

PARADISE HILL ROAD  
Acadia National Park Roads & Bridges  
Between Halls Cove and Park Loop Road  
Halls Cove Vicinity  
Hancock County  
Maine

HAER NO. ME-56

HAER  
ME  
5-HUCO.V  
1-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

PARADISE HILL ROAD

HAER No. ME-56

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ME  
5-HUCO.V  
1-

LOCATION: Between Hulls Cove and Park Loop Road, Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor vicinity, Mount Desert Island, Hancock County, Maine

Quad: Bar Harbor, Maine  
UTMs: North end: Hulls Cove  
19/560000/4917500  
South end: Park Loop Road  
19/561000/4913600

DATES OF CONSTRUCTION: 1940-41; 1950-55

DESIGN: Public Roads Administration/Bureau of Public Roads

ENGINEER: Leo Grossman, PRA Resident Engineer (road)  
George O'Neil, BPR Resident Engineer (bridges)

CONTRACTORS: W. H. Hinman, North Anson, Maine (Roadway)  
Harold MacQuinn, Hulls Cove, Maine  
(Eagle Lake and New Eagle Lake bridges)  
Harold MacQuinn, Hulls Cove, Maine and W. Robinson  
Martin, Manchester, Vermont, doing business as  
"M&M Construction Company" (Duck Brook Bridge)

STRUCTURE TYPE: Park scenic highway

FHWA STRUCTURE NO.: NPS Route 10

OWNER: Acadia National Park, National Park Service

SIGNIFICANCE: The last link in the park motor road system, the Paradise Hill Road allows visitors to enter the park without having to pass through the town of Bar Harbor. Designed as a scenic highway, the road offers splendid views of Frenchman Bay, Paradise Hill and Champlain Mountain.

PROJECT INFORMATION: Documentation of Paradise Hill Road is part of the Acadia National Park Roads and Bridges Recording Project, conducted in 1994-95 by the Historic American Engineering Record. This is one in a series of project reports. HAER No. ME-11, ACADIA

NATIONAL PARK MOTOR ROADS, contains an overview  
history of the park road systems.

Richard H. Quin, HAER Historian, 1994

## HISTORY

Paradise Hill Road was the last major part of the Acadia National Park road system to be constructed. The 2.93-mile road provided a connection between Hulls Cove, west of Bar Harbor, with the Park Loop Road, and allowed visitors to enter the park without having to pass through the congested streets of Bar Harbor. Its construction was made possible largely through the generosity of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who had funded or constructed many of the other park motor and carriage roads. Rockefeller had a route surveyed in the 1930s, and though he did not fund construction of the road, he donated the necessary land for the right-of-way to the park and kept up pressure on government officials to fund the road to completion.

Prior to the construction of the road, visitors generally reached the Park Loop Road, the principal park thoroughfare, from Bar Harbor, utilizing entrances from the Harden Farm Road, Ledgelawn Avenue, or from the Bar Harbor-Seal Harbor highway at Sieur de Monts Spring. The road could also be accessed by the Stanley Brook Road from Seal Harbor or from the Otter Creek Road, but these routes accounted for only a minor portion of the use.

As early as 1930, before the loop road was even completed, Rockefeller and his engineer, Paul D. Simpson, were discussing construction of the Paradise Hill Road as the new entrance road to Acadia. At this time, they were considering a junction with Eden Street (Route 3) near Duck Brook, and the possible extension of the road to Hulls Cove. In connection with the work, they also contemplated a carriage road outlet to Eden Street. In January 1931, Mr. Rockefeller indicated he would probably favor extending the road on towards Hulls Cove and directed Simpson to proceed with surveys for several alternate lines. He also indicated that he thought a simple bridle path, rather than a proper carriage road, might suffice for access to Paradise Hill carriage road loop from Eden Street.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Paul D. Simpson, Seal Harbor, Maine to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 2 January 1931; Rockefeller to Simpson, 6 January 1931. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group IV3A10, Simpson Family Papers, Box 1 Folder 4.

A map was prepared, evidently by Paul Simpson, in September 1934 indicating the route of the proposed road. It showed the route beginning on Eden Street just west of the outlet of Duck Brook, looping up a single switchback to the top of the ridge. A spur road from this point would lead west to circle St. Georges Hill, which would offer splendid views of Frenchman Bay. The main road would run generally east then south a short distance up the Duck Brook valley before crossing Witch Hole Brook and Duck Brook's deep ravine. It would then run east along the north flank of Sunset Hill before veering south towards the Park Loop Road. After crossing the New Eagle Lake Road, it would run around the west side of Great Hill to a crossing of the Bar Harbor-Somesville Highway (now Route 233). Less than a mile south of that point it would come to a junction with the loop road. The map showed most of the land as Rockefeller's, as well as two tracts in the Duck Brook valley and around Witch Hole Pond already transferred by Rockefeller to the park.<sup>2</sup>

Acting Park Service Director A. E. Demaray directed District Engineer H. J. Spelman of the Bureau of Public Roads (BPR), an Agriculture Department agency which oversaw major road construction projects in the national parks, to program funds for a survey of a new road from the Eagle Lake Road to Eden Street. Spelman agreed to request the funds in his 1939 budget, indicating the road would be marked as Project No. 10 and given the name "Paradise Hill Road." He estimated the cost of the survey at \$8,000, and stated he had directed his resident engineer to proceed with the work at once.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Simpson, "Plan Showing Proposed Extensions of Park Motor Road, Mount Desert Island, Maine," 5 September 1934. Acadia National Park, Maintenance Division files. The map also showed connecting horse roads connecting the Witch Hole Pond and Paradise Hill carriage road loops with the Bay Drive (the extension of Eden Street to Halls Cove, now Route 3). One would connect with the drive adjacent to the proposed new motor road, and a second linking the Paradise Hill loop with the drive opposite the end of the Breakneck Road.

<sup>3</sup>A. E. Demaray, Acting Director, National Park Service, to H. J. Spelman, District Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, 29 August 1938; Spelman to Demaray, 3 October 1938. Rockefeller Archives Center, Offices of the Messrs Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 73.

In summer 1938, Rockefeller urged Cammerer to secure funds for the Paradise Hill Road and to complete the other desired motor road projects in Acadia National Park (including the final work on the Park Loop Road). Meeting with Rockefeller at Bar Harbor in August, Cammerer explained that this would not be possible, but that the various road sections could be funded from year to year as funds were appropriated by Congress. In October, he notified Rockefeller that the BPR had begun its surveys for the Paradise Hill Road.<sup>4</sup>

The surveys began in September 1938 and continued intermittently until the project was ready for bids in November 1940. Several alternate lines were investigated. The original projected terminus for the new road was on Eden Street at the Henderson house site just west of Duck Brook. After reviewing the proposal, Director Cammerer wrote Rockefeller, indicating he thought the BPR should continue the survey line on to Hulls Cove in order to obtain an easier grade. He also thought the Hulls Cove area might have suitable land for a park entrance development. Cammerer believed an area west of The Bluffs would be suitable. He asked Rockefeller to offer his views on the matter before he made a formal request of the BPR.<sup>5</sup>

Rockefeller wrote back, stating he had acquired the Henderson tract because it had seemed the only location along Eden Street from which an entrance, both to the proposed motor road and to the carriage roads, could be made. However, BPR Assistant Highway Engineer Leo Grossman had informed him that difficult curves would be involved in making the climb from Eden Street, and had suggested that the survey be extended to Hulls Cove in search of an easier route. As Cammerer's official letter had stated the same point, he felt all possible entrances should be considered. Rockefeller added that an entrance closer to Hulls Cove would allow visitors to enter the park without having to pass through Bar Harbor, a factor he said would be appreciated by

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<sup>4</sup>Rockefeller Memo, 2 September 1938; Cammerer to Rockefeller, 7 October 1938. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 73.

<sup>5</sup>Arno B. Cammerer, Director, National Park Service, to Rockefeller, 11 October 1938. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 73.

the summer cottagers but probably opposed by the winter residents and the business interests. Rockefeller indicated he would support the extension of the survey to Hulls Cove.<sup>6</sup>

In November 1938, Grossman notified Rockefeller that, due to favorable weather conditions, the BPR survey crews under his supervision had been able to obtain complete topographic data for the entire road segment. He hoped the crews would be able to run the center line location for the road over the winter.<sup>7</sup>

Construction of the road required action by the Town of Bar Harbor, namely authorization of overpasses over the Bar Harbor-Somesville and New Eagle Lake roads. Rockefeller was actually hoping the town would abandon the New Eagle Lake Road so that it could be used as a carriage road which would be integrated with his carriage road system. In order to bring the Paradise Hill Road matter before the March 1940 town meeting, he asked Grossman to have a plan for the road drawn up for consideration.<sup>8</sup>

Paul Simpson wrote Rockefeller in October 1939, enclosing an old tracing of a road route he had prepared in 1930 which showed the possible extension of the road to Hulls Cove. He reminded Rockefeller that he had indicated that fine views of Frenchman Bay could be obtained from the sides of Paradise and St. George's hills, but warned that the remainder of the route down the grade would have little to offer of scenic interest. This having been taken into account, Rockefeller and Simpson had agreed to route the road down to Eden Street on the Henderson property much closer to Bar Harbor, while leaving open the possibility of a spur road or loop around St. George's Hill to provide the bay views. St. George's Hill might be developed for motor road users, with picnic areas, etc., while Paradise Hill would be

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<sup>6</sup>Rockefeller to Cammerer, 20 October 1938. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 73.

<sup>7</sup>Leo Grossman, Assistant Highway Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, to Rockefeller, 26 November 1938. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 73.

<sup>8</sup>Rockefeller to Grossman, 4 October 1939. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 72.

reserved for carriage road use. However, if the road were to be extended on to Hulls Cove, Simpson thought the loop would be unnecessary. Rockefeller agreed, pointing out that the loop around St. George's Hill had only been discussed as a scenic spur while it was planned to terminate the road at the Henderson place. He thought that if the road was extended on to Hulls Cove, then a viewpoint or picnic ground at St. George's Hill would suffice and the loop would be unnecessary. In November, he wrote Grossman, urging him to abandon planning for the loop and instead plan for overlooks or picnic grounds along the road.<sup>9</sup>

In a September 1939 letter to his friend, former NPS Director Horace M. Albright, Rockefeller admitted concerns that business interests in Bar Harbor might protest having the principal park entrance relocated away from the village. Although he made the point that he owned the land the park road would cross and the Park Service would build the road, he thought the businessman could bring pressure on the town government to deny permission to construct the bridges over the Eagle Lake and New Eagle Lake roads, therefore preventing the realization of the project.<sup>10</sup>

Rockefeller transferred the land constituting the major portion of the route to the government with a stipulation in the deed of gift that the Town of Bar Harbor agree to the relocation of the Eagle Lake Road and to the abandonment of the New Eagle Lake Road. The town officials accepted these conditions that fall and the project was subsequently authorized by the National Park Service. The Park Service estimated the cost of the project at \$556,000.<sup>11</sup>

The park submitted a revised proposal to town officials in February 1940, offering to build the road if the town would abandon the New Eagle Lake Road to the park, permit the

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<sup>9</sup>Simpson to Rockefeller, 16 October 1939; Rockefeller to Simpson, 26 October 1939; Rockefeller to Grossman, 20 November 1939. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 72.

<sup>10</sup>Rockefeller to Horace M. Albright, 28 September 1939. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 122 Folder 72.

<sup>11</sup>National Park Service, "Acadia National Park Master Plan, 1940" (Richmond, VA: National Park Service, 1940), 4.



construction of the overpasses over the New Eagle Lake and Bar Harbor-Somesville roads, and allow the latter road to be realigned where it crossed the ridge between Cadillac Mountain and Great Pond Hill, down which the Paradise Hill road would run..<sup>12</sup>

In September 1940, Acting Park Service Director A. E. Demarary notified Rockefeller that the Interior Department had accepted titles to land Rockefeller donated to Acadia National Park for the Paradise Hill Road project. There was a defect in the title for one lot, and Superintendent Dorr was directed to submit curative title data so that bids could be advertised for the road construction.<sup>13</sup>

The final BPR survey and design for the road was accepted in fall 1940 by District Engineer Spelman (now of the Public Roads Administration, the Depression-era successor to the BPR); Thomas C. Vint, Chief of the NPS Branch of Plans and Design; and by Rockefeller. The design called for a 20' bituminous surface gravel pavement with 2' shoulders in cuts and 6' shoulders in fill areas. Ditch-to-ditch width was to be 28' in cuts and 38' in fills. Curves were designed with spiral transitions and superelevated for traffic traveling at 50 mph. Minimum radii for curves was 440.74' on the main roadway but only 54.13' at junctions. Most of the roadway was located in sidehill terrain and grades were set for the greatest economy consistent with safety standards. The ruling grade was 7 percent, exceeded only by a 10 percent section at the approach from the county road. In order to reduce the amount of damage caused to trees along the road, fill slopes in many areas would be supported by hand-laid rock embankment. Although the road was primarily designed as a connector to bypass Bar Harbor, construction reports noted that "every effort was made to develop the many scenic viewpoints along the alignment."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>"Nat'l Park Service to Issue Proposal at Town Meeting," *Bar Harbor Times*, 22 February 1940.

<sup>13</sup>A. E. Demarary, Acting Director, National Park Service, to Rockefeller, 17 September 1940. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor).

<sup>14</sup>Leo Grossman, Highway Engineer, Public Works Administration. "Final Construction Report, 1940-1941, Acadia National Park,

The contract, designated Acadia National Park Project 10A1, was composed of two parts. The major portion of the road, 2.655 miles in length, was new construction, the connecting segment between the Park Loop Road and Hulls Cove. The second section, 0.581 miles in length, was the relocation of the Eagle Lake Road where a new grade separation structure (or underpass) was planned. The project also included a 0.178 mile section connecting the two projects and improvements at the connection with Eden Street near Hulls Cove.<sup>15</sup>

Following the advertisement of the project, bids were opened in November 1940 and the project was awarded to W. H. Hinman of North Anson, Maine, who was completing the Day Mountain section of the Park Loop Road. An 11 December appropriation allotted \$20,994.50 for engineering costs. Eight days later, "Advice of Change in Outline of Work No. 1334" provided \$209,945 for the construction. A subsequent change order increased the amount by \$1,050.<sup>16</sup>

The contractor's operations began on 19 December and were carried on nearly continuously. Equipment listed in the final construction report included 4 power shovels, 37 trucks, 2 bulldozers, 7 compressors, 4 wagon drills, 10 jackhammers, an electric jackbit grinder, a small concrete mixer, a power grader, and a roller.<sup>17</sup>

In late June 1941, Grossman notified Rockefeller that the contractor had worked all winter except for a period of one week and was making "excellent progress," having completed all but about 1,200' of the rough grading. The rock drilling and blasting was finished, so there would be little disturbance to the summer residents living near the road. Although much of the excavation was in rock, the native granite was heavily seamed and bedded, minimizing the contractor's usual problem of secondary breakage to reduce the material to a size which could be loaded

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Paradise Hill Road, Hancock County, Maine, Project No. 10A1  
(Albany, NY: Federal Works Agency, Public Roads Administration,  
16 April 1942), 2-3.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 1.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 4.

by the power shovels. The project was completed on 11 October 1941, more than two months ahead of the contract schedule; however, the road was unusable because its three major bridges had not been funded. The project was recommended for acceptance by PRA Resident Engineer Grossman and by Acadia National Park Superintendent George B. Dorr. Total cost of the project was \$199,531.81, considerably less than the estimated cost.<sup>18</sup>

While the roadbed work was complete, the three necessary bridges had not been constructed. In the spring of 1941, Rockefeller asked Albright to look into the matter. In April, Albright visited Washington and spoke with Park Service officials about the delays. He reported that plans for the Duck Brook Bridge were still incomplete and that all the bridge construction was likely to be delayed as money was shifted towards defense spending. Albright stated he had personally asked NPS Director Newton B. Drury to discuss the matter with Thomas H. McDonald, Chief of the Public Roads Administration.<sup>19</sup>

In July 1944, Rockefeller wrote Drury himself concerning the suspended project. He stated he hoped the war would soon be over, and when it was, he urged that the completion of the Acadia road system, namely the Paradise Hill Road, would be quickly undertaken. Drury replied that the plans for the Acadia park work program were in good order. Plans for the two overpasses were ready, but specifications could not be drawn up because it would be necessary to include wage and hour rates based on prevailing rates. Plans for the Duck Brook Bridge were being prepared. He added that he expected that suspended public works projects, including the park bridges, would receive prompt attention at the conclusion of hostilities.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 1, 4; Grossman to Rockefeller, 25 June 1941. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Box 123 Folder 75.

<sup>19</sup>Albright to Rockefeller, 21 April 1941, in Joseph W. Ernst, ed., *Worthwhile Places: Correspondence of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and Horace M. Albright* (New York City: Fordham University Press for Rockefeller Archives Center, 1991), 200.

<sup>20</sup>Rockefeller to Newton B. Drury, Director, National Park Service, 13 July 1944; Drury to Rockefeller, 17 July 1944. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 123 Folder 75.

Rockefeller wrote Albright again in April 1945, complaining that the Duck Brook Bridge plans were still unfinished and reporting that the PRA's Spelman had told him at least two months more was required to finish the engineering design details. Albright replied that he was continuing to press Park Service officials for completion of the plans and that he would attempt to bring the matter before McDonald himself. In August, he reluctantly reported that the Duck Brook Bridge design project still lagged, ostensibly because the Public Roads Administration had no bridge engineers free to assign to the project. However, he stated that the PRA promised that the bridge was at the top of their list of priorities and that the design would be complete before funds were appropriated for its construction.<sup>21</sup>

Rockefeller wrote Albright again in August 1947, indicating he was willing to consider offering funds to help the park carry out the construction of the three bridges. He later restated his willingness to match the government funds dollar by dollar just to have the project get underway.<sup>22</sup> Nothing came of this offer, however.

In September 1947, Drury wrote Rockefeller that if the National Park Service received its requested appropriation, construction of the two overpasses would begin as soon as possible after the funds were scheduled for release on 1 July 1948. The agency had projected \$152,000 for the project. The larger bridge over Duck Brook would have to depend on the "liberality of Congress." He had little hope, he admitted, of securing enough funds in the first appropriation, but he would ask for funds for the Duck Brook Bridge in the 1950 budget (for funds which would become available in July 1949).<sup>23</sup>

In January 1951, Drury notified Rockefeller that the three bridges were finally under contract. Winter weather had forced a

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<sup>21</sup>Rockefeller to Albright, 27 April 1945; Albright to Rockefeller, 3 May 1945; Albright to Rockefeller, 31 August 1945, in Ernst, 222-23, 230.

<sup>22</sup>Rockefeller to Albright, 1 August 1947, 20 August 1947, in Ernst, 245- 49.

<sup>23</sup>Drury to Rockefeller, 9 September 1947. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 123 Folder 77.

project shutdown the previous November, but at least the work was underway. The two overpasses were 49 percent complete, and the Duck Brook Bridge was 29 percent complete. Drury thought that wartime difficulties in obtaining structural steel, another cause for delay, had been overcome and he anticipated no further problems.<sup>24</sup> Harold MacQuinn of Halls Cove received the \$150,000+ contract for the two overpass bridges and employed more than fifty men on the project. George O'Neil of the reconstituted Bureau of Public Roads was resident engineer for the project.<sup>25</sup>

In 1949, the BPR began planning for the finish grading and bituminous surfacing of the still-incomplete road. Surveys for this phase continued until 1953. Plans, specifications and estimates for Project 6A5, which consisted of the grading and surfacing of the New Eagle Lake Road connector, were completed in June 1952. Planning for the Project 10A6, which included scarifying, final grading, bituminous surfacing, and construction of split stone guard rail for the 1.077-mile section between the Eagle Lake Road and Duck Brook Bridge, was completed in February 1953, and the combined project was advertised in October. The contract was formally awarded in November to Harold MacQuinn, contractor for the bridge work, on the basis of his low bid of \$143,510. Subsequent change of work orders brought the total construction allotment to \$147,863.68.<sup>26</sup>

MacQuinn began surfacing operations on 9 November. Part of Project 10A6 included scarifying or breaking up the deteriorated original surface and blending the materials with the gravel base

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<sup>24</sup>Drury to Rockefeller, 26 January 1951. Rockefeller Archives Center, Office of the Messrs. Rockefeller, Record Group 2, Homes (Seal Harbor), Box 123 Folder 77.

<sup>25</sup>"Acadia's Stone Bridges Link Past and Future," *Bar Harbor [ME] Times*, 23 April 1987.

<sup>26</sup>George B. Thompson, District Engineer, Bureau of Public Roads, "Final Construction Report, Acadia National Park, Project 6A5-10A6-43A1, Grading, Draining, Bituminous Surface Treatment, Split Stone Guardrail and Other Work" (Albany, NY: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Public Roads, 21 September 1960), 3-4.

to a 3" depth. The blended material was then compacted in preparation for the final surfacing. A blade grader, a three-wheel roller, and a broom drag were used in this work.<sup>27</sup>

For the split stone guardrail, MacQuinn had rough quarried granite blocks delivered to the site. Crews did the necessary dressing with pneumatic drills and hand tools. A backhoe excavated a continuous trench for the foundations. The backhoe and a front-end loader then placed the stone in position, after which the trench was backfilled and compacted with hand labor. The bituminous concrete surfacing work was carried out in the usual manner and not noted specifically in the construction reports. MacQuinn completed the work and an ancillary project, the construction of the Sand Beach Parking Area on the Ocean Drive segment of the Park Loop Road, on 9 November 1955. Total cost of the combined project was \$155,183.85, reflecting a cost overrun of \$7,323.17.<sup>28</sup>

A 1954-55 project, combined with other road work in the park, entailed the repairs of some areas of the base course, reconstruction of various shoulders along the road, and application of a permanent surfacing. Field data for the project was compiled by the BPR's Bar Harbor office, and the contract was advertised in October 1954. The project was awarded to the Warren Brothers Roads Company of Fairfield, Maine. The company erected a new asphalt plant at the MacQuinn Construction Company pit in Hulls Cove in April 1955.<sup>29</sup> Part of the work involved reconstruction of shoulders along the road. This entailed stripping or trimming the shoulders to expose the old pavement edges and preparing the shoulders to receive new borrow material. The contractor attempted to use a blade grader in the work, but due to the hardness of the shoulders and their narrow width, resorted to a small motorized cultivator to loosen the soil. The excess material was loaded into trucks and hauled off or cast on nearby fill slopes. As the aggregate for the new shoulders was a sandy gravel difficult to compact, soil was mixed with it then the mixture was rolled in place. The BPR engineer noted this

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 1, 4.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 1-6.

made "well bonded and stable shoulders." Flat stone masonry "rumble strips" were installed at two locations to warn motorists when they veered off the main roadway.<sup>30</sup>

By the 1960s, government officials became aware of a traffic hazard at the St. Georges Hill parking area and overlook. There had been no provision for parking for inbound motorists wanting to take in the road's first view of the island's mountains and Frenchman Bay. Consequently, many drivers would cross against traffic to the widened northeast side of the road. In order to correct this hazard, the Bureau of Public Roads determined to separate the road into one-way sections. Parking would be provided on the upper road in order to eliminate the crossing hazard and to offer a viewpoint for new park visitors to orient themselves to the area.<sup>31</sup>

Surveys for the project were conducted by a BPR project field office based in Bar Harbor. The preliminary line work began in October 1962, and all field work was complete in November. Project plans were prepared in Bar Harbor and were completed the following June. Specifications called for a 20' roadway and a total width of 30' between ditches. The roadway was designed to accommodate traffic at speeds of 35 mph. The final BPR estimate for the project was \$86,046, and the National Park Service Major Roads and Trails Program allotted \$99,140 for the project, including construction engineering costs, in May 1964.<sup>32</sup>

The project was advertised in September 1963. Bids were opened at the park office in October. The low bid of \$101,740 was submitted by Harold MacQuinn. As this was 18.24 above the engineers' estimate, the bid was rejected after MacQuinn refused to lower his bid below \$99,140 (the total figure including

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 4-6.

<sup>31</sup>Bureau of Public Roads, Final Construction Report, Acadia National Park Project 10A8, Paradise Hill Grade Separation" (Arlington, VA: Bureau of Public Roads, Virginia District, Region 15, n.d.), 1.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 1-2.

engineering fees). A new BPR materials survey resulted in a new estimate of \$86,286.<sup>33</sup> MacQuinn was subsequently awarded the contract and the work was carried out the following year.

A new summer visitor center was established at the west end of the road at Hulls Cove in 1969.<sup>34</sup> Location of the visitor center has helped make the Paradise Hill Road the chief entrance road for visitors entering the park for the first time. In the late 1980s, the park considered establishing a fee station at the nearby Hulls Cove entrance. No action was taken on the request.

The Paradise Hill Road has become the principal park entrance for most visitors approaching the park from off the island, though businesses in Bar Harbor have apparently witnessed little adverse impact. The streets in the resort town remain crowded during the brief summer season and early fall, and visitors ensconced in the town's hotels and inns often continue to use the Route 233 and Route 3 entrances for access to the Park Loop Road. In this sense, the road has only partially fulfilled its intended function. On the other hand, the road is a highly scenic drive, offering the visitor an introduction to several of Mount Desert Island's varied ecosystems, and in this regard is a particularly appropriate entrance to Acadia National Park.

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>34</sup>Eastern National Park & Monument Association, *Acadia National Park Motorist's Guide: Park Loop Road* (Bar Harbor, ME: Eastern National Park & Monument Association, 1991), 5.



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##### Maps

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PARADISE HILL ROAD

HAER No. ME-56

Between Hulls Cove and Park Loop Road  
Acadia National Park Roads and Bridges  
Hulls Cove VICINITY  
Hancock County  
Maine

JET LOWE, PHOTOGRAPHER, MAY 1995

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