ACADIA NATIONAL PARK AND THE EFFORTS OF GEORGE BUCKNAM DORR: HOW THE PRESERVATION FRONTIER MOVED EAST AND THE CHALLENGES FOR ACADIA'S SECOND CENTURY

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by

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ABSTRACT

Through the intrepid efforts of George Bucknam Dorr and the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations (HCTPR), Acadia National Park fostered a preservation frontier in the Eastern United States. As a trustee organization, the HCTPR was one of the first in the world to gather lands together with the express mission of preserving them for public use and recreation. While summer residents had more than enough money and legal right to divide up the island between themselves in private ownership, through a distinctive philanthropic effort they donated land and funds to the creation of a shared public space. Federal protection arrived on Mount Desert Island when Sieur De Monts was created as a National Monument, saving a unique natural space in the midst of a rapidly industrializing world. The arduous process of shepherding land from National Monument to National Park was driven by Dorr's passion and tenacity, making Acadia the first National Park east of the Mississippi River. Finally, as the park approaches its centennial, its future is uncertain due to political happenings and environmental change. Its appreciation and protection is of paramount importance.

For my friends in Acadia,

tirelessly working to keep Mr. Dorr's dream alive and well.

And

To Kathy Cox and Lona Pennisi,

for keeping the spark of history alive in our family.

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PREFACE

This honors thesis was the product of my academic field crossing paths with my residence in Bar Harbor and seasonal occupation in Acadia National Park. My family moved to Mount Desert Island about twenty years ago, and I had the unique opportunity to grow up with a National Park in my backyard. Having worked as an interpretive ranger in Acadia for six summer seasons, I developed a deep interest in Mr. George Bucknam Dorr. Fortunately, park supervisors understood my love of history, and gave me the chance to teach the "Missing Mansion" program to visitors. It was here I "met" the remarkable man who gave time, money, and boundless energy to create a National Park. I had never enjoyed teaching more than when I led tourists through the grounds of Mr. Dorr's estate of Oldfarm. My final motivation for this thesis is that Acadia is quickly approaching her centennial in 2016, and I wanted desperately to reintroduce the public to Mr. Dorr. Having lived, worked, and studied Mount Desert Island, I felt Dorr's name has been lost in many ways, where it aught to be revered and celebrated just as much as the park itself.

The three main chapters jump historical chronology to emphasize three key categories. Chapter I deals primarily with Acadia's accomplishments under the supervision of Mr. Dorr. Chapter II steps backwards to evaluate the assets protected by Acadia, and why there existed a need for a park at all. Chapter III surveys problems the park experienced since Dorr's passing, and the challenges Acadia faces today.

Writing something of this scale was a daunting process, yet one I would not exchange for anything. As an undergraduate student, the experience of researching and writing a thesis is invaluable. Though this work will likely not revolutionize park history

nor solve the conundrums Acadia is up against, if it breathes life into a faded founding father and draws attention to an uncertain future, I will feel accomplished!

The National Parks are far more than the trees, mountains, rivers, relics, or wondrous formations they feature. Taking the time to enjoy what has been set aside for our benefit is the best way to honor those who sacrificed and struggled to protect them. Each time that I found myself pushing against the dreaded writers block, driving home and simply seeing Acadia's mountain range against the sea instantly alleviated obstacles. I have been lucky enough to call Acadia home, the office, and my area of academic interest. I hope the story that follows concerning Mr. Dorr and Acadia will service as an introduction, and inspire the reader to take a vacation to a truly remarkable park.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iii

DEDICATION iv

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS v

PREFACE vi

Table of Figures ix

A Hero in the East 1

- Island of the Deserted Mountain-tops 3
- Acadia's Forebear: The Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations 8
- Charter Trouble and a New Beginning 17
- Superintendent Dorr For A Dollar 23
- Dorr's Park Puzzle 26
- Acadia At Last, and The Ending of an Era 29

Monumental Loopholes 35

- Making the Case 42
- A Period of Many Changes 49
- Wood, Stone, and Iron 53
- Village Improvement Societies 59
- Dorr's Revolutionary Triumph 61

Acadia Without Dorr 64

- Acadia's Ashes 64
- The Shadow of Oldfarm 71
- Falcons Under Fire 76
- Vacationland 78
- Tailpipes, Smokestacks, and Toxins 81
- Unforeseen Tourists 83
- Shoestring Season: Forcible Sequestration In The National Parks 85
- Acadia in the Coal Mine 87

Dorr's Dream in the 21st Century 91

- Happy Centennial 93

Bibliography 96

Author's Biography 103

Table of Figures

Figure 1 – George Dorr with Park Staff 1

Figure 2 – Reverse of staff picture 1

Figure 3 – George B. Dorr as a young man 6

Figure 4 – Partial panorama from Cadillac 11

Figure 5 – Dorr's simple memorial 14

Figure 6 – Eagle Lake 16

Figure 7 – Sand Beach 31

Figure 8 – Bar Harbor ca. 1881 40

Figure 9 – MDI sawmill 53

Figure 10 – Pink Cadillac Granite 54

Figure 11 – Quarry activity in Somes Sound 55

Figure 12 – Clergue's Railway 56

Figure 13 – The engine *Mount Desert* 58

Figure 14 – Dorr's spring house 68

Figure 15 – Oldfarm 72

Figure 16 – Oldfarm ruins 74

Figure 17 – George B. Dorr in his elder years 95

A Hero in the East

Within Acadia National Park Headquarters, a framed photo hangs in a small office hallway. An elderly man with a kind face, imposing mustache, and long dark coat stands amongst much younger uniformed park employees. On the reverse, individuals are numbered; their name and occupational title follows. Number ten says simply, George Dorr, "Hero."[1] Referred to as "the Father of Acadia" on monuments and in park literature, Dorr worked tirelessly to gather, protect, and manage land on Mount Desert Island with the hope of creating the first National Park in the eastern United States. Acadia pioneered federal land preservation in the East and stands as a major accomplishment in conservation history.



Figure 1 (George Dorr with Park Staff, courtesy of Acadia National Park Archives)

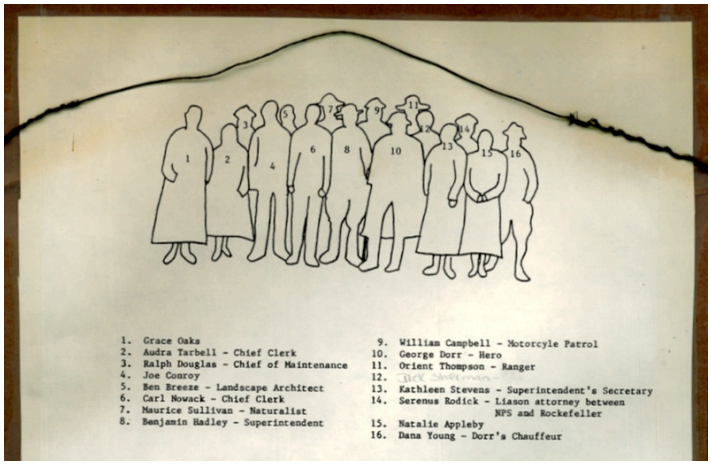


Figure 2 (Reverse of staff picture, courtesy of Acadia National Park Archives)

[1] Figures 1 and 2 from Acadia National Park Archives

Dorr's "heroic" job description is certainly up for critical interpretation, as the term "hero" is so frequently used in current terminology. As a dapper-dressed philanthropist and wealthy nature enthusiast, Dorr may not fit the classical mold for such a title. However, his actions resulted in the exhaustion of his own personal fortune, decades of selfless dedication to a singular cause, and passionate visions for a natural space to benefit future generations. Such devotion and sacrifice could be construed as "heroic" in a modernizing world, as his labor has been called "the greatest of one-man shows in the history of land conservation."[2]

The product of Dorr's efforts, Acadia is one of the few National Parks located east of the Mississippi. Though small in size, protecting only 47,000 acres, it sees millions of visitors every year.[3] Its creation was a unique effort that dramatically altered the way that National Parks were conceived, and subsequently managed. A park formed through donated land in the midst of a fashionable summer retreat, far from the "wild" places of the West, changed the course of National Park history forever. It is for this reason that Acadia will continue to be a relevant asset for the people of the United States in perpetuity. Crucial geographical placement of a federally protected natural space in the East, surrounded by human development, remains one of the park's greatest accomplishments, assets, and challenges. Dorr's work may indeed have been heroic, but his act of creation alone is not enough to ensure Acadia's safety today in the face of new threats previously unimaginable. As the park nears its centennial celebration, understanding and appreciating the resource Acadia protects in an increasingly

[2] National Park Service, "The History of Acadia National Park and Mount Desert Island." *National Park Service, Acadia, History and Culture.* January 2007. http://www.nps.gov/acad/planyourvisit/upload/history.pdf (accessed October 17, 2013).
[3] National Park Service, "History of Acadia"

urbanizing world is of paramount importance to carrying Dorr's vision of stewardship into future.

Island of the Deserted Mountain-tops

An island off the rocky coast of Maine rises amongst many smaller companions, all hovering so close to the mainland that they nearly touch. This rocky mass is Mount Desert Island, third largest island on the coast of the continental United States. For scale, Mount Desert Island, also known as MDI, is approximately five times larger than the New York island of Manhattan.[4] Its granite elevations contain the highest peak on the Atlantic coast north of Rio de Janeiro. Here of all places, resides one of the most well known National Parks in the United States.

The island's geology tells a story of fiery volcanic origins that resulted in the distinctive pink granite that is common in the area. It also exemplifies the passage of slow but irresistible glacial sculpting in its sloping, rounded, and mostly treeless mountaintops:

> Twenty thousand years ago the island that would be called Mount Desert was completely buried under the ice of the Wurm Glaciation. As the ice moved to the sea, it gouged U- shaped valleys in the ridge that crossed the island. Over the next three thousand years, the ice melted and retreated until the current surface of rugged granite, glacial lakes and the Somes Sound Fjord were exposed to the sun.[5]

Now left high and dry on the mountainside, ancient sea caves indicate a very different Mount Desert Island, one much smaller due to higher oceanic conditions.

As far back as roughly four thousand years ago Wabanaki peoples inhabited the island for seasonal hunting and fishing, and remained unaffected by Europeans until

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[4] Collier, Sargent F. *Mount Desert Island and Acadia National Park, An Informal History.* Camden, Maine: Down East Books, 1978, 1

[5] Dorr, *The Story of Acadia National Park. 3rd Edition. Bar Harbor, Maine: Acadia Publishing Company, 1997,* 5

about 1604. On a coastal expedition, Frenchman Samuel de Champlain observed the island. Champlain described and named it in his writings, as Samuel Eliot Morison records:

> In September 1604 Champlain, with twelve sailors and two indian guides, cleared Quoddy Head and sailed along the Maine coast. Attracted by smoke arising from an indian encampment on Otter Creek, he steered for Otter Cliff. "This island," wrote Champlain, "is very high, and cleft into seven or eight mountains, all in a line. The summits of most of them are bare of trees, nothing but rock. I named it l'Isle des Monts- deserts" (i.e., the Isle of Bare Mountains).[6]

Through this French encounter the island was named Mount Desert Island, but the name is not without its problems. Pronunciation remains a local pet peeve when folks "from away" ask where Mount "Desert" (as in the arid wasteland) Island is located.

As a geological wonder and an unmistakable silhouette, native peoples and Europeans used the island as a maritime landmark. As Morison stated, "Green (Cadillac) Mountain can be seen sixty miles away in clear weather."[7] Due to the prominence of the mountain range in such close proximity to the coast, many place names on the island reflect the maritime history. "Sailors, coming from England by the shortest route, would come straight across the Bay of Fundy. Upon making landfall at Mount Desert, they would line up their compass with Cadillac Mountain, and "Compass" Harbor would be directly in their line of sight."[8] This minor cove south of Bar Harbor, named for its navigational significance, would eventually host a resident responsible for the creation of Acadia.

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[6] Morison, Samuel Eliot. *The Story of Mount Desert Island.* 2nd Edition. Yarmouth, Maine: Islandport Press, 2011, 9
[7] Morison, *Story of Mount Desert*, 16
[8] Lee, Donna Marie, Jean Marie Ivey, and Alice J. Menzietti-French. *Facts and Fancy: Acadia National Park, Mount Desert Island.* Ellsworth, Maine: Facts and Fancy Universal, 1993, 11

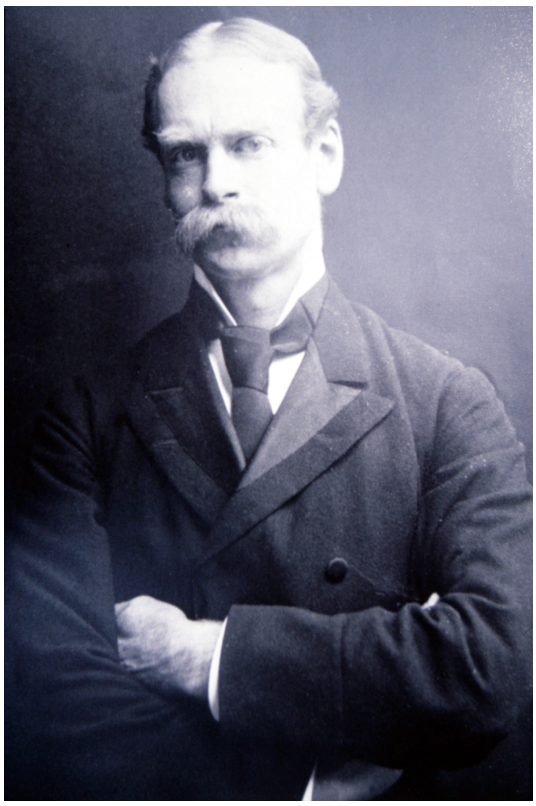
As both France and England claimed the coastal region, life on Mount Desert Island fell under varied colonial power from the 1600s through the mid 1700s. Settlement on the island was sparse in the early years mostly due to the constant fighting. One of the first settlements was a Jesuit establishment, quickly obliterated by English captain Samuel Argall in 1613.[9] After the fall of Quebec, English control began and increasing settlement appeared following the stabilization of power.

From 1763 to 1850, the island was sparsely populated. As Sargent Collier notes, "the earliest settlers raised their cabins on shore sites, near streams which could be used for waterpower and close to grass and marsh land for grazing livestock."[10] A simple agrarian or maritime lifestyle characterized the coastal economy in the early years, and as Ruth Ann Hill explained, "by the time the town of Eden was formed in 1796, there were at least two hundred people in residence, based on the recorded number of polls, or propertied men eligible to vote, which was eighty-nine."[11] It was not until 1844, when the artist Thomas Cole painted island landscapes, that summer visitation became a part of island life. Following his example, fellow artists such as Frederick Church and Fitz Henry Lane also came to the island for inspiration. The publicity that their works received resulted in a new kind of visitor: one who sought to escape the toils and filth of city life and experience a quiet and more pristine environment. Visitation grew steadily, and not long after Mount Desert Island's appearance as a vacation site, wealthy individuals began buying plots of land for summer mansions dubbed cottages. With the growth of a seasonal population and attraction of the island as a destination, few local

[9] National Park Service, "History of Acadia"
[10] Collier, *Mount Desert Island*, 26
[11] Hill, Ruth Ann. *Discovering Old Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park.* Camden, Maine: Down East Books, 1996, 17

families were able to maintain lifestyles independent of the wealthy vacationers. "The chief employment of the people is catering to the wants of the summer visitors."[12] The quiet life on Mount Desert Island ended, but tourism also ushered in a new economy based on vacationing.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, conservationists and nature lovers saw the natural wealth of the United States being abused, and sought to rescue wild spaces from destruction. Passionate nature-lovers such as John Muir had already blazed a trail for fellow enthusiasts to follow. Championing land preservation in the western portions of the United States, Muir and others saved natural wonders and wild places for the common good of the nation by creating National Parks such as Yosemite, Mt. Rainier, Sequoia, and others. While these efforts were ongoing in the western states, the industrial revolution, with all its wonders and destructive influences, encroached throughout the East.


Figure 3 (George Bucknam Dorr as a young man, courtesy of Acadia National Park Archives)

To preserve the ever-shrinking opportunities for finding natural tranquility in the East, George B. Dorr brought the conservation effort to Maine. Originally hailing from Massachusetts, Dorr and his family became seasonal residents of Maine in order to enjoy a more tranquil summer existence. The family witnessed the concerted

[12] Hill, *Discovering Old Bar Harbor*, 25

effort to preserve natural places many hundreds of miles from their homes. The concept of land conservation was seldom applied in the eastern states, as these lands had long been mined, farmed, and privately owned for centuries. Industrial development, timber cutting, farming, and residential expansion had already transformed most of the East. However, parts of Maine had not suffered the same fate, and remained lightly populated in comparison. One of these areas in particular was Mount Desert Island. It was here on the island, in quiet Compass Harbor that George Dorr's family built their summer home, and from which Dorr would work to bring the conservationist movement to the East.

While Dorr was responsible for the development of land that would become Acadia National Park, the concept of land preservation in Massachusetts and Maine belonged to Charles Eliot Jr. Eliot wrote passionately about the possibility of protecting wild spaces for the public good; however he did not live long enough to see his ideals come to fruition. Dying at the age of 38, Eliot Jr. left behind writings that his father, Charles Eliot Sr., later published:

> It is time decisive action was taken, and if the state of Maine should encourage the formation of associations for the purpose of preserving chosen parts of her coast scenery, she would not only do herself honor, but would secure for the future an important element in her material prosperity.[13]

Wanting to honor his son's memory and intentions, Charles Eliot Sr. actively pursued the opportunity for land preservation on Mount Desert Island, where he lived as a summer resident.

In his desire to create a protected wild space on Mount Desert Island, Charles Eliot Sr. wrote to fellow island resident George Dorr on August 12, 1901, asking for his

[13] National Park Service, "Charles W. Eliot." *National Park Service, Acadia, People.* http://www.nps.gov/acad/learn/historyculture/upload/CharlesWEliot.pdf (accessed October 24, 2013).

attendance at a committee meeting designed "to hold reservations at points of interest on this Island, for the perpetual use of the public."[14] The meeting brought together members of the village improvement societies from the local island towns, and by the end of the gathering, the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations (HCTPR) had been formed with Eliot as president and Dorr as vice-president and executive officer. Eliot had sparked Dorr's passion for nature and launched a movement that would ultimately yield a National Park.

Acadia's Forebear: The Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations

Long before there was a National Park on Mount Desert Island, Village Improvement Societies existed in the various island towns. These organizations were responsible for some of the original trails through the forests of Mount Desert Island. With this foresight, residents began viewing portions of the island as scenic treasures. Some lands were saved from private purchase, hidden away on private estates. These improvement organizations set the tone for nature appreciation on the island. The conservation movement then expanded and took island preservation as their main goal under the direction of Eliot and Dorr.

It was not until Charles Eliot Sr. proposed an organization capable of holding lands for the public interest that a notable conservation effort reached the island. The Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations was modeled after a similar group in Massachusetts created by Charles Eliot Jr. and named the Trustees of Public Reservations for Massachusetts. Both were charged with the mission to "acquire, by gift or purchase,

[14] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 13

beautiful or historical lands in any part of the state."[15] The new Hancock County group sought to obtain, primarily through private donation, lands that could be protected and preserved for the public and by the public.

With such individuals as George Dorr amongst them, the group included several people of substantial wealth and social stature. They were able to use their connections to convince friends and powerful acquaintances of the worthiness of their endeavor. These island towns were certainly unique; the extremely wealthy lived in close proximity to average families in an environment utilized simultaneously for recreation and extraction. This meant that purchasing or acquiring land would be an extraordinary and complex experience. As the executive officer of the HCTPR, George Dorr was principally in charge of land acquisitions, and therefore needed to ensure cooperation among residents in this uncommon class mixture.

Although conservationists had already achieved several National Park victories, the major reservations that existed by 1901 were in the western United States. National Parks were still in their infancy, and the nation had no clear oversight for their development, protection, or organization. Predominantly, the reservations were the result of individuals lobbying and sacrificing to save areas that they had found particularly special. Since the western parks were mostly carved out of previously allocated federal lands, the creation of Acadia, crafted together from private donations, is unique in conservation history.

The official charter for The Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations was created January 1, 1903, indicating that the organization was tax exempt. From this point

[15] Goldstein, Judith S. *Tragedies & triumphs: Charles W. Eliot, George B. Dorr, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the founding of Acadia National Park.* Somesville, Maine: Port in a Storm Bookstore, 1992, 18

onward, officers of the Trustees operated under the charter, believing that their status was secure. This was not always to be the case, but in the early years the Trustees were able to receive gifts of land without extensive trouble. The first donations of land to the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations included an oceanic cliffside and a particularly well-known hill looking across Jordan Pond.[16] These two donations were the only gifts received for five years after the creation of the group. Dorr attests that "the corporation slept" during this period.

Eliot privately printed a publication in 1904 outlining to the public the goals and desires his organization. Eliot argued that this organization should hold lands for the common good and for future generations. His vision of the island was certainly ahead of its time:

> The whole island ought to be treated by every resident, and by the body of voters, as if it were a public park; that is, the beauty and convenience of the place as a health and pleasure resort ought to be kept constantly in mind to guide the policy of the towns and the habits and customs of the people.[17]

During these dormant years, Charles Eliot Sr. and others were quietly promoting the goals of the young organization, ensuring that the public was made aware of its mission and hopefully gaining their support.

In 1908 Dorr was slowly recovering from intensive optical surgery when the next gift of land fell into the Trustee's laps. The area known as Beehive and Bowl fell under the supervision of the Trustees and Dorr. To this point, the Trustees had passively accepted gifts of land. Dorr began actively hunting for opportunities rather than wait for friendly philanthropists to come his way. He set his sights upon the summit of Green

[16] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 15
[17] Eliot, Charles William. *The Right Development of Mount Desert.* Privately Printed, 1904, 12

Mountain (now known as Cadillac), the tallest point on the island and indeed on the whole coast of eastern North America.

Now on the offensive, Dorr called on comrades-in-residence living on Mount Desert to assist with the expanding conservation effort. A neighbor and friend of Mr. Dorr was John S. Kennedy of New York (not of Massachusetts Kennedy lineage). Kennedy was a great proponent of the idea, and encouraged Dorr to pursue the new strategy. As Dorr recounts,

> It proved a most interesting piece of work, and I still remember as though it were but yesterday the succession of beautiful Indian summer days I spent upon the mountain-top with my friend and legal assistant, Mr. Harry Lynam, tracing out and identifying the bounds of the land I sought.[18]

The tract identified by Dorr and his friends on the summit of Green Mountain included much of the iconic scenery that millions of visitors now appreciate. Through Kennedy's promise of financial support, Dorr secured the summit from local Daniel Brewer and "gained a priceless possession for the Trustees and the as yet unborn Acadia."[19] The mountain's expansive and rolling granite top provides a commanding view of the entire



Figure 4 (Partial panorama from Cadillac facing southeast, photo credit Sean Cox, 2014)

[18] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 17
[19] Collier, *Mount Desert Island*, 92

island, provided that one walks in a grand loop. From its northern side, Bar Harbor and the surrounding Porcupine Islands can be seen on a fair weather day, and for the clearer days, one can see far inland to the mountains of central Maine. Views from the east and west provide lengthy vistas of further island coastline and mainland. A southern view includes the sloping lines of glacial valleys extending to the jagged shore and finally the last small islands before encountering the vast open ocean beyond.

Following the successful acquisition of Green's summit, an entirely new chapter of land conservation began, one that involved serious competition with locals. Near Bar Harbor is an area known as Great Meadow, a place that George Dorr's elderly mother Mary Dorr and others had frequented. There so happened to exist a spring in the area, and as Dorr attests, "springs, from my boyhood on, have always held a singular interest for me, an interest heightened by years of travel abroad where, from the earliest historic period on, they have been objects of mystery and worship."[20] With his natural wonder piqued and a taste for conservation on his palate, Dorr inquired about a price for the land. However, there were plans to develop the spring, and the asking price put it out of reach of the Trustees. Dorr made a deal with a local, Mr. Ora Strout, to be notified if ever there came an opportunity to purchase the land. Mr. Strout made good on his promise, and Harry Lynam alerted Dorr to the opportunity in 1909. Dorr recorded the events of that morning:

> Mr. Harry Lynam, knowing my interest in the tract drove up hastily, searching out for me, and said: "Mr. Dorr, a bunch if them up town have got together and raised the money to take over the option on the spring. Ora Strout gives you until noon to take it, but will sell to them upon the stroke of twelve. Cash in hand, they are waiting by the clock upon the Village Green. What will you do?"[21]

[20] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 19
[21] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 19

With scarcely fifteen minutes before the deadline, Dorr sent Lynam back to Bar Harbor as fast as the horse and carriage could take him, and claimed the land with a few minutes to spare. Understandably, those who lost their chance at the spring had "hot words" with Mr. Strout, but the land had been irrevocably tucked away into the holdings of the Trustees.

Dorr's work appears to be noble in hindsight, yet through the creation of the park, he also ruffled some local feathers. From the perspective of community members, it may have been ominous watching land disappear into the pockets of a new organization, especially one run and funded by "folks from away." During a time where businesses were attempting to expand to meet increasing seasonal demand, yet another powerful entity was claiming land and preventing commercial development that could benefit the community. Tempers ran hot at times between locals and summer folk, which then also applied to the relationship between locals and the eventual park. One can characterize both interactions as a highly complicated situation even today.

> Most residents believe the park has a negative effect on the cost of land and housing. Respondents clearly believe that the high level of visitation to the park causes traffic congestion with which the local residents must contend. The most clearly positive were availability of recreational and cultural opportunities [including] opportunities for jobs, income of residents, and fire protection. Finally, "general quality of life," was included in the questionnaire. The vast majority of respondents felt the park had an overall positive effect on their lives and on their communities."[22]

While the cottagers and visitors provided major economic influx, the island sometimes can feel overrun from a local perspective. Dorr's work, though individuals lost

[22] Manning, Robert E. *Parks and People: Managing Outdoor Recreation at Acadia National Park.* Hanover, New Hampshire: University of Vermont Press, 2009, 90

entrepreneurial opportunities, may have ultimately guaranteed the economic success of Mount Desert Island for many years to come.

The spring that had been so contested became one of the major landmarks of the future National Park. Dorr named it Sieur De Monts after the first French regional governor of the area Lieutenant Governor Pierre Dugua, Sieur de Monts, displaying his interest in commemorating French history on Mount Desert. Today, Sieur De Monts is the location of the park nature center and the Wild Gardens of Acadia that see hundreds of visitors each day in the summer season. In addition, it serves as a memorial to the work of George Dorr, with a simple plate secured to a large granite stone that reads:



Figure 5 (Dorr's simple memorial at Sieur De Monts spring area, photo credit Sean Cox, 2014)

> In Memory of George Bucknam Dorr
> 1853 - 1944
> Gentleman Scholar
> Lover of nature
> Father of this National Park
> Steadfast in his zeal to make the beauties of this Island available to all

Here in the valley between two of the larger island mountains, the spring that Dorr was so interested in still exists today with the large domed structure standing atop its source that Dorr desired built.

The fall of 1909 brought more acquisitions for the Trustees, most notably several portions of donated land including a donation from Dorr himself. His intention to secure

the region around Beaver Dam pond was nearly complete except for portions of the surrounding mountains. Again Dorr sought Mr. Kennedy, and as with the previous plans, Kennedy agreed to support Dorr.

> No papers passed between us; his word was enough. Mr. Kennedy left for his winter home in New York. Soon I heard that he was ill of pneumonia; then word came suddenly that he had died. It was a great loss to me and I felt it deeply. It left me, also, in a difficult situation as regards the land he offered to buy.[23]

Without any written legal understanding, it seemed that the plan was lost. The area that Dorr desired so intently was rich in personal connections for him. Mary Dorr and others had enjoyed buckboard rides and bicycle excursions on the road that Dorr himself had constructed years before. Unlikely though it seemed, the plan succeeded after Dorr came to know what passed between Mr. Kennedy and his wife before he died: "it happened, most movingly to me, that the last words that his wife had heard him utter, as she bent over him to hear what he might say, were: 'Remember that I promised Mr. Dorr to help him get that land.'"[24] Such was the strength of personality and impression that George Dorr left upon friends, family, and those who worked with him.

Dorr had by this time experienced collecting land from willing donors, displeased local businessmen, as well as donating from his own estate. The number of cottages on the island continued to grow, less space was available on the coastline, and by 1910 a new threat appeared. Until 1910 the water source for much of Bar Harbor from Eagle Lake had remained safe. However, a summer resident had recently proposed to build a home on the shoreline of the lake. This stirred up the fears of the water company and the Trustees alike since many of their interests and members were understandably the same:

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[23] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 23
[24] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 23

> There was considerable crossover in membership between the two corporations. George Dorr purchased 22 shares in the Bar Harbor Water Company in 1895, and in 1911, joined its Board of Directors. Conversely, John Kennedy, a Bar Harbor Water Company board member, sat on the Board of Directors for the Trustees, until his death late in 1909. Working with the Hancock County Trustees of Reservations, the Bar Harbor Water Company moved to prevent others from making similar development plans. The plan worked out by the two organizations was that the water company would finance the purchase of land it wished to protect, but that actual title would be placed in the hands of the Trustees.[25]

The development along Eagle Lake had been effectively stopped by the coalition of the two organizations. Dorr had managed to secure the legal power of eminent domain for the Trustees in order to acquire the land, empowering the organization far beyond the original bounds.[26] The Trustees now represented not only a group seeking to preserve wild spaces for its own intrinsic value, but a holding group for land that protected the public health from its own developmental meddling. However, the action taken to secure Eagle Lake set into motion a series of events that would threaten the Trustees and all protected lands on MDI.



Figure 6 (Eagle Lake looking south, photo credit Sean Cox, 2013)

From 1901 to 1913, the Hancock County Trustees had successfully built a cause and rallied donors around the ideal of natural preservation. Tracts preserved for beauty, for recreation, and for protection of valuable resources were now under the control of the

[25] Morrison, Peter. "History of the Bar Harbor Water Company 1873-2004." Crane and Morrison Archaeology, in association with the Abbe Museum, 2005, 91-92

[26] Hale, Richard Walden Jr. *The Story of Bar Harbor, An Informal History Recording One Hundred and Fifty Years In the Life of a Community.* Binghamton, New York: Ives Washburn, Inc., 1949, 195

Trustees and removed from the threat of development. The work of George Dorr and other residents constituted a monumental milestone in conservation history; the work of the public to actively save wilderness in the midst of private and commercial ownership was truly revolutionary. However, this security of conservation was not to last. By January of 1913, Dorr had already returned to Boston with the intention of wintering there. Dorr wrote of a phone call he received from Harry Lynam: "Mr. Dorr, I think you will wish to know that a group of them down here have got together and have introduced a bill in the State Legislature to annul the charter of our Trustees of Public Reservations corporation."[27]

Charter Trouble and a New Beginning

After hearing of the impending crisis in the State Capital regarding the charter Dorr and his associates had so successfully labored under for over a decade, he informed his friend Mr. Lynam that he intended on boarding a train for Maine that evening. Logging groups on MDI had become uncomfortable with the Trustees power to remove land from commercial development, especially in response to the Eagle Lake acquisition.[28] According to Dorr's account, after arriving in Augusta, he consulted with the speaker of the house John Peters of Ellsworth who happened to be a friendly acquaintance. Upon informing the speaker of the urgent nature of his visit, Dorr proceeded to work with Peters. As Hale wrote, "like an avenging angel, Mr. Dorr descended on Augusta. With the force of a man who knew he was right, with the winning charm of a scholarly man of the world who loved Maine, Mr. Dorr won the leaders of the

[27]Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 28
[28]Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 195

legislature to his side."[29] The job completed by Dorr and his associates was so successful that "ten days later, our bill came up for hearing the action of the committee on it was a foregone conclusion."[30] The Trustees had cleared their first serious legal hurdle successfully due to Dorr's well-connected and persuasive nature. Though the matter was officially concluded, this was only viewed as a temporary victory in Dorr's mind. More legal protection was needed in order for their efforts to be preserved in a lasting way. Dorr stated that the incident with the charter "made me realize on how unstable a basis our Reservations rested."[31]

The natural conclusion in contemplating the next move towards more permanent conservation involved creation of a national park. There were only around a dozen in existence by 1913, and all of them were in the West. A new park conceived through donated land and in the eastern states was a unique concept. Much of the difficulty in the creation of National Parks resides with the congressional involvement it requires. However, there had recently come into law an act assisting in circumnavigating an unwieldy congressional body. The Antiquities Act was a revolutionary step in the field of conservation, allowing for a presidential signature to suffice for federal protection of a National Monument. This was seen by some as a fast track to recognition while waiting for a more compliant congress to come along. Between the inception of the Antiquities Act on June 8, 1906, and the near bust of the Hancock County Trustees charter in January of 1913, Presidents Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson, had proclaimed twenty sites as National Monuments. After coming to the conclusion that federal involvement was crucial in maintaining safety and permanence in conservation, Dorr consulted with Charles Eliot to

[29]Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 196
[30]Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 28
[31]Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 28

inform him of the danger they had recently avoided and to solicit approval for a plan to visit Washington D.C.[32]

Dorr spent valuable time liaising with members of the D.C. scene, staying with Gifford Pinchot. During his stay, Dorr had ample time to make acquaintances and understand the political climate of the time, all of which proved crucial during the next few years. Certainly without the experience, it would have been highly unlikely that Dorr would have succeeded in navigating a troubled wartime government. With a clearer understanding of what lay ahead, Dorr returned home and began the long process of compiling their park case.

While building the argument, Dorr and others published a great deal of literature on the need for an eastern park. Public opinion was crucial for an area already so congested with both people of high and low profile mixed in a vacation destination. Dorr wrote an article for magazine publication:

> The completion of this purpose will create a wild park of remarkable beauty, unique character, and great variety of landscape feature, whose permanent and best development in accordance with the spirit of their undertaking the members of the association feel will be provided for most wisely by placing it--except in special portions carefully selected and set aside for arboretum and other educational or scientific purpose--in the hands of the Federal government as a gift to the nation.[33]

The unique character of the island was essential to their argument, simultaneously philosophizing on the importance of wild spaces to humanity.

The appeal for an eastern park, closer to the vast majority of United States citizens, was the angle that Charles Eliot explained in his own articles for magazine publication. He said specifically, "it would help consecrate for all time to the

[32] Dorr, *Story of Acadia, 29*
[33] Dorr, George B., Ernest H. Forbush, and Merritt Lyndon Fernald. *The unique Island of Mt. Desert.* 1914, 3

improvement of the human environment" and regarding the geographical placement of Mount Desert Island much closer to the already established major populations, "it would take appropriate part in resisting and overcoming the destructive influences on modern civilization of urban life and the factory system."[34] Mount Desert had already played host to residents seeking time away from the "evils" of the city. Eliot continued, exclaiming that the government has paid attention to conservation in the West, but has long neglected the East, an area where "manufacturing industries occupy the major part of the population and the destructive effects of city life has long been manifest."[35]

While Dorr and Eliot focused their campaigns on the positive effect for human visitors, their colleagues wrote extensively of the benefits to the natural world. Earnest Forbush, a wildlife enthusiast, wrote about the unique placement of Mount Desert Island regarding birds: "An admirable opportunity presents itself for the establishment of a bird study station such as has proved so valuable in Germany and has revolutionized the methods formerly in use there for the encouragement and protection of bird life."[36] Forbush greatly desired that if a park were to exist, it would be an opportunity to observe the migratory species that use it as a landmark, breeding ground, or summer home. M.L. Fernald focused instead on the many varied botanical wonders of the island. "This extraordinary accumulation within one small area of the typical plants of the arctic realm, of the Canadian Zone, and in many cases of the southern coastal plain, cannot be duplicated at any point known to the writer."[37] Both authors wanted to assist Dorr's

[34] Eliot, Charles W. *The Need of Conserving the Beauty and Freedom of Nature.* 1914, 20
[35] Eliot, *Conserving Beauty and Freedom of Nature*, 20
[36] Dorr, Forbush, and Fernald, *Unique Island of Mount Desert*, 7
[37] Dorr, Forbush, and Fernald, *Unique Island of Mount Desert*, 13

crusade for a park in any way possible, drawing the attention of people with interests other than simple natural beauty.

Dorr returned to Washington in 1914 with specifications regarding the land in the possession of the Trustees, and a continued hope for a National Park designation. While in the capitol, it was brought to Dorr's attention that his desire for a National Park was unlikely to be successful considering the political atmosphere. Dorr's friend, Dr. Palmer informed him:

> Congress is already loaded up with bills for the establishment of National Parks the country over, all calling for appropriations, and most of them, introduced solely for political effect, ought not to pass. These other projects will be tacked onto yours in an omnibus bill and the whole go down in defeat.[38]

With the prospects of a National Park diminishing simply due to the current political trends, Palmer suggested that pursuing a National Monument would be far more likely under the circumstances.

Once Dorr concluded that the National Monument route was the correct path to pursue, the documents were then turned over to the proper officials. The proposal was returned to Dorr, the Public Lands Commission stating that it did not fully meet the standards for a monument. It took Dorr and Harry Lynam another two full years before the documents were again presented and finally accepted.

Although the groundwork had been laid, the project was far from complete success. Although it only required a presidential signature, the politics and personal agendas of the day clouded the process. The proclamation was passed on to President Wilson through proper and official channels, yet it remained unanswered. Due to his lengthy periods in Washington, Dorr had accrued many connections, and through their

[38] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 34

assistance he came to understand that the individual holding up the project was Secretary of Agriculture David Houston. Houston suggested to President Wilson that the Antiquities Act did not grant the authority to accept a proposal, despite the precedent set by Muir Woods. Feeling that this was an obstacle that needed more direct intervention, Dorr wrote to Eliot and asked him to personally pen a letter to Houston to persuade him: "Playing my trump card, I had telegraphed that morning to President Eliot, to whom I knew Secretary Houston to be indebted for kindness shown him earlier in his academic career at Harvard as a professor."[39] The result came three days later when Secretary Houston had officially shifted his outlook on the matter, and three days following the change of heart, July 8, 1916, President Wilson created Sieur De Monts National Monument.

The Bar Harbor Times on July 15th of 1916 proclaimed on its front page, "Pres. Wilson Accepts Sieur De Monts Memorial - Superb U.S. National Park of Mt. Desert Hills," followed by: "Through the courtesy of George B. Dorr, the whose untiring effort the creation of Sieur De Monts National Monument has been made possible." The article goes on to say, "the new national playground is already known to many thousands for its majestic beauty. It embraces more than five thousand acres of rugged mountain, directly south of Bar Harbor. In fact, its northern boundary lies within a mile of that famous resort."[40] Now the nation had recognized the work being done to preserve wild spaces even in the East, the precedent had been set for other places to follow suit. The unique formation of the monument was also recognized in the article,

> The lands included in the Sieur de Monts National Monument have never formed a part of the public domain but, through the patriotism and

[39] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 50
[40] Bar Harbor Times, July 15th, 1916

> generosity of the present owners, known collectively as the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations, are presented to the United States. The trustees have been represented in the matter by Mr. George B. Dorr of Boston who, in the creation of this National Park, has attained the object of years of public spirited endeavor.[41]

Now federally recognized and protected from external sources, the long process that Dorr had undertaken had reached a significant milestone. From a geographical area already well known and explored, private citizens with the intentions inclined towards preservation and with the financial means available had successfully assembled roughly 5,000 acres for a nationally recognized and protected region.

As with any deal, there were stipulations however. To assuage the fears of a wartime government, Dorr had assured them that if the land was accepted as a monument, he would be willing to become caretaker of the lands until such time as an appropriation could be made to help finance the project. While bargaining for the monument, Dorr was informed that unpaid service of this kind could not be accepted, so to resolve the matter, Dorr writes of his salary agreement: "I would take over charge of the Monument at the lowest salary paid at that time to anyone in government service, a dollar per month."[42]

Superintendent Dorr For A Dollar

Dorr, now caretaker of the nation's newest National Monument, still had grand plans for the site. The idea of a National Park had never strayed too far from his designs. Perhaps a fear of abolishment plagued Mr. Dorr, for if a presidential signature could create a National Monument, how difficult could it be to conceive of an action that takes

[41] Bar Harbor Times, July 15th, 1916
[42] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 49

that decree away? Regardless, the passion for a National Park still drove Dorr to seek more stable protection.

The success in bringing federal recognition to Mount Desert Island spurred Dorr on to greater efforts. "By 1918, George Dorr's single-minded drive to enlarge Sieur De Monts National Monument and turn it into a National Park was picking up momentum. Some 15,000 acres of Mount Desert Island --triple the original gift-- was being offered."[43] As Dorr's ambition for a park grew, so did the local interest in preserving the wild spaces still remaining. Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane, assisting with lobbying for Dorr's park plan, eloquently wrote a letter to Congressman Scott Ferris, chairman of the Committee on Public Lands in 1918, summarizing all that Dorr had argued.

> First: Mount Desert has important historic value. Second: Scenically, its impressive headlands give Mount Desert Island the distinction of combining sea and mountain. Their high rounded summits, often craggy, form a background for a rugged shoreline and an island-dotted harbor. Third: From the point of conservation, the value of the proposed park can hardly be overestimated. The forests are largely primeval. Oaks, beeches, birches, maples, ashes, poplars, and many other deciduous trees of our eastern range mingle with pine and hemlock. Wildflowers abound. There are few spots, if any, which can combine the variety and luxuriance of the eastern forests in such a small compass. The rocks have their distinction, worn by the ice sheets of the glacial period, eroded by the frosts and rains of the ages, their bases carved by the sea, their surfaces painted by the mosses and lichen of today, they are exhibits of scientific interest as well as beauty. Still another distinction is Mount Desert's wealth of bird life. All the conditions for a bird sanctuary in the East seem to be here fulfilled. Fourth: From a recreation standpoint, the park would be capable of giving pleasure to hundreds of thousands of people living east of the Mississippi river.[44]

[43] Duncan, Dayton, and Ken Burns. *The National Parks; America's Best Idea.* Alfred A. Knopf, 2009, 191
[44] National Park Service. "Acadia National Park: general management plan." Department of the Interior, North Atlantic Region , 1992, 3

While all that Lane wrote is true, the scale of visitation imagined was ultimately dwarfed by reality. Dorr had succeeded in convincing wealthy men to help create and propose the park, and now finally the right politicians to make the park a reality.

Using his connections in Washington, Dorr was able to have two bills entered simultaneously in the House and Senate in 1919. These bills requested the creation of Lafayette National Park, a name meant to invoke a connection between the United States and France, especially during the developments of World War I. The choosing of the name was far more complicated than expected however: "I planned to call the Park the Mount Desert Island National Park. Someone asked what the name meant, was it really a desert? And I had to explain that in the old French the word 'desert' meant uninhabited by man, wild but not devoid of life."[45] The language barrier certainly became an issue, as some could not pronounce the current name of Sieur De Monts, so continuing the name was not a desirable option. Still wanting to honor the French heritage of the island while utilizing current events and the national sympathy for France, Lafayette became the name. The bill succeeded in both House and Senate, but halted on the desk of President Wilson yet again.

With the wartime events demanding much of Wilson's time, Dorr seized the small window of opportunity while Wilson remained in D.C. before sailing to Europe. The bill first required the signature of the President of the Senate, which Dorr secured without much trouble. At the same time, a bill authorizing the transition of the Grand Canyon from National Monument to National Park, similar to Dorr's project, needed Wilson's signature as well. Dorr records that, "getting the President of the Senate's office to entrust

[45] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 71

the two bills to me as a special messenger to the Executive Chambers at the White House, I took them over personally."[46] Both bills were finally signed on February 26, 1919.

Dorr's Park Puzzle

Lafayette National Park now joined the ranks of preserved land under federal protection through the intrepid efforts of Dorr, and stands as a unique collaboration in the history of preservation. Two distinctive predecessors, Lassen National Park and Muir Woods National Monument, along with contemporaneous park Grand Canyon set the stage for Lafayette's legal path. The unique formation of the park owes several of its components to these preservation compatriots, yet Dorr combined them in an unprecedented way. While being on the forefront of many changes in preservation, Lafayette was not the *first* in many categories, but Dorr managed to combine crucial elements from each innovation.

When it was designated a National Monument, there had already been dozens of regions preserved through the use of the Antiquities Act, so Sieur De Monts could not claim originality in this legal pathway. Dorr had been prompted to utilize the National Monument status to achieve federal protection while hoping for a National Park. This had already been achieved in California through the creation of Lassen National Park, the first monument to do so in history.[47]

President Roosevelt had established the Lassen region as a Forest Reserve in 1905, and in 1907 "the president signed two separate proclamations that established Lassen Peak National Monument and Cinder Cone National Monument, each retaining

[46] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 74
[47] Krahe, Diane L., and Theodore Catton. *Little Gem of the Cascades: An Administrative History of Lassen Volcanic National Park.* University of Montana: National Park Service, September 2010, 38

the boundaries drawn by Forest Supervisor Barrett."[48] The two National Monuments were placed under the care of the U.S. Forest Service (the National Park Service not having been created until 1916), and was the topic of political debate for the following years. This was especially due to the legal stipulations involved in creating the monuments within the previously established National Forest. Roosevelt had stated the monuments were "not intended to prevent the use of the lands for forest purposes," although in cases of conflicting land use, the preservation-oriented National Monument "shall be the dominant reservation."[49] Local opinion was strongly in favor of National Park status for Lassen despite departmental protests. "Forest Service resistance to the Lassen National Park proposal was part of a larger agency response to what Assistant Forester William B. Greeley described as a "National Park craze" sweeping the West, fomented by railroads and other commercial interests."[50] Wanting to maintain control of the lands placed at their disposal, the U.S. Forest Service proved to be a major hurdle for many monuments and parks seeking to place lands elsewhere for *preservation* rather than for *conservation.*

The same David Houston who would insistently block Dorr's application for federal protection in 1919, had done so to those promoting Lassen National Park several years earlier. "Houston's report on the Lassen Volcanic National Park bill reflected the strong anti-park viewpoints echoing from the ranks below him. "The Service should consistently oppose" all National Park proposals other than for exceptional scenic lands of national significance."[51] The opposition eventually was overcome, and in 1916 the two

[48] Krahe and Catton, *Little Gem of the Cascades*, 23
[49] Krahe and Catton, *Little Gem of the Cascades*, 24
[50] Krahe and Catton, *Little Gem of the Cascades*, 28
[51] Krahe and Catton, *Little Gem of the Cascades*, 34

National Monuments of Lassen Peak and Cinder Cone were incorporated together as Lassen Volcanic National Park, blazing the trail from monument to park.

However, Lassen had been carved from lands reserved as a Forest Reserve, while Sieur De Monts had been crafted by private donation. Here also existed a precedent in Muir Woods, also of California. A gift of 295 acres donated by William and Elizabeth Kent preserved a section of woodland for the creation of a National Monument, in order to prevent its development.[52] Accepted in 1908, this was the first instance of private donation being the driving force enabling federal preservation, encouraging Dorr and the Hancock Trustees. While the idea of donated land becoming the possession of the government had already been established through Kent's generosity, the scale of Dorr's donation was significantly different. The region under control of the Trustees contained thousands of acres as opposed to the several hundred of Muir Woods.

Lafayette's "twin" Grand Canyon, which entered parkhood on the same day utilized the Lassen process and capitalized on the same political opportunities as Dorr's unit. The Canyon had experienced a much longer history of federal designations, beginning with a Forest Reserve in 1893, changing to a Game Preserve in 1906, National Forest in 1907, and finally achieving National Monument status in 1908. Each stage of Grand Canyon's development had accompanying problems; the most prominent concerned the lack of real protection. "The 1897 law that allowed grazing, mining, and lumbering within reserves, though it led to permit requirements for such pursuits, did not challenge rimside entrepreneurs. President Theodore Roosevelt visited the canyon in

[52] Auwaerter, John, and John F. Sears. *Historic Resource Study for Muir Woods National Monument, Golden Gate National Recreation Area.* Prod. Olmstead Center for Landscape Preservation. Boston, Massachusetts, 2006, 277

1903, expressing his wish that it remain pristine for future generations."[53] Just as with Lassen, Grand Canyon fell under the supervision of the U.S. Forest Service from 1905 until the National Park Service took the reigns after 1919.

Dorr's work combined the process of federal redesignation from monument to park, and the philanthropic work of private donation in a uniquely crafted unit, without the U.S. Forest Service having controlled the region previously. In addition to this amalgamation of legal precedents, Lafayette can claim one historical "first" in becoming the *only* National Park formed in the eastern United States to that point. Dorr's skill in political timing and maneuvering yielded a major victory for preservation that would fortunately be followed by many others.

> In 1926 Congress authorized Shenandoah, Great Smoky Mountains, and Mammoth Cave National Parks in the Appalachian region but required that their lands be donated. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who gave more than $3 million for lands and roads for Acadia, contributed more than $5 million for Great Smoky Mountains and a lesser amount for Shenandoah. With such private assistance, the states involved gradually acquired and turned over the lands needed to establish these large natural parks in the following decade.[54]

While Sieur De Monts, Lafayette, and finally Acadia could not be leaders in certain legal arenas, the progression overseen by Dorr heralded a new age for preservation that finally included the East, where such efforts were greatly needed.

Acadia At Last, and The Ending of an Era

In March of 1924, an article published in the Bar Harbor Times contained an evaluation of Robert Sterling Yard's new National Park booklet, which now included

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[53] Anderson, Michael F. *Polishing the Jewel: An Administrative History of Grand Canyon National Park.* Vol. Monograph No. 11. Grand Canyon Association, 2000*,* 7

[54] National Park Service, *The National Parks: Shaping the System. Washington D.C.: Harpers Ferry Center, 2005,* 23

Lafayette National Park. Yard included a portion dedicated to the origins of the park saying, "the story of the making of Lafayette National Park has been told in detail not only to preserve for history a valuable record, but also to point the example for other achievements in practical conservation. What Mr. Dorr has done, with a good cause to aid him and the help of friends, others may do in other sections of the country."[55] Dorr's work had come to fruition, and the stage was set for other conservation efforts, not only in the west to take up the same fight.

The work on Mount Desert Island continued, Dorr never relenting in his desire to gather and protect more wild or undeveloped spaces. A unique opportunity appeared in 1922, when Dorr happened to strike up a conversation with Mrs. Warner Leeds. Leeds, a landowner on Schoodic Peninsula directly across Frenchmans Bay from MDI, proposed her share as an addition to the park.[56] Though excited at the prospect, Dorr recognized the proposal was yet another contentious affair. The tantalizing offer also included the stipulation that the land "be used as a public park and for other uses, including the promotion of biological and other scientific research."[57] The Schoodic proposal drifted in limbo for several years, until 1928 when Congressman Cramton from Michigan was invited to make a vacation stop in MDI by George Dorr.[58] Dorr's skill at making friends within governmental realm was something truly remarkable, and here he succeeded yet again.

> I told Representative Cramton of our Schoodic reservation. "Why do you not included it in the Park?" he asked. That, I told him, was what I hoped at the start to do, but two obstacles blocked my way: First, the name of the

[55] Bar Harbor Times, March 12th, 1924
[56] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 104-105
[57] National Park Service, "The Schoodic Peninsula." *Acadia National Park.* May 2009. http://www.nps.gov/acad/planyourvisit/upload/schoodic.pdf (accessed March 5, 2015)
[58] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 107

> Park—and I told him of Lady Lee's and her sister's objection to the name of Lafayette [the sisters being of English heritage]; and second, an act of Congress would be necessary, since when the bill creating the Park was drawn I was able only to secure, looking to the future and the Park's increase, to accept gifts of land lying on Mount Desert Island, and Schoodic lay upon the mainland.[59]

Cramton was supportive of the Schoodic addition, and urged Dorr to submit a bill, which simultaneously changed the name of the park, and extended the geographical bounds of land acceptance. Changing the name also satisfied the landowners on Schoodic, as "avid Anglophiles, they had always been unwilling to donate Schoodic for inclusion in such a French-named entity as 'Lafayette Park.'"[60]All of this Dorr did, and with the dedicated support of Cramton, was passed in the nick of time added onto the Interior Appropriations Bill. The name change was a welcome revision regardless of the additional benefits as "World War I was over, and the name Lafayette no longer served to enlist support for the park. *La Cadie* or *L'Acadie* is the French version of an Indian word meaning 'the place.'"[61] Thus Dorr had expanded his park project and renamed it Acadia in the process.


Figure 7 (Sand Beach, photo credit Sean Cox, 2014)

One of the most significant additions to the park now named Acadia was a small segment of oceanfront property

[59] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 108
[60] Workman, *Workman, Allen K. Schoodic Point: history on the edge of Acadia National Park. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2014,* 114
[61] Roberts, *Roberts, Ann Rockefeller. Mr. Rockefeller's Roads, The Story Behind Acadia's Carriage Roads.* 2nd. Maine: Down East Books, 2012, 63

containing a rare sandy beach amongst the rough and rocky coastline. Because of Dorr's perseverance and Mr. Rockefeller's assistance in 1929, visitors today recognize the cove as Sand Beach, one of the most well known and loved features of the park. At the same time, the gift included a guesthouse built by the Homans family, originally thought to become a superintendent's residence upon Dorr's retirement[62] The house was never used by Dorr and according to Hale, locals were very displeased when Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior from 1933 to 1946, took up a prolonged residence in the home while on an inspection trip. The home no longer stands, swept away by natural disaster in 1947.

Mr. Dorr still managed to keep himself entirely immersed in the Park business in his advancing age. Still acting as superintendent despite failing health, he worked at a fever pitch as though he was a much younger man. As Collier wrote, "Dorr, now eighty, his failing sight having reached almost the point of no return, betook himself to Washington for a last request concerning the enlargement of his beloved Acadia: he hoped to extend its lands to the western, the "backside" of Mt. Desert Island."[63] One significant change was that Dorr now accepted a full and regular salary for his position. Having gallantly refused payment years ago, Dorr had little choice now; "his great fortune had dwindled to almost nothing from his passion for the park and from mismanagement by those he entrusted with his affairs."[64]

A sturdy and stubborn individual, the health problems slowed him little. "One morning in 1934, Dorr was gone, it seemed, overlong during his usual swimming period

[62] Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 202
[63] Collier, *Mount Desert Island*, 131
[64] National Park Service, "George B. Dorr." *National Park Service, Acadia, People.* http://www.nps.gov/acad/learn/historyculture/upload/GeorgeBDorr.pdf (accessed November 2, 2013)

[Mr. Dorr was fond of ocean swimming in all seasons]. The old man, lying unconscious across a ledge [was] carried back to the house. He was diagnosed as the victim of a severe heart attack, with but six months to live."[65] Clearly paying no heed to this, Mr. Dorr outlived this pronouncement by a full and productive nine years. These last few years were spent in near total blindness, despite the surgery he had previously undergone. Unable to see, Dorr still made himself useful and maintained his centrality in the park proceedings. Supported by the small staff of devoted house faculty, Dorr was rescued from disaster on occasion, "in the lobby of Portland's Hotel Eastland, the blind Dorr tripped at the head of a trio of terraced staircases and was about to plunge full length when saved by a flying tackle from the ever watchful chauffer."[66] Though blind, poor, and increasingly dependent on others for basic affairs, Dorr maintained an attitude unparalleled by any that met him. "The old man reveled in illuminating the downcast spirits of others, transmitting mirth and encouragement from his own never-ending supply."[67]

The heart that was supposed to cease beating in 1934 finally gave out on August 5, 1944. The Bar Harbor Times of that week contained a modest length article concerning Dorr's passing, saying finally "in his passing, Bar Harbor and New England lose an outstanding citizen."[68] Perhaps an egregious understatement, Dorr represented conservation in a way that none could have imagined, which was seen across the nation. As Father to one of the most well known and visited National Parks in the country, Dorr and his legacy touches the lives of millions each year as they enter Acadia, from all parts

[65] Collier, *Mount Desert Island*, 132
[66] Collier, *Mount Desert Island*, 135
[67] Collier, *Mount Desert Island*, 137
[68] Bar Harbor Times, August 10th, 1944

of the globe. As a lifelong bachelor, Dorr had no family to provide for and no need to conserve his family fortune. His immense expenditures for the park reveal a public inheritance that few leave behind, and no one person can own. While never having met him, those who visit Acadia are direct beneficiaries of his work and passion.

Monumental Loopholes

Dorr's passion for the land and resource was boundless, but in order to save what he loved, Dorr had to quantify and defend Mount Desert Island as a valuable resource deserving of federal protection. The bounds of the Antiquities Act forced Dorr and the Hancock County Trustees to prove MDI's historical and scientific worthiness. Simply being beautiful was not enough to draw governmental dollars to the region, and through research and well-reasoned arguments, Dorr succeeded in validating local ardor in quantified legal terms. Bringing the National Monument designation was crucial to Dorr's success, and it could not have been achieved without precedents set by zealous presidents and a vaguely worded Act. Despite political and legal opposition, Dorr triumphed in bringing the designation of National Monument to the East, and in doing so revolutionized the concept of federal conservation. Never before had a Monument existed east of the Mississippi, preserving lands that had previously been utilized by humans for natural resources and for personal property. The land was not pristine territory, but it consisted of donated parcels stitched together to form a natural space amidst development.

The late 1890s were a unique time in United States history, where the colonial ideals of wilderness were fading and environmental awareness slowly came to the forefront. Romantic era culture concerning man and nature coupled with industrial revolution set the stage for a remarkable opportunity which men like Muir, Theodore Roosevelt, and Dorr capitalized upon. Roderick Nash, the well-known environmental historian wrote, "transforming the wild into the rural had Scriptural precedents which the New England pioneers knew well. Genesis 1:28, the first commandment of God to man,

stated that mankind should increase, conquer the earth, and have dominion over all living things. This made the fate of wilderness plain."[69] Having been divinely granted ownership of all wildernesses, settlers proceeded to conquer "unimproved" land to create settlements. Religious confirmation that unused land was displeasing to God meant cultural appreciation of wilderness did not widely exist. This changed in the 1890's when land scarcity became a factor in early preservationist reactions.

As a result of this rare social environment in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Antiquities Act of 1906 proved to be one of the most widely interpreted bills of the twentieth century. Created with the intention of preserving historic landmarks, the Act provided a 'backdoor' to conservationists, including Mr. Dorr. Still used today, this Act grants executive authority to declare certain lands a National Monument. Though the singular signature of a compliant president, lands can be tucked away under federal protection if they have met the standards as describe in the Act.

Executive authority for creating reservations existed before 1906, though the Forest Reserve Act of 1891, "empowering presidents of the United States, without consulting Congress, to set aside parcels of public land as national forest reserves, and providing some measure of protection from the wholesale destruction of woodlands."[70] Acute awareness of finite space in the post-manifest destiny North American continent meant that what wilderness was left suddenly had enormous value. Men like John Muir had long advocated for wild spaces in the face of human development. "Early settlers, claiming Heaven as their guide, regarded God's trees as only a larger kind of pernicious weeds. Accordingly, with no eye to the future, these pious destroyers waged interminable

[69] Nash, Roderick. *Wilderness and the American Mind.* 5th Edition. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967, 31
[70] Duncan and Burns, *The National Parks,* 84

forest wars."[71] The census record of 1890 also carried with it a message of environmental concern, noting the decline in available timber and arable lands within reach of United States citizens.[72] Upon Frederick Jackson Turner's declaration in 1893 of the closing frontier, the academic world also came to the conclusion that wilderness had more value than simply a commercial evaluation. Prominent and outspoken individuals, such as George Bird Grinnell, had lobbied successfully to empower the President in the 1891 act.

With this previous executive power granted in 1891, the precedent had been set for continual expansion of Presidential authority in regards to public lands. While the future for forests seemed brighter, human activity threatened other national resources not covered by the Forest Reserve Act. In the Southwest, the ancient ruins of Native American civilizations were in danger from looters and those claiming to be archeologists. Richard Wetherill ignited a social fire when he filed for a homestead amongst the ruins and excavated thousands of artifacts. Although Wetherill claimed the land privately, his intention was to protect it from those seeking to pillage the site until his call for governmental help was answered. Angry professionals in the East dismissed Wetherill's work and "ironically, the furor over Wetherill's excavations at Chaco Canyon prodded Congress into doing exactly what he had proposed. The Act for the Preservation of American Antiquities made any unauthorized disturbance of a prehistoric ruin a federal crime."[73] Included in the bill were punishments for violating the law and an executive power to designate lands as National Monuments if they contained "historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific

[71] Muir, John. *Our National Parks.* Boston and New York: Houghton and Mifflin Company, 1909, 336
[72] Runte, Alfred. *National Parks: The American Experience.* 2nd Edition. University of Nebraska Press, 1987, 68
[73] Duncan and Burns, *The National Parks,* 104

interest."[74] The original Antiquities Act had also restricted the size of an appropriation to 640 acres, but in the final version passed by congress in 1906, a slight text change had resulted in another vaguely worded opportunity: "the smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the object to be protected."[75] It was within these small sentences that a window existed for conservationists. President Theodore Roosevelt threw wide this window, and changed the course of the conservationist movement forever. "Almost immediately he interpreted the word 'scientific' to include areas noted for their geologic (hence scenic) as well as man-made significance." Vague language in the Antiquities Act now became one of the most valuable tools in the arsenal of avid nature-lovers.

Some could consider Roosevelt's use of the Antiquities Act as an audacious interpretation. His administration saw many firsts, and paved the way for many more. Roosevelt became the first U.S. president to use the word 'conservation' while addressing Congress. He was also the first to call a federal conference on preserving the United State's natural heritage.[76] Under his supervision, he proclaimed a total of eighteen monuments and protected 1,530,934 acres; these two records stood until broken by president Clinton creating a total of nineteen monuments, and president Carter preserving 54,125,000 acres.[77]

Though Roosevelt had saved precious lands in the West, the East remained at the mercy of industrialists, capitalists, and private land development. Muir, father of

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[74] National Park Service, "Antiquities Act 1906-2006, About the Antiquities Act." *Archeology Program.* http://www.nps.gov/archeology/sites/antiquities/FAQs.doc (accessed February 2, 2015)
[75] National Park Service, "Antiquities Act of 1906"
[76] Duncan and Burns, *The National Parks,* 107
[77] National Park Service, "Antiquities Act of 1906." *Federal Historic Preservation Laws.* http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/FHPL_AntiAct.pdf (accessed January 5, 2015)

preservation movements in the western states, wrote in his book, *Our National Parks:*

> The tendency nowadays to wander in the wilderness is delightful to see. Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wilderness is a necessity: and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but fountains of life.[78]

Muir understood the value of land differently than his contemporaries, and certainly most politicians. His emotional and spiritual connection to land could not be quantified in a monetary way, yet his battle would be fought within an arena which was solely based upon the financial potential stored in the acres of wilderness he so cherished. While Muir espoused the worth of lands in the West that were, in the eyes of most people, virtually primeval and untouched, land east of the Mississippi had been largely exploited. Muir himself stated that "most of the wild plant wealth of the East has vanished, -- gone into dusty history."[79] Fortunately, George Dorr and the philanthropists of Mount Desert Island seized the opportunity to preserve what remained.

Although Muir thought the East lost to preservation efforts, the environmental state of the New England area provided a unique opportunity. The "pristine" wilderness Muir sought had vanished, yet lands had rebounded from previous human activity to become what environmental historian Richard Judd terms "second-nature." The regrowth of forests and natural reclamation "could return even the most abused lands to seemingly wild conditions within a generation or two."[80] Under these conditions, Dorr and his associates set out to save this recovered second-nature land upon Mount Desert Island.

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[78] Muir, *Our National Parks*, 1
[79] Muir, *Our National Parks*, 6
[80] Judd, Richard W. *Second Nature: an environmental history of New England.* Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014, 265

While still one of the largest islands on the eastern coast of the United States, MDI is still a small parcel of land. It seems especially small when considering the nature of arable land for subsistence farming and early settlement. The areas level enough to retain soil while still being accessible, leave convenient access for residency are few. However, as one account of Bar Harbor from 1881 attests, the island was still a busy and productive environment: "The soil varies from loam to gravel, with some marsh. Wheat, corn, oats, potatoes and barley are all raised to some extent. There are two saw-mills for long lumber, two shingle and two clap-board mills."[81] The igneous composition of the island coupled with a glacial scouring of the island left little in the way of suitable farming soil. However the small forests held potential, especially in close proximity to the ocean. Shipbuilding became one of the staple activities of waterfront communities, and required vast amounts of lumber. While most ships produced were of smaller scale, the need for sawmills and local wood still existed.



Figure 8 (Bar Harbor from Bar Island, ca. 1881, courtesy of Acadia National Park Archives)

In 1939, Harlean James assessed the state of the forests on the island. Original growth forests had mostly escaped fires and human destruction. Wide varieties of pine and spruce, balsam firs, larches and arborvitae, and a selection of hardwoods still covered

[81] Hill, *Discovering Old Bar Harbor*, 25

most of the island.[82] Mount Desert forests had survived the beginnings of the industrial age, at a time when forests all over the United States were being sacrificed in the name of financial gain. John Muir's expression at this crucial moment in history is particularly pertinent: "Surely, then, it should not be wondered at the lovers of their country, bewailing its baldness, are now crying aloud, "Save what is left of the forests!"[83] Muir's rhetoric painted a picture of the East as a place where natural beauty had been utterly defiled in contemptibly materialistic ways. Capitalists seeking more opportunities were turning their attention to the West. While this is true of the economic patterns of the day, some of the individuals profiting from western development retreated to Mount Desert Island to escape the world of heavy-handed finance and urban life.

Under these conditions, Charles Eliot's vision, Dorr's passion, and the increasing national awareness of rare natural spaces set the stage for an unprecedented movement. Though other conservationists had utilized the Antiquities Act to achieve their goals, none had done so east of the Mississippi, and this was exactly what the Hancock County Trustees intended to do. There were certainly obstacles to this however, and it would take a very persuasive argument to succeed in convincing president Wilson to deploy the Antiquities Act on the coast of Maine. Mount Desert Island could not boast bizarre geological formations like Devil's Tower, or ancient Native American cliff dwellings like Montezuma Castle. Nor could its forests compare with the giant redwoods in Muir Woods or the beautiful remnants of the Petrified Forest. Clearly, the skills of Mr. Dorr would be tested in this difficult endeavor.

Dorr's first attempt to give the land to the government in 1914 had resulted in

[82] James, Harlean. *Romance of the National Parks.* New York: Macmillan Co., 1939, 215
[83] Muir, *Our National Parks*, 336-337

rejection, the proposal being returned with a note stating that it "did not come up to the National Government's exacting standard."[84] While MDI was far different from the National Monuments in the West, Dorr and others felt that it possessed features worthy of equal recognition and protection.

Making the Case

Returning to Bar Harbor in the hopes of revising the proposal and persuading the necessary people, Dorr set to work compiling all the historical and scientific information possible. A modern National Park Service geological evaluation of the Acadia region states quite clearly "the park's landscape captures the interplay between older episodes of tectonic deformation, Pleistocene glaciation, and more recent depositional and dynamic erosional processes of the ocean. Mount Desert Island contains Cadillac Mountain, the highest point on the U.S. Atlantic coast."[85] Although Cadillac only reaches a height of 1,530 feet, rising from the coastline roughly three miles away from the summit, it is an impressive difference. Locals often hear that calling Cadillac a mountain is an insult to those used to western peaks, but those objections are frequently silenced in the effort required to hike the steep, rocky trails. MDI summits may not be astoundingly tall, but the trails utilize switchbacks infrequently at best. There are few places in the world where one can hike a mountain and gaze down upon the sea, seemingly close enough to touch.

From the tops of these mountains, the volcanic and glacial history is apparent for all to see. Granite bedrock is common in New England, but the Bar Harbor area can boast uncommon granite coloration. "In contrast to the fine-grained Southwest Harbor granite,

[84] Dorr, *Story of Acadia*, 36
[85] Graham, J. "Acadia National Park Geologic Resources Inventory Report, NPS/NRPC/GRD/NRR—2010/232." National Park Service, Ft. Collins, Colorado, 2010, v

the coarse-grained Cadillac Mountain granite contains easily visible grains of translucent, gray, glassy-looking quartz and pink or gray feldspar."[86] The "pink Cadillac" granite is easily observed, especially due to extensive erosion and glacial sculpting. The mountains that stood on MDI were humbled by the advance of successive glacial periods, and low-lying regions were steadily deepened.

> On Mount Desert Island, an advancing ice lobe scoured a particularly deep trough that is now occupied by Somes Sound. Other ice lobes carved the U-shaped, elongate valleys that are filled today by Jordan Pond, Eagle Lake, Echo Lake, Long Pond, and Seal Cove Pond. Ice continued to thicken on Mount Desert Island so that by 21,000 years ago, glaciers covered the entire island, including Cadillac Mountain.[87]

The modern appearance of MDI, with long sloping mountains running North to South, with similarly oriented lakes, is due to this lengthy procedure of erosion and the ice age lathing.

Being surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean adds yet another unique feature to the island's geological past. Often one forgets exactly how heavy ice can be, unless forced to carry a water bottle, cooler, or bags filled with it. The immense pressure glaciers exerted upon the island left features no western monument could possess.

> In the Acadia region, ice may have been 1.6 km (1 mi) thick. Each acre of ice 1.6-km (1-mi) thick weighs approximately 7 million tons… During the last period of glacial activity, known as the Wisconsin glaciation, the mass of the ice depressed the coastline (isostatic depression) so that areas on Mount Desert Island that are now above sea level were submerged. At that time, the shoreline on Mount Desert Island lay just south of Jordan Pond, which was approximately 70 m (230 ft) higher than it is today.[88]

Caves are certainly a common feature in National Monuments, but MDI's ancient sea caves and coastlines are certainly a possession worthy of note and appreciation.

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[86] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 23
[87] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 45
[88] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 3

In the process of shaping the mountains and valleys, the glaciers also removed significant quantities of earth from the region, resulting in poor soil conditions today. According to David Pimental, "once fertile soil is lost, it takes 500 years or more to form a mere 25 mm of fertile soil. For crop production, at least 150 mm of soil is required."[89] Whatever soil conditions were before the glacier, little to no organic material was left once the ice receded. Soil development is dependent on a myriad of environmental factors, and the bare rock island proved to be a difficult place for organic matter to collect. "The predominant soil classification is a shallow-to-bedrock, stony complex, derived from granite and schist tills. This classification includes extensive areas of exposed bedrock, along with areas where soils exist as thin deposits of gravelly sandy loam less than 15 cm (6 in) deep."[90] While inconvenient for those originally seeking to farm, this specific formation allows for exposed bedrock and a chance to study both the composition of the granite and its interaction with glacial movement.

Though the botanical development was slow, the unique positioning of the island in mid-coastal Maine allowed for a mixing of zones in a small geographical region. A recent article describes the island as "a broad transition zone between southern deciduous and northern coniferous forests."[91] The diversity of such a placement lends itself well to scientific botanical study, especially due to the wide range of sub-environments on the island. "Over a distance of only a few kilometers, elevations on MDI range from sea level to [1530 ft] at the summit of Cadillac Mountain, with habitats rapidly transitioning from

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[89] Pimental, David. "Population Growth and The Environment: Planetary Stewardship." *Electronic Green Journal* (UCLA Library) 1(9), no. 1(9), Article 10 (1998), 3

[90] National Park Service, *Geology Fieldnotes, Acadia National Park, Maine.* 12/4/2006. http://www.nature.nps.gov/geology/parks/acad/ (accessed January 13, 2015)

[91] Harris, T. B., N. Rajakaruna, S. J. Nelson, and P. D. Vaux. "Stressors and Threats to the Flora of Acadia National Park, Maine: Current Knowledge, Information Gaps, and Future Directions." *Journal of the Torrey Botanical Society*, 1 2012: 323-344, 323

maritime to mountain summit. Similarly, rocky coastal bluffs with minimal soils occur within a few kilometers of inland bogs where peat is several meters thick."[92] For the visitor today, the "Wild Gardens of Acadia," located at Sieur De Monts Springs, showcases the variety of plant life. The gardens are broken down into diverse segments based upon the different environments found on the island. As a result of the multiplicity of growing habitats, one can find botanical representatives of more that 50% of vascular plant species attributed to Maine and more than half of the natural plant communities found within the state as well.[93]

These various botanical spheres support a sundry selection of birdlife. The mixed forest, the fields and lakes, and the coastline all provide unique nesting and feeding grounds. Birding enthusiasts visit MDI in all seasons, but the annual Acadia Birding Festival is one of the many opportunities. Roger Tory Peterson called MDI the "Warbler capital of the United States" and suggested that on Mount Desert Island the "birding here is a totally different challenge" because "it is necessary to be a bird listener as well as a bird watcher."[94] Rangers and locals give birding programs throughout the spring, summer, and fall seasons, to take advantage of this bountiful resource.

While the geography, flora, and fauna, make Mount Desert Island a unique region, there is also a significant human history. Acadia does not feature magnificent Native American structures like other National Monuments, yet humans have existed in the island region for thousands of years. Coastal Maine played host to the Wabanaki people long before European arrival. According to Bunny McBride and Harold Prins,

[92] Harris, et al. "Stressors and Threats", 323
[93] Harris, et al. "Stressors and Threats," 326
[94] Acadia Birding Festival. 2015. http://www.acadiabirdingfestival.com/birdsofmdi.htm (accessed January 13, 2015)

"Mount Desert Island was seasonally occupied by a highly mobile Wabanaki band of a few dozen families. Adapting to the seasonal rhythms of this environment, they migrated between seacoast and hinterland."[95] MDI was well known to Native Americans, who called it "Pemetic" denoting the multiple mountains with bare summits.[96] From the tallest of these mountains (now known as Cadillac), one can see the sand bar stretching between the main island and a nearby relative. Natives also were well aware of this natural phenomenon, calling it "Manesayd'ik" which translates roughly to "at the clam-gathering place."[97] Visitors today would know these places as the Sand Bar between Bar Harbor and Bar Island, which is only revealed around low tide.

From what can be discerned through archeological evidence, the Wabanaki maintained a successful lifestyle in the Mount Desert region. "One of their favorite sites was strategically located at Manchester Point (Northeast Harbor) by the entrance to Somes Sound. In the early 1600s, Wabanaki families under the leadership of Chief Asticou camped here in the summer."[98] It was around this time that Samuel de Champlain made his voyage to the vicinity of this encampment, charged by Sieur de Monts to map the area, in search of the fabled city of "Norumbega."[99] In September 1604 that Champlain encountered the island and gave it the name that, though translated and often mispronounced, still stands today.

In 1613, a small contingent of Jesuits and French settlers arrived at Mount Desert, where they then made camp on the shore of Somes Sound. The group contrived no

[95] McBride, Bunny, and Harald E.L. Prins. *Indians In Eden, Wabanakis and Rusticators on Maine's Mount Desert Island, 1840's-1920's.* East Peoria, Illinois: Down East Books, Versa Press, 2009, 3
[96] McBride and Prins, *Indians in Eden*, 2
[97] McBride and Prins, *Indians in Eden*, 5
[98] McBride and Prins, *Indians in Eden*, 3
[99] Morison, *Story of Mount Desert*, 9

permanent structures, for the ill-fated settlement did not last long enough to leave an indelible mark upon the landscape. As recorded by Father Biard, one of the Jesuits on the mission, "a Cross was erected, by way of consecrating the place. La Saussaye, the commander of the colonists, took, from the beginning, so deep an interest in agriculture that he thought of that alone, and neglected everything else."[100] During the few weeks the mission operated, an English captain was patrolling the Maine coast. Allegedly, the Wabanaki encountered the English and "assuming that all white men were friends, conveyed to Captain Samuel Argall, by a pantomime of genuflections, curtsies and flourishes which could have only been learned from Frenchmen, that a colony of King James's enemies was not far away."[101] The confrontation was violent and brief, resulting in a definitive English victory. The French suffered casualties, notably Jesuit brother Gillbert du Thet, who "was assisting in the defense of the vessel, when an especially violent shower of bullets assailed them, in which he was stricken with a mortal wound; and although attended with great devotion by an English surgeon who was a Catholic, on the following day he died most piously."[102] The French ship was taken as plunder and the mission at St. Sauveur was no more. The destruction of St. Sauveur was only the first of many French and English conflicts, of which the Wabanaki found themselves entangled.

Settlement on MDI was a near impossibility for Europeans during the feuding colonial years, yet "small Wabanaki hunting groups continued to camp there periodically to hunt, trap, fish, and gather. In times of peace, white fishermen occasionally came

[100] Thwaites, Reuben Gold, ed. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791.* Vol. 2. Computerized Transcription. Prod. The Burrows Brothers Company. Cleveland, 2/17/2015, 78
[101] Morison, *Story of Mount Desert*, 13
[102] Thwaits, *Jesuit Relations*, 79

ashore to dry their daily catch on the beaches."[103] In 1761 the English won a decisive victory in Canada, resulting in English control throughout the coastal Maine region, and "Wabanaki chiefs were forced to accept the imposed terms of peace agreed upon by the European rivals and told their warriors to lay down their weapons."[104] A singular European power had finally emerged, and as for the Wabanaki, they had backed the losing force. A familiar story of pestilence decimating native populations, land being consumed by hungry settlers, and displacement of native peoples followed.

Though dispossessed of their ancestral territory, the Wabanaki began a seasonal pattern of visitation to MDI to capitalize on the vacationing economy. While the island drew visitors from abroad to enjoy natural scenery, the summer "indian encampments" became a well-known attraction. The Wabanaki maintained a "marginal survival strategy that combined limited hunting and fishing (thwarted by the state's shifting game laws and loss of hunting territories) with making and selling hand-crafted goods to locals."[105] These seasonal establishments were designed to showcase the Wabanaki-made products, hunting or guide services, and were advertised as "perfectly safe for anyone to visit."[106] Through the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Wabanaki were able to maintain a tenuous economic foothold on MDI, despite multiple legal removals and reestablishments due to the Bar Harbor Village Improvement Society. Property prices along the shoreline on MDI ultimately resulted in a final forcible Wabanaki removal from the seaside to the southern end of Bar Harbor, and effectively strangled the economic power of the establishment.[107]

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[103] McBride and Prins, *Indians in Eden*, 8
[104] McBride and Prins, *Indians in Eden*, 8
[105] Prins, Harold E.L., and Bunny McBride. *Asticou's Island Domain: Wabanaki Peoples at Mount Desert Island 1500-2000.* Vol. 1. 2 vols. Boston, Mass.: Northeast Region Ethnography Program, 2007, 268
[106] Prins, Harold E.L., and Bunny McBride. *Asticou's Island Domain*, 292
[107] Prins, Harold E.L., and Bunny McBride. *Asticou's Island Domain*, 329

Without the high visibility nature of an ocean-side encampment, interest in native goods and services declined, and by the 1920s, the Wabanaki presence on MDI had almost completely been destroyed.

A simple perusal of the geological, ecological, and anthropological histories of Mount Desert Island clearly indicates that it was unlike any other National Monument or National Park to that point. MDI was a hybrid environment, boasting volcanic and glacial formation, rich intermixture of flora and fauna amidst northern and southern zones, and human history extending back several thousand years. Separate parks or monuments had represented all of these elements individually, but Dorr's project uniquely combined them east of the Mississippi. This meant that the argument had to be all the stronger, as the ability to create National Monuments was still new, and few presidents after Roosevelt were as liberal with its usage. While unique, there also must exist a need for federal recognition and protection. Dorr had experienced the danger in relying on a state charter and felt that the land was in dire need of federal intervention, but this was only one reason among a myriad of preexisting dangers.

A Period of Many Changes

After the English gained control, settler population density in Maine grew rapidly, "between 1763 and 1790, the population of Maine nearly quadrupled from 24,000 to 96,000. Natural increase and massive migration from southern New England dramatically boosted the region's population."[108] In the wake of independence, Maine was still under political control of Massachusetts. It would take the rumbling national stressor of slavery to sever Maine from her parent state. In 1820, Maine and Missouri entered the Union

[108] Hornsby, Stephen J., and Richard W. Judd. *Historical Atlas of Maine.* Orono, Maine: The University of Maine Press, 2015, part I plate 13

together, the former as a free state and the latter a slave state, maintaining the tenuous balance of power in the nation. While the term "frontier" in the context of antebellum United States summons imagery of westward expansion, Maine also possessed an undefined northeastern boundary, even after statehood. By the time Maine had established official borders in 1842 by the Webster-Ashburton treaty, the population had expanded considerably; Maine had over half a million residents in 1840.[109] For Mount Desert Island, it had been considered settled, its land designated taxable since 1778,[110] and had achieved a population of roughly 3,400 by 1850.[111]

Also in 1850, Charles Dorr and Mary Ward were married and settled in Jamaica Plain Massachusetts.[112] Their second son, George Dorr, later transcribed the family story of his own birth, "on the 29th of December, 1853 during a wild snowstorm through whose deep drifts my father plowed his way on foot to carry the good news to my grandfather Ward."[113] Dorr was born into a wealthy Massachusetts family, and following the pattern of similarly rich, would take up summer residence on Mount Desert Island. The land on which the Dorr family built their estate was purchased in 1868, and the home completed around 1879.[114] The estate, entitled "Oldfarm" in reference to the old farm land on which it was built, was one of the first large summer cottages to be built on MDI, and served as an escape from the increasingly suburban setting of Massachusetts. Within these walls, Dorr would eventually craft his plans for a National Park upon the island his family had

[109] Hornsby and Judd, *Historical Atlas of Maine*, part II plate 24
[110] Hornsby and Judd, *Historical Atlas of Maine*, part II, plate 26
[111] Mount Desert Island Historical Society. *Census Records of Mount Desert Island (and the town of Cranberry Isles)*. 7 14, 2014. http://research.mdihistory.org/MDIcensusrecordshome.htm (accessed January 7, 2015)
[112] Dorr, George"A Word About Myself to String Some Memories Upon." Compiled by Acadia National Park Archives. July 17, 1938, 2
[113] Dorr, "A Word About Myself", 2
[114] Dorr, George"To President Roosevelt." Compiled by Acadia National Park Archives. Bar Harbor, Maine, August 1, 1940

so loved. In the same account in which Dorr described his birth, he commented on the world; "I came into conscious life at three o'clock that stormy morning and have remained in it till now through a period of many changes whose issuance none can see."[115] To find a more succinct and astute statement concerning the local, national, and global events witnessed during his lifetime is virtually impossible.

When the Dorr family came to Maine, several strange fluctuations were occurring. The state had experienced incredible population expansion in the antebellum period, yet since then, had experienced negative population growth followed by a long period of weak positive growth from 1870 onward into the next century.[116] While the state was in the midst of a period of slow growth, Mount Desert Island was changing radically. "Between 1870 and 1910, the permanent population of the town [Bar Harbor] increased from approximately 1,200 to almost 4,500 people."[117] The early "rusticator" painters and artists had by this point made MDI famous far and wide. As the earliest forms of advertisement for the region existed in art galleries and literature, only the wealthy were able to take notice. Those with the leisure to do so, began coming to the island, and much like the Dorr family, eventually decided that building a luxurious "summer cottage" would be far more enjoyable than staying in a hotel. For those who find themselves confused about the term 'cottage' applied to a mansion, Samuel Eliot Morison assists by writing:

> It should be explained for the benefit of posterity that on Mount Desert a permanent resident's house is a *house*; but a summer resident's house is either a *camp* if it is very simple, with no interior sheathing or plastering;

[115] Dorr, "A Word About Myself", 2
[116] Hornsby and Judd, *Historical Atlas of Maine*, part III, plate 41
[117] Hornsby, Stephen J. "The Guilded Age and the Making of Bar Harbor." *Geographical Review* 83, no. 4 (October 1993): 455-468, 464

> otherwise it is a *cottage*, no matter how elaborate. Many years ago I head the news "Edsel Ford is building a million-dollar cottage at Seal Harbor.[118]

Bar Harbor was the cultural hub of this "invasion" as some have called it, and it was an environment ripe for upper-class recreation.

While the island may have belonged to the locals in the winter, the arrival of fair weather heralded scores of visitors flocking to their estates, and a dynamic change in island culture for the next few months. A periodical article in 1907 proclaimed:

> The season at Bar Harbor starts on Independence Day; from then on the round of gaiety is incessant. Dances, dinners, teas, amateur theatricals, lawn fete, drives, yachting parties and golfing follow in rapid succession. The climax is reached in August when Frenchman's bay is alive with the sails or gleaming hulls of sailing and steam yachts; for the big yacht clubs all rendezvous at Bar Harbor. Name over the list of yachts famous in the marine world and you will find that they have been visitors at Bar Harbor; or are in the bay at the moment.[119]

Locals were frequently employed by this new vacationing elite to make their extravagant stay as comfortable as possible. The families that had in previous generations relied on the land for a living now depended on the influx of summer wealth to sustain themselves. "Virtually all the working population served the summer cottagers and tourists. Of the principal male occupations, most men were in construction and landscaping trades. Most working women were in some type of domestic service or associated work as laundresses and dressmakers."[120] By the late 1800's, Mount Desert had been transformed into a bustling and robust vacation destination, sweeping up locals and visitors into a cyclical economy of seasonal interdependence. The land that had originally drawn visitors to the island now was becoming increasingly inaccessible due to private ownership.

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[118] Morison, *Story of Mount Desert*, 65
[119] *Town and Country (1902-1913). "Bar Harbor's Delightful Summer Life: The Yachting and Other Sports, ..." June 29, 1907*, 10
[120] Hornsby, "The Guilded Age", 465

Wood, Stone, and Iron

Cottagers were not the only, nor were they even the original threat to the land on MDI. Industrial pursuits existed in the island for many years, shaped by the resources and skills of the region. The natural assets of the island were conveniently located near the water, allowing for ease of shipping, and unfortunately, over exploitation. The valuable raw materials of MDI were cut, quarried, or built upon to the detriment of the island's natural beauty.

Lumber has long been one of the great sources of wealth in Maine, and with transportation predominantly done by ship, the forests of MDI were in a prime position for harvesting. As early as 1768, when early European settlers on the island noticed the frequency of island timber being cut, they petitioned the Massachusetts governor wanting to "inform your Excelency that Vessels hands and others make a Practis of Coming to this island and Cutting Lumber Such as Stave, Shingles and clap boards and other Lumber which will much discourage further Settlers."[121] The island was so easily accessible that, "by 1860 or 1880 almost every square rod of land that could be improved, a saw or a grist mill had been taken up."[122]



Figure 9 (One of MDI's sawmills, courtesy of Mount Desert Island Historical Society)

[121] Hill, *Discovering Old Bar Harbor*, 31
[122] Morison, *Story of Mount Desert*, 39

The upswing in northeastern urban population before the Civil War resulted in a great demand for timber, and Maine responded to the call. By 1850, the state boasted almost one thousand sawmills.[123] The timber was used not only for lumber, but to construct vast fleets of sailing ships. Before the use of iron and steel in maritime construction, Maine was one of the foremost builders of boats in all shapes and sizes. In 1855, during the peak of Maine shipbuilding, Frenchman Bay alone contributed over 10,000 tons alone.[124] However, Mount Desert's forests clearly could not bear up under such pressure. "By 1870, almost the entire first growth of timber was cut off, if not burned down to make lumber, ship timber and cordwood."[125] Though a renewable resource, the forests of MDI suffered from overuse and were in need of protection.



Figure 10 (Pink Cadillac granite near Ocean Drive, Photo Credit Sean Cox, 2013)

Maine also possesses ample sources of stone for building material, specifically granite. The distinctive pink coloration made the Bar Harbor granite formation highly desirable for decorative facades and monuments. Industrial scale granite quarrying on MDI did not start until 1871, when Cyrus Hall began using the area around Some Sound,

[123] Hornsby and Judd, *Historical Atlas of Maine*, part II, plate 31
[124] Hornsby and Judd, *Historical Atlas of Maine*, part II, plate 32
[125] Morison, *Story of Mount Desert*, 41

though it is possible that local stonemasons had used native materials for many years.[126] Just as logging was made profitable through close proximity to the water, quarrying could be established with relative ease on the waterfront. Ten years later, another quarry was opened in the Otter Cove region, specializing in the red or pink stone. Otter Creek stone notably went to build the Sally Baker Memorial Church in Boston and the First National Bank of Omaha in Nebraska.[127]

Hall managed to maintain control over the Somes Sound area. "By the summer of 1888, the company employed one hundred and ninety six men at three quarries, [building] new derricks, sheds, blacksmith shops and a boarding house for imported Italian workers on high ground eventually named "Macaroni Hill" by Yankee natives."[128] Several quarries were in operation on the island when the land preservation movement began at the turn of the century. Although the quarries were on the decline by the time Dorr and the Hancock County group were gaining momentum, the possibility of industry in such a visible location as the shorefront was likely another incentive for preservation.



Figure 11 (Quarry activity in Somes Sound, courtesy of Mount Desert Island Historical Society)

Another industry that threatened the tranquility of land on MDI depended not on a raw

[126] Domingos, Frank Eugene. "An Investigation of the Granite Quarry Industry In Hancock County, Maine." Orono, Maine, June 1967, 86
[127] Domingos, "Granite Quarry Industry", 87
[128] Domingos, "Granite Quarry Industry", 89

material, but seasonal tourist dollars. Enterprising men saw the value of the island as an attraction, and focused their efforts on showcasing the environment for a price. However, the lengths that some capitalists went to were truly astounding. A man by the name of Francis "Frank" Clergue fit such a description. Raised and educated in Maine, Clergue originally worked as a lawyer and councilman for the town of Bangor, yet "it was only a matter of time before the lure of promotion and entrepreneurship enticed him first from the practice of law then from Bangor."[129] Having been successful in implementing an electric streetcar system in Bangor, Clergue was a man swept up in the craze for transportation development.

Looking for a profitable venture, Clergue was galvanized by the work of Sylvester Marsh in New Hampshire. Marsh had been inspired to invent and construct a cog railway to Mount Washington's summit, after being caught in a dangerous winter storm while hiking, subsequently vowing to find a safer way to the top.[130] The revolutionary engineering solution involved a locomotive with a drive gear fitting into a slotted central track, and a uniquely angled engine that would remain nearly level as it ascended an elevation. Clergue envisioned such a



Figure 12 (Clergue's Railway extending up the side of Cadillac from the shore of Eagle Lake, courtesy of Mount Desert Island Historical Society)

[129] Sault Ste. Marie Public Library. *Francis H. Clergue and the Clergue Industrial Empire.* 2008. http://www.cityssm.on.ca/library/Clergue_Personality.html (accessed 3 17, 2015)
[130] Bachelder, Peter Dow. *Steam to the Summit, The Green Mountain Railway, Bar Harbor's Remarkable Cog Railroad.* Ellsworth, Maine: The Breakwater Press, 2005*,* 34

railway going to the summit of Green Mountain (now known as Cadillac) on Mount Desert Island.

Clever businessman that he was, Clergue acquired permission to use the western face of Green Mountain, and "quietly but legally, official notices necessary for opening a railway were published. Before anyone knew it, the time for objections had come and gone."[131] The railway was only a part of Clegue's overall scheme. "Passengers would take a 20-minute (2.5 mile) carriage ride from in town Bar Harbor to the north end of Eagle Lake, then a 20-minute (1.5) boat cruise down the lake to a landing near the train depot atop Green Mountain [Clergue] planned to erect a substantial hotel and dining room for the enjoyment of his patrons."[132] All of this was functional for the 1883 season, and proved that industrial technology could find a commercial foothold in a vacation spot famed for natural beauty.

The Green Mountain Railroad (GMR) was not without its problems however. Wildfire caused by steam trains was certainly common in the far west, and it proved to be just as destructive on MDI. "A spark from *Mount Desert*'s [the name of Clergue's engine] stack kindled a fire in the undergrowth some distance from the track, well up on the mountain. Unnoticed at first, it eventually spread into the brush on the north side of the roadbed and quickly burned out of control."[133] Additionally, Clergue faced competition from carriage companies offering a buckboard ride up Green Mountain. Hale writes,

> The Green Mountain Railway got "too big for its boots," and used methods not customary, it is to be hoped, in the State of Maine. It blocked traffic by putting up gates across the roadway. Naturally these were pulled

[131] Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 156
[132] Bachelder, *Steam to the Summit,* 59-61
[133] Bachelder, *Steam to the Summit,* 59-61

> down [by the carriage folk]. Then [the GMR] sent to Bangor for sixteen men, who worked all night setting dynamite, and that dawn blew the charges and destroyed the road. This however, was the last such effort, for when the carriage road was rebuilt, it was left alone.[134]

Though the 'road war' had ceased, pressure was mounting for Clergue to expand services to compensate for the costs of operation. A radical proposal was made to institute an electric "Mount Desert Railway", but this time the island residents put up a fight. In 1884, a synopsis of arguments against the proposal was read, including objections to the significant cost of land needed, the disruptive noise of the trains, and the very apparent danger of further fires caused by such an endeavor.[135]



Figure 13 (The engine *Mount Desert*, courtesy of Mount Desert Island Historical Society)

This time, Clergue was not successful, and the dream perished.

After several years of operation, Clergue still had been unable to overcome a significant deficit in spending. The patronage for his extravagant enterprise had declined, and by 1891, he was unable to continue in the face of mounting debt.[136] Thus ended one of the most visible attempts to commercialize the vistas on MDI, at the cost of significant environmental damage through construction of the railroad. The scars of fire caused by

[134] Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 158
[135] Bachelder, *Steam to the Summit,* 82
[136] Bachelder, *Steam to the Summit,* 109

the engines and remnants of the business linger, even decades later. The steamer, which had served to ferry patrons across Eagle Lake, was gutted and scuttled where she still rests today. The two engines Clergue used for his enterprise were sold to the Mount Washington Railway and rechristened for use.

Natural resources on Mount Desert Island were clearly in danger from the saw, hammer, and opportunistic capitalist. With an ever-growing summer contingent, and the natural environment becoming evermore precious as an attraction, the motivation behind conservation groups seem highly logical. Men like Charles Eliot, George Dorr, and eventually John D. Rockefeller had witnessed the industrial changes happening elsewhere on the East coast, and felt the need to prevent such development on their beloved island retreat. If the woods could be logged, the bedrock sold, and the mountaintops turned into hotels, the original attraction to the island's natural beauty could be irrevocably lost.

Village Improvement Societies

The summer folk who had invested great sums of their family fortunes to live on MDI in the height of fashion understandably decided to prevent as much environmental abuse as they could. Though they intensively manicured their own properties, "beyond the granite walls and *arborvitae* hedges that enclosed the estates, the cottagers tried to control the landscape of Bar Harbor and Mount Desert Island."[137] In an attempt to create an idyllic retreat, intensive landscaping was required. The ultimate goal was to keep Bar Harbor as an escape from the stressors of the increasingly modernizing and urbanizing world, so in 1889 the Bar Harbor Village Improvement Association was created. Though merely a club without any real legal authority, this group contained well-known and

[137] Hornsby, "The Guilded Age", 462

socially influential individuals who managed to sway decisions and successfully lobby for certain developments. Part of the utopian image was a retreat that was beneficial for one's health, and therefore the association desired measures such as sewer and garbage services, along with purity of water and milk. There were certainly consequences of the remolding of town. Native Americans living in a waterfront encampment, who had successfully eked out a living in Bar Harbor, were relocated "on sanitary grounds and the inhabitants moved to the outskirts of the town."[138] Locals were also pestered by cottagers to keep up the appearances of their homes and properties. Organizations like this, although discriminatory at times, were fundamental in sparking interest for natural esthetics.

Frank Clergue had succeeded, albeit briefly, in bringing industrial transportation to the island, and had desired to develop even further. This encounter assisted in polarizing many cottagers against further changes on the island, especially the introduction of automobiles. Charles Eliot spoke passionately on how he thought the island should develop, and he desired to "exclude electric cars and automobiles from the highways, because these vehicles imply broad roads, noise, and city-like commotion."[139] Summer folk managed to secure legislation keeping automobiles off the island.[140] For a time at least, cars would race across other parts of the nation, but MDI remained a haven for horse enthusiasts. Eventually the situation changed: "The fight played out in the state legislature as well as on the roads. The pro-autoists brought forth a bill that would open

[138] Hornsby, "The Guilded Age", 462
[139] Eliot, *Right Development of Mount Desert*, 4
[140] Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 175

all roads, but the bill was defeated due to 'money from away' that spoke louder. The battle raged on, until finally in 1913, Bar Harbor rescinded the law."[141]

Though the cottagers eventually lost the war against cars on MDI, the social and political influence they had was truly astounding. Their passion for creating the perfect escape led them to be activists in the communities, and through some persuasive connections, they became equally involved in preserving land for public usage. The pool of expendable wealth, coupled with the cultural romanticism of nature made the Village Improvement Societies a useful tool in the quest for a National Monument.

Dorr's Revolutionary Triumph

Upon the news that Sieur De Monts was rejected as a gift to the federal government in 1914, Dorr worked tirelessly to persuade officials that although Mount Desert Island looked far different that the previous monuments, it was just as worthy. Having spent two further years compiling his argument, Dorr anxiously submitted the papers yet again. The year 1916 yielded the outcome he desired: he succeeded in protecting land that he felt was rich in both historic and scientific associations. Dorr's stubbornness and passion had finally gotten the better of a cautious president, and brought a modicum of land on the island under the protection of federal regulation.

Achieving political success ensured that Dorr could safely expand the park boundaries and go the extra distance to make it a National Park. Today, the park shields roughly 47,000 acres, making it one of the smallest parks in the entire system. Yet for lack of size, that which it does protect is strikingly beautiful. The smooth rippled ranges of mountains stand imposingly over the towns, their summits untouched by hotels and

[141] Hobbs-Olson, Laurie. *Acadia National Park Carriage Road Explorers, An Educator's Guide to Acadia's Carriage Roads.* Southwest Harbor, Maine: Horizon Printing, 1996*,* 5

private homes. Unquarried granite ledges of pink and grey contrast with the ocean, which some days appears more bluish green, yet also can acquire an iron grey in a storm. Sweeping forests carpet the valleys between elevations, and become a natural firework display of reds, oranges, yellows, and browns in fall. Ever the eloquent writer, Dorr perhaps encapsulates the park better than anyone:

> Saved to future generations as it has been to us, in the wild primeval beauty of the nature it exhibits, of ancient rocks and still more ancient sea, with infinite detail of life and landscape interest between, the spirit and mind of man will surely find in it in the years and centuries to come as an inspiration and a means of growth as essential to them ever and anon as are fresh air and sunshine to the body.[142]

For the millions who find pleasure in traveling its roadways, hiking its rocky trails, exploring its ponds and shorefront, and take comfort in rare quiet surrounded by this modernizing world, the resources saved are invaluable.

Sieur De Monts was not the largest National Monument, nor did it contain true "wilderness." European and U.S. development ensured that there was little to no "virgin land" remaining. Sieur De Monts protected the ideology of intangible value surrounding natural spaces, but not the complete integrity of wilderness. Monuments and Parks in the West were responsible for sheltering unmolested territory. Sieur De Monts revolutionized the concept of Monuments, bringing a federally recognized natural space to the East, where such a space had never existed and was needed desperately.

Upon Mr. Dorr's passing in 1944, Acadia entered a new phase; without the guidance of its founding father, how would her resources be valued, interpreted, and protected? Acadia had accomplished much in being the first eastern park, and came into existence through a unique process. The park also protects precious assets that had never

[142] Dorr, Forbush, and Fernald, *Unique Island of Mount Desert*, 3

been protected before in conservation history. Mr. Dorr envisioned a National Park on Mount Desert Island, but could not have foreseen the myriad of challenges that the park would face without him.

Acadia Without Dorr

Since Dorr's passing in late 1944, Acadia has faced the modernizing world without its founding father. The stewardship and intrinsic value of natural spaces that Dorr brought to Mount Desert Island would be severely tested in the following decades. Benjamin L. Hadley had been Assistant Superintendent to Mr. Dorr for many years, and two days following Dorr's death, Hadley assumed his role on August 7th 1944.[143] Hadley now dictated the direction of Acadia, and under his watch there were many challenges and decisions. The men and women involved in the creation of Acadia slowly turned over the park to new hands, allowing Acadia to grow and evolve, but also to confront dilemmas of physical, ideological, scientific, and anthropological causes. The way in which Acadia has and continues to deal with these obstacles defines its significance in the modern world.

Acadia's Ashes

Summers on Mount Desert Island commonly conclude with a rainy period, claiming the late flowers and pyrotechnic fall foliage. Expired leaves coat the forest floor, weaving a multicolored carpet with mosses and the red-brown of pine needles. The rains that cool the island, preparing for the descent into winter, never came in October of 1947. Rain had dampened the local spirits earlier in the season, but the weather had eventually blossomed into a dry and sweltering summer. Beneficial to the tourist season, but ultimately dangerous, the year 1947 marked one of the most destructive years in Maine history.

[143] Acadia National Park Resource Management Records. "Draft Finding Aid." Bar Harbor , Maine: Northeast Museum Services Center, September 2013, 13

In the wake of the enjoyable summer, the Maine woods became a prime habitat for potential sparks. During that fall, fires around New England became a common and deadly occurrence; "the situation became so explosive that the Governor of Maine declared a state of emergency, closing woods to the use of fires, general travel, etc. After the 23rd [October] the President declared a national emergency existed."[144] By the end of 1947, approximately 213,547 acres of Maine land succumbed to wildfire. The Great Mount Desert (or Bar Harbor) fire that devastated 17,188 acres on MDI constitutes 8% of the total destruction that year.[145] With roughly 90% of the state covered by forest, Maine had been fortunate in maintaining the lowest fire record in the eastern states until 1947 when the luck turned dramatically.[146]

Mount Desert Island possesses only one true connection to the mainland, a small bridge reaching from the tip of the main island to Thompson Island, over the Mount Desert Narrows and finally into Trenton. Any threat of fire on the island is a serious matter, especially due to this "bottleneck" effect for evacuation procedures by land. With a population of several thousand spread across the small communities, surrounded by forests, and the dry conditions set the stage for a potentially deadly affair.

The town of Bar Harbor relied heavily on its small fire department to save not only the woodlands surrounding the town, but the impressive summer cottages. In Bar Harbor itself, large wooden hotels had been common for almost a century, catering to the visitors who had not managed to carve out a piece of the island for themselves. Richard Hale Jr. writes, "from July on, in front of the Bar Harbor Firehouse hangs a placard,

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[144] Savage, Wilbur L. "Preliminary Report Mount Desert Island Fire (October 17-31, 1947)." National Park Service, 1948, 2
[145] State Of Maine. "Maine Forest Fire Record 1903-1970." 1970"
[146] Butler, Joyce. *Wildfire Loose: the week Maine burned.* Kennebunkport, ME: Durrell Publications, 1978, xvii

telling the degree of fire danger. This custom was suspended during WWII, as giving out information that might aid the enemy, but it was promptly resumed in 1945, after VE Day."[147] The weather conditions were certainly dangerous as the placard indicated that month, but a primarily wooden community on the doorstep of a National Park tempted disaster.

A picturesque and overgrown cranberry bog, adjacent to "Dolliver's Dump" began to smoke on a fall afternoon. The source of the original fire, either stemming from human activity or bottles magnifying the light, has been greatly contested. For many years the dump itself has been blamed, simply due to the close proximity of the establishment to the first blaze. The detailed fire report of 1948 says however, "the owner of the dump had assured Chief Sleeper that there had been no burning in the dump which would account for this fire."[148] Although burning in the dump had been common under controlled circumstances, the Bar Harbor Fire Department had prohibited open burning operations within the township, and Sleeper "had patrolled the vicinity by automobile one hour prior to the start of the fire and that he saw no evidence of fire in the dump then."[149] Most of the accounts attest that those involved with fighting the fire were far more concerned with stopping the blaze than determining the exact source for posterity. October 17, at approximately 4:05 PM the Bar Harbor Fire Department received the call from the dump, reporting the beginning of what would become a fateful fire.[150]

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[147] Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 216
[148] Arnold, Fred H., Wilbur L. Savage, and Robert B. Moore. "The Mount Desert Island Fire of October 17-November 14, 1947 With Particular Reference to Acadia National Park, Maine." United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service Region One, 1948, 13
[149] Arnold, Savage, and Moore, "Mount Desert Island Fire", 13
[150] Heath, Capt. John, and Chief David A. Sleeper. "The Bar Harbor Fire 1947." Bar Harbor Fire Department, 1

Fire was not an uncommon event in Maine, and "all hands turn out to fight it."[151] The report by Capt. John Heath and Chief David Sleeper of the Bar Harbor Fire Department indicates that, "unlike the fire fighting in other sections of the state at the time, where confusion and divided command was a handicap, the fighting on Mount Desert Island was exceptionally marked by a central command at all times which coordinated all the various units in a well planned attack."[152]

Nevertheless, the fire steadily made its way closer to the summer colony, and evacuation seemed of paramount importance. Sleeper recounts that, "those persons (about 2500) who failed to escape by way of Seal Harbor road were gathered together in the Athletic Field where it was thought maximum safety was to be had."[153] The Athletic Field, south of downtown Bar Harbor was the location Ruth Soper was directed to move to that day; "I remember getting ready to go down to the ball field. We got down there and decided we needed warm blankets and things to keep warm if we were going to stay there. People had their stuff packed around the trees and everywhere. We watched that lovely house up on Thorndike's Hill go up in flames, that was pretty close."[154] It was not long after this that the National Guard moved the residents from the field to the town pier.

Gathered on the pier, residents watched the flames approach the town and waited for evacuation by land or sea. Hale then attests,

> It was about this time that there descended upon Bar Harbor a swarm of newspaper correspondents, who came by plane and train and car and even destroyer. They arrived at perhaps the worst moment for getting

[151] Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 216
[152] Heath and Sleeper, "Bar Harbor Fire", 1
[153] Heath and Sleeper, "Bar Harbor Fire", 5
[154] Mount Desert Island Historical Society, "Oral History Interview with Ruth Soper, the Fire of 1947, November 2, 1996." Compiled by Mount Desert Island Historical Society Archives. November 2, 1996.

> information. Those who knew what had happened were dog-tired, and too busy to talk. Only the uninformed had time to spare. There was further complication in the fact that a store of dynamite, known to be at Howe Park, blew up at the height of the fire's fury, thus starting a legend that houses were being dynamited to save the town.[155]

The rumors of dynamiting spread beyond local belief when these reporters translated the tale into newsprint nationwide.

Other sensationalist headlines appeared, reporting that Bar Harbor appeared to be "an American Dunkirk,"[156] upon the usage of naval and private vessels for evacuation. While there had been calls for emergency maritime assistance, a water escape was never truly needed. Those ships that did arrive were "[extraordinarily] welcome and a wonderful reassurance. Fortunately, comparatively little evacuation had to be done by sea."[157]

While there was no immense loss of human life on Mount Desert, there were countless natural victims. Sieur De Monts, the small spring tucked in-between the mountains, one of the original portions of land used to create the National Monument, was severely scorched. The Venetian spring canopy that Dorr built survived the great fire, but the house and surrounding vegetation was not so lucky. Another casualty was Dorr's Mount



Figure 14 (Dorr's Spring House at Sieur De Monts, photo credit Sean Cox, 2014)

[155] Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 229
[156] "Dynamite is Used" Special to *New York Times,* Oct 24, 1947, 1
[157] Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 230

Desert Nursery business that had existed since 1896, "providing plant stock to the Bar Harbor community. The nursery's wide array of hybridized plants earned medals from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and the Society of American Florists."[158]

The composition of Bar Harbor also was radically effected, though the majority of town survived the flames. In the early development of Bar Harbor, hotels were the focus for summer visitation. These wooden structures became part of the social scene in Bar Harbor, even into the cottage era. Three of the most prominent and fashionable hotels were the Malvern, Belmont, and De Gregoire, which had survived many radical changes on the island, but fell to the fire.

Summer cottages had dominated architectural landscapes on Mount Desert for decades, but began to decline after income tax and inheritance tax were established. The fire dealt the final blow to an already weakened institution, but the loss also heralded a radical change in social and economic folkways on the island. Much of the cottager history simply vanished in the flames. One of the many estates leveled in the disaster was Stanwood, the summer home of James G. Blaine, (often referred to as the "continental liar from the state of Maine" due to a famous accusation in a railroad scandal) and eventually the residence of Walter Damrosch upon marriage to Blaine's daughter. Damrosch, a prominent conductor working with the New York Symphony Orchestra, spent seasons in the lavish home. The "cottage" was one of the many victims of the fire, and the contents of the home were lost. Nearly fifty years after the fire, local resident Irene Marinke still expressed great regret for Damrosch's loss; "The thing I feel the worst about was Walter Damrosch. He had all of his scores here. He used to do programs for

[158] Epp, Ronald H. "George B. Dorr on Mount Desert." Edited by Judith B. Tankard. *The Beatrix Farrand Society News*, Winter 2009, 1

the children on Saturday afternoons in New York. I don't know what his position was, but he was a very well renowned conductor and musician. All of his scores were there and that went up in smoke."[159]

In the cultural development of Bar Harbor, many felt that there was sufficient need to create a space dedicated to expression. Construction of the Building of the Arts was completed in 1907, with a cost of approximately $100,000, having been funded by wealthy patrons of the area. The venue experienced moderate success, but by the early 1940's, the building had fallen into a state of disrepair.[160] There was also little money to keep the building running, as "somehow the mortgage always ate up. The money that should have gone to improvements in the program or the building."[161] When the building became a victim of the Great Fire, opinions ranged from disappointment to indifference; "few tears were shed" said Richard Hale, but Josephine Richardson recognized the loss: "When that was built, it looked like a Grecian temple. I just hated to see something like that go because I knew they would never rebuild."[162]

In the wake the disaster, the mythical phoenix is cited frequently as a symbol of community hope and renewal. However, the island deviated from the legend after the Great Fire in that it did not simply renew, it changed radically. Acadia certainly did not escape unscathed. The park lost thousands of acres to the blaze, taking many years to recover. The structural losses were of course not on parkland, but the destruction in Bar Harbor as the most prominent town on the island, meant that cultural and economic

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[159] Mount Desert Island Historical Society, "Oral History interview with Irene Marinke, The Fire of 1947, September 21, 1996." Compiled by Mount Desert Island Historical Soceity Archives. September 21, 1996
[160] Maine Historical Society. *Building of the Arts, Bar Harbor, 1918.* https://www.mainememory.net/artifact/21194 (accessed February 5, 2015)
[161] Hale, *Story of Bar Harbor*, 208-209
[162] Mount Desert Island Historical Society, "Mount Desert Island Historical Society, Oral History Interview with Josephine and John Richardson, November 12, 1996." Compiled by Mount Desert Island Historical Society Archives. November 12, 1996

changes that resulted from the fire had a direct effect upon the park. The island had played host to the rich and famous for many decades, but fire dramatically terminated the era, bringing sharp and noticeable change to the community. Irene Marinke reflected: "It finished the summer colony. They couldn't afford to rebuild those because income tax had come in in the meantime, the stock market crash and all of those things had put the skids on it completely. The evolution was into the Park, into tourism and into the mess that we have now."[163] The rapid change from an elite outpost to a National Park was understandably disorienting, and it put strain on the young Acadia. Although his indomitable spirit would have been a great asset in the aftermath of the disaster, it was perhaps fortunate Mr. Dorr did not live to see the Great Fire destroy much of the island he had sacrificed his personal wealth and time protecting. Physical destruction was perhaps the most dramatic obstacle Acadia faced without Dorr at the reigns, but it was certainly not the last.

The Shadow of Oldfarm

As unique as the man who owned it, Oldfarm was an eclectic and imposing cottage, sitting comfortably south of Bar Harbor while overlooking the Atlantic. After 1944 however, Mr. Dorr was no longer at home, and as he had no children to inherit the property, it stood empty. Dorr never intended his beloved to become derelict, and before his passing he had concocted plans for the estate. Without Dorr's advocacy however, the house was ultimately doomed.

[163] Mount Desert Island Historical Society, Oral History with Irene Marinke

The mansion was a work of art, a creation without duplicate or equal. Its many unique elements created a structure that embodied the romantic era of Bar Harbor. The family had employed an architect by the name of Henry Richards to assist in planning the cottage. The building reflected "practical" ideas generated by Charles and George Dorr and the artistic vision of Mary Dorr.[164] Dorr's many writings contain a wonderful image of Oldfarm through its construction and to its early magnificence,



Figure 15 (Oldfarm rear elevation, courtesy of Acadia National Park Archives)

> The first story we built of granite split out from tumbled boulders in the gorge. At the last some brick was used that added their touch of color to the warm-toned granite. All was shingled [with] the warm brown, never rotting California Redwood. Great chimneys of brick rose above the shingles promising generous warmth, a promise they have well fulfilled. In the interior, the frame was built with extra strength-- my father saw to that-- while all the interior was skillfully and carefully worked out from the best of Michigan White Pine, Maine wood of similar grain being no longer obtainable. The result, when we at last moved in the summer of 1880, the carpenters were still working upon the house, was a delightful home and a home it has proved to be at any season of the year.[165]

Oldfarm stood on the rocky outcropping overlooking Frenchman Bay, with the surrounding islands and mainland in the distance. The view from the three-story

[164] Dorr, George. May 13 transcription, Compiled by Acadia National Park Archives, 1
[165] Dorr, May 13 transcription, 2

construction would have been simply awe-inspiring, and fortunately Mr. Dorr had the good sense to describe such a view:

> From the high-placed casement windows of the chamber I chose for myself when the house was done, the Sea Room as it is called, I used to see, day after day, this wonderful, slow breaking of dawn, with the bold rounded mass of the Porcupine black against the growing light reflected in the Bay, then changing insensibly to green as the light grew stronger.[166]

Dorr's language in recording such an image is wonderfully descriptive, but may also have been due to his failing vision leaving him little but memories of such beauty.

The final years of Dorr's life were spent between Oldfarm and the Storm Beach Cottage, a guesthouse that had been constructed as part of the estate plan. Although not nearly as grand as the mansion, it was much more manageable. In his extreme old age, Dorr moved permanently into the guest cottage, and Oldfarm was rented out to friends. Near the end off his life, Dorr wrote several letters expressing his intent concerning the home, wishing for it to achieve a prestigious status. In August of 1940, Dorr penned a proposal to President Roosevelt.

> I write about a matter that is much in my heart at this time and that I hope you look upon it favorably. This old family home, which has been in its day the scene of much generous hospitality, I would like greatly to have become, yet while I live, the possession of the United States, that it may serve the President and executive officers in maintaining health and vigor for their work.[167]

Though Dorr desired a presidential retreat to be made of his cottage, it was not to be so. President Roosevelt responded later that month, "your thoughtful and generous offer to donate this property to the United States is very much appreciated. I know of no provision of law, however, which would authorize me to accept it for the purpose you

[166] Dorr, May 13 transcription, 3
[167] Dorr to President Roosevelt, 1-3

mention."[168] Roosevelt then suggested that the property simply be donated to Acadia National Park, to be made available for executive purposes if so needed. His original hopes foiled, Dorr donated Oldfarm to the park, just as Roosevelt suggested. It was the house's fate not to be consumed by the fire of 1947 nor any other natural disaster, yet if visitors walk the grounds of Oldfarm today, it is a shadow of its former glory.

In 1946, the park service evaluated the aging house and listed several options on for the estate's management. The report contains data concerning the prospective costs for conversion into a concession building, an administrative outpost, a park museum, or a hybrid office and interpretive site. The engineers found Oldfarm to be "structurally sound," but the "mechanical work" was outdated and insufficient, including heating systems, electric wiring, and plumbing.[169] In a purely methodical way, the specialists composed six pages of cost analysis before finally recommending that the Park Service, "strip Oldfarm" of such shelvings, doors, or piping and other similar materials as may be of use in the Park in the near future, advertise for bids



Figure 16 (Oldfarm ruins after razing but before Rockefeller's donation, courtesy of Acadia National Park Archives)

[168] Roosevelt, Franklin D. "To George B. Dorr." Compiled by Acadia National Park Archives. August 21, 1940, 1

[169] Denniston, J. H., and Aloysius J. Higgins. "Field Report on "Old Farm" Acadia National Park, September 16, 1946." Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1946, 2

for razing [the] building, and as many of the other Dorr Estate buildings not required in the operation of the park."[170]

The National Park Service decided that it would be more costly to update and transform the house than it was to disassemble and obliterate it. Oldfarm was destroyed by the organization that Dorr himself had fought so ardently to bring to Mount Desert Island in order to protect valuable resources. However, the job was not entirely done: walls were still partially standing in 1955. John D. Rockefeller Jr., as a close associate of Dorr's in the development of Acadia, donated $5,000 to finish the demolition and clean the area.[171] While today it seems heartless and shameful to have destroyed the home of Acadia's own founding father, the ideological priorities of the post-war years were not favorable to protecting such a structure. Parks had been "neglected since the New Deal era improvements of the 1930s, and were in desperate need of funds for basic maintenance, not to mention protection from an increasing number of visitors."[172] Mission 66 of the National Park Service was a response to the dilemma of parks nationwide, and focused on building infrastructure and starting fresh with modern facilities. Oldfarm simply was a liability that the financially stressed National Park could not feasibly take on, and only in hindsight do we recognize the intangible value lost in its destruction. Acadia had lost a potentially useful resource due to shortsighted ideology and dire financial straits. However, no institution of human design is perfect, and the destruction of Oldfarm provides a significant example in inadvisable park management for the future. Manmade buildings were not the only resources endangered by

[170] Denniston and Higgins, "Field Report", 8
[171] Rockefeller Jr., John D. "To Conrad Wirth." Compiled by Acadia National Park Archives. May 2, 1955,
[172] Allaback, Sarah. *Mission 66 Visitor Centers, The History of a Building Type.* Digital Book. Prod. National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior. 2000, Introduction

improvident planning, as anthropocentric planning jeopardized the very ecosystems the park sought to protect.

Falcons Under Fire

World War II yielded scientific discoveries in many fields, including the increased protection of U.S. food production. As Rachel Carson writes, "in the course of developing agents of chemical warfare, some of the chemicals created in the laboratory were found to be lethal to insects. The discovery did not come by chance: insects were widely used to test chemicals as agents of death for man."[173] Although it failed as an effective weapon for the battlefield, DDT was found to be a miraculous cure for the plagues of insects destroying food and pestering citizens. As with all "miracle" cures, it came with unforeseen consequences, and the publication of *Silent Spring* brought them to the attention of the public.

Carson's *Silent Spring* drew national attention to the destructive potential of "miracle" pesticides. Animals residing at the tops of food chains suffered most egregiously, due to bioaccumulation of DDT (*dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane*). As DDT enters the ecosystem, primary producers are exposed, and slowly as nature takes its course, the concentration of DDT increases in each tier of dietary hierarchy.[174] This culminates with the apex predators of the ecosystem, and results in decreased reproductive capacity. As just one of the many victims of this chemical experimentation, the peregrine falcons of Acadia disappeared after 1956.[175]

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[173] Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring.* 14th. New York, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002, 16
[174] U.S. Fish and Wildelife Service. *DDT and other Organochlorine Insecticides* . January 15, 2015. http://www.fws.gov/contaminants/info/ddt.html (accessed Jaunary 21, 2015)
[175] National Park Service, Acadia National Park. *Peregrine Falcons.* http://www.nps.gov/acad/learn/nature/peregrines.htm (accessed January 5, 2015)

Mount Desert Island contains rare ocean-side mountains that make excellent nesting sites for the falcons. As DDT affects birds acutely, the mountains of MDI grew increasingly quiet. Falcons' predominantly feed on songbirds, and without a strong dietary base and decreased fecundity in all species, the cliffs where they had once nested were as barren as the remaining breeding pairs. After years of public advocacy, the government finally responded to environmental studies though the Environmental Protection Agency, outlawing DDT in 1972. The ban was closely followed in 1973 with the Endangered Species Act.

Legally recognizing the dangers of DDT would not bring falcons back to the cliffs of MDI. It took a concerted effort to reestablish the species in all of the Eastern United States, where they had been declared regionally extinct.[176] In a process called "hacking" birds hatched in captivity were placed in strategic areas. Acadia was one of many test cases for species reintroduction; the birds were fed without visible human intervention, and were released when able to hunt on their own. [177] From 1984 to 1986 hacking was performed in Acadia, and a returning male falcon appeared in 1988; "he and his mate had their first successful nest in 1991, the first in Acadia in 35 years. Since that time, at least one pair and sometimes three other pairs have produced young in the park."[178] Today the falcons are a prime attraction for visitors each summer, and though some climbers are crestfallen when told cliffs are closed for falcon nesting, the policies implemented in Acadia have been a great success story for the species. The Park had up to this point faced dangers of the visible and financial sorts, but when confronted with something as

[176] National Park Service, "Peregrine Falcons"
[177] Campbell-Thompson, Edwin, F. Hernán Vargas, Richard T. Watson, Angel Muela, and Nilton C. Cáceres. "Effect of Sex and Age at Release on the Indepedence of Hacked Harpy Eagles." (The Raptor Research Foundation) 46, no. 2 (June 2012), 159
[178] National Park Service, "Peregrine Falcons"

overwhelming as accidental biological self-destruction, Acadia successfully worked as a laboratory to reverse the damages. While the park found ways to combat the effects of chemical pollutants, Acadia remains vulnerable to other destructive forces, including its own visitors.

Vacationland

The familiar moniker has been a part of Maine license plates for now almost seventy years, yet originally the word caused much debate. The Legislative Record of 1937 carries the reading of a letter from Richard Hale, dripping with sarcasm and disappointment.

> Maine is Maine no longer. By the beneficent action of the Eighty-seventh Legislature, Maine became on July 6, 1935 Vacationland. Under the provisions of Chapter 162 of the Public Laws of that year, thenceforth and forevermore "Vacationland" goes on all license plates in 'letters not less than three-quarters inch in height, touted on a hundred and fifty thousand license plates. It is odd that the men and women who have loved the essential Maine most steadfastly and most profoundly have never termed it Vacationland.[179]

As Hale pointed out, the designation seemed to do disservice to those who make Maine their home and workplace year-round. There was significant support for this ruling to be overturned, but it was not to be so. Today Maine is synonymous with “Vacationland” with Acadia playing a significant role each season drawing millions to the state. Too much visitation however, now presents itself as an increasing challenge.

Originally, Dorr and the Hancock organization had faced problems in convincing politicians that the area was worthy of a National Park, and they felt a need to advertise the region as an attraction and destination. Simultaneously, Stephen Mather and Horace

[179] State of Maine. *Legislative Record of the Eighty-Eighth Legislature of the State of Maine.* Maine, 1937, 378

Albright were working on their own plans to publicize the parks and increase visitation. The "Mather Mountain Party" in 1915 was an effort to involve significant political and business figures in promoting the parks, and so persuade the government to release further funding to the conservation and protection efforts.[180] Both Dorr and Mather were successful in the long run, to the point where it has become too much of a good thing, and now endangers the very sites that are legally protected.

While visitation has been enormously beneficial for parks, the nature of humans interacting with nature has typically yielded negative results, especially when the goal is to preserve wild spaces as pristine. In 1866, long before Acadia existed, a group of visitors sailed to Mount Desert Island for a pleasure cruise in the wake of the Civil War. This group took full advantage of the natural scenery, and then promptly polluted the picturesque mountain in ways that still seem remarkably familiar even to this day,

> The party amused themselves by building a monument to commemorate their visit to Dog Mountain [now known as St. Sauviour]. The most elevated point was selected, to which each member rolled or carried a stone of a size proportionate to their strength. When it was completed, a rude pole was fixed on the top, to which, for want of a better signal, were tied the red shells of the lobsters.[181]

While the intention was not malicious, the tendency to personally mark nature continues to be a significant problem especially with increasing visitation numbers.

Some visitors are not satisfied by leaving a trace of their visit, but desire to bring part of the park home with them. This is especially prevalent on the rocky coastline in Acadia. "Although signs in the park discourage illegal cobble collecting, cobble theft continues. Because many cobble beaches and access points exist in the park, monitoring

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[180] Duncan and Burns, *The National Parks,* 141

[181] Anonymous. *The Cruise of the Forest Home; or, Chronicles of a Pleasure Trip to Mount Desert.* New York: Francis Hart and Co. printers, 1866, 119-120

cobble theft presents a difficult and time- consuming task. Relatively few citations are issued each year for cobble theft."[182] Though the cobbles seem as numerous as the stars in the night sky, with millions of tourists each year, the physical loss of stone is a real danger to the resource.

Visitors also have an unintended effect upon the attractions that cannot be seen without a careful eye. The simple act of walking and exploring leaves a minute trace that over time brings significant change. One of the previously well-known and popularized attractions, Anemone Cave, is now only visited by a few. "High visitor impact has been proposed as one possible reason for the decline in the anemone population in Anemone Cave. In the 1960s to early 1970s, the park removed all references to Anemone Cave from maps and the parking lot. Visitor developments, such as the handrail, were also removed, thereby inhibiting easy access to the cave."[183] Recent visitors to Acadia never know that the place exists, giving the natural environment a fighting chance to rebound without constant sojourns.

Even Cadillac, immovable and ever-present on the Mount Desert skyline, has noticeably changed over the years. Since the development of the auto road to the summit, Cadillac sees a vast majority of all Acadia visitors. Popular features like Cadillac and the glacial erratic Bubble Rock have suffered from extensive trampling, damaging the thin soil and fragile vegetation.[184] Although Cadillac's summit has been shaped by management techniques, including a paved walking path and signage to deter visitors from walking on the plant life, four to six thousand individuals each day in the peak

[182] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 22
[183] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 22
[184] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 22

season is simply overwhelming.[185] Studied recently, the Cadillac situation was evaluated thus:

> The summit loop trail and vicinity has an entirely open landscape characteristic (sparse low-lying shrubs and grasses intermixed with bare rock) that encourages visitors to wander and explore. High visitation causes some visitors to go off-trail to pass others or to escape the crowds for privacy. Signs on the summit that indicate ‘‘step only on the paved trail or rocks’’ imply that off- trail use is acceptable.[186]

Problems such as this are common in many places, providing an entirely new set of challenges. When considering the rapidly increasing visitation numbers and surrounding local populations, Dorr's park is under attack constantly.

Tailpipes, Smokestacks, and Toxins

Acadia's challenges are not limited to the physical or chemical difficulties within its boundaries, but now the park is under attack from forces far outside its control. It is legally true that, "Acadia National Park is designated a mandatory Class I Federal area under the U.S. Clean Air Act. This classification places stringent constraints on facilities emitting air pollutants that may affect park resources."[187] Yet the fact still remains that pollution from the Midwest permeates the atmosphere, causing things such as mercury deposition and acid rain. [188] As clean as Acadia may look, the chemical dangers are quite real. "Maine's fish, loons, and eagles contain mercury levels that are among the highest in North America."[189]

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[185] Bullock, Steven D., and Steven R. Lawson. "Managing the "Commons" on Cadillac Mountain: A Stated Choice Analysis of Acadia National Park Visitors' Preferences." *Leisure Sciences* (Routledge) 30, no. 1 (January 2008): 71-86, 71

[186] Kim, Min-Kook, and John J. Daigle. "Monitoring of Vegitation Impact Due to Trampling on Cadillac Mountain Summit Using High Spatial Resolution Remote Sensing Data Sets." *Environmental Management* (Springer Science+Business Media), June 2012, 3

[187] National Park Service, "Acadia general management plan", 1

[188] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 15

[189] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 15

Exhaust from personal vehicles and other industrial activities are main components in Acadia's environmental problems. The gasses contribute atmospheric sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, increasing the occurrence of acid rain. Acid precipitation from rain, snow, and fog alters lake and stream chemistry."[190] While some National Parks have banned cars from entering the park, this is far more easily said than done in Acadia. U.S. citzens have a nearly unbreakable fondness for personal vehicles; "studies consistently have shown that large numbers of people in the United States also consider driving a recreational activity. Recently, 'driving for pleasure' was ranked as one of the most popular recreational activities."[191] In addition to this attachment, island communities depend on personal vehicles for many transportation needs, making restrictions on cars highly impractical. Parking cars in Acadia is also a related and highly significant problem. While park law enforcement attempts to keep parking management in check, they respond to far more than simply parking violations. Due to the myriad of operations that park law enforcement oversees, cars parked illegally occasionally escape fines, "[encouraging] a "snowball effect"; once one car parked illegally without a warning or ticket, more visitors were likely to park illegally."[192]

While combating logistical automobile issues, the chemical damage remains a significant problem. "The ponds on Mount Desert Island are bordered by Cadillac Mountain granite, and the bedrock on Isle au Haut consists of granite, gabbro, and diorite. These igneous rocks do not act as buffering agents to acid deposition. If acid precipitation increases, the park's soil and bedrock have little buffering capacity."[193] The delicate soil

[190] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 15
[191] Manning, *Parks and People*, 53
[192] Manning, *Parks and People*, 210
[193] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 15

situation on Mount Desert is unable to take anthropogenic abuse without showing it readily.

Dorr likely did not imagine a version of Acadia struggling with chemical contamination from hundreds of miles away, or with millions of boots slowly deteriorating the landscape and flora. Management in such a tightly packed park, while combatting the pressures of environmental stressors, makes Acadia an ideal national testing ground to develop effective policies.

Unforeseen Tourists

Amongst the millions of individuals that visit the park, a multitude of organisms come for more than a singular season. Invasive species of plant and animal life now threaten environments around the globe, assisted by the rate and volume of international shipping. Though this is not to imply that invasive species are new occurrence, for during the cottage era in Bar Harbor, many estates contained sumptuous gardens showcasing species from far and wide. As it was fashionable to import garden materials, it is not difficult to understand why "nearly one-quarter of the 1,135 vascular plant species found in Acadia are non-native [and]; about two dozen species are highly invasive and threaten native communities."[194] Additionally, unintentional transportation of animal life contributes greatly to the invasive problems. The emerald ash-borer, for instance, has been carried via firewood in long distance travel.[195] Extravagant gardens and tourist firewood are certainly not the only sources for invasives. "The United States Office of Plant introduction alone has introduced almost 200,000 species and variants of plants

[194] National Park Service, "Unwelcome Guests" Acadia National Park. July 2009. http://www.nps.gov/acad/planyourvisit/upload/UnwelcomeGuests_Lo.pdf (accessed January 11, 2015)
[195] National Park Service, "Unwelcome Guests"

from all over the world. Nearly half of the 180 or so major insect enemies of plants in the United States are accidental imports from abroad, and most of them have come as hitchhikers on plants."[196]

One of the most distinctive plant varieties that endanger park land seems beautiful to the casual observer. Purple loostrive presents a pleasing purple spike of flowers and is found in many gardens, but it is an aggressive colonizer. It creates a monoculture in wetland environments that chokes out all native plant growth.[197] Visitors unfamiliar with the species understandably confuse popular lupines and loostrife, due to the similar flower formation. Although the lupines are non-native to Acadia as well, loostrife presents a severe ecological danger, requiring a high management priority. Although Acadia has made successful suppression efforts, "unmanaged purple loosestrife populations are increasing rapidly just outside the park. Because invasive plant management remains a long-term commitment in the park, officials have expanded their management program to include other invasive species."[198] This is perhaps the most difficult logistical obstacle for any environmental program in the park, as private and commercial lands surround governmental lands; even if eradication is achieved within park boundaries, strongholds may exist just beyond the line.

Invasives also threaten the iconic shoreline in Acadia. The rocky environment provides extensive depressions and crevices for tidepool formation. As a unique feature within the park for exploration and scientific studies, they are truly distinctive within the National Park system. Acadia's tidepools face a potential threat from the Asian shore

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[196] Carson, *Silent Spring*, 11
[197] University of Maine Cooperative Extention. *Maine Invasive Plants, Purple Loosestrife* . Prod. University of Maine Cooperative Extention. July 2001
[198] Invasive Weed Awareness Coalition. *Saving Acadia National Park from Purple Loosestrife Infestation.* Prod. Invasive Weed Awareness Coalition. 2006

crab, which has done extensive damage in other coastal states.[199] The park service described the intrusive species as "a voracious eater that reproduces quickly and tolerates a wide range of environmental conditions." [200] The crab endangers native species that are integral parts of the intertidal ecosystem such as periwinkles, blue mussels, and rock crabs. Posing a threat to the fragile shoreline ecosystem and to Maine economic ventures like the mussel harvesting industry, this particular species has prompted close observation by park personnel.

There are increasing ecological threats to Acadia that could not have been anticipated by even Mr. Dorr. These pests appear far more frequently in a globalized world, and because of Acadia's small size, varied landscapes, and popularity, it is vulnerable to a frightening list of invasive hazards. While the dramatically diverse habitats in the park proved to be an asset for its protection, they now resemble a plethora of potential invasive footholds all clustered together.

Shoestring Season: Forcible Sequestration In The National Parks

Not all threats to Acadia's safety come from visitors, pollution, and non-native imports. Some of the most devastating wounds can come from within. The 2013 season marked a particularly dark time for Acadia, having to comply with governmental budget cuts. The White House website outlined the situation clearly: "in 2011, Congress passed a law saying that if they couldn't agree on a plan to reduce our deficit by $4 trillion, about $1 trillion in automatic, arbitrary and across the board budget cuts would start to take

[199] National Park Service, "Unwelcome Guests"
[200] National Park Service, "Unwelcome Guests"

effect in 2013."[201] This is exactly what happened, creating a massive fiscal shortfall, roughly $153.4 million system wide.[202] In Acadia,

> This amounts to a $390,000 reduction from a budget of $7,807,000. The reduction imposed by sequestration is in addition to budget reductions realized in 2011 and 2012. To compensate for the decreased funding in 2011 and 2012, the park has reduced spending for travel, training, overtime and supply purchases. Additionally the park reduced the number of permanent employees, which left few options to compensate for the 2013 budget cuts. The only remaining alternative to achieve the 5% sequester cut is to reduce the level of visitor services that can be delivered this year.[203]

The National Park Service prides itself upon the quality of their personnel who interact with the public, manage the resources, keep services running, and combat natural dangers, yet when such a spending cut is forcibly enacted, it is exactly these great assets that are damaged. In Acadia alone, five permanent positions went unfilled in addition to eighteen permanent positions not filled in previous fiscal years. Twelve seasonal positions were cut, and thirty-two seasonal positions were shortened by two to six weeks each.[204] Fewer men and women in uniform means that the park is not being adequately cared for, yet the park service is tasked to preserve and protect these valuable resources. This was the predicament in 2013 ushering in the 'shoestring season' where services and rangers around the country were stretched thin, while congress debated the problem.

Interacting with the disgruntled public during this period was perhaps one of the most personally distressing problems for rangers. Stephen Mather famously said, "if a trail is to be blazed, send a ranger. If an animal is floundering in the snow, send a ranger.

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[201] The White House web site. *What you need to know about the Sequester.* 2013. http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/sequester (accessed January 13, 2015)
[202] Terkel, Amanda. *Sequestration Hits National Parks Just in Time for Tourist Season.* May 23, 2013. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/05/23/sequestration-national-parks_n_3326973.html (accessed February 2, 2015)
[203] National Park Service, *Effects of Sequestration on Acadia National Park.* April 10, 2013. http://www.nps.gov/acad/learn/news/acadia-summer-operations.htm (accessed February 5, 2015)
[204] National Park Service, "Effects of Sequestration on Acadia"

If a bear is in a hotel, send a ranger. If a fire threatens a forest, send a ranger. And if someone needs to be saved, send a ranger."[205] This iconic job now had to be followed with "send a ranger… if there is one available and only if we can afford to." The ideological motivation that makes the job such an attractive one, was now undercut by political inaction. Parks had little choice but to tighten already strained financial belts, "but park officials are used to budget cuts, and they plan to lean on extra volunteers and more money from private groups to help them get through the summer."[206] Statements like these further exacerbate the problem, leading the public to believe that budget cuts are not a serious threat. Although the financial crisis hurt parks around the country, men and women in uniform went above and beyond to cover the shortfalls. Former ranger Charles Farabee Jr. describes the job as "an amalgam of Jedi Knight, favorite teacher, and Smokey Bear."[207] The eclectic and inspiring image keeps employees and visitors returning, even in the face of political difficulties.

Acadia in the Coal Mine

Finally, the greatest danger to Acadia comes from collective human activity itself. Mr. Dorr believed ardently in protecting Mount Desert from over development and personal ownership, but he could not have predicted the imminent danger from global climate change. This struggle has been and continues to be a multi-generational conflict, which no area on Earth can claim to be exempt. As safeguards of wild spaces, the National Parks act as early indicators of climate change, and may be some of the most

[205] Farabee, Charles R. "Butch". *National Park Ranger, An American Icon.* Lanham, MD: Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 2003, vii
[206] Siegler, Kirk. *Sequestered Spring Means Fewer Ranger, Services At National Parks.* March 5, 2013. http://www.npr.org/2013/03/06/173532285/sequestered-spring-means-fewer-rangers-services-at-national-parks (accessed February 11, 2015).
[207] Farabee, *National Park Ranger*, vii

noticeable victims of changing global conditions. Dorr had managed to save a small portion of Maine from humanity's own destructive progress, yet as the park nears its centennial celebration in 2016, Acadia now is endangered by humanity yet again.

As a coastal National Park, Acadia is in a precarious position in the face of global climate change; "sea-level rise and a possible increase in storm intensity and frequency due to global warming may increase beach erosion and negatively impact many of the park's iconic visitor destinations. Some significant cultural resources that are located immediately in the coastal zone may also be damaged."[208] Storm intensity was certainly seen when hurricane Bill swept across the Gulf of Maine in 2009.

> An estimated 10,000 people converged on the Park Loop Road, trying to get a good view of the violent waves, some of which were more than 5 m (15 ft) high. Ignoring park rangers' warnings, visitors crowded close to the rocky coastline. Suddenly, an unusually large wave careened against the cliffs and the cavernous inlet of Thunder Hole, washed over a crowd of spectators, and swept seven visitors into the ocean. Tragically one of the seven was lost to the sea."[209]

The spectacle was absolutely breathtaking: massive waves crashing and spraying over even the tallest sections of Otter Cliff. Maine experiences these fierce storms infrequently at best, yet with a dramatically warming Gulf of Maine, increasing events are potentially on the horizon. While the granite summits of Mount Desert will feel little to no effect in the rising ocean level, other iconic and beloved regions will not be so lucky: "According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, global sea level will rise an estimated 0.19 to 0.58 m (7.5 in to 1.9 ft) by 2100,"[210] and a change of this magnitude would certainly have an effect on such well-known places as Sand Beach and Thunder Hole.

[208] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 13
[209] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 11
[210] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 13

Sand Beach has been a major attraction, drawing visitors to wander the rare formation, yet under a rising ocean, the beach will not only shrink, but change in composition; "both natural processes and human activity have exposed the slope leading to the beach. With constant wave action, the harder quartz and feldspar grains abrade the softer calcium carbonate fragments breaking them down. Over time, the amount of shell fragments that currently dominate the beach may diminish."[211] In addition to this, the lagoon that resides behind the beach may also become increasingly unstable while the dunes disintegrate, and increasing storm rainfall amounts change the water levels.

At Thunder Hole "high energy waves erode the retaining wall so that the trail and stairs often need repair. Storm surges coupled with high tide and overall rising sea level present significant future potential danger to the park. In general, rising sea level is causing the shoreline to migrate inland."[212] The natural phenomenon of waves filling the cave and creating the booming sound may well diminish, if not disappear under severe sea level rise.

The storms that could potentially do damage to Acadia bring both wind and waves, but the significant rainfall could also effect park resources. Current rates of erosion are manageable, but "saturated soils, thawing, precipitation, and storm waves lead to rockfalls that impact the Park Loop Road on Mount Desert Island and slumping along coastal bluffs. Undercutting of the paved surface above the path leading to Thunder Hole has caused the slope to fail and required the installation of a safety fence."[213] Due to the glacial history of MDI, the ancient shoreline is many feet above current levels, but the erosion now presents a new challenge for maintenance: "Potential mass wasting and

[211] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 12
[212] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 12
[213] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 11

slope failure may be an issue wherever this marine clay is exposed on Mount Desert Island."[214]

Finally, the changing Atlantic poses threats not only to Acadia, but to the surrounding communities. Although it may seem that the park and the towns are separate entities, they are so closely interwoven that failure of one would likely lead to a rapid decline of the other. As an island, the marine resources are integral to supporting local economies and drawing tourists to the seaside. According to the 2009 report assembled by the University of Maine, "the Gulf of Maine lies along a boundary between the subarctic zone to the north and the temperate zone to the south, and represents the southern limit for many cold-water marine species and the northern limit for many warm-water species."[215] A changing temperature in this critical fishing ground and scientific resource could dramatically alter the delicate balance.

The effects of climate change in Maine are still revealing themselves through careful study. The results are far from certain, but change in some form is guaranteed, and is already in progress. Changes in the Atlantic, shifting growing patterns, invasive species finding a more agreeable climate in Maine, and physical damages to Acadia have already been observed. These may only be the beginning of a dramatically different Acadia if nothing is done to mitigate climate change. Nearing the centennial of Acadia, locals and visitors alike will determine if the park will prosper or suffer in the next one hundred years, based upon their actions.

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[214] National Park Service, "Geologic Resources Inventory Report," 11

[215] Jacobson, G.L., I.J. Fernandez, P.A. Mayewski, and C.V. Schmitt. *Maine's Climate Future: An Initial Assessment.* University of Maine, Orono: University of Maine Printing Services, 2009, 19

Dorr's Dream in the 21st Century

Acadia's General Management Plan outlined the following goals: "first, Acadia National Park protects and preserves outstanding scenic, natural, scientific, and cultural values for present and future generations through programs, facilities, and services. Second, the park provides an increasingly urban population with programs and opportunities for non consumptive, resource-based recreation and education."[216] Recognizing threats and forming protective measures are of paramount importance to this mission.

Through experimentation and extensive study, park management has learned much in the years following Dorr's passing. Fire on the island has been a constant fear since 1947, and national awareness of the Smokey Bear "Only YOU" campaign for example, has contributed to active management. The destruction of Oldfarm indicates that money is often the cause for poor choices, and greater foresight along with adequate funding is needed to prevent such decisions. Species decimated by environmental damage can find a precious foothold within the park bounds, protected by the federal lands and national programs. These challenges have been met, and must be remembered as Acadia continues to develop.

Ongoing issues, such as overcrowding, pollution and invasive species are proactively countered in Acadia today. Studies have been evaluating high visitation resources like Cadillac Mountain for many years, and show that "visitors consider protecting vegetation and soils on the summit to be a high priority, and that they are willing to accept restrictions requiring visitors to stay on the trail and site management

[216] National Park Service, "General Management Plan", 1

structures such as signs, rock borders, and even fencing if necessary to do so."[217] Acadia has also embraced public transportation, greatly abating visitor pollution. The Island Explorer shuttles traverse the island, including the towns in addition to parklands. With increasing tourism and pollution becoming a major concern, the success of Island Explorer has made visitation possible especially in peak season. "Since its first day of operation in 1999, more than 4.3 million passengers have ridden the buses. An estimated 1,710,939 private vehicle trips have been eliminated, along with 24.5 tons of smog-causing pollutants and 15,942 tons of greenhouse gases."[218] The resource management and invasive plant crews of Acadia also deserve profound credit in suppressing a myriad of encroaching entities, while working in a challenging space surrounded by private lands. While these measures address issues that can be remedied locally, Acadia's safety is still in doubt.

Climate change is inevitable, heavily exacerbated by anthropogenic activity. Scientific evidence indicates alarming trends, while political manipulation has diminished these findings if not discrediting them entirely. As William Norhaus writes metaphorically "we are entering the Climate Casino. We are rolling the climatic dice, the outcome will produce surprises, and some of them are likely to be perilous."[219] Our hazardous behavior with natural resources has created incredibly high stakes, with National Parks as one of the many chips. Acadia will not suddenly vanish beneath the sea as many science fiction films may imply, but the park will nevertheless change. Increasing cases of lyme disease, changing composition of forests, and the warming

[217] Bullock and Lawson, "Managing the 'Commons'", 81
[218] Friends of Acadia. *The Island Explorer.* 2015. http://friendsofacadia.org/what-we-do/sustainable-visitation/the-island-explorer/ (accessed March 13, 2015)
[219] Nordhaus, William. *The Climate Casino, Risk, Uncertainty and Economics for a Warming World.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press Books, 2013, 5

Atlantic may all be characteristics in a future Acadia. These changes are to be underestimated or ignored at our own risk, jeopardizing natural treasures shared by all citizens. U.S. citizens must weigh the intangible value of wild spaces against the consequences of our own progress. What had been set forth as gifts for future generations, now are indicators of abuse and mistreatment. Environmental damage abides by no legal boundaries, irrevocably changing the world around us. Beloved vistas and climates have proven to be malleable, however timeless they may have originally appeared to be.

Happy Centennial

As the Founding Father of Acadia, George Dorr proved to be an iconoclastic figure for the preservationist movement in the United States. Building a park from disjointed donations, navigating troubled political waters, and guiding safeguarded lands to final parkhood took extraordinary ingenuity and personal sacrifice. While his role as creator is apparent when looking Acadia's chronology, his presence has faded from the park. The stone bearing his name sits quietly at Sieur De Monts, beneath an ash tree tagged for observation as an indicator of encroaching emerald ash-borers. Dorr's formerly distinguished estate Oldfarm, long since gone, has been disguised by vegetation. Visitors are far more likely to encounter the name of John D. Rockefeller than Dorr, the former having maintained both a family and the famous fortune while assisting in the park's formation.

Dorr's historical significance has been obscured, and without extensive literature highlighting his labors, even frequent vacationers may be completely unaware of his role. Those who are avid hikers may have ventured up Dorr Mountain, but never connected the

name to such a crucial figure in the park's history. Visitors cannot be expected to learn and absorb every ounce of information thrown their way, but as the centennial approaches, Dorr and his work deserve center stage.

2016 marks the 100th birthday for not only Sieur De Monts National Monument, but also the National Park Service itself. On the threshold of celebration, Acadia's significance becomes clear: Acadia represents one of the most democratic park formations. Originally comprised of private property, Acadia was not simply carved from national reserves. Dorr's work also broke the monopoly of National Parks in the West, proving that the East still had natural treasures worth saving if one was sufficiently determined. Jack Perkins poetry concerning Acadia accurately summarizes the park formation: "People who, seeing came to love; Who, loving, chose to stay; Who, staying, came to guard and enhance" and "it's plain to see reciprocity: For as they made Acadia, Acadia made them."[220] Dorr and Acadia serve as unique examples in preservation history, one inextricably linked to the other. As a hybrid of park precedents, Acadia served as a trailblazer for future eastern units to become established.

Finally, as a geographically small yet internationally renowned vacationland, Acadia developed a policy that is setting the standard procedure when facing overcrowding and environmental dangers. Statistics place Acadia in the top 10 visited National Parks in the country, with over 2.5 million people in 2014 alone.[221] Many National Parks can differentiate between "front country" and "back country," but Acadia is so small that there really is no such thing as true "back country." Acadia in its entirety is on the frontlines of visitation, and intensive care is needed every season. The phrase

[220] Perkins, Jack. *Acadia: visions and verse.* Camden, ME: Down East Books, 1999, 65
[221] National Parks Conservation Association. *Ten Most Visited Parks.* 2014. http://www.npca.org/exploring-our-parks/visitation.html (accessed March 6, 2015)

"as Maine goes, so goes the nation" was one in popular circulation; in this case, perhaps Acadia can be considered a similar bellwether for National Park units in this new century of challenges.

The United States lack the historical longevity of Old World continents, yet the treasures preserved by law are not simply reminders of our past but testing grounds for the future. While parks like Acadia preserve natural spaces, they are also environments of change. The park has grown alongside the National Park Service, and while both institutions deserve the celebration, serious reflection and planning is necessary if they are to enjoy a healthy future. Only through dedicated stewardship as displayed by individuals like Dorr, can Acadia prosper for generations to come. With the centennial candles ready to be lit, Dorr's intrepid efforts should be similarly illuminated by the celebration. Hopefully, the next century will appreciate him as the significant historical figure he deserves to be, and possibly even as the photo indicated, Mr. Dorr, "Hero."



GEORGE BUCKNAM DORR

Figure 17 (George Bucknam Dorr in his elder years, courtesy of Acadia National Park Archives)

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