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# Shaping the Nature of a Controversy: The Park Service, the Forest Service, and the Cedar Breaks Proposal

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*Cedar Breaks Lodge was developed by the Union Pacific Railroad at the request of National Park Service director Stephen T. Mather. UP photograph in USHS collections.*

THE TENSION BETWEEN THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (NPS) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has been the subject of much discussion, and it is easy to get the image of two petty agencies squabbling over minute policy differences important only to bureau administrators. Recent scholarship, however, has begun to delve into the serious points of conflict between the two agencies. One author has suggested that the Forest Service's self-image and inward-looking view of its responsibilities put that agency at a disadvantage in its dealings with the National Park Service.<sup>1</sup>

While an admirable hypothesis, the emphasis on the attitude of Forest Service personnel neglects a very dynamic factor in the controversy. The terms of the conflict favored the Park Service so dramatically that, in retrospect, the evolution of that agency to its present position seems inevitable. In fact, throughout the late 1920s and the 1930s NPS officials chose the tracts of land over which the two agencies argued, defined its aesthetic value, and orchestrated the conflict that occurred. These structural circumstances, not the psychological profile of the participants themselves, put the Forest Service on the defensive in its constant battle with the Park Service. While Horace M. Albright, who directed the Park Service from 1929 to 1933, was a master of acquisition politics, he was only the most successful of many who exploited the structural advantage the Park Service enjoyed.

But there were limits to the degree the Park Service could press its advantage. In order to receive support from Congress and influential citizens, the Park Service had to articulate its objectives clearly and adhere to the standards it established. A successful NPS effort required an area with spectacular features of some sort. Agency officials could not successfully push for the acquisition of areas that might somehow be classified as ordinary. The Park Service had to have ample justification for its proposals, or the USFS might successfully cast the NPS in the role of an acquisitive and arrogant bureaucracy making decisions without regard for local interests.

The Park Service learned to use interagency rivalry to its advantage by resorting to a trial-and-error method during the late 1920s and early 1930s. When Albright pushed too far and requested the transfer of large areas of land with only average scenic attraction to enlarge or

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<sup>1</sup>Ben W. Twight, *Organizational Values and Political Power: The Forest Service Versus the Olympic National Park* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1983).

establish national parks, he was often stymied by valid resistance within both agencies. Congress, the Forest Service, and even elements within the Park Service would not allow Albright to redefine agency goals. But when he tried to acquire smaller tracts or asked for the transfer or creation of national monuments from Forest Service land, he was more often successful.

Smaller areas transferred for specific reasons did not threaten the Forest Service as much as did the permanent reservation of large tracts of forest land within the boundaries of a national park. USFS officials could also claim victory when the Park Service acquired a new national monument after initially requesting a national park. In such cases, the foresters had thwarted the overwhelming threat to their agency, the single-use national park. Forest Service officials regarded national parks as anathema, and anytime they prevented the establishment of one they considered it a triumph.

As they came to understand the Forest Service perspective, Park Service officials learned to ask for more than they could possibly expect to receive. Albright regularly requested new national parks or additions to existing parks and monuments that would take in Forest Service lands. In some cases the Forest Service opposed the attempt to create the national park but was willing to concede a national monument to the NPS if it appeared that the transfer would temporarily satiate the Park Service. Finding greater success along these lines, Park Service officials learned to go after their goals in increments.

By the early 1930s the Park Service dominated its rivalry with the Forest Service, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the case of the establishment of Cedar Breaks National Monument in southern Utah. A comparatively unimportant site, Cedar Breaks was the scene of a typical Mather-Albright-era conflict between the Park Service and the Forest Service. The circumstances surrounding Park Service attempts to acquire the area allowed Albright to unleash his piranha-like acquisitive instincts and led to the ultimate establishment of the monument.

## I

The Forest Service and the Park Service were at odds almost from the inception of the latter in 1916. The two agencies had overlapping missions and constituencies, and often they had to compete for land. Before the establishment of the Park Service, the Forest Service was dedicated to a Progressive-era kind of utilitarian conservation. For-

esters gradually added wilderness and recreational programs, which became controversial within the Forest Service; the first director of the NPS, Stephen T. Mather, worked to establish a foothold among the middle class and the affluent.

From the beginning Mather cultivated the American business and tourist community. By the mid-1920s he had built a powerful national network of support, and his personal connections gave the NPS immense leverage. The American railroad industry, for example, continued its support of the park system, and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., contributed heavily to the purchase of land for a number of national parks. Mather gave his successors a base upon which to build, and they guarded it zealously.

The Park Service clearly defined its responsibilities as an agency, and its officials took a dim view of any challenges to their position. As a new agency, the NPS tried to fight off competitors within the federal bureaucracy. Its primary adversary was the Forest Service, and much of their conflict centered upon recreational policy.

The administration of recreational areas was a major problem between the two agencies. The Park Service regarded all forms of visitor service as its obligation, and Mather's work did much to further that idea with the public. The Forest Service quickly realized that to protect its holdings and its grazing and timber programs the agency had to begin a counter-offensive. Early in the 1920s foresters began to implement their own recreational programs—encouraged in no small part by Mather's successes. By offering a service similar to that of the Park Service, the USFS countered claims that any specific area needed a different administration and added credence to its contention that the Park Service was simply an acquisitive agency.

The problems between the two agencies were aggravated by the fact that the Antiquities Act had split the jurisdiction of national monuments among the Park Service, the Forest Service, and to a lesser extent the War Department. When national monuments were established, the sites remained the responsibility of the agency that had previously administered the land. Early in their rivalry, the Park Service coveted the Forest Service national monuments and pushed for their transfer to the Department of the Interior.

Although the Park Service succeeded in a number of important cases—such as the transfer of the Grand Canyon in 1919 and Bryce Canyon in 1928—constant NPS attempts to acquire USFS land sparked resistance. Secretary of Agriculture D. F. Houston circumvented Mather and other park advocates when he proposed establish-



*Horace M. Albright and Stephen T. Mather, 1924, masterminded the National Park Service's rivalry with the U.S. Forest Service over control of scenic areas and archaeological sites. Courtesy of the National Park Service.*

ing the Bandelier National Monument from national forest land in 1916. The Forest Service became responsible for important archaeological ruins in northern New Mexico and spent the better part of the 1920s fending off Park Service acquisition attempts there and throughout the Southwest. By the end of the 1920s Forest Service officials felt as if they were under constant assault.

NPS claims to certain kinds of areas administered by the Forest Service had undeniable merit. Its level of sophistication in the management of archaeological sites far exceeded that of the Forest Service. Frank "Boss" Pinkley, superintendent of the Park Service's southwestern national monument group, pushed hard throughout the 1920s for the acquisition of the four Forest Service archaeological national monuments in the Southwest: Bandelier and the Gila Cliff Dwellings in New Mexico and Tonto and Walnut Canyon in Arizona. Pinkley found Forest Service management of archaeological areas grossly

inferior to his own and believed that adequate protection of archaeological ruins required Park Service administration.<sup>2</sup>

Less clear were cases where the lands in question had economic value to local residents as well as scenic tourist potential, and both agencies could make a solid case for their management plans. Such cases were so ambiguous that, on one occasion, a national park proposal for the Bandelier vicinity left the USFS in charge of grazing rights within the new park! As Forest Service officials began to develop widespread recreational programs during the 1920s, Mather continued to emphasize tourist service in his agency. By the end of the 1920s the Park Service's new Educational Division was catering to motor and rail visitors looking to see inspiring sites. In some cases, both agencies were trying to serve the same people in similar ways, a situation that was always a prelude to conflict.

Mather's success in excluding commercial use of natural resources from the national parks made the Park Service view of its prime category of sites restrictive. The amorphous "national park idea," which determined that for an area to have enough merit to become a national park it had to include substantial acreage and awe-inspiring, monumental, and pristine scenery, shaped agency perspective. Park Service officials left themselves little room for compromise when it came to use of park land. In their view, their goals were always more important than those of any other users. By the late 1920s agency officials were unwilling to allow grazing within park boundaries except in emergency situations, and mining remained anathema. This view precluded compromise with the Forest Service.

To the Forest Service, if the Park Service got what it most often requested, an expansive national park, the future of the USFS would be in danger. It could not then serve its constituents, and its power base would likely erode. Park Service success in an area meant a loss of Forest Service prestige, the demise of its recreational policy, and restrictions upon the livelihood of its constituents.

Forest Service officials felt most threatened by the concept of the "single-use" national park. From their perspective, the scenic value of a tract was only one among many potential values, and the position of the Park Service regarding national parks did not leave foresters room to implement their policies. The two agencies had different standards

<sup>2</sup>Circular Letter 5, December 1927, Casa Grande National Monument File 12-5, and Frank Pinkley to Horace Albright, July 27, 1932, Tonto National Monument File 12-5, Series 6, Record Group 79, National Archives (NA).

for scenic merit, with the Park Service position encroaching upon the USFS view of its obligation of managing natural resources. USFS officials frequently disputed the need to reserve scenic tracts from other uses and in their more cynical moments felt that the Park Service was after their land simply because it was their land.

The different philosophies regularly created conflict between the two agencies. Many NPS proposals for the establishment of new national parks and monuments, or the extension of the boundaries of existing sites, called for the transfer of large sections of national forest land to the Park Service. Forest Service response was usually swift and negative. Foresters consistently opposed restrictions on land use by their predominant constituency—local ranchers, farmers, and timber and mining interests—and were determined not to allow their aggressive counterparts at the Department of the Interior to take any of their land. Solutions acceptable to both agencies were difficult to find, for neither side trusted the other. When agency officials finally did agree, the terms of the compromise often left both sides bleating.

The Cedar Breaks dispute clearly reveals the positions and tactics of both agencies. The tract—not an area of exceptional scenic or economic value—became a focus of USFS resistance because the Park Service initially wanted to attach Cedar Breaks to a nearby national park. As the situation escalated, Albright made the case into a matter of principle and used the structural advantage of the Park Service to rally the support of his subordinates. The resulting national monument came into existence only because of the way Albright applied his instincts to the existing situation.

## II

The Cedar Breaks acquisition was the final step for the Park Service in southwestern Utah, part of an early agency plan of director Stephen Mather to link the development of national parks and monuments to the railroad industry. After the creation of the National Park Service in 1916, Mather worked to develop southern and southwestern Utah as an integral component of the fledgling park system. The sparsely populated region offered a perfect opportunity for him to try out his strategy of cooperation with the railroad industry.

In 1917 Mather called the region a potential “all-year round resort.” Its scenic and archaeological features made it an excellent complement to the nearby Grand Canyon, and he believed that Little Zion Canyon compared favorably with Yosemite. On his first trip to

Bryce Canyon in 1919, Mather swore that he would get it into the national park system.<sup>3</sup> He soon enlisted the help of Frank Wadleigh of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and then convinced the Union Pacific Railroad to develop a lodge at Cedar Breaks.<sup>4</sup> At his behest, Mukuntuweap National Monument became Zion National Park in 1919, and the USFS national monument at Bryce Canyon became a national park in 1928. Mather even went so far as to acquire a marginally significant historical site, Pipe Spring, Arizona, as a national monument because it could serve as a stopover for motor tourists between the Grand Canyon and Zion national parks.<sup>5</sup> Clearly, in Mather's hands southern Utah was being groomed as a new American outdoor vacationland, and by the mid-1920s the NPS had an important foothold there.

Horace Albright, perhaps even more aggressive and acquisitive than his predecessor, followed similar policies after he became NPS director in 1929. Closely tied to the Hoover administration, Albright began a program to round out the National Park System for all time.<sup>6</sup> He proposed thirteen transfers of USFS land to the NPS, arranged for the acquisition of the Bandelier National Monument from the Forest Service after being thwarted in attempts to make it a national park,<sup>7</sup> worked for the establishment of what became the Capitol Reef National Monument in central Utah, and pressured the Forest Service in Washington, California, and elsewhere.

Much further down on the Park Service agenda was the Cedar Breaks section of the Dixie National Forest. It was an area of stunning pink cliff formations very similar to those in Bryce Canyon National

<sup>3</sup>National Park Service Report for 1917-1918 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), p. 86; Robert Shankland, *Steve Mather of the National Parks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), pp. 136-38.

<sup>4</sup>See Mather's correspondence with Wadleigh, which is spread throughout RG 79, NA. The Arches, Bryce Canyon, Zion, Rainbow Bridge, and other files all contain letters discussing Mather's plans. For a specific reference to the work of the Union Pacific, see Albright to Stuart, February 20, 1933, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, RG 79, NA.

<sup>5</sup>Hal Rothman, "Second-Class Sites: The National Monuments in the National Park System during the 1920s," *Environmental Review*, spring 1986.

<sup>6</sup>See Horace Albright, "The Origins of National Park Service Administration of Historic Sites," (Philadelphia: Eastern National, 1971), pp. 21-23. Albright's correspondence and files strongly indicate that the Park Service believed it could fill out the park system for all time during the 1930s. See also Hal Rothman, "Conflict on the Pajarito Plateau: Frank Pinkley, the Forest Service, and the Bandelier National Monument Controversy, 1925-1932," *Journal of Forest History* 29 (April 1985): 76-78; and Rothman, "Protected by a Gold Fence with Diamond Tips: A Cultural History of the American National Monuments" (Ph.D diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1985), pp. 236-75. Albright's biographer, Donald Swain, makes much of Albright's empire-building in *Wilderness Defender: Horace M. Albright and Conservation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

<sup>7</sup>Horace Albright to Major Robert Y. Stuart, June 16, 1931, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, Series 7, RG 79, NA.



*Early tour buses in front of lodge in Zion National Park. Zion was elevated from monument to park status in 1919. John F. Bennett photograph in USHS collections.*

Park, and it also contained a large natural amphitheater. Since it was a small area, the Park Service did not initially regard Cedar Breaks as an individual unit. In keeping with agency acquisition strategy in southern Utah, Albright in 1931 decided that he wanted to add it as a segregated section of either Zion or Bryce Canyon national parks.<sup>8</sup>

The Park Service had clearly defined its objective and the reason it needed to acquire the site. In Albright's estimation Cedar Breaks had enough scenic merit to belong in the park system, and its acquisition would enable the agency to fill out its holdings in southern Utah. From the Park Service perspective, the transfer of the area would not hurt the Forest Service. NPS officials refused to take Forest Service recreation policy seriously, and since the area in question contained only some 6,000 acres it could not possibly affect the local grazing industry.

But Forest Service officials did not want to relinquish any part of their holdings for inclusion in a national park, and they found ample reason to oppose the project. On the defensive from the outset, regional

<sup>8</sup>Thomas J. Allen to Albright, June 24, 1931, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, Series 7, NA. All further references to National Archives material are to Series 7, RG 79.



*Beautiful Navajo Lake in the Dixie National Forest east of Cedar Breaks. The NPS-controlled national monument is completely surrounded by Forest Service land. U.S. Forest Service photograph in USHS collections.*

forester Richard H. Rutledge immediately countered that the area was not worthy of such a designation. He also pointed out that the establishment of a Park Service site at Cedar Breaks would place that agency in control of the main highways in the region. The Park Service charged an access fee for use of park roads which, Rutledge asserted, would work a hardship on area ranchers.<sup>9</sup>

The Park Service paid little attention to the contentions of the Forest Service and continued to press for the transfer. Albright did not believe that USFS personnel were qualified to judge the aesthetic merit of any site, while Thomas J. Allen, the superintendent of Zion and Bryce Canyon, contended that control of the highway would allow the

<sup>9</sup>According to scholars, the Forest Service constituency was generally comprised of sheepmen and the majority of cattlemen. Usually strong in the region in question, the USFS constituency had to prove that the public good provided by commercial resource use outweighed the general public good that might be derived from reserving the lands being debated. The NPS constituency, made up of business and preservationist interests, with strong support among social and political elites, was often more powerful in the national arena. See Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890–1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959); and Daniel Flores, “Zion in Eden: Phases in the Environmental History of Utah,” *Environmental Review*, winter 1983, pp. 325–45, for two interesting accounts of the function of the agency.

Park Service to regulate the fees transportation companies charged visitors for a trip to the parks.

With the two agencies speaking in completely different terms, an impasse quickly resulted. Neither side addressed the questions of the other, nor does anyone seem to have made an effort to understand the other's policy stance. As the talks degenerated, both agencies began to rally their constituencies in preparation for a showdown.

At the urging of the Forest Service, stockmen in the Cedar Breaks area responded to the proposed withdrawal. The Utah Woolgrowers Association and the Associated Civic Clubs of Southern Utah sent letters pointing out the economic disadvantages of the proposal to both Utah senators, William H. King and Reed Smoot. Senator King protested the proposed withdrawal in a vehement letter to the secretary of the interior, while Senator Smoot, a long-time supporter of the Park Service, privately informed Albright of the objections.<sup>10</sup> USFS supporters did much to strengthen the case against the proposed transfer.

But the Park Service also had supporters. The Cedar City business community realized that it stood to gain a great deal if Cedar Breaks was added to one of the national parks in the area. Since Cedar Breaks was located between Bryce Canyon and Zion, Cedar City would become an important entry point if the Park Service had its way. Residents of the town did their best to help the cause.

The local Chamber of Commerce, however, could not risk alienating local ranching interests. Ranchers were much too important to the economy of southern Utah. As a result, when park superintendent Allen, assistant regional forester Danna Parkinson, and Dixie National Forest district supervisor James E. (Ed) Gurr met to discuss the proposal with two members of the Cedar City Chamber of Commerce Cedar Breaks Committee on September 30 and October 1, 1931, the Chamber of Commerce modified its support of the NPS position. The group inspected the region and drew up a tentative agreement they believed would serve the interests of both agencies and their constituencies.<sup>11</sup>

The Park Service held to a moderate stance at Cedar Breaks. Agency officials did not envision the area as an individual unit, only as a segregated section of one of the other national parks. This gave Allen more leeway in negotiations with the Forest Service than was common

<sup>10</sup>William King to Secretary of the Interior, August 26, 1931; Reed Smoot to Horace Albright, August 23, 1931; Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

<sup>11</sup>Allen to Albright, October 5, 1931, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

in other cases. Instead of proposing an area comparable in size to the other two Utah parks,<sup>12</sup> the agency wanted only the pink cliff formations and a small adjoining area.

The Forest Service, however, was afraid that giving up a noncontiguous addition to either national park would later encourage the NPS to try to add the area between the park boundaries and the unattached section. This was a well-founded fear, for the Park Service often settled for less than it wanted, only to return later to fill in the gaps. Even though the pink cliffs themselves had little apparent value to area stockmen, the acreage between Cedar Breaks and the boundaries of either Zion or Bryce Canyon did. By making a stand against NPS acquisition of Cedar Breaks, the USFS was really trying to protect the adjoining timber and grazing land against future assaults.

Parkinson and Allen presented their respective positions to the Chamber of Commerce committee the following day. Parkinson suggested that the NPS would seek extensions of the new park and might even charge entrance fees. Although these arguments had merit, Allen responded by explaining NPS policy at Zion, which exempted local residents from entrance fees, and explained the economic advantages of the park to businessmen.<sup>13</sup>

The Cedar City business community stood to gain more from a new park than the USFS could offer with its management policies. Park Service development in southern Utah had been substantial; tourism had increased from 3,692 at Zion in 1919-20 to 55,297 at Zion and an additional 35,982 at Bryce Canyon by 1929-30.<sup>14</sup> The Chamber of Commerce committee recognized the potential windfall that the new unit could bring and unanimously recommended that the entire Chamber of Commerce support the proposal.

At nearby Parowan on October 4 the Forest Service constituency made its stand, and Allen encountered serious opposition. A community "made up entirely of sheep grazing interests," Parowan's citizens had reason to fear restrictions on any nearby lands.<sup>15</sup> Parkin-

<sup>12</sup>Zion and Bryce Canyon national parks were among the smallest of the "monumental" national parks, Zion being about one-tenth the size of Yosemite. To ensure the status of the parks and to protect them from being labeled in any way inferior to the best parks in the system, it was important to make them as substantive as possible. See Rothman, "Second-class Sites," and Alfred Runte, *The National Parks: The American Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), pp. 33-48.

<sup>13</sup>Allen, October 5, 1931, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

<sup>14</sup>See *National Park Service Report for 1919-1920* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1920), p. 270; and *National Park Service Report for 1929-30* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930), p. 144.

<sup>15</sup>Allen to Albright, October 5, 1931, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

son's audience was noticeably more sympathetic to reminders of previous NPS extension attempts than the Chamber of Commerce in Cedar City had been. The vote in Parowan was unanimously against the establishment of any kind of NPS park at Cedar Breaks.

The situation was deadlocked along strict constituency lines, an advantage for the Forest Service. Each side had a strong case, and vocal supporters stood ready to try to influence the political process. The local NPS constituency, the business community, could not risk the ire of the USFS constituency—the area livestock industry—and they proceeded timidly.

Forest Service arguments countered the Park Service's structural advantage very well. Although the clearly defined NPS acquisition effort at Cedar Breaks did not pose a real threat, the implications of such a transfer frightened local livestock interests. As long as the Forest Service could convince area residents that Cedar Breaks was only a prelude to further acquisition attempts, NPS claims of merit went unheard.

The open forums in Cedar City and Parowan suited the Forest Service well. The agency made its case in front of people who were dependent upon it and would be affected by a change in administration. Foresters also had an opportunity to refute the dramatic claims of the Park Service. Seeing themselves as the advocates of local interests in the southern Utah area, USFS officials used public meetings to marshal their constituency in an effort to counteract the Park Service's structural advantage.

Horace Albright took a dim view of Danna Parkinson's way of presenting Park Service intentions, for he believed it obscured the issues at stake. "In other words," Albright wrote Allen on October 23, 1931, "Mr. Parkinson accused us of being 'inchers' and evidently got away with the statement."<sup>16</sup> He complained to the chief forester, Maj. Robert Y. Stuart, who told Albright that he was satisfied with the debates. The two agencies were no longer discussing the merits of Cedar Breaks as a Park Service site; they were debating the implications of the transfer upon future agency behavior.

Albright was angry at the turn of events, for the Park Service had relinquished an advantage when his representatives lost control of the debate and the issues discussed. He could not afford to let the USFS put the Park Service on the defensive with the people of southern Utah.

<sup>16</sup>Albright to Allen, October 23, 1931, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

His agency had too much at stake in the region. His complaint about the "inchers" was an effort to counteract the turn of events, but he knew he had lost the initial skirmish. Cedar Breaks would not be established as a segregated section of either Bryce Canyon or Zion national parks in 1931. "I think we had better let the project go over for this session of Congress,"<sup>17</sup> Albright wrote David H. Madsen, NPS supervisor of wildlife resources, on January 18, 1932. The Forest Service had broadened the issue successfully, and the usual Park Service responses had failed to win support.

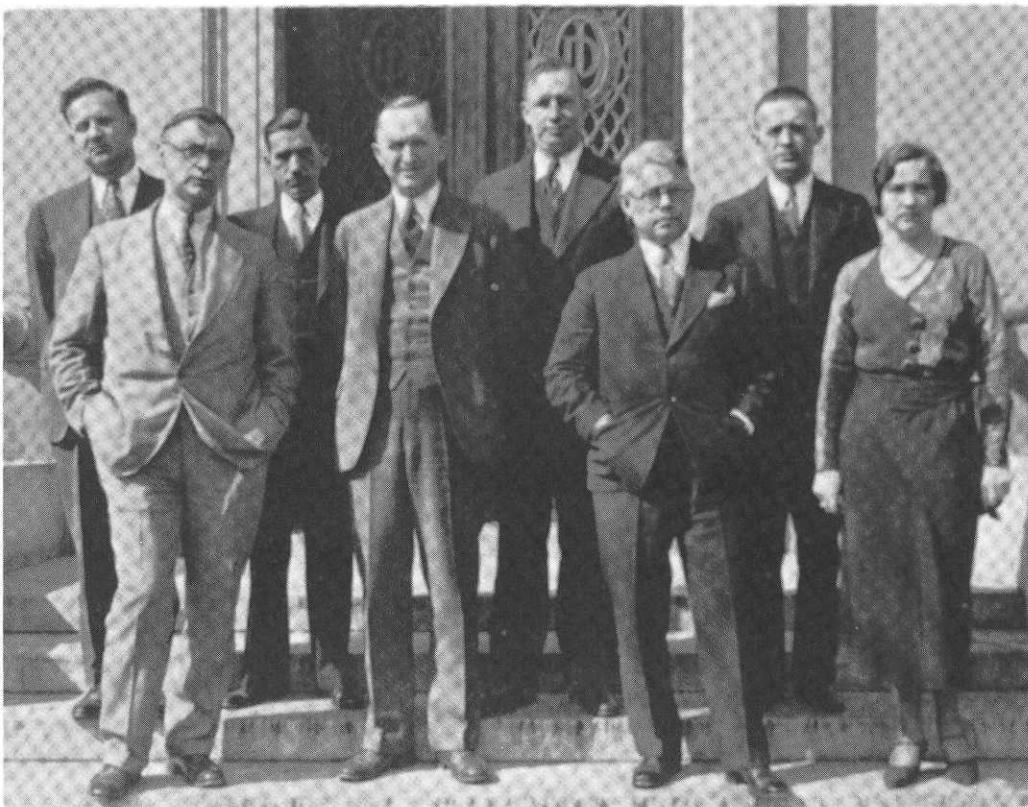
Yet Cedar Breaks became something of crusade for Albright, and in typical National Park Service fashion, he chose to table the project until a more favorable time. When he felt that he could define the entire range of issues the two agencies would discuss, then Albright would reinstitute acquisition plans. The Forest Service had effectively blunted only the first attack.

### III

Under Horace Albright the NPS rarely gave up all together, and Cedar Breaks was no exception. As was often the case, the Park Service had the advantage of a clearly defined objective. Albright had only to make sure that when the two agencies discussed the Cedar Breaks transfer again that advantage applied and not the transfer's implications. He kept Cedar Breaks in the active consideration file and sent Roger Toll, the superintendent of Yellowstone National Park and the primary NPS inspector of proposals in the West, to evaluate the situation.

The acquisition effort appeared to be proceeding, but Albright had not foreseen anyone in the Park Service disagreeing with him. Toll reported in an October 31, 1932, letter to Albright that the Cedar Breaks area was not suitable for park purposes. The formations were similar to Bryce Canyons and, in comparison, noticeably inferior. Allen, who had become the superintendent of Hot Springs National Park in the interim, concurred. Park Service sentiment in favor of acquiring Cedar Breaks had simply dried up. Allen's perspective on the proposal had changed with his distance from the project. He offered the opinion that "the value of the Cedar Breaks is not nearly great enough to justify the National Park Service entering in a bitter fight for

<sup>17</sup>Albright to David H. Madsen, January 18, 1932, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.



*Key Park Service staff, 1932, some of whom pushed to acquire Cedar Breaks—left to right: Conrad L. Wirth, associate director Arno B. Cammerer, R. Holmes, director Horace M. Albright, education head Harold C. Bryant, Arthur E. Demaray, attorney George A. Moskey, and Isabelle F. Story. Courtesy of the National Park Service.*

its control.”<sup>18</sup> His successor at Zion and Bryce Canyon, P. P. Patraw, agreed. On November 4 Patraw wrote Albright that Cedar Breaks “offers nothing that the Bryce Canyon National Park does not contain except a greater thickness of the pink cliff formations.”<sup>19</sup> Dr. Harold C. Bryant, the head of the National Park Service’s dynamic new Educational Division, also thought the area inappropriate as did NPS attorney George A. Moskey.

To Albright, all this was immaterial, and he carried the effort forward, seeing the Cedar Breaks question as a part of a much larger picture. On Patraw’s letter he wrote: “It doesn’t matter if it is inferior. It is different and therefor o.k. for addition to either Zion or Bryce.”<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup>Allen to Albright, November 11, 1932, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

<sup>19</sup>P. P. Patraw to Albright, November 4, 1932, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

<sup>20</sup>Albright handwritten memo, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

This was NPS policy dictated from the top. The objections of his field staff were of little consequence when Albright made up his mind. He wanted Cedar Breaks, and, like Mather before him, he zealously pursued what he wanted; however, without the support of residents in the southern Utah area and with the field representatives in his agency unsympathetic, Albright needed a new plan of attack.

From another perspective, Cedar Breaks became more than just another proposed addition. Albright thought it important to win any skirmish with the Forest Service, particularly in the strategically important southern Utah region. USFS representatives had succeeded in calling Park Service motive and intent into question, and its officials had skillfully negated the advantages that Mather had spent a decade building. To preserve its position the NPS needed to make a counter-move, or its failure at Cedar Breaks might establish a basis for stronger resistance to future NPS proposals. Albright's effectiveness as a leader was also being challenged, and from his perspective dangerous precedents were being set. Valuable as a park or not, Cedar Breaks came to represent dominance over the Forest Service. Albright felt slandered by the USFS, and the only adequate redress was acquisition of the site. But first he had to position himself to exploit the inherent advantage of his agency.

The one Forest Service official who had not yet made up his mind on the Cedar Breaks transfer was chief forester Robert Stuart. Without the support of the field representatives of either agency, Albright began high-level communications with him. Albright knew that Stuart had previously been "favorably disposed to consider a unit of reasonable size, embracing the major natural features and such surrounding land as was essential to its best use and enjoyment by the public," and he tried to convince him to approve a transfer.<sup>21</sup>

Stuart would not, however, accede to Albright's request for a segregated unit of a national park. The restrictive, preservationist nature of national parks precluded his acceptance of a park extension proposition. Albright knew he was asking for more than the situation warranted and withdrew in order to restructure his proposal to make it more palatable.

Albright chose not to back down, though, and again proposed that the Forest Service give up a small area as a segregated addition to either national park. Stuart allowed that the primary value of the area

<sup>21</sup>Stuart to Albright, March 3, 1932, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA. See also Twight, *Organizational Values*, p. 113, 133 *passim*.

in question was scenic, but argued that Cedar Breaks "does not appear to be unique or supreme within its class. Compared to the Bryce Canyon, Zion Park, or the Grand Canyon . . . its natural and social values would seem distinctly subordinate."<sup>22</sup> Therefore, a park addition was out of the question.

Stuart offered to join Albright in recommending its proclamation as a national monument, stipulating that the Forest Service retain administrative jurisdiction under the terms of the Antiquities Act of 1906. The Cedar Breaks were, in Stuart's estimation, a series of vistas to be viewed by the public at a distance. "There is little in the formation," he wrote, "to afford the bases [sic] for extended visits or examinations by the . . . public."<sup>23</sup> Visitors posed no threat to the features, and Stuart found little reason for "intensive or continuous policing" of the site. "If the several points of observation are neatly maintained, provided with adequate parking facilities, water supplies, sanitary facilities and information relative to the formations, the origins etc.," the needs of the public would be well served. Because the area was surrounded by national forest land, USFS administration of the monument was the "most appropriate, efficient and economical procedure."<sup>24</sup>

By suggesting a national monument, Stuart thought he had outmaneuvered Albright. The Antiquities Act offered a compromise position, for under its provisions the Forest Service had fifteen other national monuments it administered on national forest land.<sup>25</sup> National monuments were not as exclusive as national parks; even the Park Service allowed limited commercial use of natural resources in many of its monuments.<sup>26</sup> Reserving Cedar Breaks did not require adding it to a national park; and with Stuart suggesting protection of the pink cliff formations Albright could no longer claim the lands were inappropriately managed.

<sup>22</sup>Stuart to Albright, February 8, 1933, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>The Antiquities Act of 1906 was hastily drawn up and, in order to avoid interagency conflict, left each bureau with administrative responsibility for land which had previously been under its jurisdiction. This created numerous problems and was resolved, to the dissatisfaction of the USFS, by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933. See Rothman, "Protected by a Gold Fence," pp. 1-150.

<sup>26</sup>Commercial use of natural resources in national monuments was permitted in some cases. Under NPS management this usually occurred when the place was so remote that tourists were unlikely. Mukuntuweap (Zion) and Natural Bridges were two national monuments in Utah where commercial use of resources persisted into the 1920s. Mining claims also abounded, with Death Valley National Monument, established in 1933, as a primary example. See Rothman, "Protected by a Gold Fence," pp. 86-117.

If Albright agreed to his proposal, Stuart would have jurisdiction over the new monument, the effort to add to the national parks would be thwarted, and no land would be transferred between the agencies. It looked as if the Forest Service would be able to consolidate its position, protect its domain, and develop a semi-permanent defense against future acquisition attempts.

Stuart, however, had unwittingly given Albright a way to rekindle the enthusiasm of his own staff for the Cedar Breaks project. Defining recreational policy had been a point of contention between the two agencies throughout the 1920s. The Park Service catered to the affluent and middle-class motor tourists, while the Forest Service during the 1920s shed its traditional distaste for recreation and began to develop recreational programs as well as an embryonic wilderness policy that culminated in the formalization of the L-20 regulations for primitive area management in 1929.<sup>27</sup> Foresters could see that they needed a response to the Park Service, and they concentrated their efforts in places like southern Utah. Region 4, which contained the Dixie National Forest, had an auto recreation program that dated back to the early 1920s.

To help with the onslaught of visitors the national park system experienced during the 1920s, the NPS had started an Educational Division in 1929 to provide information for tourists. It soon became the focus of agency development efforts, and its leaders played an important role within the agency. When Stuart suggested that the Forest Service could serve the NPS clientele, he hit an exposed nerve with Albright and Dr. Harold C. Bryant, the head of the Educational Division, and the NPS push to acquire Cedar Breaks started anew. Now it was NPS officials who felt their constituency threatened.

Albright responded to Stuart on February 20, 1933, outlining his plans for the park in greater detail. He envisioned only a small NPS presence at Cedar Breaks. The visiting public already thought the Park Service administered the site, Albright contended, and withholding the transfer "would seem to me to be simply continuing into the future an opportunity for discord between the two bureaus and for misunderstanding on the part of the visiting public as to the fundamental activities of the two organizations."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup>Twight, *Organizational Values*, pp. 10-14; Harold K. Steen, *The U.S. Forest Service: A History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), pp. 152-61, 209; Sally K. Fairfax and Samuel T. Dana, *Forest and Range Policy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980) pp. 131-34, 155-57.

<sup>28</sup>Albright to Stuart, February 20, 1933, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

Having convinced Stuart to accede to the Park Service view of the worth of Cedar Breaks, Albright now had only to make the case that the NPS was better prepared to manage such a natural feature. In effect, the silver-tongued Albright had redefined the conflict so that future Park Service acquisition efforts in the region played no part in the current discussions, thereby placing limits on the Forest Service response to the takeover attempt.

Instead of capitulating, Stuart explored other options. He wrote Albright that the Forest Service did not see the need for the intensive service that the NPS wished to provide and asserted that the Forest Service had plans of its own for the region. To counter the Park Service desire to interpret the site, Stuart again asked regional forester Richard Rutledge for his views. Ardently against the transfer from the beginning, Rutledge elaborated on his earlier work on recreation policy in Region 4 of the Forest Service. He devised a plan to include Cedar Breaks among a collection of points of interest located in the Dixie National Forest and drew up a development proposal that focused on recreational management of Cedar Breaks in conjunction with a number of nearby natural features.

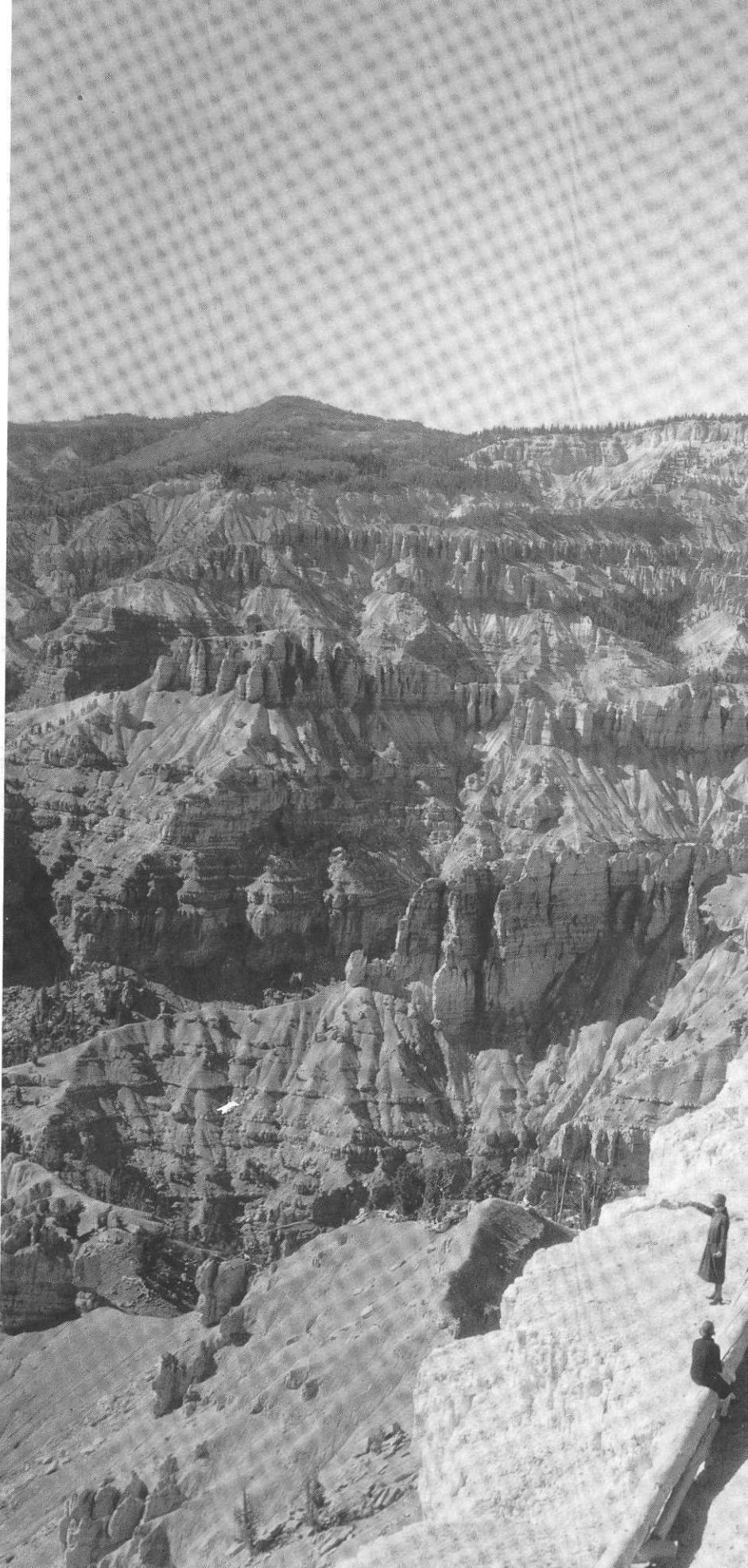
In a pragmatic move, the Forest Service suspended its intraagency controversy over the recreation issue and confronted its adversaries. Under Rutledge's proposal the USFS could offer essentially the same service as the NPS and at a lower cost to the taxpayer. Stuart sent the plans to Albright and stuck to his position.

The idea of an established Forest Service recreational program so threatened the Park Service that its officials jumped to support their director. The field staff believed that the USFS was trying to seduce their constituency. The comparative land values in question were obscured by the NPS view of its public image and its desire to protect its established position.

Under NPS administration the Educational Division would have played an important role in the development of Cedar Breaks, but Forest Service management would preclude that eventuality. Associate director Arno B. Cammerer pointed this out to Harold Bryant with a note attached to the Forest Service plan: "Bryant You are out of business under this plan of thought and management."<sup>29</sup> Despite his earlier reservations, Bryant quickly became an advocate of the Cedar

<sup>29</sup>Arno B. Cammerer handwritten memo on Stuart to Albright, March 3, 1932, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

*Tourists at Cedar  
Breaks, 1920s.  
Union Pacific  
photograph in  
USHS collections.*





Breaks project. Others within the NPS followed, until Albright had the support he needed. No longer was the Cedar Breaks transfer being debated on the merits of the scenery and the commercial value of the resources in the area; it had degenerated into a battle over agency constituency.

Steve Mather's programs had made visitor service the primary responsibility of the NPS during the 1920s and early 1930s. Park Service officials recognized this, for they clearly articulated their objectives and established standards that protected their existence as an agency. If the Forest Service could retain control of a site the Park Service coveted and implement programs similar to those of the NPS, the Park Service itself might, in the long run, become expendable.

An exasperated Albright had to protect his agency's position. He could not allow the USFS even the smallest opportunity to encroach upon the NPS constituency. "It appears," he wrote Stuart on April 4, 1933, "the Forest Service is planning to duplicate the type of educational work undertaken by the Park Service."<sup>30</sup> Albright felt that only one agency should take responsibility for educational practices in the region, and the NPS already had an extensive program in Bryce Canyon and Zion national parks.

Stuart had backed his agency into a corner, for the Forest Service had comparatively little experience with NPS-style educational practices. "If the Cedar Breaks area is most valuable to the public because of timber or grazing resources, administration would naturally come under the Forest Service," Albright wrote. "However, this area is scenic rather than industrially useful . . . and the public [should be] afforded a unified educational service such as the Park Service is equipped to supply."<sup>31</sup> After earlier agreeing that the primary value of the site was scenic, Stuart was hard pressed to disagree.

Between 1931 and 1933 Albright turned the Cedar Breaks situation around by exploiting the structural advantages the Park Service enjoyed, and the result was the establishment of Cedar Breaks National Monument. He limited the scope of the discussion to favor his agency, demonstrated that Park Service contentions about Cedar Breaks were indisputable, pressured Stuart into a blunder that allowed Albright to regain support within his own agency, and subtly defined the limits of USFS management. Stuart agreed to the transfer over the objections of

<sup>30</sup>Albright to Stuart, April 4, 1933, Cedar Breaks File 12-5, NA.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

his field staff in May 1933, and as Albright prepared to leave the NPS during the summer of 1933 the project progressed. On August 22, 1933, Albright received a belated "going-away" present. President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed the Cedar Breaks National Monument to be administered by the National Park Service.<sup>32</sup>

Roosevelt's Executive Order 6166, which reorganized the entire federal bureaucracy and changed the balance of power in the NPS-USFS relationship, came into effect on August 10, 1933. Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes and the National Park Service interpreted the order as transferring the fifteen Forest Service national monuments to the NPS. Cedar Breaks was a small and unimportant site compared to the issues surrounding reorganization. With Harold Ickes controlling the budget of the various national relief and public works programs, he and the NPS enjoyed an even greater advantage in their battles with the Forest Service; and during Roosevelt's first term that advantage persisted.

On its merits as a scenic or scientific site alone, Cedar Breaks might well have remained an undesignated part of the Dixie National Forest. Allegiance to Mather's long-term goals led the NPS to seek its acquisition. Albright, his successor, used the structural advantages interagency conflict presented him, and his persistence and charismatic personal style saw the project through to fruition.

With interlocking constituencies, missions, and often adjacent lands, the Park Service and Forest Service were bound to have disputes. The nature of these conflicts, not the nature of the participants, put the Forest Service at a constant disadvantage; with Horace Albright at its helm, poised to exploit any opening, the Park Service emerged with more of what it wanted than did its rival.

<sup>32</sup>Executive Proclamation No. 2054, August 22, 1933, U.S., Statutes at Large, 48 Stat 1705.