventre were killed but the horses were nearly all stolen, although Lewis and his men secured four horses belonging to the Indians. They then beat a hasty retreat to the main party and pushed on rapidly down the Missouri. This encounter is usually said to have been with the Blackfoot, but apparently the tribe concerned was the Gros Ventre. At least this is Lisa's report.

One John Colter, a soldier with Clark, asked permission to stay on the upper Yellowstone, which was granted. Further down the river Lewis and Clark met with fur traders already following their trail, presumably the party headed by that dynamic Spanish trader of St. Louis, Manuel Lisa, who figured largely in the history of the succeeding years. In 1807 Lisa pushed as far as the junction of the Yellowstone and Bighorn rivers, where he established a post. Colter met him and enlisted with his company, going alone to visit the Crow and crossing over the summit with Crow guides. There they were attacked by Blackfoot (Gros Ventre?) and Colter was forced to return, making his way through what is now Yellowstone Park. Two years later Lisa turned his post over to the Missouri River Fur Company which he had helped to organize. An attempt was made to establish a post at the Three Forks of the Missouri but this party, under Pierre Menard and Andrew Henry, was driven out. They crossed the Rockies, building Henry's Fort on the opposite slope, abandoning it the following year.

In 1811 all posts of the Missouri Fur Company above the Mandan villages were abandoned. The Astorians in this year went overland from Arikara rather than risk ascending the river through Blackfoot territory. No recorded efforts to make establishments above the Mandans are known for some years. The abortive Yellowstone Expedition of 1819 must have seriously injured American prestige. Yet two years later, in 1821, another effort was made and the first Fort Benton was built at the Big Horn and Yellowstone rivers and the Rocky Mountain Fur Company established a post the following year at the mouth of the Yellowstone. Disaster attended efforts to push into Blackfoot country, however. In 1823 a party under Jones and Immell left Fort Benton for the Three Forks and were ambuscaded on their return trip. The same year Andrew Henry, bound toward the Blackfoot for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, was attacked at Great Falls and driven back. The Blackfoot stole so many horses from the Rocky Mountain Fur Company post at the mouth of the Yellowstone that it was abandoned and moved up to the Bighorn. The following year the Missouri Fur Company found this upriver trade so unprofitable and dangerous that it withdrew all the way down river to the Omaha.

At this time a great deal was said and written about British influence being used to inflame the Blackfoot and other tribes against the Americans. As we have seen, the British were having their own difficulties and the attempt to reestablish Chesterfield House failed about then. Although the British were willing to buy beaver stolen from Americans, competing American companies were known to do the same thing, and there is at least one case where actual robbery of a competing company was instigated by an American firm. While the British may have depreciated the Americans to the Blackfoot, they did no more than they would and did do to any rival trader regardless of nationality. The diatribes against British machinations at this time must be read with the Anglophobia of the period in mind as well as an eye to fur trade ethics and the actual situation of the British in the same area.

The second and more successful Yellowstone expedition, in 1825, made a change for the better in the American fur trade. The expedition moved some distance up the Yellowstone, where it met General Ashley, moving spirit at the time in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, and made treaties with all the tribes of the River except the Blackfoot, with whom it was unable to establish contacts. In 1827 Ashley projected a post at the mouth of the Marias for Blackfoot trade, but his interest was diverted, and no attempt was made to carry out the plan.

The year 1828 saw the entry of the powerful American Fur Company on the upper river, with posts at the mouth of the Yellowstone and up the Yellowstone. In 1830 the name Fort Union was applied to the post at the junction of the Yellowstone and the Missouri which was destined to become one of the important centers for the area. This same year Henry Vanderburgh had his first brush with the Blackfoot, who two years later were to kill him.

The American Fur Company was determined to open trade with the Blackfoot at any cost. In 1831 opportunity offered. An old trapper by the

name of Berger, formerly with the Hudson's Bay Company, who had lived among the Blackfoot and spoke the language, appeared at Fort Union. He offered to lead a party into the country and set off with three companions, returning with forty Blackfoot men, many of whom had never before visited this far down the Missouri. So suspicious were the Blackfoot that Berger had told them the distance was less than it actually was. One day's journey from the fort, they refused to travel further. Berger courageously offered his life as forfeit if they did not reach the fort the following day. Berger's companions had felt that they were committing suicide in accompanying him. To Berger must go the credit for a courageous handling of a dangerous enterprise which resulted in the establishment of American relations with the Blackfoot for the first time.

The immediate result of Berger's success was the establishment of a post, Fort Piegan, at the mouth of the Marias, which had a successful season except for one abortive attack. The Blackfoot wished the post kept open in the summer and when the founder, James Kipp, left it according to his instructions, the Indians burned the first fort. The same fall it was rebuilt by D. D. Mitchell in what is now known as Brule Bottom and renamed Fort McKenzie after the energetic director of the Missouri River operations of the American Fur Company. From this time on the American Fur Company maintained almost permanent relations with the Blackfoot but all was not peace. This same year Bridger and Fitzpatrick of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company had one of their many encounters with Blackfoot (or Gros Ventre?).

The year 1831 was epoch-making in another respect. That year steamboat navigation began on the upper Missouri and the first steamboat reached Fort Union at the mouth of the Yellowstone. This was destined to revolutionize the fur trade.

The long and bitter hostility of the Blackfoot has always been somewhat of a mystery. It has sometimes been attributed to Colter's presence with the Crow when the latter were attacked by the Blackfoot, sometimes to the mistake of Lisa in establishing his first up-river post among the Crow, bitter enemies of the Blackfoot, and sometimes to British influence. The last charge is disproved by a reading of British troubles with the Blackfoot. Neither of the first two seems in any degree an adequate explanation, although it is true that Lisa found the Blackfoot friendly before he established his post among the Crow.

For one thing the Blackfoot were blamed for many events with which they had no connection. The early trappers and traders constantly classed the Gros Ventre with the Blackfoot although they in fact were only loosely allied to them, speaking a different language and occupying a different territory. The Gros Ventre were really a branch of the Arapaho, whom they frequently visited. The Gros Ventre route is known to have been west of the Rockies, to avoid the Crow country, and most of the "Blackfoot" encounters in this region were actually with Gros Ventre. Although such an able authority as Chittenden was thoroughly aware of these facts, in his narrative sections he generally repeats Blackfoot without qualification.

From the conduct of the Blackfoot in a somewhat later time, that is, at the making of the Reservation treaties, both with the United States and Canadian governments, it seems fairly clear that their hostility was in part an effort to keep their own territory and customs intact, aggravated perhaps by the misdeeds of some whites. To well-conducted individuals they seem to have been friendly and permitted numerous individuals to reside among them and marry into the tribe. Hendry's account of the dignity and friendliness of the tribe is but one of many telling the same story. Thompson, too, had most pleasant relations with them until he began selling arms to the Kootenay. They do not seem to have been hostile to trading parties but only to the establishment of posts and the visits of trappers as opposed to traders. In 1857 a Blackfoot chief said to Hector, leader of one of the parties of the Imperial Palliser Expedition, "We see but little of the white man, and our young men do not know how to behave. But if you come among us the chiefs will restrain the young men, for we have power over them. But look at the Crees, they have long lived in the company of white men, and nevertheless they are just like dogs, they try to bite when your head is turned - they have no manners, but the Blackfeet have large hearts and they love to show hospitality." (MacInness, 44) For similar good accounts one may see also the account of Stevens on the Pacific Railway Surveys.

We return to the chronological story of the fur trade advance. The American Fur Company built Fort Cass at the mouth of the Big Horn in 1832, the year of the building of Fort McKenzie. This year is also notable for the visit of Catlin to Fort Union, and the following year came Maximilian, Prince of Weid, both famous chroniclers of Indian customs. In 1834 Thomas Nuttall and J. K. Townsend, English scientists, crossed the continent by way of the fur posts on the Missouri. In 1836 Larprenteur speaks of Blackfoot trading at Fort Union, and of traders being sent into the Blackfoot country, as though it wore a regular thing (Larprenteur, 92: 101.) Father de Smet began his famous missionary labors among the Flatheads in 1840. The usefulness of Fort McKenzie came to a close in 1842-3 when F. A. Chardon, post manager, attempted to massacre a group of Bloods in revenge for the killing of a favorite negro servant, reviving Blackfoot animosity. Fort Benton which was built in 1846 slightly above the Marias on the Missouri was destined to become a famous post because of its situation at the head of steamboat navigation. The day of the fur trade was about to wane, and here, as to the north, the story is to be taken up by engineer, cowboy, miner, railroad builder, and settler. (The preceding section is largely summarized from: Chittenden; American Fur Trade of the Far West; Laut; The Blazed Trail of the Old Frontier; Larprenteur; Forty Years a Fur Trader; Irving; Bonneville. Various other journals and accounts in the bibliography may be used to supplement this information in detail.)

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The Railroad and Boundary Surveys

In 1853 and 1854 the Pacific Railroad surveys foreshadowed the end of the fur trading period. Isaac Stevens, Governor of Washington Territory, directed the surveys in this region. As a result of the surveys, the first documented white entry into the park region was made when Tinkham, in the winter of 1853, crossed the False Marias Pass at the head of Cut Bank Creek from west to east. In 1854 Doty made a trip up the east side of the Rockies, noting Chief Mountain, Chief Mountain Lake, and Bow Lake. On his return he ascended Marias Pass for thirty miles until he could see no mountains ahead on the course of the river, but failed to cross the Pass. In 1835 Stevens negotiated a reservation treaty with the Blackfoot. It is noteworthy that Stevens had no difficulty with the Blackfoot and was in fact materially assisted by them. He was told of the existence of the true Marias Pass and was convinced that a feasible railway pass existed at this point. Doty's failure to cross the pass, while unavoidable, was obviously disappointing to Stevens.

It is of interest that Hugh Monroe was of Steven's party. Whether he went with Tinkham or Doty is not indicated. Monroe was married to a Piegan woman and had lived near the Blackfoot for thirty years. Shultz says Hugh Monroe first camped on lower Chief Mountain or St. Mary's Lake in 1811. As Schultz knew Monroe well, this may have been true. But Monroe's time sense was evidently Indian-like, for he says also that he took Father De Smet there in 1830 and that the Father gave the name of St. Mary to the lakes. This is manifestly impossible as to date. What is possible is that Father De Smet visited the lakes during his trip to the Blackfoot in 1846, although De Smet does not mention it. However, De Smet knew Monroe, met him on several occasions, and in 1850 sent him a very affectionate letter which implies that he had traveled extensively with Monroe. (1:527; 3:946; et seq.) (See: Pacific Railroad Explorations and Surveys, XII:1; 102-185; Schultz; Blackfeet Tales; Smet, Life; Letters & Travel.)

In 1861 the Northwestern Boundary Commission had established a station at the main divide on the 49th parallel, but had not penetrated across the ridge, which at this point is impassable. In 1874 the commission surveying the northern boundary of the United States from the Lake of the Woods to the summit of the Rockies camped on Waterton Lake (which they called Chief Mountain Lake owing to an error in the cartography of the Pacific Railroad surveys). They ran a number of triangulations along the lake, and located a number of the main peaks for a distance of two miles south of the lake, and also calculated their heights. By a circuit through Canadian territory they

connected their surveys with those of the Northwest boundary survey on the summit. The map of the boundary survey commission shows the territory to have been opened to some extent. A trading post was located on the Badger River, while the agency was a short distance north of the Teton. A military post, Fort Shaw, was on the Sun River. These were all connected by a wagon road which ran on to the border. (Survey of the Northern Boundary, etc., pages 312;315; 365-366, Map; Grand: Early History of Glacier National Park.)

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The Frontier Period - Miners, Cattlemen, Railroads

Only four years before the boundary survey, Generals Sheridan and Sherman ascended the Missouri and made several tours of inspection, including Fort Benton. They passed over the divide south of the Park, and Sherman went on to the Pacific. At this time, 1870, Fort Benton was an important point, with a heavy steamboat traffic. Quite a number of settlers were already in the region and more were coming constantly. The Union Pacific was building a northward line toward the territory. The cattle industry was already established. Much of the territory in 1870 was indicated on the accompanying maps of this report as unexplored except along certain routes. (Sheridan, etc.)

The real settlement of Montana began from the west towards the east. This was true of cattle, mining, and agricultural interests. The first settlement began with the cattle industry in a small way when the "road ranches" along the Oregon trail began wintering cattle in western Montana. This cattle business was stimulated by the Mormon war of 1857-8, which caused many "gentiles" to retreat into the Montana-Idaho region with their cattle. The troop operations afforded something of a market in addition to the settlers passing through, and shortly after this the development of military posts and the discovery of gold gave a more permanent basis to the cattle business.

In 1858 the construction of the Mullan road began to connect Fort Benton with Walla Walla. This was much used for a few years, being completed just in time to be an important means of providing supplies to the miners who were rushing to Montana after the discovery of gold in 1862. In 1864 Montana's first legislative assembly was held and the following year it is estimated that there were 150,000 people in western Montana. This number later dwindled considerably, but mining and agricultural interests were firmly entrenched at an early date so that the cattle business did not dominate the state as it did in Wyoming. In 1864 the famous Bozeman trail was opened, providing a more direct route into Montana. Leaving the Oregon trail at Fort Fetterman on the North Platte, it came into Montana via the valley of the Big Horn. Its way led through Indian country and consequently it was the scene of many bloody encounters. For long periods of time it was unusable.

The drives up the Chisholm trail had as part of their objective the stocking of the ranges of Montana. The great drives may be said to be dated in 1871 but the movement of cattle to the north continued for many years. As late as 1902 a shipment of southern cattle to Montana

ranges was made.

The placing of the Indians on reservations after the final Indian wars of the '70's opened the major portion of eastern Montana for settlement, and here the cattleman spread out rapidly from the west ahead of settlement. The open range had, however, a short life in Montana, for the settler pushed in rapidly behind the cattleman, making fenced ranges an early necessity except in the region north of the Missouri, which, for some reason, was much neglected. Even under open range conditions it was little used, possibly from fear of Indian troubles, although on the whole the Blackfeet participated relatively little in the Indian disturbances.

The coming of the railroad was much later in Montana than in most western states. Not until 1880 did a rail line cross the borders of what is now Montana. This was the Utah Northern, now forming part of the Oregon Short Line. The Northern Pacific was built through in 1880-1881, after many vicissitudes, mostly of a financial nature, which need not concern us here. Finally, in 1893, the line of the Great Northern was completed across the northern counties of the state.

The work of railroad building was far less romantic than in the case of the Union Pacific. The supply problem was far less than in the former case, both because of the parallel line and the presence of river transport. The building of the Great Northern was marked by some record track-laying operations, the average for one season being over three miles a day. To chief engineer Stevens of the Great Northern also goes the credit for discovering the long-sought Marias Pass, which is now known by his name.

In 1889 the line of the Great Northern had been built down the Missouri and into the mining districts of Helena and Butte. James J. Hill sent John F. Stevens west to see if he could locate a more northerly pass over the Rockies than any yet known. Stevens, at this late date, on December 11, reached the top of the pass. Only one half-breed Flat Head accompanied him anywhere near the pass and even this companion gave up. Stevens reached the top of the pass alone and spent the night walking up and down to prevent himself from freezing. It may be noted, however, that by this time the Glacier region was to some extent known. In 1882 Prof. Raphael Pumpelly had attempted to cross Cut Bank Pass, succeeding the following year, and in 1855 George Bird Grinnell, whose name is so intimately linked with the Park, had made his first trip. Prospectors were working on the edges of the territory. The modern period had begun. (See: Osgood; The Day of the Cattleman; Hebard and Brininstool; The Bozeman Trail; Sanders; History of Montana; Grant; Early History of Glacier National Park.)

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III. The Canadian Frontier

The later history of the regions to the north of Glacier National Park somewhat parallels that of Montana, but there are important differences. We have already noted that the fur trade had been forced to withdraw northwards in favor of the American "whisky" traders. The excesses of the "whisky" traders caused the creation of the Northwestern Mounted Police, which in Alberta and Saskatchewan preceded the coming of the settlers. Consequently, the period of disorder in Montana between the beginnings of cattle raising, mining, and agriculture, which was marked by road agents and vigilance committees, was lacking in Alberta. There, by 1875, the Mounted Police had established a remarkable degree of order.

The Mounted Police performed another service north of the Park; they early gained the confidence of the Indians, particularly the various Blackfoot tribes. The more influential members of the Blackfoot were grateful for the suppression of the whisky traffic. They had seen the future with sufficient clarity to be anxious to conclude a treaty establishing a reservation at the earliest possible date, realizing that they would secure a better reservation if this were done before the coming of the settlers than afterwards. Consequently, in 1876, a treaty was made with the Blackfoot, which established their reservations and laid down the terms under which they were to occupy them. It is stated that but for the confidence of the Indians in the Mounted Police, established in two short years of contact, it would have been almost impossible to conclude the treaty.

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Decline of the Buffalo

The willingness of the Blackfoot to accept a treaty was in part connected with the rapid disappearance of the buffalo. The process of extermination which had been going on in the United States was being repeated in Canada, although on a smaller scale. In Canada the slaughter was chiefly carried out at first by the Red River Hunters. These were a curious group of half breeds, neither white nor Indian, who had established settlements in the Red River Valley. Excluded from consideration by the Indian tribes, they were white in their sympathies and contacts but Indian in their government and mode of life to a very large degree.

The Red River Hunters in 1820 had sent out five hundred and forty buffalo carts, the famous two-wheeled Red River carts. In 1840 one thousand two hundred and ten carts were sent out. Each year they roamed further and further westward as the buffalo diminished. In 1870 American hunters cut the herds in two, the northern herd roaming the region between the Missouri and the Saskatchewan. From this time on the slaughter became intensive. Yet in 1874 enormous herds still existed. The boundary survey parties of that year and the following year were often delayed for hours by the buffalo.

After the coming of the Mounted Police, some effort was made to keep track of the slaughter of the buffalo. Figures only exist on those hides on which duty was collected when exported to the United States, and it is certain that these were a small part of the whole. They give a dramatic idea, however, of the rapidity of the decline of the buffalo in the late seventies.

	<u>Fort McCleod</u>	<u>Fort Walsh</u>
1877	30,000	
1878	13,000	18,375
1879	5,764	8,617

In 1882 the last herd of about four hundred buffalo was killed near Wood Mountain. In 1888 the Game Report states only six buffalo were still in existence in Canada.

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Transportation

As in the area south of the border, the steamboat played its part in developing the region north of Glacier Park, although it began at a much later date. The first steamboat on the Saskatchewan ran to Edmonton in 1871. It was used by the Hudson's Bay Company exclusively, for its own transport but in 1880 was opened to general transport business. In 1881 the Winnipeg Transport Company took over this business and ran boats up the south branch of the Saskatchewan to Blackfoot Crossing. An attempt made in 1884 to operate steamers on the Bow river was a failure.

As in the United States, there was early interest in a transcontinental railroad. Visualized primarily as a military necessity, it later became a means of developing the vast Plains area, which before had been considered uninhabitable. In 1851 the first bill for the chartering of a railroad company was introduced in the Canadian parliament, and in 1858 the first charter was granted to the North-West Transportation, Navigation, and Railway Company. It proposed a combined water-way, wagon road, and railway, the latter to be extended as business warranted. Nothing was done by this company.

Palliser reported against the construction of a road even as far as from Lake Superior to the Red River, but the interest of the British Government was still involved in view of the military desirability of overland communication with the Pacific. When British Columbia entered the Dominion in 1871, it was with the express understanding that construction of a railroad begin within two years and be completed in ten. Nevertheless, the quarrel over a northern versus a southern route, the inability to find private interests able to finance the undertaking, and the political situation of the times, led to nothing more than surveys being made for ten years.

In 1881 a contract was finally made between the Canadian Government and a group first known only as the "Syndicate" for the construction of the road later to be the Canadian Pacific. Twenty-five million acres of land between Winnipeg and the Rocky Mountains were given to the Syndicate, and the Government was to build part of the western section of the line.

Work began less than six months after the granting of the charter. The speed of construction was remarkable. Across Alberta an average of over three miles of track a day was laid. By 1885 the line was in operation to Calgary and the last spike was driven, although regular operations were not under way over the whole line until a short time later.

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The Cattle Industry

As in Montana, cattle ranching was an early industry in Alberta. In 1872 the first herd of range cattle was brought in by the McDougall brothers, but it was not until some years later that ranching actually began. In 1875 the first dairy ranch was established near McCleod. In 1877 the first cattle were turned loose on the range by Fred Kanouse. The earliest cattle were brought in from Montana and were chiefly of Texas and Mexican strains. By 1884 forty-one companies and private individuals held leased lands in addition to many cattlemen who ran their stock on the open range.

In 1881 there were only 5,690 cattle in all the northwestern territories. By 1885 the Calgary and McCleod districts alone had about 75,000. In 1892 Southern Alberta, south of the Canadian Pacific line, was estimated to have about 200,000 head of beef cattle. In 1901 the number had risen to over 300,000.

Sheep and horse ranching developed almost simultaneously with the cattle industry. In the year 1881, when the number of cattle was only 5,690 in all the Northwest, the number of sheep was 346. Three years later 80,000 pounds of wool were exported. The rivalry of the cattlemen and a series of misfortunes beset the sheep men, however, and by 1903 the sheep industry on a large scale had practically disappeared.

Although there had been some agriculture in the Canadian region for many years, it was not until, the turn of the century that it began to rival cattle raising as a business seriously.

The development of representative governmental institutions and the economic history of the region to the north of Glacier National Park are all parts of modern history. It has not seemed necessary to go into this part of the story, which is in the period since the beginning of the present century. (This entire section is summarized from MacInness's excellent book, *In the Shadow of the Rockies*. Further details may be secured from various works in the bibliography if desired.)

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