



## *A New Year and a New Future* 1919

On January 6, 1919, I celebrated my twenty-ninth birthday by pulling out of Washington. Just before I left, I received a telegram from Mr. Mather. He was in Albuquerque, New Mexico. "Congratulations on your birthday and for what you have accomplished in this relatively short span of years. May the next 29 be ever more fruitful." He added that he would meet me in South Chicago.

Lane had issued my travel orders and had assured me Mather knew all about them. That was not true. Mather had only been told I was going west for a short time, and it was implied that I'd be back in Washington soon. When we sat down together in Chicago and he learned Lane had consented to an indefinite stay in California, his ill-concealed anger at Lane turned into smooth talk to convince me that my place was in Washington.

Not this time, I protested. My orders were from Lane, and I couldn't do a thing about it. Of course, he knew that I could easily get those changed if I wanted to, but I had absolutely no intention of doing so.

I was delighted to note that Mather appeared to be as good as new. Instead I felt I was the one who was beaten up. I reminded him of the last two years, of the stress and work, the separation from Grace. He listened and kindly sympathized and thanked me profusely, but he came back with the argument that he simply couldn't stay in Washington too long at a time. It damaged his health. I would have to take over when he wasn't

there. I almost told him I couldn't and wouldn't, but Lane's letter came back to haunt me. I had deliberately kept our correspondence away from Mather.

Mather then happily told me about the proposed trip to Hawaii that he and his family were going to take right after the first of the year. He pointed out that it would be necessary for me to be back in Washington while he was gone. His purpose was clear. Get me to Washington and then keep me there when he returned. My reaction was that he was again thrusting on my shoulders the burden of keeping him healthy and seeing that the Park Service was running smoothly even though he was back as director.

It was just too much for me. For the first time since we had been a team, I refused his request. Not only that, but I added that I had to go to California to look for a new job, that I had to leave the Park Service for the sake of my wife and the baby. And I blurted out the gist of my letter to Lane and his response. There just was no future for me in the service.

Momentarily I was afraid I had gone too far, for he slumped back in his chair, put his hands over his face, and said nothing. Just as I was about to try to soften my abrupt declaration, he quietly said, "I understand, Horace. You go on out to San Francisco and stay there for a few months with Grace and the baby. I know how hard it's been for you and how tired you must be. Go ahead and open an office out there and clean up our problems on the West Coast. But I'll ask one thing of you. Please don't make any hasty decision. Take care of the service while I'm gone and give me a little time to ease back into my job."

His pathetic words and my deep concern for him forced me to agree to his plan. You could almost hear our sighs of relief that an impasse had been avoided—at least temporarily.

I stayed over in Chicago for a day with him, going over matters I would attend to on the West Coast, especially Yosemite concession problems. On the train I had a few days of reading and relaxation before arriving in Berkeley on the clear and sunny morning of January 11, 1919.

As usual, my girl was her bubbling self and looked as beautiful as ever. I want to say right here that she wasn't just beautiful on the outside, for she certainly was, but she had an inner beauty. It just shone like an aura around her. Approaching motherhood had added to her already gentle and compassionate warmth, her desire always to do something for someone else and to make my life as smooth as she could. Each reunion seemed more precious than the last.

The next day, January 12, I set up my headquarters in an office of the United States Public Health Service in the Call-Bulletin Building on New Montgomery Street near the Palace Hotel. As Grace and I were living with her parents on Ellsworth Street in Berkeley, I commuted daily back and forth to the "City" via the ferry boat. Those quiet, lazy ferries were a wonderful invention for a person to catch up on the news in the morning paper going over and calm down at night with the wind, the foghorns, and the gentle dipping and swaying of the boat as it plowed its way to the East Bay.

Instead of what I had planned, my California relaxation period turned into a buzz-saw. Of course, there was the business Lane had assigned me of getting a bill through the state legislature turning over California police jurisdiction of Yosemite, Sequoia, and General Grant parks to the federal government. Then there was another crisis with the concession in Yosemite. On top of these, Mather opened up an explosive situation with changing our Sequoia extension project into a promotion of Roosevelt National Park, as he renamed it.

Since Mather's two mountain trips in 1915 and 1916, we had gained a great deal of support for the extension of Sequoia. The so-called Greater Sequoia would include the existing Sequoia and General Grant Parks but would add the Kern River Canyon, Mount Whitney and surrounding area, and most of the Kings River and its watershed. Of course, we also wanted the Tehipite section to the north of the Kings. In Yosemite we never let up asking for the restoration of the magnificent Minarets and Mount Ritter areas, which had been taken away in 1906. Our dream was to create a great swath of wilderness through the "The Range of Light," as John Muir called the Sierra Nevada.

The American Civic Association, the Sierra Club, the national and local press, and many prominent men in Washington had joined our crusade. Bills had been introduced in the Congress but were dangling in the wind. From the beginning, we had been grimly opposed by the Forest Service, by the people who had grazing rights, by hunters and fishermen, and finally by the water and power interests, including the juggernaut Los Angeles, which was also gobbling up the lands on the east side of the Sierra.

The Park Service had made one step forward when, on July 8, 1918, President Wilson signed an executive order temporarily withdrawing from entry, sale, and settlement all lands described in the latest extension bills before the Congress. However, in December our adversarial secretary of

agriculture, David F. Houston, issued an unfavorable report, claiming that he hadn't had time to study the whole situation in his forests (which, of course, constituted most of the lands we coveted). Our Greater Sequoia appeared stalled.

Then came news of Theodore Roosevelt's death, on January 6, my birthday. To Mather this was a terrible blow. A few days later he read in the paper about a dinner in New York where a group of Boone and Crockett Club members had met to decide on a fitting memorial for their most famous member, Teddy Roosevelt. Someone had suggested that a national park in his honor would be perfect. Of course, said Mather, and he knew where that park was located and how to promote this splendid idea.

Even though Roosevelt was one of his heroes, Mather didn't give a darn about memorializing his name. He had instantly recognized a way to get his Greater Sequoia. Although another park had been proposed at the same time, by the same name, in the Badlands of North Dakota, Mather played that one down. He publicized Roosevelt's connection with California, knowing full well that the state wasn't prominent in TR's life. He had visited the state a couple of times, and he had received only 174 votes more than Wilson in the 1912 presidential election, splitting the electoral vote.

But Mather knew how to exploit a situation and never missed an opportunity for publicity. He had Yard and other media contacts pump out reams of copy about creating a great Sierra Nevada park in honor of the late lamented president, Roosevelt National Park.

Honoring a favorite president by a great national park captured the fancy of Americans and was received with warm approval. There already was a bill concerning Greater Sequoia pending in the Congress, so Mather planned to turn the grief of a nation into a golden opportunity to get this passed.

Mather ordered me to get busy on the situation in California while he drummed up support in Washington. The result was swift. A Senate bill creating the Roosevelt National Park by enlarging the present Sequoia Park passed unanimously, but it still had to face the House. As it turned out, it was defeated by the tactics of Representative Denver Church of Fresno, a Democrat. He had no intention of glorifying any Republican president. At the same time, he did want to satisfy his agricultural friends with irrigation water that would be denied to them with this enlarged park. He pulled the old stunt of pleading illness. He was too sick to be present for a vote and requested the House delay the vote until he could

return. As a gesture of sympathy, his wish was granted and the bill died aborning.

Before I could jump into this fray, I got a telegram from Lane, needling me to get going on the job he had asked me to do for him. I dropped everything else and headed for Sacramento, where I spent a great deal of time for the next several months.

California still retained law enforcement authority over the national parks in the state. The Park Service wanted to have complete jurisdiction within its borders. We had gotten the soldiers out of our lands. We had the army engineers off our road construction. Now we wanted federal judges to have the power to punish lawbreakers, federal commissioners in the parks who could try cases rather than have the state try them outside the parks.

Although the matter had been brought to the attention of state officials, it had been ignored. Voters were apathetic, and consequently politicians did nothing. Then I noticed in a newspaper that a college friend, Charlie Kasch, was in the state assembly from Ukiah. I hurried back to Sacramento and got in touch with him. He immediately picked up the ball and ran with it. He introduced a bill in the assembly on January 16, giving full police powers to the federal government. Next he got me together with Senator Evans, who started the bill through the Senate. It still took many trips to Sacramento before the bill finally passed on April 15, 1919. It was most successful and covered everything we wanted, except that the state retained the right to tax and issue fish and game licenses. On June 2, 1920, Congress accepted California's cession of jurisdiction over all lands within Sequoia, General Grant, and Yosemite.

Before I could turn to the Yosemite situation, Mr. Mather returned to Washington. Many people wrote me about how grand he looked and how he had really taken hold in his masterful and exuberant style. He approached every problem there with contacts in person or a deluge of letters. His charm and persistence brought results. If he couldn't move people by verbal or written arguments, he coaxed them over to the Cosmos Club for lunch or took them out for a leisurely dinner at the Willard and perhaps an evening at the theater afterward. They usually came around to his suggestions.

Now that I felt the work in Sacramento was basically wrapped up, I turned to Yosemite. On December 12, 1917, the name of the Desmond Service Company had officially been changed to the Yosemite Park Company and leased to Richard and Harold Shaffer.

These brothers had been doing business in the valley before there was a Park Service. When the "blunt-nosed mechanical beetles," as John Muir called the automobiles, were permitted into Yosemite, they were required to stay in a special auto camp. When that filled up, all other motorists had to leave their cars at a certain garage for space or repairs. These averaged twenty-five dollars per car.

So along with this business the brothers Shaffer now operated the Yosemite Park Company from April 1 to October 1, 1918. They did just fine, better than anyone had before. In fact, they actually made money, all of sixteen thousand dollars. This profit inspired them to ask A. B. C. Dohrmann and associates to sell the company to them. Negotiations went well for a while. The Shaffers raised the amount they understood was necessary, but Dohrmann raised the ante. He now wanted \$450,000, more than the Shaffers could come up with.

In December 1918 Harold White had written me that he expected Dohrmann in Chicago the next day. He was not going to allow Mather to see him and intended to refuse any further refinancing of the Yosemite Company through the issue of additional bonds.

When it became apparent that there was no money to see the company through the 1919 summer season, the Reorganization Committee under Dohrmann came to the conclusion that the only way out of their dilemma was to renegotiate the franchise contract with Secretary Lane. The company simply had to make more profit.

In December 1918 Dohrmann and Lane agreed on general terms. Then they directed me to negotiate the final contract. That's what used up a good portion of my time through the winter and into the spring. It was a well-trodden path from San Francisco to Yosemite, from Dohrmann to Lewis, to my typewriter or the telegraph office with messages for Lane and Mather. Terms simply couldn't be reached. Later on in the year Lane appointed an arbitration committee, people outside both parties, and final terms were agreed upon, although never really settled until 1923.

To remove the company from receivership, Dohrmann and his associates reorganized the Yosemite Park Company, raised one million dollars from San Francisco and Los Angeles businessmen, and talked the original stockholders (like Mather) into a voluntary sixty-percent assessment on their stock. Stock in the new organization was exchanged. A twenty-year lease was signed with the government for the former Desmond concessions, including general transportation, garage operation, and the camps

and hotels. The Desmond dairy, saddle horse services, and store operation received a franchise for ten years.

Now the shock came. White sent me a surreptitious letter letting me know that Mather had contributed more money to the Dohrmann group. That seemed to fit the sixty-percent levy on original stockholders. I never knew for sure the exact amount of the new contribution, but it was somewhere around \$200,000.

Why did Mather keep slipping deeper into this quagmire? There seemed to be two reasons. First, he was violently anti-Curry. He felt he couldn't allow the Curry Company to get too powerful and cut into the profits of the Yosemite Park Company. Second, Mather was intent on promoting the development of his "new Yosemite village." He felt it was imperative to have the financial backing of this consortium of San Francisco and Los Angeles businessmen to accomplish his goals of developing Yosemite Valley with the new northern village and a luxury resort hotel.

I was torn between telling myself it was none of my business and fearing for the future of Mather and the Park Service should this leak out in the public press. I passed White's letter along to Lane without comment. Lane's reply was close to explosive. He told me he had warned Mather long ago about a 'conflict of interest' and his involvement in government affairs using his own money. He had discussed every angle of the case with him. After a crisscross of telegrams between Lane and me, Lane insisted I write Mather saying that "Lane and I" felt he should back out of any further connection with the Yosemite Park Company.

I didn't want any part of telling my chief what to do, felt it was none of my business, and didn't want to appear to be in cahoots with Lane. But I was afraid this situation might cost Mather his position, so I reluctantly agreed to do it. I kept the letter short, used Lane's opinions almost entirely, and concluded with, "I hope you will take the Secretary's words as friendly advice, for he cares deeply about you and fears for you should the company go into bankruptcy."

No matter how careful White, Lane, and I were, it seemed everyone in Yosemite heard rumors. Even the Currys heard about it but kept silent, fearful that Mather might turn on them and cut them off with no lease at all. The matter was temporarily dropped. Mather simply ignored Lane's arguments, blandly assuring him that when he made the additional loan he wasn't trying to make any money. After all, he was only charging five percent interest. As far as I ever knew, Lane must have been baffled and

let it go at that. A few years hence, with a different interior secretary, a forceful showdown occurred.



On February 2, 1919, our son, Robert Mather Albright, was born. He was a handsome, healthy little fellow who weighed in at eight pounds, ten ounces with a mop of very dark hair like his mother's and the potential for her dancing brown eyes. Once more the National Park Service had kept me from her even during the birth of our son. Of course, my work kept me away from her most of the time she was in the hospital too.

First, I received a wire from Congressman Mondell that his Greater Yellowstone extension legislation had sailed through the House and looked good for the Senate. He suggested that I immediately get busy rounding up support, get the Sierra Club and others to bombard California's senators and other advocates to push the bill through the Senate. Unfortunately, there was a full-blown filibuster in the Senate, and the bill died for that session. Reintroduced in May 1919, it was never reported out of committee because Senator John Nugent of Idaho blocked it. He couldn't seem to get it through his head that the west line of our proposed extension of Yellowstone was the summit or backbone of the Tetons. He believed we were bringing the extension to the state line, thus including much sheep-grazing land used by his Idaho constituents. While we had been so near our goal in February, we never came close again for thirty years. It was controversy and bitter warfare from 1919 until a separate national park, Grand Teton, became a reality in 1950.

On February 17, when Grace and Bobby had only been home from the hospital two days, I left for Fresno to attend a meeting of the supervisors of the Seventh Congressional District. It was of vital importance concerning the Sequoia extension or, as it was currently called, the Roosevelt Park.

On February 19 advocates and opponents met at the Fresno County Courthouse. As the Fresno paper reported, "Before a crowd that overflowed the large room and stood around the walls, senators, congressmen, attorneys, army officers, and representatives of chambers of commerce and civic organizations favored and opposed the enlarging of the Sequoia park to contain 1,025,000 acres or 1,600 square miles to preserve its vast resources for future generations."

The paper further stated that "the most heated debates ever heard here" were witnessed that day. That was true. Opposition was immediate



and vociferous. Grazing and lumber were the prime considerations. Proponents were ardent. Both sides were out of order time and again, interrupting when an argument didn't suit them.

Our opponents clearly carried the day. The upshot of the hearings was a wire from the supervisors of the county to Washington: "It was the sense of the mass meeting at Fresno today that the passage of S.B. 2021 and H.B. 10929 be deferred until National Park and Forest Service further investigate as to boundary lines and varied interests." The stalemate was exactly what I had figured the Forest Service and their allies would accomplish.

Sequoia was put on hold while I switched to a new pet project of Mather's. He had visited Yosemite in the fall of 1918. Accompanying him was Rudolph Spreckels, one of the wealthiest and most prominent men in San Francisco. They had become excited about the possibilities of a "winter season" for the park. They envisioned an all-year, seventy-mile concrete-surfaced road between Merced and El Portal that would open Yosemite to winter sports as well as summer sightseeing. Another purpose, as quoted in California newspapers, was "to give employment to thousands of our out-of-work service men, some of whom are now being cared for at public expense and whose idleness is rapidly becoming a menace to the industrial security of the nation."

Spreckels was so fired up by Mather's idea that he went to work to raise money for the project. He arranged a luncheon conference on February 28, 1919, at the Hotel Fresno to iron out details for financing the construction of this "winter gateway" to Yosemite. Attending were representatives of chambers of commerce, the newly powerful California automobile clubs, other commercial interests, the "good roads" advocates, and highway officials from all levels of government.

To my surprise, Mather had instructed me to offer a method of raising the money through the Park Service: "Tell the conference to issue \$5 certificates of membership which will be exchanged for park permits. As a permit is worth \$5, the purchaser of a certificate will lose nothing by advancing the money to build the road as there is no fixed time limit when the certificates must be redeemed. He can use his certificate (permit) to come to the park at any time."

I did as ordered but asked myself: Wasn't the Park Service paying for this road instead of private capital? How were we to explain the loss of permit revenue to the United States Treasury? Or worse still, the congressional appropriations committees? I never got an answer to my questions

from Mather. To my chagrin, the local newspapers attributed this idea to me, saying I originated it;

More business concerning the Sequoia area had me rushing back to San Francisco for a conference on March 4. I was greeted with a pile of congratulatory telegrams concerning great news from Washington. On February 26, 1919, Grand Canyon had finally been made a national park.

My ebullient mood evaporated when I received a telegram from Mather: "In view of my Hawaiian trip, please be in D.C. by March 15." He had obviously chosen to forget our conversation in Chicago in which he promised to let me stay in California to rest up, be with my family, and plan my future. Of course, I hadn't been with my family and I hadn't rested up. I'd been running around like a chicken with my head cut off. But the one thing I had done was interview for positions in various San Francisco law firms, and I had been offered two fine opportunities that promised bright futures.

This telegram had brought me to a fork in the road, and a major decision had to be made. There could be no more shilly-shallying, no more procrastinating, no more grim determination to leave the Park Service mixed with painful regrets in cutting the umbilical cord. I had to make up my mind once and for all where I was going.

I chose to resign from the National Park Service and put that part of my life behind me.

Up to this time, I had tried to keep my increasingly depressed state of mind and the problems I was wrestling with to myself. But this was a decision that affected our whole family. I told Grace that we had to have a talk, so we took a long walk up on the Berkeley campus. When we finally sank down on the grass, Grace said, "All right, darling. What is it you have to tell me? I read the telegram from Mr. Mather. I know it upset you badly, but I wanted to let you tell me about it when you were ready."

As I poured out all my doubts and uncertainties, all the depression and discouragement of the situation with Mather, Lane, and what I felt was my future in the Park Service, my precious wife sat there with quiet tears streaming down her face. She was overwhelmed by the thought that I had kept all this to myself, hadn't let her share my agony.

It was a relief to talk things over with her. As I related my feelings about the months and years of strain, of difficult decisions, of loneliness, of concern over Mather and the Park Service, of relentless, unending work, I began to realize just exactly how depressed and exhausted I was. Grace understood and felt that resignation from the Park Service was the

only answer. We agreed that we owed each other and our baby a life together, that I just couldn't be responsible for carrying the type of burden I had carried for the last two years. Mr. Mather's health was an uncertain question at best. Lane's reply to me had cut any hope I had to step into Mather's position should he become ill again and be replaced. Our income after July 1, when Mather's payment to me had to cease, would be impossible for the three of us to live on.

When we went home, I got out my typewriter and wrote a letter of resignation to Mr. Mather, dated March 9, 1919. The next few days I was very sick with what I called a bilious attack, so the letter didn't get mailed until March 14. It was just as well because, in those five days, I added a few extra pages that changed the course of our lives forever.

My original letter began with and repeated throughout my love and admiration for Stephen Mather, "the one man that I am mighty nearly as fond of as I am of my own parents." "You shall ever remain our (Grace and my) ideal of Christian manhood, our highest conception of a public official, our personification of all that is good, kind, gentle, thoughtful, and unselfish in modern man."

My regard for Mather as a father-figure made the original section of the letter an emotional reiteration of my own hopes and despairs, my deep concern for him, my agonizing over this decision I felt I had been forced to make in view of Lane's attitude, financial concerns, and love for Grace.

I concluded the letter of March 9 with:

I do not know what I will do as yet, but I am not afraid of this old world. It has never had me guessing, and I think I can weather any storm that hits us. Grace is a brave girl, and will back me up night and day.... It is hardly necessary for me to say that I shall never get into any line of work that will interest me as much as national park work.... You and I know more about the parks than any other men on Earth; the National Park Service is our child. We gave birth to it and we will love, cherish and protect it as long as we live."

With that last paragraph, I signed the letter and put it in an envelope. I felt my career in the National Park Service had been put behind me forever, but fate stepped in and turned my life around. There is no more logical answer than that.

The unmailed letter kept torturing me like a cat playing with a mouse. I couldn't get the thought out of my head that I was making a

terrible mistake. Every bit of logic told me that the choice was correct, but every fiber in me cried out not to accept it. I knew I couldn't face a future along the same path I'd been traveling the last few years. I simply refused a life of uncertainty, total responsibility for operation of the Park Service, and, it seemed, Mr. Mather, and unacceptable separation from Grace.

My dilemma seemed insurmountable until a thought began to worm its way into my consciousness. Why not be a field officer like superintendent of Yellowstone and also be available as a troubleshooter? This would keep me with my family and in the Park Service but away from Washington most of the time. I could still help Mather on park and administrative problems. Would a proposal like this satisfy both of us? I went back to the typewriter and added four more pages to the existing five.

My proposal began with: "If I could have my wife and my baby and my home, and, at the same time, continue in my beloved National Park Service, I should ask for little more in this world. Wealth I have never craved, but home life is as dear to me as anything can be, and this I do crave. This I must have."

Then I came to the crux of the issue: "For several years, I have hoped that circumstances might make the superintendency of the Yellowstone available to me. Back in 1916, when Colonel Brett left, I wanted the place, but I felt that I could help you more in Washington then; I have thought longingly of the Yellowstone ever since." And then, in typical legal fashion, I proceeded with paragraph after paragraph promoting the idea and then presenting arguments against it.

I suppose I thought I was being very straightforward in offering suggestions for a person who could fill the position of assistant director to Mather, but I quickly dismissed each one of them offhand or found serious faults with each. I made the flat, blanket statement: "There seems to be nobody in the Department that could fill the job."

Conclusion: "You need personal representatives in the field constantly ... somebody in the far West and in the Rocky Mountain region to keep tab on all movements that affect the parks, just as I am watching everything out here now.... With me in Yellowstone, in the winter time, you could call me to Washington for a couple of months to help with legislation, or any other work that even now comes within my sphere\_\_\_ It is absolutely impossible for you to think of making the entire round of the parks, and still look after the promotion of Roosevelt Park as you plan." I believe it was the first time that the idea of Park Service regions with their own officials was put forth.

I didn't have long to wait for an answer. Instead of the multipage, handwritten letter I had expected, I received an immediate reply in the form of a short and to-the-point telegram from Mr. Mather in Washington. He simply asked me to defer any precipitous action until he returned from his Hawaiian trip and to assume the position of acting director in Washington until that time. I agreed to do this, but I pointedly did not take back my resignation.

It was mighty frustrating to be back in Washington on April 2. I pushed thoughts of my future aside to focus attention on the upcoming tourist season. We anticipated greatly increased visitation, which would lead to road, concession, and numerous other problems. One on the top of the list was finding topnotch personnel for the parks. We needed numerous rangers, but most of all we were looking for superintendents of the Dusty Lewis variety. And fortune smiled on the Park Service, as we acquired many a fine leader as they emerged from wartime service.

There was the case of Roger Toll. I had been acquainted with him through my work in Colorado and had extensive communication with him before he left for Hawaii to study the volcanic mountains. I gave him letters of introduction to officials in the islands and suggested he look up Mather while both were there. Then I wired Mather about him. I praised his knowledge and ability and suggested he be appointed superintendent at Mount Rainier.

When the two men did meet in Hawaii, Mather was most impressed by Toll and wired me to get Lane's approval for the appointment. Toll took over Mount Rainier on May 29, 1919.

Then one day a jaunty, red-haired Air Corps colonel named John White came into my office and asked for a job. His background was that of a soldier-of-fortune, but I instantly liked him and offered him a ranger position at Grand Canyon. He snapped it up and, within a year, became superintendent of Sequoia and General Grant Parks.

Sandwiching in work on next year's budget and outlining the 1919 annual report, meeting with congressmen about park legislation, especially the Sequoia and Yellowstone extensions, and handling the day-to-day operations, I faced some interesting decisions.

There was a flurry of bills regarding various parks and monuments. Introduced or reintroduced were extensions of Yellowstone, Sequoia, Crater Lake, and Hawaii. Members of Congress had a field day proposing new areas to add to the system, including Pajarito (New Mexico), Mississippi Valley (Iowa and Wisconsin), Mammoth Cave (Kentucky),

Grand Coulee (Washington), and Killdeer (North Dakota). The list of national monuments was endless, including a tract of land in California to save the *Washingtonia filamentosa* (palm).

Opportunity arose to accept gifts of land: a section of the beautiful Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina and equally attractive acreage in the Green Mountains of Vermont. These offers excited me, for I felt eastern parks were the wave of the future. Most of our population lived east of the Mississippi, most of the Congress represented them, and appropriations would be more generous if eastern areas were included. Above all, Americans deserved to have every section of the country represented in their heritage. Year after year in our annual report, I encouraged the idea that the National Park Service should consist not only of scenic parks, but of historic areas transferred from the War and Agriculture Departments.

Even though I considered my time in the service probably coming to an end, I actively promoted our extension plans for Yellowstone and Sequoia and a few new ones, including the California *sempervirens* redwoods and Great Smoky Mountains. I considered most of the other new proposals rather facetious, not up to our standards, or out of reach financially. However, I didn't discourage or promote them, but left them for Mather's consideration.

Although I left decisions on less vital issues for Mather, I was dead serious, firm, and decisive about others, especially the effects on the parks due to the conclusion of the war. The most immediate problem that arose was Secretary Lane's enthusiastic endorsement of a program to reward our returning war veterans with public lands, farms, and ranches to start new lives.

On the surface this idea sounded fine, but it quickly turned into something else when suggestions were made as to how these lands could be made more productive by providing more water for irrigation. At the top of the list for proposed irrigation projects was Yellowstone Park, including Lewis, Shoshone, Yellowstone, and Heart Lakes as well as the incomparable Falls River Basin in the southwest corner.

Darns were projected for all of them that would flood huge sections of timberland, bringing wholesale desecration to these vast wilderness areas. Not only were dead trees a blot on the landscape, but they were a source of serious water pollution. In the National Park Service annual report of 1919, I deplored the utilization of the lakes and the Falls River Basin for irrigation. The loss of this precious land, I wrote, would only be "for the benefit of a few individuals or corporations."

This situation couldn't wait for Mather's return. Perhaps because I believed I would be out of the Interior Department soon or because I no longer had as much awe and respect for Secretary Lane, I openly crossed swords with him about Yellowstone. I wrote a eight-page "brief" arguing that these irrigation dams would destroy a wilderness that was ordained by law to be kept "unimpaired." He read my paper and, right in front of me, angrily tore it in half, threw it in the wastepaper basket, and, without a word, signaled me to leave his office.

There was obviously nothing more to be done at the Interior Department, so I turned my attention to the Capitol. I sought out conservation friends here, passed out a one-page version of my arguments to Lane, and especially warned them to be on the lookout for the bills when they were brought before committees. This was just the start of the Yellowstone irrigation confrontation, and within a few months I was deeply embroiled in it once more.

Mr. Mather didn't come back to Washington immediately after he returned to Chicago from Hawaii. I was on pins and needles until the morning he did show up. He dropped an orange paper lei around my neck, clapped me on the back, and laughingly said, "All right, Horace, the time has come for a showdown!"

We were closeted in his office for hours. He started off by telling me that Secretary Lane had assured him that it was our decision, that he'd go along with whatever we decided. But then he never got to the central issue, never directly referred to my letter. It seemed as if he was stalling as we discussed mundane park problems, including a new superintendent for Glacier, the Yosemite road, and other like matters.

I finally blurted out, "Mr. Mather, I have resigned from the Park Service, so I really don't know why you are bothering to go over all these things with me."

This must have startled him, for he immediately became serious: "You're not really going to leave me in the lurch, Horace, are you? You yourself said that we were a team, that we would be in this thing together."

From there the conversation quickly picked up steam, and all the arguments were exchanged. Mather purred like a cat in his most charming and persuasive style while I was in my best legal form. Of course, it ended as we both knew it would. He proposed the exact thing I wanted, and, by my acceptance, he gained what he wanted.

I would assume the superintendency of Yellowstone National Park on July 1, 1919, along with a house, official car, and raise in salary to thirty-six

hundred dollars per annum. Chester Lindsley would become my assistant superintendent. I would relinquish my title of assistant director. We agreed that together we would pick out a new assistant director, who would remain in the Washington office constantly, so that Mather could also get away most of the time.

Instead I would be designated assistant to the director. In this capacity I would continue to oversee all the field operations as well as come to Washington for a few months in the winter when Yellowstone was closed. I would still be responsible for the budget, working up appropriations and testifying about them before the congressional committees, and promoting legislation concerning the parks.

With this settled, Mather wasted no time in outlining things he wanted me to work on until it was time to go to Yellowstone. Then he grinned at me and said, "Horace, I'm going to start your new salary before then, so you'll have a little extra to move on." He arranged this by getting Lane to appoint me as of June 10 and start my new salary on that date.

Before the law shutting off private payments to government workers went into effect on July 1, Mather gave Grace and me a personal check for one thousand dollars. It was an awesome sum to us, and we were eternally grateful to this kind, thoughtful man. His note that accompanied the check read: "You may have to keep your little Washington apartment for awhile with some necessities, and Grace can't live with all that old army furniture in Yellowstone. You'll need something better—and a lot more of it—for that huge, old stone barn you're moving into. At least I want a better bed than Brett's iron monster when I come to visit—which will be often!"

Shortly after our agreement was reached, Mr. Mather and I came to a decision about a new assistant director for the Washington office. It was to be Arno B. Cammerer.

Cammerer was born in 1883. Financial problems in his family forced him to quit high school, and he left Nebraska and came to Washington. Here he took secretarial courses, finished high school, and went to Georgetown University Law School by night. He worked as a clerk in the Treasury Department by day. In 1916 he was chosen assistant secretary to the National Commission of Fine Arts and first secretary of the Public Buildings Commission of Congress. In this position he prepared annual budgets, testified before Congress, handled financial accounts. The commission was in charge of the District of Columbia parkway system, the construction of the Lincoln Memorial, and the care of other structures.



Although we both knew Cammerer casually, Mather made some in-depth, discreet inquiries. From these, we came to the conclusion that he would be perfect to handle the bureau, allowing both of us to be absent from Washington a good deal of the time.

Of course, we recognized that he knew nothing about national parks, but his administrative ability, extensive financial work, supervision of office staffs, and knowledge of congressional budget and legislative processes made him the perfect man for Mather. He was very intelligent and would pick up park affairs in short order. Above all he was hard-working, amiable, and even-tempered, with a great sense of humor and an optimistic, businesslike devotion to duty. Mather and I liked him immediately and immensely.

Mather offered Cammerer the position of assistant director, and he took his place on July 3, two days after my appointment as superintendent of Yellowstone was activated. "Cam," as we always called him, proved invaluable, and through the years we regarded ourselves as a triumvirate.

The Washington situation was in good shape, so I headed back to California once more. I wanted to be sure of Grace's reaction to the decisions reached in Washington. Of course, I'd written her all the details. I was sure they met with her approval, but it wasn't until I arrived in Berkeley and saw her excitement and happiness that I was completely ready to face my new challenge.

Grace felt her life had been turned around. We would be together most of the time, although she knew probably better than Mr. Mather and me that I'd be away on park affairs more than imagined. But in the meantime, the Albright family would enjoy a real home. She loved Yellowstone.

On June 10, 1919, I received a beautifully engraved parchment document signed by Secretary Lane proclaiming me superintendent of Yellowstone National Park. With this was a formal letter from him confirming the appointment.

In view of the strained relations between Lane and me since the preceding November, I was astonished to see that there was a four-page note attached by a paper clip. It was scrawled in pencil on five-by-eight-inch official Department of the Interior stationery. It was in Lane's handwriting but unsigned: "I want you to understand that we part with you here with great regret and because of your sure knowledge of the parks we shall feel free to call upon you to do some larger work than others in your position. From time to time Mr. Mather will call upon you to give

him your opinion on phases of administration in the other parks but this must be done in such a way as to keep from any semblance of subordinating other superintendents to you and I know that your tact will not permit this impression going out."

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The Albright family arrived in West Yellowstone on July 14, 1919, and occupied our huge stone house the next day. As I was exploring my new office, Jack Haynes, who had the photographic concession in the park, sent a fellow over to take some pictures of me on my first day as superintendent of Yellowstone. I was delighted, as I had my full-dress National Park Service uniform on.

Before going outside for the picture-taking session, I studied myself in the mirror. The uniform was fine. With fear and trepidation, I had ordered it by mail, but it fit perfectly. My puttees were polished, my hat was squarely on my head, but I still looked too young.

Although my age had never handicapped me, I was always so conscious of it. This particular day I was especially bothered that I not only was twenty-nine, but looked twenty-nine. After considering the problem, I decided my pince-nez glasses would do the trick. I pinched them on my nose, straightened my tie, and assumed my pose on the bottom step of my headquarters. Solemnly staring at the camera for my first official photograph as superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, I felt a surge of happiness go through me. All the doubts, depression, and fears were gone. There was nothing but opportunity to make this land, the size of Rhode Island and Delaware, into a shining example of what a national park could be. I was filled with anticipation of work to be done, goals to be reached, and years of sunshine ahead in this strange and beautiful wilderness.

I always remembered this day as one of the proudest moments of my entire life.