

THE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

NATIONAL PARK READER



EDITED BY JAMES H. PICKERING

The Rocky Mountain National Park Reader



THE NATIONAL PARK READERS
Lance Newman and David Stanley, series editors

Bressler



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NATIONAL PARK READER**

EDITED BY

JAMES H. PICKERING

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1948 Map of Rocky Mountain National Park, published by the Rocky Mountain Motor Company.

NIGHT

WET CLOUD WAITING FOR A PICNIC

SUNRISE



LEGEND

- HARD SURFACE AUTO ROADS
- HORSEBACK and FOOT TRAILS
- HOTELS-DUDE RANCHES-CABINS
- LAKES and STREAMS
- MOUNTAINS and PEAKS
- SPRUCE \rightarrow PINE \rightarrow JUNIPER

IF LOST IN REGION FOR MORE THAN THIRTY DAYS-ASK A NATIVE WHERE YOU ARE-AN CARTOGRAPHER OF THIS MAP NOT RESPONSIBLE.



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ESTES PARK
IN NATIONAL PARK

INTRODUCTION

James H. Pickering

Straddling the Continental Divide north and south, Rocky Mountain National Park contains some 415 square miles spread across three distinctive life zones (montane, subalpine, and alpine/tundra). Its geologic history is complex, the culmination of the powerful forces of tectonic uplift and erosion, spanning billions of years. The resulting scenic beauty is one that few places in North America can surpass: rugged and spectacular peaks; U-shaped, glacial-sculpted valleys; crystal clear mountain lakes and snow-fed streams. Ninety-five percent of the park is designated wilderness. Drier on the east than on the west, the park rises in elevation from about 7,500 feet on its eastern boundary to 14,259 feet at the summit of Longs Peak, a magnet for visitors for more than a century and a half. The subalpine region of the park is one of flowering meadows separated by densely wooded stands of ponderosa and lodgepole pine, Engelmann spruce, and Douglas fir, intermixed with aspen and willow—green or golden depending on the season. A full third lies above tree line at 11,500 feet in the harsh and windswept tundra where it is bisected by Trail Ridge Road, the highest continuously paved highway in America. The iconic features of its topographical landscape have long since made Rocky Mountain National Park one of the best known and most visited in the nation. The park with its surrounding region has a long, rich, and varied literature uniquely its own, a literature well worth celebrating and sharing on the occasion of its centennial year. Hence this anthology.

Archaeologists tell us that the park and its two adjacent valleys, Estes Park on the east and Middle Park on the west, have been inhabited by humans, at least on a seasonal basis, for some ten thousand years. Until the

late 1700s the Utes dominated the interior mountains to the west, increasingly sharing their territory with others—Comanche, Shoshone, and perhaps the occasional band of Apache. The eastern valleys belonged to the Arapaho, a nomadic people who began to arrive about 1790, pressed west across the northern plains by their aggressive Sioux enemies. Entering the foothills of the Front Range and the area that is now Rocky Mountain National Park, the Arapaho forced the Ute to retreat across the Continental Divide.

Evidence of Native American activity—projectile points, potsherds, broken knives, scrapers, and other tools—have been discovered at various places throughout the park. These include the tundra along Trail Ridge Road where still can be located the remains of low-walled game drives used to herd animals into the arms of waiting hunters. Oldman Mountain, the rocky knob just west of the town of Estes Park, which archaeologists believe served as a spiritual (or vision) quest site, is but the most prominent of the hundreds of suspected sacred sites identified throughout the park region.

What would become Rocky Mountain National Park enters the historical record in June 1820, when the party commanded by Major Stephen H. Long, passing north to south along the Front Range on a scientific reconnaissance mission, first sighted the great peak that would be named in his honor. Though Long and his companions made no attempt to penetrate the mountains of northern Colorado, others already had. By this date, in fact, much of the region's interior had already been explored by Euro-American trappers and traders. Other than a few place names, however, these early visitors left little in the way of written or physical evidence of their comings and goings. Though some historians believe that the travels recorded by mountain man Rufus Sage in his *Rocky Mountain Life* (1846) brought him into or near the future park, the honor of "discovery" belongs to Kentuckian Joel Estes who, in October of 1859, together with one of his sons, stood at the crest of what is now Park Hill and gazed down in wonder upon the empty valley that would soon bear his name.

Their initial stay was brief. It was not until 1863, in fact, that Estes decided to relocate his family of ten from their ranch at Fort Lupton on the South Platte. For the next three years the Estes family made the valley floor

their home. Here they supported themselves by carting game they shot down through the foothills to market in Denver while raising cattle and occasionally housing as paying guests those who wandered in to hunt, fish, prospect, or climb mountains. The winters, however, proved to be severe, making cattle grazing difficult. By mid-April of 1866 the Estes were gone, leaving behind their squatter's cabin and outbuildings that stood in what is now the small arm of Lake Estes. A year later their place was taken by a jovial Welshman named Griff Evans, who moved his wife and young family up from Lyons to occupy and then expand the Estes holdings.

By the early 1870s the number of visitors who sought out the hospitality of the Evans ranch had greatly expanded. They were a varied lot: hunters and fishermen, government surveyors, prospectors, scientists, mountaineers, artists and writers, together with those simply seeking rest, recreation, or improved health away from the heat of summer. Two would leave indelible marks. The first was Windham Thomas Wyndham-Quin, the Fourth Earl of Dunraven, who came up from Denver to hunt during the week after Christmas in 1872. The second was noted English travel writer Isabella Lucy Bird, who arrived a year later, in October of 1873. Both departed deeply impressed by all they found. For the entrepreneurial Earl, Estes Park became a place in which to invest a portion of his not inconsiderable fortune. After having the valley surveyed and opened for settlement in January and February of 1874, Dunraven proceeded to acquire (through means at best suspect) direct title to some five thousand acres of prime real estate to use for raising cattle and as the site of a first-class tourist hotel, both of which he accomplished in short order. The legacy of Isabella Bird's three-month visit was equally important. The publication of her delightful book, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, in 1879 brought Estes Park's scenic wonders and invigorating climate to the attention of the nation and the world.

Dunraven's land grabbing gave him ownership of the best part of the Estes Valley, including choice parcels along its rivers and streams. But there was ample room for others and by 1875 pioneer families had begun to arrive, intent upon making Estes Park a year-round home. Some took time to locate permanently. New Yorker William James and family, for example, had to endure a miserable winter in a dirt-roofed cabin up against

Lumpy Ridge before swapping that property with the Reverend William McCreery for open land along Fall River. Others settled in more quickly: the MacGregors in the mouth of Black Canyon; the Fergusons below the alkaline pond known as Marys Lake; the Hupps in lower Beaver Meadows; the Spragues in Moraine Park; and the Lambs nine miles south in the valley at the foot of Longs Peak. Like Joel Estes and Griff Evans before them, all but one of these new arrivals soon found themselves in the tourist business. Abner Sprague said it best: “The hotel business was forced upon us. We came here for small ranch operations, but guests and visitors became so numerous, at first wanting eggs, milk, and other provisions, then wanting lodging, and finally demanding full accommodations, that we had to go into the hotel business or go bankrupt from keeping free company.” Aided by fairly passable new roads linking the Estes Valley to Loveland, Longmont, Boulder, and other Front Range towns, within a few short years Estes Park’s future as a destination resort community had been firmly established. All of these early resorts were located either in or close to the area that in 1915 would become Rocky Mountain National Park, quickly establishing a love of place among both residents and visitors that passing years would only strengthen.

The final decades of the nineteenth century were ones of expansion and consolidation, during which these pioneer resort owners and those who followed their example increased the capacities of their establishments, trying without much success to keep ahead of the new and returning visitors who crowded in each summer. Except for the Earl of Dunraven’s fashionable Estes Park Hotel on Fish Creek, most of the valley’s scattered guest ranches were modest places that catered to those who needed few amenities or were willing to “rough it” out-of-doors in some quiet, sequestered place.

The early years of the new century brought dramatic changes, including a building boom of new lodges, many within the future park. The most important can be traced to the morning of June 30, 1903, when Free-lan Oscar Stanley, coinventor with his identical twin brother of the famous Stanley Steamer automobile, negotiated his small steam car up the rough wagon road from Lyons to spend the summer recovering from consumption. That moment, Enos Mills, the community’s first historian, would later

write, was “the epoch-making event in the history of Estes Park.” F. O. Stanley would make Estes Park his summer home and chief beneficiary for the next thirty-seven years. The construction of the magnificent Stanley Hotel, a complex of eleven buildings in all, between 1907 and 1909, was but the beginning.

Stanley’s timing was right. By the time that F. O. and his wife, Flora, returned for the summer of 1905, the village of Estes Park had been platted and laid out and building was well underway. Purchasing a half-interest in the holdings of the Earl of Dunraven, Stanley then used portions of that property and his own money to provide the fledgling town with its water, sewerage, and electrical systems, as well as its first bank. Later he would gift Estes Park land for its dump, a new eighteen-hole golf course, a new school, and, finally, the public recreation and fairgrounds that is today’s Stanley Park.

There was also the matter of civic engagement. In 1906 Stanley agreed to serve as the first president of the Estes Park Protective and Improvement Association (EPPIA). This organization of local boosters, as its name suggests, sought to increase tourism by protecting the natural resources of the wilderness area west of the new village, including local fish and game, while encouraging the building of new roads and trails. The work of the EPPIA brought Stanley into close and regular contact with Enos Abijah Mills, a young man, not yet thirty, but even then well on his way to building the national reputation as a writer, lecturer, and scenic preservationist that would propel him into the front ranks of America’s growing conservation movement. It was, in fact, at a meeting of the association in October 1907 that the “national park idea” was born to preserve in perpetuity the work already so well begun.

The speaker was Herbert N. Wheeler, newly appointed head of the Medicine Bow National Forest, the wilderness preserve that two years earlier had been extended south from Wyoming to include the area that would become Rocky Mountain National Park. “If you want to draw tourists,” the chief forester told his audience, “you should establish a game refuge where tourists can see wild life.” Wheeler then produced a map on which he outlined an area of more than a thousand square miles, beginning west of the new village of Estes Park and extending across the Continental Divide.

Mills wrote Wheeler the following spring to ask just where the boundaries of such a preserve might be located. It was in the context of this exchange that Mills's own far more ambitious plan for a full-blown national park began to take shape.

The campaign to create Rocky Mountain National Park was not easy. Opposition from entrenched timber, mining, and grazing interests was formidable, and it took seven long years and a broad coalition of powerful civic, business, and political organizations at the state, regional, and national level to make the park a reality. The peripatetic Mills was active on every front, and while others helped, most notably Denver lawyer James Grafton Rogers who drafted and redrafted the needed legislation, without Mills's dogged persistence and determination the "Estes Park Project," as he referred to it, might well have languished and died. In the end it took three separate park bills and five major revisions to get the required legislation through the U.S. Congress, and, even then, the size of the new park had been whittled down from the original Wheeler-Mills proposal of more than 1,000 square miles to 358.5.

The dedication of Rocky Mountain National Park took place on Saturday, September 4, 1915. The site was an open knoll in Horseshoe Park, near today's Lawn Lake trailhead, beneath a banner announcing the event. Despite the gray and threatening weather, it was a festive occasion. Some came by wagon, bike, and on foot. Most came in cars; as many as 267 by one count. "The greatest automobile demonstration," the *Rocky Mountain News* reported, "ever seen in Colorado." Ladies from the Estes Park Woman's Club passed out souvenir buttons and provided box lunches and hot coffee. Their husbands, most of whom were members of the Protective and Improvement Association, dutifully stood nearby dispensing ice cream cones. While guests and dignitaries assembled on a makeshift platform, a twenty-five-piece concert band from Fort Collins serenaded. Those on hand included Colorado governor George Carlson; Colorado congressman Edward Taylor; Assistant Secretary of the Interior Stephen Mather, soon to become the first head of the new National Park Service, together with his young deputy Horace Albright; and Mary Belle King Sherman, chair of the Conservation Committee of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, an organization that had helped galvanize support across the nation. F. O. Stanley, who

had generously subsidized Mills's travels and lobbied eastern legislators, was there as well, captured in a memorable photograph holding a small American flag. But the day and hour belonged to Enos Mills, who chaired the afternoon's program. "This is the proudest moment of my life," he told the crowd. "I have lived to see the realization of a great dream come true. It means great things for Colorado and for the nation."

Since that day in 1915, a full century of history has now passed, providing an appropriate, indeed obligatory, occasion for a reflective backward glance at milestone events and achievements. There have been many. One thinks of the completion of Fall River Road over the Continental Divide in 1920, and its successor, Trail Ridge Road, in 1938; of Civilian Conservation Corps days of the 1930s which advanced important park projects, including trail building, by at least a decade; and of the "holing through" of the thirteen-mile Alva Adams tunnel beneath the park in 1944, a key element in the Colorado–Big Thompson transmountain irrigation project. Other, more recent, accomplishments include the opening of the Beaver Meadows Visitors Center in 1967 as part of the Mission '66 project, the last concerted attempt to refurbish and update America's system of national parks; and the completion in 2013 of the reconstruction and relocation of portions of much-traveled Bear Lake Road.

Over the past hundred years Rocky Mountain National Park has grown slightly in size and greatly in complexity. To be sure, it is rather less cluttered than it was in 1915. All of the great resort hotels (those "castles of woods") are gone, as are many of the other, smaller in-holdings once found clustered in Moraine Park and here and there in other places, returning large sections of the park to their natural state. The size of the ranger force and support staff of necessity has also grown (at the time of the dedication there were only three). They are needed to cope with the more than three million visitors who enter the park, mostly by way of Estes Park, each and every year, using a road and trail system that, though well maintained and in some places improved, has not grown materially since the CCC camps were closed by World War II. Protecting the park's resources—physiographic, biological, and cultural—while making them available for use and enjoyment is today the major ongoing concern. Some worry as well that, given the rapid growth of Colorado's Front Range communities, an

increased number of visitors may one day, like its much-viewed elk herds, outstrip the park's carrying capacity. Balancing accessibility with the need to protect and preserve the park's fragile ecology is, and will remain, a significant challenge.

What has not changed is the special relationship between Rocky Mountain National Park and its gateway towns. The residents of Estes Park and the Estes Valley continue to regard the mountainous area to the west as their own to use, support, and protect, just as they did in Enos Mills's and F. O. Stanley's time. This is also true of the residents of Grand Lake across the Divide, a community where, as in Estes Park, the summertime population doubles with second homeowners. For both, Rocky Mountain National Park remains *their park*. To promote a game preserve, it was the members of the Estes Park Protective and Improvement Association who in 1913 and again in 1914 pooled their funds to reintroduce elk from the Yellowstone region of Wyoming into an area where they had virtually been hunted into extinction. It was these same residents who, on Halloween evening of 1917, when the park was very young and very vulnerable, left their partying and rushed in costume to fight a fire in Hidden Valley. Four decades later, local commerce-minded citizens would unite once again, this time unsuccessfully, to protest the closing of the ski facilities in Hidden Valley which they had long since come to regard as their own.

As a gateway community and haven for retirees, many of whom came as tourists and returned to stay, Estes Park has long since come to rely on park visitors for its economic well being. For better or for worse, the futures of both are inextricably linked. The same thing is true in an ecological sense, as well, for as Enos Mills and other early park supporters knew all too well, Rocky Mountain National Park and the adjacent Estes Valley share a common ecosystem, a fact that becomes self-evident each fall and winter when herds of elk wander through village neighborhoods.

"No place is a place," Wallace Stegner once wrote, "until things that have happened in it are remembered." Such is true of Rocky Mountain National Park. Engagement with place, often resulting in events that loom large in park history, is, in fact, the underlying theme that connects and animates the narratives in this anthology. Broadly representative, both in subject and

approach, they reach back to Arapaho and pioneer times before the park was established; and then move forward to span its first hundred years. The voices that speak to us are equally distinctive. Some tell us about the past, how it once was, recalling personal moments of triumph and tragedy. Other voices are quieter and more polemic. Perhaps the most notable of these are the concluding selections on the white-tailed ptarmigan, elk, and pika whose authors speak directly to realities that define the park's present and that will, in all likelihood, shape its future. All, however, serve a single purpose. They are the attempt to capture and share the rich literary and historical mosaic that helps us understand and better appreciate the national treasure that is Rocky Mountain National Park.

1

PREFACE TO “THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK”

1915

Enos A. Mills

No one worked harder for the creation of Rocky Mountain National Park than Enos A. Mills (1870–1922). For those efforts the Denver Post and others bestowed on him the title “Father of Rocky Mountain National Park.” It had been a long and hard journey. Having arrived in Estes Park from Kansas in 1884 as a sickly youth in search of better health, within little more than two decades Enos Mills had created for himself an attractive new persona. He had become “Mills of the Rockies,” a man with a national reputation as mountaineer, lecturer, scenic preservationist, and mountain innkeeper, as well as the author of authentic and highly readable essays on wildlife and out-of-doors adventuring. By the date of the park’s dedication, Houghton Mifflin had published three volumes of these essays. Not surprisingly, in the fourth, Rocky Mountain Wonderland (1915), Mills chose to devote the final chapter to a descriptive survey of the new park. Today’s visitors will have little trouble in recognizing the familiar terrain over which Mills guides them.

Extend a straight line fifty-five miles northwest from Denver and another line sixty miles southwest from Cheyenne and these lines meet in approximately the centre of the Rocky Mountain National Park. This centre is in the mountain-heights a few miles northwest of Long’s Peak, in what Dr. F. V. Hayden, the famous geologist, calls the most rugged section of the Continental Divide of the Rocky Mountains.

This Park is a mountain realm lying almost entirely above the altitude of nine thousand feet. Through it from north to south extends the Snowy Range,—the Continental Divide,—and in it this and the Mummy Range

form a vast mountain Y. Specimen Mountain is the north end of the west arm of this Y, while Mummy Mountain is at the tip of the east arm. Mt. Clarence King on the south forms the base of the stem, while Long's Peak is against the eastern side of the stem, about midway.

Long's Peak, "King of the Rockies," is the dominating peak and rises to the altitude of 14,255 feet. There are ten or more peaks in the Park that tower above thirteen thousand, and upwards of forty others with a greater altitude than twelve thousand feet. Between these peaks and their out-jutting spurs are numerous cañons. The Park is from ten to eighteen miles wide, its greatest length is twenty-five miles, and its total area is about three hundred and sixty square miles.

A line drawn around the Park on the boundary line would only in two or three places drop below the altitude of nine thousand feet. The area thus is high-lying and for the most part on edge. About one fifth of the entire area is above the limits of tree-growth. Here and there they are whitened by comparatively small snow and ice fields. From the summits the mountains descend through steeps, walls, slopes, terraces, tablelands, spurs, gorges, and mountain valleys.

This Park is a wilderness. Though entirely surrounded by settlers and villages, it is an almost unbroken wild. Many of its peaks are as yet unclimbed. There are pathless forests, unvisited gorges, unnamed lakes, and unknown localities.

Gray and red granite form the larger portion of its surface. Here and there are mixtures of schist, gneiss, and porphyry. The northwest corner is volcanic and is made up of rhyolite, obsidian, and lava. The Indians have a tradition concerning the volcanic activity of Specimen Mountain, though I doubt if this mountain has been active within a century. It is a dead or sleeping volcano. A part of its old crater-rim has fallen away, and brilliant flowers cover the cold ashes in the crater.

Most of the territory was glaciated during the last ice age, and there still remain five small glaciers and a number of ice-fields. The Hallett Glacier is on the north shoulder of Hague's Peak, the Sprague Glacier on the south side of Stone's Peak, Tyndall Glacier between Flat-Top and Mt. Hallett, and Andrews Glacier in a cirque of Loch Vale, while an unnamed small one is at the bottom of the east precipice of Long's Peak.

There can hardly be found a greater and more closely gathered area of imposing, easily read glacial records than those which centre about Long's Peak. These works of the Ice King, both intact and partly ruined, have attracted the attention and study of a number of prominent geologists and glaciologists. Among these ice works Dr. Hayden and Dr. David Starr Jordan have climbed and wandered. Vernon L. Kellogg has here gathered material for a book, and Dr. Edward L. Orton, former State Geologist of Ohio, has spent many weeks here in study. Within a six-mile radius of the top of Long's Peak are more than thirty glacier lakes and perhaps twice as many lakelets or mountain tarns. Immediately south of the Peak, Wild Basin is literally filled with glacier-records. To the north is Moraine Park; to the northwest, Glacier Gorge and Loch Vale; to the west, lying between the Peak and Grand Lake, there is a wondrous area of the Ice King's topography.

Bierstadt, St. Vrain, and Mills Moraines are imposing deposits of glacial *débris*. Of these Mills Moraine has been the most studied. It apparently holds the story of two widely separated ice ages. This moraine evidently was formed by the glacier which made the basin of Chasm Lake. It extends eastward from Long's Peak, its uppermost end being at twelve thousand five hundred feet. At timber-line its trend is toward the southeast. It is about one mile wide, five miles long, and in places apparently more than one thousand feet deep.

The ice-stream which piled the enormous Bierstadt Moraine took its rise on the west summit slope of Long's Peak. It flowed first toward the west, and in the upper amphitheatre of Glacier Gorge it united with the ice-stream from the north slope of Shoshone Peak and the stream off the eastern slope of Mt. McHenry. Although a part of this enlarged flow appears to have been thrust across the Continental Divide, the larger portion of it was deflected to the north through Glacier Gorge. Emerging from this gorge and enlarged by the ice-streams from Mt. Otis, Mt. Hallett, and other peaks in the Continental Divide, it flowed on to thrust against the eastern base of Flat-Top Mountain. This bent it to the east, and from this turning-point it began to unload its *débris* on Bierstadt Moraine. A part of its *débris* was dropped in a smaller parallel moraine on the opposite side of the Glacier Creek, and finally a terminal moraine was piled against the western front

of Green Mountain, where it almost united with the terminal part of the Moraine on the south side of Moraine Park.

The glaciers have formed and distributed much of the soil of this region. Above timber-line there are wide, sedgy meadows and tundras and dry, grassy moorlands. Everywhere on the heights where there is soil there is a growth of Arctic-Alpine vegetation. Above the limits of tree-growth are enormous ragged areas and tiny ledge gardens that are crowded with a variety of brilliantly colored wild blossoms.

The average altitude of the timber-line is about eleven thousand three hundred feet, nearly a vertical mile higher than the timber-line in the Alps. Timber-line the world over is a place of striking interest, but nowhere have I found or heard of a timber-line which exhibits so many telling features as does the forest-frontier on the eastern side of the Continental Divide. The prevailing tree on the drier slopes at timber-line is *Pinus flexilis*, the limber pine. In the moist places Engelmann spruce predominates, and in many of the moister places there are dwarfed and tangled growths of arctic willow, black birch, and aspen.

Among the least broken and most enchanting of the primeval forests of the Park are a few that are grand. One of these is between the head of Fall River and the Poudre; another is in Forest Cañon; one is in the southern part of Wild Basin; still another is on the western slope of Stone's Peak and Flat-Top Mountain. These forests are mostly Engelmann spruce, with a scattering of sub-alpine fir. Around the lower, warmer slopes grows the Western yellow pine, and on the cold lower slopes the Douglas spruce. There are a number of extensive lodge-pole pine forests. These are from thirty to one hundred and thirty years old. Lines of aspen adorn most streams; here and there where the soil is moist they expand into groves.

The wild-flower inhabitants of this great Park number more than a thousand species. Many of these are members of famous families,—famous for their antiquity upon the earth, for their delicate scent, for their intricate and artistic structure, and for their brilliant color.

The gentian family is represented by fifteen species, one of these being a fringed blue gentian, a Western relative of the fringed gentian celebrated by the poet Bryant. There are intricately-formed orchids. The silver and blue columbine is here at its best; it blossoms on the lower slopes in June, on

the heights during September. The populous pea family, in yellow, white, and lavender, covers and colors extensive areas. Then there are asters, daisies, mariposa lilies, polemonium, wintergreen, forget-me-nots, black-eyed Susans, and numerous other handsome flower people. These flowers are scattered all over the Park except in places destitute of soil. I have found primroses, phlox, and mertensia on the summit of Long's Peak. In the heights above the limits of tree-growth there are scores of other blossoms.

More than one hundred species of birds nest in these scenes. Among these are the robin, the bluebird, the wren, the hermit thrush, the hummingbird, the golden eagle, the white-crowned sparrow, and that marvelous singer the solitaire. Among the resident birds are the ouzel, the crested and the Rocky Mountain jays, the chickadee, the downy woodpecker, and the magpie. The ptarmigan and the rosy finch are prominent residents in the heights above the timber-line.

Once the big-game population was numerous. But the grizzly has been almost exterminated, and only a few black bear remain. There are a few mountain lions and elk. Deer are fairly common, and in localities mountain sheep are plentiful and on the increase. Specimen Mountain probably is one of the places most frequented by mountain sheep. A number of times flocks of more than a hundred have been seen on this mountain. A scattering of wolves, coyotes, and foxes remain. Conies are numerous in the slide rock of the heights, and snowshoe rabbits people the forests. The Frémont, or pine, squirrels are scattered throughout the woods. Lurch where you will, and the dear and confiding busy chipmunk is pretty certain to approach. The region appears to be above the snake line, and I have never seen a snake within the boundary. The streams and a number of the lakes have their population of rainbow and brook trout. Around the water's edge mink make their home.

The beaver has colonies large and small all over the park up to the limits of tree-growth. Houses, ponds, dams, tree-cuttings, canals, and other works of the beaver are here readily seen. Excellent opportunities are afforded to study beaver manners and customs and to comprehend the influence of his work in the conservation of soil and water.

Big game, and in fact all wild life, begin to increase in numbers and also to allow themselves to be seen from the instant they receive the complete protection which parks afford. This park will thus assure a multiplication

of the various kinds of wild life which the region now contains. And this increased wild life, with no hunters to alarm, will allow itself to be readily seen.

There are only a few miles of road within the Park boundaries, but the Fall River Road, now under construction across the Continental Divide at Milner Pass, just south of Specimen Mountain, will be a wonderful scenic highway. Although there are a number of trails in the Park, so broken is the topography that most of the country a stone's throw away from them is unvisited and unknown.

A road skirts the western boundary of the Park and touches it at Grand Lake and Specimen Mountain. Another road closely parallels the eastern boundary-line, and from it a half-dozen roads touch the Park. This parallel road reaches the roads of Denver and of the plains through Boulder, Left Hand, Big Thompson, and two St. Vrain cañons.

The drainage of the western half of the Park concentrates in the Grand River on the western boundary and reaches the Pacific Ocean through the Grand Cañon of Arizona. A number of streams rise in the eastern side. These assemble their waters in the Platte River out on the plains. In their upper course, all these streams start from the snows and come rushing and bounding down the roughest, steepest slopes.

The climate of the eastern slope is comparatively dry and mild. The winters are sunny, but little snow falls, and the winds are occasionally warm and usually extremely dry. Though only a few miles from the eastern slope, the western rarely receives a wind, and its snow-fall is more than double that of the eastern.

Numerous authors and artists have made long visits in this region, and its scenery has received their highest praise. Bierstadt, the artist, came here in 1870. A few years later he was followed by the famous authors Isabella Bird, Anna Dickinson, and Helen Hunt. Frederick H. Chapin visited the region in 1888 and wrote a splendidly illustrated book about it, called "Mountaineering in Colorado." This was published by the Appalachian Club. In commenting upon the scenery of the region Hayden, Father of the Yellowstone National Park, turned aside from scientific discussion in his geological report for 1875 to pay the following tribute to the scenic charm of this territory:

Not only has nature amply supplied this with features of rare beauty and surroundings of admirable grandeur, but it has thus distributed them that the eye of an artist may rest with perfect satisfaction on the complete picture presented. It may be said, perhaps, that the more minute details of the scenery are too decorative in their character, showing, as they do, the irregular picturesque groups of hills, buttes, products of erosion, and the finely moulded ridges—the effect is pleasing in the extreme.

Long's Peak is considered by mountain-climbers an excellent view-point. Standing aside one mile from the Continental Divide and rising above a large surrounding wonderland, its summit and upper slopes give splendid views and command a variety of scenes, near and far. While upon its slope, Mr. Chapin said: "I would not fail to impress on the mind of the tourist that the scenes are too grand for words to convey a true idea of their magnificence. Let him, then, not fail to visit them." It is an extremely rocky and rugged peak, but it is almost entirely free of snow and ice, so that climbing it is simply a day's work crowded with enjoyment and almost free from danger. Though it is two hundred and fifty feet lower than the highest peak in the Rocky Mountains and three hundred and fifty feet lower than Mt. Whitney, California, the highest peak in the United States, Long's Peak probably has a greater individuality than either. Alongside it stands Mt. Meeker, with an altitude of 14,000 feet. These sky towers are visible for more than one hundred miles. The Indians of the Colorado and Wyoming plains used to call them the "Two Guides."

It is possible, if not probable, that Long's Peak was originally one thousand or even two thousand feet higher. The mass of this peak stands apart from the main range and embraces three other peaks. These are Mt. Meeker, Mt. Washington, and Storm Peak. All are united below thirteen thousand feet. They may once have been united in one greatly higher mass. Much of the débris in the vast Boulderfield and Mills Moraines and a lesser amount from the enormous Bierstadt and St. Vrain Moraines must have come from the summit slope of the Long's Peak group. No small part of this may have come from above thirteen thousand feet. An exceedingly small percentage of the glacial débris which surround Long's Peak would, if atop the Long's Peak group, elevate it two thousand feet higher.

The Glacier Gorge region, which lies just to the northwest of Long's Peak, probably has the most magnificent scenery in the Park. Here are clustered enormous glaciated gorges, great glaciated walls, alpine lakes, waterfalls, moraines, alpine flora, and towering peaks.

Wild Basin, a broken and glaciated region of twenty-five square miles, lies immediately south of the Peak. This basin is almost encircled by eight towering peaks, and the enormous St. Vrain Moraine thrusts out of its outlet and shows where the united ice-rivers formerly made their way from this basin. Within this wild area are lakes, forests, waterfalls, and a splendid variety of wild and lovely scenes.

The glacier lakes and wild tarns of this Park are one of its delights. Though most of these water fountains are small, they are singularly beautiful. They are in the middle-mountain zone, in a belt which lies between the altitudes of ten thousand and twelve thousand feet. There are more than a hundred of these, and their attractiveness equals that of any of the mountain lakes of the world.

The best known and most popular of these lakes are Fern and Odessa. These lie about twelve miles west of the village of Estes Park. Chasm Lake, on the east side of Long's Peak, is set in an utterly wild place. Its basin was gouged from solid granite by the old Long's Peak Glacier. Mt. Washington, Mt. Meeker, and Long's Peak tower above it, and around it these peaks have flung their wreckage in chaotic confusion. A glacier almost crawls into it, and the east precipice of Long's Peak, the greatest precipice in the Park, looms above it.

Long, Black, Thunder, Ouzel, and Poudre Lakes have charms peculiar to each, and each is well worth a visit. Lake Mills, in the lower end of Glacier Gorge, is one of the largest lakes in the Park. The largest lake that I know of in the Rocky Mountain National Park is Lake Nanita. This is about one mile long and half as wide, and reposes in that wilderness of wild topography about midway between Grand Lake and Long's Peak. There are mountain people living within eight or ten miles of this lake who have never even heard of its existence. Although I have been to it a number of times, I have never found even a sign of another human visitor. A member of the United States Geological Survey is the only individual I have ever met who has seen it.

As originally planned, the Park was to have more than twice its present area. I hope there may be early added to this region Mt. Audubon, Arapahoe Peak, and other territory to the south. The summit of Twin Peaks on the east would make another excellent addition. A part of the Rabbit Ear Range to the northwest, and Medicine Bow Mountains and the headwaters of the Poudre lying to the north, would make excellent park territory.

But even as it now stands, this splendidly scenic region with its delightful climate appears predestined to become one of the most visited and one of the most enjoyed of all the scenic reservations of the Government. In addition to its scenery and climate, it is not far from the geographical centre of the United States. A number of transcontinental railroads are close to it, and two railroads run within a few miles of its border. The Lincoln Highway is within twenty miles of it, and six excellent automobile roads connect its edges with the outside world.

Each year visitors reach it in increasing numbers. During 1914 there were more than 56,000 of these, many of whom remained to enjoy it for weeks. It has a rare combination of those characteristics which almost every one wants and which all tired people need,—accessibility, rare scenery, and a friendly climate.

2

NATIVE AMERICAN PRESENCE

The Return of the Arapaho, 1914

Oliver W. Toll

It was part of the publicity campaign for the new park. In early 1914, with legislation stalled in Congress, the nomenclature committee of the Colorado Mountain Club hit upon the idea of researching the original Native American names of landmarks in the Estes Park region. Unable to identify professional anthropologists, CMC members turned to the Indians themselves, raising sufficient funds to bring two elderly Arapaho, Gun Griswold and Sherman Sage, and their young interpreter, Tom Crispen, from the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming for a well-scripted, two-week pack trip that July through the region outfitted and led by veteran guide Shep Husted. Twenty-three-year-old Oliver Toll, the son of prominent Denverites, was recruited to take notes during the journey that followed. These were organized and published in 1962 under the title Arapaho Names and Trails. His account, archaeologist Jim Benedict has noted, though not an ethnography, has proven reliable, and brings us as close to Rocky Mountain Park's Native American past as we are likely to get.

These field notes were written up shortly after a two weeks pack trip with three Arapaho Indians through the Estes Park–Grand Lake region of Colorado in the summer of 1914. Two of the Indians—Griswold and Sage—had lived in that region in their youth, but did not speak English, so Tom Crispen, a younger Indian of partly white blood, came down with them from the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming as interpreter. The trip, arranged in order to learn the Arapaho names for the area, was outfitted by Shep Husted, whose ranch was near Estes Park village, and who was very familiar with the local place names.

We tried to cover as much of the region as possible, especially from the high country. I tried to match the Indian names for the various features of the country, as obtained from Griswold and Sage through Tom, with the local names given by Shep. I also asked about other matters which I thought might be of interest. My notes recorded what the Indians said with little evaluation or selection....

The Indians arrived in Longmont, Colorado, on Tuesday, July 14, 1914, about noon. As they got off the train, Tom Crispin was carrying his suitcase with an air of considerable sophistication. Sage in his blue chief-of-police uniform, rather baggy at the knees, had a roll of blankets under his arm, and Gun Griswold was fanning himself embarrassedly with some eagles' feathers, his share of the luggage.

Of course we became at once public characters to the citizens of Longmont; and in fact throughout the trip were accorded a place in the estimation of the public between that of a governor and a theatrical troupe.

From Longmont we went to Estes Park by automobile, in the machines of Mr. C. F. Hendrie and Mr. F. O. Vaille, arriving at Longs Peak Inn in the latter part of the afternoon. There, with the help of Enos Mills, general plans for our camping trip were made. Our idea was to cover a good deal of the country, and as far as possible to get views from high elevations, so that the Indians could see as much of the geography of the region as possible.

Gun Griswold was the oldest of the Indians, seventy-three years old. He found it a hard trip. He rode in the saddle with the ease and poise of a sack of oats, and about the middle of the trip developed a sore back, so that we made the travelling as easy as possible for him. As Tom said, the people at the reservation would be apt to blame us if Griswold never came back. As we were coming back over the Flat Top Trail, which is pretty hard going, Griswold got discouraged, got off his horse and sat down on a rock, telling us to go ahead, but that he was an old man, it was too hard a trip for him, and he wanted to be left there. It was a natural feeling but not a very practical one. This, by the way, was the only instance on the trip of anything approaching bad humor on the part of the Indians. They were ideal camping companions, jolly and good natured.

Griswold has been a judge among the Arapaho under United States law which was translated into the Arapaho language. Now he is retired