

TOURISM, CONQUEST, AND THE IDENTITY OF GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

Sarah Heavren

The Act Establishing Glacier National Park illustrated the tension between preservation and tourist use, a tension that quickly became inseparable from the identity of Glacier National Park.

The superintendent's reports from 1911 and 1912, which assessed the park during its first two years of operation, along with Great Northern Railway advertisements and newspaper articles reporting on developing the park, illustrate that tourism was a major concern for the success of the park. Consequently, from Glacier National Park's establishment, tourism was intrinsic to its identity and was a means of altering, manipulating, exploiting, and conquering the natural wonders within the park.

Section 2 of the Act Establishing Glacier National Park (1910) states that the Secretary of the Interior's duty was to create and enforce rules "for the care, protection, management, and improvement of the same, which regulations shall provide for the preservation of the park in a state of nature so far as it is consistent with the purposes of this act, and for the care and protection of the fish and game within the boundaries thereof."¹ However, immediately after declaring its commitment to preservation, the act states that the Secretary of the Interior also had the right to allocate territory "for the erection of buildings for the accommodation of visitors."² Presented at the beginning of the Report of the Acting Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, The Act illustrates the tension between preservation and tourist use, a tension that quickly became inseparable from the identity of Glacier National Park. While scholars have examined tourism within the park and the influence of the Great Northern Railway on developing the park, they have not yet deeply explored the influence of tourism on the identity of Glacier National Park, an issue that bears mounting significance as climate change continually challenges Americans' relationship with the environment in modern times. From its inception, the superintendents of Glacier National Park and Louis Hill, the head of the Great Northern Railway, tried to make the park a tourist attraction, altering and modifying the park to accommodate visitors. Such structural transformations permanently engrained tourism into the park's identity. Studying the superintendent's reports from 1911 and 1912, which provide assessments of the park during its first two years of operation, along with advertisements sponsored by the Great Northern Railway and newspaper articles reporting on developing the park illustrate that tourism was a major concern for the success of the park. Consequently, from Glacier National Park's establishment, tourism was intrinsic to its identity and was a means of altering,

¹ Robert Hollister Chapman, "Report of the Acting Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1912" (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1912), 16.

² Chapman, "Report from the Acting Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1912," 16.

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manipulating, exploiting, and ultimately conquering the natural wonders within the park.

During the early twentieth century, Glacier National Park was in a unique position because it used tourism to straddle between preservation and industrial use. Gifford Pinchot, one of the leading foresters around the turn of the century and a proponent of conservation, believed that “the commercial use of natural resources was inevitable.”³ Amidst the competition between untouched preservation and regulating the consumption of natural resources, the federal government created national parks, including Glacier National Park. George Bird Grinnell, a preservationist and contemporary of Pinchot, came to a similar conclusion regarding Glacier National Park. Summarizing Grinnell’s position, Andrew C. Harper explains, “Tourism, slightly more controllable than other industries, posed less of a threat to the spirit of the wilderness than allowing the unchecked marketplace to determine nature’s fate.”⁴ Tourism acted as an ideological compromise because it preserved the land while opening it to commercial tourism. However, people did not immediately see the financial benefit of national parks. Park officials such as William R. Logan, the first superintendent at Glacier National Park, had to convince visitors to come to the parks as a way of proving their use.⁵ Consequently, tourism was the industrial justification for the allocation of land to create national parks. Grooming the national parks to accommodate visitors acted as a compromise between preservationist and conservationist ideas, but it also set a precedent for how superintendents would run the park.

The first superintendent’s report showed that tourism was a concrete part of the operation of Glacier National Park from its establishment. Documenting the goings—on within the park during its first year, the report testified to the keen interest to foster tourism within the park. The intentions of William R. Logan, the first superintendent for the Montana park, claimed that Glacier National Park competed with international tourist destinations and offered an unparalleled experience for people of all interests. He wrote, “Within its borders are attractions for the scientist and tourist unsurpassed in any country in the world, tourists of worldwide experience pronouncing it the Switzerland of America.”⁶ Not only did the attractions within the park appeal to a variety of people, but they also rivaled those of international acclaim. Early in his opening remarks, Logan already emphasized the inseparability between the park and tourism. Additionally, he alluded to the attempt to use national pride as a way of bolstering the number of visitors. The supposed uniqueness and grandeur of the park’s glaciers, lakes, and mountains were meant to entice Americans to experience it for themselves. By focusing on the attractions of the park and portraying it as better than other vacation destinations, Logan marketed it as a tourist site.

In further emphasizing tourism in Glacier National Park, Logan assessed the accessibility of the park. In doing so, he alluded to the ways in which Glacier National Park and the surrounding areas were being developed to accommodate tourists. Consequently, Logan’s intentions illustrated that a national park was an entity that had to be created. Since his appointment, he had an awareness of and specific ideas for

³ Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), 300.

⁴ Andrew C. Harper, "Conceiving Nature: The Creation of Montana's Glacier National Park," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 60, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 5.

⁵ Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*, 308.

⁶ William R. Logan, “Report of the Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1911” (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911, 1911), 5.

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improving accessibility to the park.⁷ A major consideration for accessibility was the means through which visitors arrived at Glacier National Park. Logan was acutely aware of the importance of the Great Northern Railway in bringing visitors to the park. "Glacier National Park is easily accessible via the Great Northern Railway, at present it being the only line which touches its borders," he wrote. Soon permanent camps popped up within the park to provide lodgings for tourists, showing that tourism started to make its mark on the landscape. Discussing considerations for accessibility and basic lodgings early in the report indicated that they were a priority. Additionally, the permanence of the camps symbolically solidified the presence of tourism in the region. Logan had plans for expanding the accessibility of the park, stating that the "Great Northern Railway is contemplating constructing an automobile road from Midvale to St. Marys, by which means tourists can reach the foot of the mountains a few hours after getting off the train at Midvale."⁸ Logan explicitly had tourists in mind when making the comment about the expansion of the road system. Constructing roads would give visitors better access to lakes and mountains, opening the park for more recreation. However, doing so inevitably required transforming aspects of the park and compromising its untouched appearance. He emphasized the role of the Great Northern Railroad in not only transporting visitors to the park but also within the park itself, linking commercial enterprises to the park's operation. Establishing permanent camps and building roads to accommodate tourists showed that tourism was a principal concern since the park's inception and that it demanded developments that would inevitably alter the landscape.

Reflecting on the first year of operation in Glacier National Park, Logan analyzed the number of tourists and possible ways to attract more visitors, showing that he had an ardent interest in fostering tourism within the park. The superintendent reported that there were 4,000 visitors to Glacier National Park between June 1 and October 1 in 1910. "Considering that this is the first year of the park," he wrote, "this number far exceeded expectations." Logan viewed the first season as a success, which inspired him to make the next season even better. To increase the influx of tourists, Logan drew attention to the need to build more trails to scenic but inaccessible locations. "Most of these trails will be along and over the Continental Divide, and it will necessarily take a considerable amount of money to put them in such condition as to afford the maximum of safety to tourists," he explained.⁹ Logan sought to make Glacier National Park's features and wonders more traversable. The desire to increase tourism and please the tourists outweighed respecting the untouched nature of the land. Logan purported that tourists should enjoy ease of access to Glacier National Park's various attractions, no matter how secluded. However, developing the park to make it safer for visitors compromised or removed the landscape's natural ruggedness, transforming its identity and physical appearance.

Logan was not the only one who noted that Glacier National Park needed some alterations in order to boost the tourism industry. An article titled "Need Two Millions for Glacier National Park: Preliminary Survey Says Much Should Be Spent" that appeared in *The Anaconda Standard* on February 6, 1911, contained information from the Washington Bureau of the Standard and reported on a geological survey that called for improvements on roads and trails within Glacier National Park. "The park

⁷ Curtis W. Buchholtz, "Wr. Logan and Glacier National Park," *Montana The Magazine of Western History* 19, no. 3 (Summer 1969): 7.

⁸ Logan, "Report of the Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1911," 6.

⁹ Logan, "Report of the Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1911," 9, 11.

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is not almost entirely unimproved, and the various spots of scenic interest are difficult to access. Before the park can become in a true sense a pleasure ground for the people, it will be necessary to build an extensive system of roads and trails, similar to those in Yellowstone Park,” the article justified.¹⁰ Glacier National Park had to be transformed in order to make it more visitor—friendly. By stating that making the park a suitable “pleasure ground” required adequate trails and roads, the article insinuated that the park was not pleasurable enough in its natural state. The sites of the park had to be opened and exposed in order for the park to meet its potential. The roads and trails transformed Glacier National Park into a showcase rather than a designated plot of protected land. However, tourist accommodations did not stop at roads and trails. Glacier National Park was not going to attract enough tourists by simply being a plot of preserved wilderness.¹¹ “As soon as the work for improving the park is advanced far enough to permit general tourist travel,” the article states, “steps should be taken to provide proper accommodations for visitors.”¹² Placing hotels along some of the lakes within the park was an attempt to take advantage of any appealing aspects of the park to attract tourists. Not only did Glacier National Park require developments to become more accessible to tourists, but it also needed to invest in lodging, giving tourists more opportunities to take over the landscape.

Exploiting the natural appeal of the lakes in Glacier National Park was not a new concept. Prior to the establishment of the park in 1910, Lake McDonald already had a reputation as being a desirable vacation spot. In the late—nineteenth century, “homesteaders around Lake McDonald began catering to tourists’ needs for overnight accommodations, transportation, and guide services.”¹³ Even before Glacier National Park was established, a legacy of tourism had infiltrated the area. Hotels and boat trips across the lake were the first tourist accommodations in the area. Men like George Snyder constructed the Glacier House as a lodging for tourists and used a steamboat to transport his guests across the lake to the hotel. The Great Northern Railway helped attract tourists to the region, further solidifying the presence of tourism in the area. Passenger agents for the Great Northern Railway used brochures and pamphlets to promote and sell the Lake McDonald experience, which encouraged more travelers to utilize the railroad.¹⁴ By helping expand local tourism to Lake McDonald, the Great Northern Railway set a precedent for tourism at Glacier National Park.

The federal government had an interest in opening Glacier National Park and portraying it as an appealing vacation destination for the sake of promoting domestic tourism over foreign travel, emphasizing the inseparability of tourism from the identity of the park. Like the independent hotel operators and the Great Northern Railway who used the lakes and mountains to their advantage, the federal government sought to exploit the natural features of Glacier National Park to incentivize Americans to stay within their country’s borders. A 1911 newspaper article titled

¹⁰ “Need Two Millions for Glacier National Park: Preliminary Survey Says That Much Should Be Spent,” *The Anaconda Standard*, February 6, 1911, sec. News/Opinion, 7.

¹¹ C.W. Buchholtz, “The National Park as a Playground,” *Journal of Sport History* 5, no. 3 (Winter 1978): 22.

¹² “Need Two Millions for Glacier National Park: Preliminary Survey Says That Much Should Be Spent,” 7.

¹³ Jennifer Bottomly—O’looney and Deirdre Shaw, “Glacier National Park: People, a Playground, and a Park,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 60, no. 2 (Summer 2010): 45.

¹⁴ Calvin H. Mires, “Plying the Waters in America’s Little Switzerland: Early—Twentieth—Century Lake Tourism in Glacier National Park,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 59, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 45.

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“Uncle Sam is Boosting for Glacier National Park” stated that “every effort will be put forth by the government to check the tide of summer tourists to Europe and to divert travel to the national playgrounds of the West.” Glacier National Park was included as one of the “national playgrounds of the West,” a title that diminished the national parks to sources of recreation, amusement, and entertainment for tourists. The article quoted a statement made by the Department of the Interior, reporting, “Every year the great resorts of Europe are visited by thousands of tourists who apparently have no knowledge of the great national parks which have been created by congress for the benefit of the people and in which there are natural features and views that cannot be surpassed.”¹⁵ Not only had national parks become objects of tourism, but the government used them to wage a battle against international sightseeing. According to the article, the glaciers found in Glacier National Park rivaled the Alpine and Swiss glaciers, promoting a spirit of competition between domestic and foreign landscapes. The national parks, including Glacier National Park, were part of a tourism ploy to promote the greatness and superiority of the American landscape. Additionally, the Department of the Interior explicitly stated that the government created national parks for the “benefit of the people,” depreciating the dignity of protecting the environment for its own sake. Instead, national parks were meant to serve the people instead of being appreciated in their own right. The Department of the Interior objectified Glacier National Park in the competition between domestic and international travel and tried to sell it as a “playground” for the people, emphasizing the inseparability between tourism and the park and illustrating the ways in which tourism became a form of exploitation.

The Department of the Interior was not alone in its attempt to market the attractions of Glacier National Park. The Great Northern Railway produced ample advertisements in multiple publications throughout the United States to publicize its railroad. One advertisement appeared in *Puck* on June 21, 1911. Promoting “Resting in the Great Northwest,” the advertisement promised restored health and vigor as a result of being outdoors in the “Great Northwest.” Endorsing the mountains, glaciers, fish, and lakes, the advertisement encouraged, “*Enjoy Your Home Land—See America First.*”¹⁶ Part of the Great Northern Railway’s “See America First” campaign, the advertisement encouraged tourists to use its railroad to explore the West. In addition to opening up the landscape through railroad travel, the Great Northern Railway opened up Americans’ minds to the appeals and attractions of the West, and there was a direct correlation between rail companies and advertisements for the West.¹⁷ The advertisement offered “Special Round Trip Summer Fares to Belton in Glacier National Park and to the cities of the Puget Sound and the Pacific.”¹⁸ The Great Northwest Railway company exploited natural destinations such as Glacier National Park, feeding off tourism to market its railroad. In doing so, it promoted the link between tourism and the identity of Glacier National Park.

The second park superintendent’s report showed that tourism was a major factor in operating the park in 1911 and that it would continue to be a paramount focus in 1912. Robert Hollister Chapman was the acting superintendent of the park

¹⁵ “Uncle Sam Is Boosting for Glacier National Park,” *The Anaconda Standard*, June 18, 1911, sec. News/Opinion.

¹⁶ “Advertisement 14—No Title,” *Puck*, June 21, 1911, 15.

¹⁷ Wyckoff and Dilsaver, “Promotional Imagery of Glacier National Park,” *The Geographical Review* 87, no. 1 (January 1997): 3.

¹⁸ “Advertisement 14—No Title,” 15.

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following the untimely death of William Logan.¹⁹ However, Chapman continued the legacy that his predecessor left. Chapman noted that even through 1912, the Great Northern Railway served as the sole means of accessing the park by train. Consequently, the Great Northern Railway and its president Louis Hill had a vested interest in tourism in Glacier National Park, motivating Hill to sponsor the construction of hotels, chalets, and tent camps, as well as financing advertising campaigns.²⁰ In addition to lodging accommodations, there were also transportation improvements within the park. “From Midvale to St. Marys Chalet motor car service is established and a stage line runs to Two Medicine and Cut Bank camps,” Chapman reported.²¹ While establishing lodgings was a major step in developing the park, the Great Northern Railway also used roads, which could connect campsites, as a way of further developing the landscape. The Great Northern Railway, which used Glacier National Park to promote itself, helped revolutionize transportation within the park to create a better visitor experience. In his report, Chapman wrote, “From Belton to the foot of Lake McDonald a stage line is operated under schedule of three round trips per day, making connections with incoming and outgoing trains on the Great Northern Railway.”²² Transportation was a crucial instrument of tourism, and it was intimately connected to the major railroad company in the area. Offering three round trips a day that correlated with the train schedule emphasized the ways in which travel and tourism intersected to open the park to as many tourists as possible. Because of its location, the identity of Glacier National Park was inseparable from the Great Northern Railway, which ultimately meant that the identity of the park was intimately intertwined with tourism.

In providing the assessment of Glacier National Park for 1912, Chapman discussed the construction of roads to expand automobile travel within the park, showing that the promise of tourism continued to necessitate that the park be as accessible to visitors as possible. In addition to providing railroad transportation, the Great Northern Railway also financed several roads throughout the park. “On the east side of the range between Glacier Park (Midvale post office) and Divide Creek the Great Northern Railway Co. constructed an automobile road through the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, approximately 27 miles in length, under an agreement with the department,” Chapman reported. The extensiveness of a 27—mile road indicated the commitment to making the park travelable and connected. Cutting across the Blackfeet Indian Reservation showed a disrespect for the dignity of the land and a prioritization for making travel as convenient as possible. Rangers and hired hands also worked on trail construction and maintenance. Ironically, however, the trails received less attention in Chapman’s report than the roads did.²³ Focusing on the development of the park through roads and automobile travel implied that Glacier National Park was something to be seen and witnessed from afar instead of fully experienced on foot. In discussing making the park more accessible for cars, Chapman

¹⁹ Michael G. Schene, “The Crown of the Continent: Private Enterprise and Public Interest in the Early Development of Glacier National Park, 1910—17,” *Forest and Conservation History* 34, no. 2 (April 1990): 71.

²⁰ Schene, “The Crown of the Continent,” 69.

²¹ Chapman, “Report of the Acting Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1912,” 6.

²² Chapman, “Report of the Acting Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1912,” 7.

²³ Chapman, “Report of the Acting Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1912,” 7.

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illustrated the ways in which tourism was altering the landscape and sacrificing the experience it offered for automotive convenience.

Like Logan, Chapman also provided various statistics on park visitors in 1912, directly emphasizing the importance of tourism to the superintendent. Chapman recorded the number of visitors in the park between May and October of 1912, the park's second tourist season. He kept records of the number of visitors who came through certain entrances as a way of assessing accessibility to the park. The Belton entrance, which was the closest to the Great Northern Railway station, had the greatest number of visitors come through, totaling 4,868 visitors during the five-month period. The eastern entrance at the Midvale post office had the next highest at 830, which was 4,000 fewer than the Belton entrance. With 6,257 visitors for the year, the Belton entrance was the gateway for over three-quarters of the visitors. Undeniably, there was a correlation between the number of visitors and the proximity of the Belton entrance to the Great Northern Railway's train station. Chapman listed the number of visitors per state and per country as another way of assessing the park's popularity. Additionally, he provided the number of visitors who stayed at the Hotel Glacier and the Park Hotel. The number of automobile and motorcycle visitors as well as the number of visitors at different camps throughout the park also found a place in Chapman's tallies. The detailed enumeration that Chapman provided was indicative of the importance of tracking the number of people visiting the park, showing that assessing tourism was a crucial part of assessing the park's value and success. Additionally, tallying the means through which visitors reached the park and where they stayed showed the ways in which tourism had expanded and diversified since Logan's counts the previous year. Only after addressing major aspects of tourism did Chapman concern himself with the state of wildlife in within Glacier National Park's borders.²⁴ Consequently, the superintendent prioritized finding trends in visitors to the park over documenting the state of the natural inhabitants of the park. The attention and detail that Chapman devoted to tallying tourists were indicative of the centrality of tourism to evaluating the state of Glacier National Park.

Later in his report, Chapman offered some suggested improvements to be made in the park, and several were in response to meeting the demands of tourism, underscoring the influence of tourism in administering Glacier National Park. One of Chapman's final recommendations was the establishment of another headquarters so that "there may be a more complete registration of the visitors to the park" and that there could be "better control of the rangers and tourists." The superintendent felt the need to bolster the number and availability of rangers because "[i]t is anticipated that there will be a large increase of visitors during the season of 1913 owing to the wide publicity which has been given the attractions and accommodations in the park."²⁵ With more tourists came the need for more administration, showing that the park became increasingly regulated and monitored as tourism overtook the territory. However, Chapman viewed the demands as a positive sign and sought to provide more resources to cater to the growing needs of visitors. By anticipating and trying to prepare for an increase in the number of tourists for the following season, the superintendent showed that improving tourism meant improving the park and that the growth of tourism was welcomed and even encouraged.

The Great Northern Railway was largely responsible for the publicity that Chapman referenced in his report, sponsoring another advertisement for Glacier

²⁴ Chapman, "Report of the Acting Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1912," 8—10.

²⁵ Chapman, "Report of the Acting Superintendent of Glacier National Park to the Secretary of the Interior, 1912," 13.

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National Park. This one urged, “Freshen Up in Glacier National Park,” listing the price of vacation trips as ranging from \$1.00 to \$5.00 for each day. It tried to sell the park experience, stating, “Up on the mountains of Glacier National Park the air is laden with the fragrance of pine and hemlock that grow tall and stately in the valleys and on the mountain sides, or it blows to you alive with vigor from illimitable space above the tallest peaks.” Although the elements of the park were something for visitors to admire, they were also something for visitors to use for the sake of restoring health. Additionally, the advertisement promised, “Life is different in Glacier National Park—you can freshen up there.” The Great Northern Railway advertisement appealed to tourists who might be longing to escape the business of city life, enticing them to experience the healing offered by the western environment. In doing so, the advertisement portrayed the beauty and freshness of the park as an exploitable, sellable, and consumable good. Consequently, the railroad company used Glacier National Park to manipulate people’s desires to get them to spend money. The advertisement also appealed directly to tourists, stating, “On the shores of Two Medicine, St. Marys, Gunsight and McDermott Lakes, four of the most beautiful among the 250 that abound throughout the park, also at Cut Bank Canyon and in Sperry Glacier Basin, the tourist will find quaint little hotel colonies built on the Swiss Chalet style of architecture, where splendid meals and comfortable lodgings can be had at \$3 per day.”²⁶ The beauty and appeal of the chalets competed with the beauty of natural sites such as the various lakes throughout the park, distracting tourists from the park’s intrinsic appeal. Tourism not only reduced visiting Glacier National Park to a consumable experience, but it also placed the attraction of constructed chalets on the same level as natural features, showing the ways in which tourism distorted the value of the environment.

Newspaper articles that reported on developments within Glacier National Park also acted as incognito advertising for the tourist experience. An article from *The Kansas City Star* was printed in early May at the beginning of the tourist season to report on the serious spending that has gone into furnishing Glacier National Park with comfortable accommodations for tourists. Much of the development happening in Glacier National Park resulted from the investments of Louis W. Hill, the president of the Great Northern Railway. Hill directed the erection of “a chain of eight new chalet colonies, reaching from Glacier Park Station, the eastern entrance, to Belton on the west.” The expansiveness of the chalets, sprawling all the way across the park, exemplified the effect of tourism on the landscape. In addition to building chalets, the federal government worked with the Great Northern Railway in establishing roads and trails. “What was only a short time since an inaccessible wilderness—a gigantic region covering fifteen hundred square miles of mountains, glaciers, lakes, torrents, and forests—has been prepared for the tourist, the artist, the scientist, the fisherman, camper and sightseer,” the article declared.²⁷ It portrayed the territory constituting Glacier National Park as previously useless, insinuating that “wilderness” was a derogatory description. Additionally, the park had to be “prepared” for tourists, implying that it was unsuitable or inadequate in its natural state. Consequently, the park needed modifications, such as lodgings and roads, to make the land useable. The article depicted Glacier National Park as being solely a plot of territory intended for recreational enjoyment and that the mountains, glaciers, lakes, and forests would be worthless if they were not readily accessible and available to visitors. By portraying

²⁶ “Advertisement 41—No Title,” *The Independent...Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts*, May 2, 1912, xiii.

²⁷ “Opening the Glacier Park, a New National Playground Soon Ready for the Toural,” *The Kansas City Star*, May 23, 1912, sec. News/Opinion, 4.

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the environmental wonders of the park as needing to be transformed for tourists, the article epitomized the conquering effects of tourism within Glacier National Park.

Using the testimonies of visitors to Glacier National Park to attract other tourists further solidified the park's identity as a tourist attraction and as the subject of improvements sponsored by the federal government and the Great Northern Railway. One of the ticket agents for the Great Northern Railway, R.M. Smith, took a two-week employer-sponsored trip through Glacier National Park to scope out the sites. Upon his return, Smith proclaimed that "the scenery of the Glacier national park [was] the most magnificent he [had] ever seen." By allotting ticket agents such as Smith to spend a significant amount of time in the park, the Great Northern Railway equipped its ticket salesmen with the experience to be able to literally sell the Glacier National Park experience. The focus was on finding ways to make the park more marketable instead of appreciating it for its natural beauty. The article also listed ways in which the federal government and the Great Northern Railway made the park more accessible to tourists, stating, "The government has spent and will spend a vast sum in the construction of roads and the improvement of the park to make it attractive to tourists, but at the present time the most [*sic*] of the improvement and advertising of the park is being done by the Great Northern railway."²⁸ The article insinuated that the park was not attractive enough to tourists on its own, an ongoing theme throughout the park's first two years of operation. Additionally, the article further emphasized that many of the improvements within the park were at the hand of the Great Northern Railway, which raises questions about the integrity of the investments. Hill's motivation for developing the park unquestionably had personal financial incentives, showing that he treated Glacier National Park as an investment upon which he expected financial returns. Additionally, the influence that the private company had over the park emphasized that the tourism industry took priority in the park. The need to alter the natural state of Glacier National Park for the sake of tourists exemplified the conquest of tourism that plagued the park since its establishment.

The developments that the Great Northern Railway made to Glacier National Park were strategic, attempting to maximize convenience for tourists as well as maximize profits for the company. "Throughout the park at points which are most accessible, and where the scenery is the best," the article reported, "camps are located where hotels are built and from each of the camps side trips to points of interest may be taken."²⁹ The presence of hotels and campsites compromised the pristineness of the environment, valuing ease of access for visitors over natural integrity. The landscape enhanced the hotels, but the hotels did not offer a mutual benefit for the landscape. As the article showed, the lodgings distracted from the real purpose of visiting the park, which was witnessing and appreciating the lakes, mountains, and glaciers for their own sake. By constructing lodging sites near the most scenic aspects of Glacier National Park, the Great Northern Railway construed the identity of the park, presenting the landscape as an accessory instead of the focus.

The legacy of the inseparability between Glacier National Park's identity and tourism has endured throughout the twenty-first century. However, understanding the impact of tourism on the park's identity creates an opportunity to transform its emphasis on the tourism industry into a tool for environmental awareness. Indirectly, the effects of industrialization, which have aggravated anthropogenic climate change, have continued to transform the park long after roads and chalets interrupted its

²⁸ "Smith Returns from Glacier National Park," *The Bellingham Herald*, September 25, 1912, sec. News/Opinion, 5.

²⁹ "Smith Returns from Glacier National Park," 5.

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pristineness. Most notably, the park's trademark glaciers from which it derives its namesake have suffered, retreating drastically in light of rising temperatures. "Glacier National Park is warming at nearly two times the global average and the impacts are already being felt by park visitors," the National Park Service reports on Glacier National Park's website, still giving a nod to tourists' experience.³⁰ While tourism has remained an intrinsic part of Glacier National Park's identity, it now acts as a witness to the jarring effects of climate change on American beauty and issues a call to rebuild Americans' relationship with the environment. "Life is different in Glacier National Park," claims a 1912 advertisement, and as the glaciers melt and weather warms, tourists will see for themselves.³¹

³⁰ "Climate Change," National Park Service, last modified February 22, 2021.

³¹ "Advertisement 41—No Title," xiii.

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