History of Scotts Bluff National Monument

EARL R. HARRIS

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Published by Oregon Trail Museum Association
1962
Gering, Nebraska



Foreword

This history of Scotts Bluff National Monument helps to fulfill a project of the National Parks Service, namely, to complete an "administrative" history of each of the areas under its jurisdiction. Unlike most of the other histories, this one is being published and made available to the public.

Space and publication costs necessitate a compact format and condensation of materials, omitting much information of less vital importance. The author wishes to thank all of those people who gave assistance in various ways in helping to prepare this monograph, and especially to the Oregon Trail Museum Association who financed its publication.

This history supplements Merrill J. Mattes' handbook, SCOTTS BLUFF NATIONAL MONUMENT, NEBRASKA, published in 1958 by the Government Printing Office, commencing where that story ends and bringing it to present times.

History of Scotts Bluff National Monument

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Geographical Setting

Scotts Bluff National Monument is located in Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska, about 20 miles east of the Wyoming state line, in what is commonly called the "Panhandle of Nebraska." The Monument itself contains some 3,450 acres of land of which about 2,200 acres are federally owned. The three nearest towns are: Gering, 3 miles east of the headquarters area; the city of Scottsbluff, 5 miles northeast from the Monument; and Mitchell, Nebraska, some 10 miles to the northwest. State Highway 92 intersects the Monument and connects with U. S. 26, 20 miles to the east; with State Highway 29 in Gering; and again at an intersection some 3 miles north of headquarters.

The North Platte River flows in a southeasterly direction through western Nebraska to a junction with the South Platte at North Platte, Nebraska, (175 miles east of the Monument). It was along this famous river route to the western mountains that the endless caravans of fur trappers, emigrants, and pioneers made their way west seeking homes and riches. The Monument borders this river on the south bank and encompasses the famous bluff, which bears the name of one of the more unfortunate "mountain men," Hiram Scott.

Along the south bank of the North Platte River for 100 miles in western Nebraska, is a long ridge of bluffs. These bluffs, with some lesser hills to the north, form the North Platte Valley. Scotts Bluff stands apart from these bluffs to form one of the dominant features of this valley. Soil in the valley is rich and, with the aid of irrigation from the river, produces excellent crops of corn, potatoes, beans, sugar beets, and other staples. Where irrigation water cannot reach, the raising of cattle and sheep is important.

The climate of the area is semi-arid, with cold winters, relatively hot summers, and the windy conditions of the Great Plains.

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Prehistory of the Area

The geology of the main bluff shows features of both the Miocene and Oligocene epochs. The upper third of the bluff consists of a formation of sandstone known as the Arikaree formation. Concretions located in this softer sandstone have resisted erosion and have left the bluff standing while the elements reduced the land around it.

The lower two-thirds of the bluff are of the Oligocene Epoch. The principal formation in this section is Brule clay. This material is very soft and sand-like, submitting rapidly to erosion. When this clay is unprotected by more durable formations, erosion has produced a pattern of irregular gullies known as "badlands". Thin layers of volcanic ash and very soft sandstone are interspersed within the walls of the bluff. "One of the most interesting physiographic features of the Northern Great Plains is the badland topography so extensively developed in the Big Badlands of South Dakota and Northwestern Nebraska as well as in numerous smaller areas such as that developed at the base of Scotts Bluff."[1]

Paleontology is very rich in Scotts Bluff National Monument, as it is in this general area of the Great Plains region. Fossil remains found in the Brule clay formations are of great interest. Fur traders and pioneers of over 100 years ago noticed these remains. The first scientific interest was aroused in 1847 when a fur trader showed the jawbone

of a Titanothere to Dr. Hiram Prout of St. Louis. Common fossils found in the Scotts Bluff area are giant turtles, Oreodonts (pig-like animals), ancient rhinoceroses, saber-toothed tigers, dogs, deer, camels, and rodents.[2]

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Prehistoric Man

Little is known about the activities of prehistoric man around Scotts Bluff even though several important sites have been found. Archeologists have found evidence of primitive Indian life of the early lithic period of 5,000 years ago. Several occupation sites have been uncovered at nearby locations such as Signal Butte, Scotts Bluff Bison Quarry, Spanish Diggings, Ash Hollow Cave, and the Scotts Bluff Potato Cellar. Signal Butte is, perhaps, the most famous of these sites being investigated by scientists of the Smithsonian Institution and the University of Nebraska. Three levels of materials were found here revealing early mankind in western Nebraska. The oldest of these dates back 5,000 years. The second, or middle, level reveals life of the Pre-Woodland period, 1,500 years ago. The last, or uppermost, level has produced artifacts of the "Ceramic Period" of 250 years ago.

The Scotts Bluff Bison Quarry, located near Signal Butte, has revealed signs of ancient hunters who lived some 10,000 years ago. Other caves and excavations nearby have produced materials of burial sites of early Indian dwellers.[3]

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The Coming of the White Man

It is not known when the first white men saw western Nebraska. It is now known that the Spanish explorer, Coronado, did not penetrate beyond central Kansas during his explorations in 1541. Such French explorers as Nicolet and Radison were in the upper Mississippi region in the mid-seventeenth century. The first real evidence of white man in western Nebraska is found in 1720 when a group of Spanish explorers under General Pedro de Villasur was massacred at the forks of the Platte River.[4]

The Platte river received its name from the French Mallet brothers who, with six others, crossed Nebraska from north to south in 1739. The word "platte" is a translation from the Otc, meaning "shallow".[5] Other trappers of European extraction undoubtedly wandered through the area during the years before the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from Napoleonic France in 1803. After this date, American explorers Lewis and Clark, Pike, and others traversed the region to the north and south of Nebraska and left recorded evidence of their journeys. Major Stephen H. Long, in 1820, was the first official Government explorer to use the "Platte River Route," going up the South Platte to the Colorado Rockies.[6]

In 1810, John Jacob Astor organized the Pacific Fur Company. In 1811 he sent two parties to the Oregon country to establish trading posts and claim the area for the United States. One group went by sea around Cape Horn and established Astoria, the first American fur trading post on the Pacific. The second group, under Wilson Price, went up the Missouri River and then overland. The following year, seven men, the Stuart party, carried dispatches overland to Astor. They traveled up the Snake River, crossed the Continental Divide near South Pass, and down the Sweetwater. The party lost their horses to some raiding Indians and were compelled to continue on for 2,000 miles on foot. They trudged down the North Platte River with most of their gear on the back of a poor old horse obtained from some friendly Snake Indians. These are the first known white men to see Scotts Bluff.[7] Ironically enough, they passed the famous landmark on Christmas Day, 1812, on the north bank of the river, subsequently returning to the vicinity of present Torrington, Wyoming, to spend the winter. After delays, hardships, and near-starvation, they reached St. Louis on April 30, 1813.

Although Stuart and his party discovered an important river route to the western mountains, the significance of his findings were not generally understood at the time. The rediscovery of this corridor was left to a group of General Ashley's fur traders who passed by the bluff in 1824. During the decade following Stuart's eastward journey, most of the

fur trading activity was focused on the upper Missouri. Indian troubles on the upper Missouri, especially with the Ree, Blackfoot, and Gros Ventre, caused Ashley's fur company to turn its attention to the Rocky Mountain region south of the hostile Indian settlements. Among the employees of Ashley at this time were such famous men as Jim Bridger, Jebediah Smith, William Sublette, Thomas Fitzpatrick, and Hiram Scott.

It was at this time that the annual rendezvous system was initiated. In the summer of 1825, rather than build expensive forts to protect his interests, Ashley had his men meet a caravan from the east to transport the year's take of pelts to market. These meetings, which continued until 1840, were responsible for the opening of the Platte River route, being used by the caravans of supplies on their way to the designated rendezvous spot and return with the beaver pelts.

It was during this period that Scotts Bluff received its name. One of the mountain men, Hiram Scott, returning



Early view of "Scott's Spring." Although legend states that Scott died at this spring, there is no historical evidence to prove this. Spring is now piped for easy use by visitors.

to St. Louis in the fall of 1828, somehow became stranded among the bluffs on the south bank of the North Platte river in western Nebraska. Circumstances of his death are not known and many legends and traditional accounts of it have clouded the facts even more. It is thought that he was abandoned to his fate by his companions and left to die somewhere in the general vicinity of these bluffs. Washington Irving's account of the incident, as related in his stories of Captain Bonneville's adventures in the west, is probably the most famous and often quoted version:

". . . encamped amid high and beetling cliffs of indurated clay and sandstone, bearing the semblence of towers, castles, churches and fortified cities. At a distance it was scarcely possible to persuade one's self that the works of art were not mingled with these fantastic freaks of nature. They have received the name of Scott's Bluffs from a melancholy circumstance. A number of years since, a party were descending the upper part of the river in canoes, when their frail barks were overturned and all their powder spoiled. Their rifles being thus rendered useless, they were unable to procure food by hunting and had to depend upon roots and wild fruits for subsistance. After suffering extremely from hunger, they arrived at Laramie's Fork, a small tributary of the north branch of the Nebraska, about sixty miles above the cliffs just mentioned. Here one of the party, by the name of Scott, was taken ill; and his companions came to a halt until he should recover health and strength sufficient to proceed. While they were searching round in quest of edible roots they discovered a fresh trail of white men, who had evidently but recently preceded them. What was to be done? By a forced march they might overtake this party, and thus be able to reach the settlements in safety. Should they linger they might all perish of famine and exhaustion. Scott, however, was incapable of moving; they were too feeble to aid him forward, and dreaded that such a clog would prevent their coming up with the advance party. They determined,therefore to abandon him to his fate. Accord-

ingly, under pretence of seeking food, and such simples as might be efficacious in his malady, they deserted him and hastened forward upon the trail. They succeeded in overtaking the party of which they were in quest, but concealed their faithless desertion of Scott; alleging that he had died of disease.

On the ensuing summer, these very individuals visiting these parts in company with others, came suddenly upon the bleached bones and grinning skull of a human skeleton, which by certain signs they recognized for the remains of Scott. This was sixty long miles from the place where they had abandoned him; and it appeared that the wretched man had crawled that immense distance before death had put an end to his miseries. The wild and picturesque bluffs in the neighborhood of his lonely grave have ever since borne his name.[8]

It should be remembered, however, that this account is only one of many and its validity is debatable. Captain Bonneville passed through the area four years after the tragedy, in June, 1832. The name "Scotts Bluffs" or "Scott's Bluffs," generally applied to all of the bluffs in the vicinity of the present Monument, remained until the advent of ranching and homesteaders in the 1870's and 1880's, after which time the connotation was reserved for the single promontory which now bears the name, "Scotts Bluff".

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Migration to the West

Following the opening or rediscovery of the Platte River route to the west by the fur traders and mountain men of the 1820's and 1830's, it was natural that other parties should use this same route to find their way to the newly opened Oregon country, to the gold fields of California, and to a religious haven in Utah.

In the early 1830's, various parties of missionaries traveled over the old traders' road to the western mountains and on to the Pacific coast. Jason and Daniel Lee were the first to use the trail and were soon followed by other mission-

aries, Samuel Parker, Marcus Whitman, Henry Spalding, and William Gray. Elizabeth Spalding and Narcissa Whitman, who traveled west with their husbands in 1836, were the first white women to see Scotts Bluff.[9]

John Ball is credited with the first Oregon secular settlement in 1832. Others followed, but not until 1841 did a large covered wagon train make the entire route. The mass migration began in 1843 when over 1,000 people started for the great northwestern country in May. The peak year of travel was evidently 1852 when some 50,000 emigrants passed through Mitchell Pass. Most of these were on their way to California as part of the great Gold Rush. Travel on the Oregon Trail continued until 1869 when the country was linked by the Union Pacific railroad, up the Lodgepole Route, 50 miles to the south of Scotts Bluff.

While the Oregon-California Trail lay on the south side of the North Platte River, the Mormons used the north side. "In the spring of 1847 the Mormon pioneers, 144 strong under Brigham Young, traveled to their promised land, Great Salt Lake Valley in Utah."[10] Another 4,000 Mormons passed over the trail in 1848. Scotts Bluff could easily be seen by these religious emigrants from the north bank and many mentioned the famous landmark in their journals.

Until about 1851, the pioneers used Robidoux Pass, located nine miles southwest of the National Monument. Travel between Scotts Bluff and the river was impossible due to eroded gullies and badlands. This pass was named for a trader who had built a blacksmith shop and trading post there. Facts concerning Robidoux and his activities in the area are vague, but research indicates that he was either the eldest son of Joseph Robidoux, founder of St. Joseph, Missouri, or his uncle, Antoine. His trading post was frequently mentioned by pioneer journalists from 1849 until 1851. He moved his establishment to Carter Canyon, about a mile southeast of the original location in 1851. Here he stayed until about the fall of 1852.[11]

The American Fur Trading Company set up a trading post at Robidoux Pass in 1849 after they had sold their post

at Fort Laramie to the United States Government. They later moved from Robidoux Pass to a site eight miles south and east of the Monument at Helvas Canyon. Little is known about this establishment except that it did not last long. It was generally known as Fort John, or "Fort John, Scott's Bluffs." It was off the main trail and became farther removed when a new route to the north through the bluffs via present Mitchell Pass was developed in 1850.[12] The Monument headquarters and the Oregon Trail Museum are situated near Mitchell Pass.

Another establishment of importance to Scotts Bluff was Fort Mitchell. It was built in 1864 to protect travel along this section of the Oregon Trail during a period of Indian unrest. Fort Mitchell was only a small secondary outpost of Fort Laramie, some 55 miles to the west. The post was abandoned about 1867 when immediate threat to emigrants seemed to have decreased.[13]

Besides the pioneer wagon trains passing through Mitchell Pass, a number of other uses were made of the trail. The Pony Express used this section of the trail from April 1860, until its last run in October, 1861. Nearby Pony Express stations included one at Chimney Rock, 23 miles east of Scotts Bluff; Ficklin Springs, about 9 miles east; the Scotts Bluff station, 3 miles west of Mitchell Pass; and Horse Creek, about 18 miles to the west.

One of the causes of failure for the Pony Express was the advent of the transcontinental telegraph line, established and in use by October, 1861. Russell, Majors and Waddell, founders of the Pony Express, then turned their interests to the Overland Mail Company from whom they obtained a subcontract to operate a mail and passenger service over what was known as the "Central Route." In 1861-1862, there was stage service up the Platte route. This activity did not last long due to Indian troubles in the area and the route was moved to the south, up the Lodgepole route.[14]

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Settlement Period

After the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, the Oregon-California Trail ceased to exist as a migra-

tion route to the Pacific. After gold was discovered in the Black Hills of South Dakota in 1874, a gold rush began. There were two main trails into the Hills from the south, but neither passed by Scotts Bluff. One of these started from Cheyenne, Wyoming, and passed through Fort Laramie. The other, and perhaps the most used, was the Sidney-Deadwood route. A bridge across the North Platte at Camp Clark, near present Bridgeport, saved the gold seekers time from the railroad junction at Sidney.

Ranchers moved in to the North Platte Valley around 1870, and by 1872, some 60,000 head of cattle were located on Horse Creek, about 20 miles west of Scotts Bluff.[15] From this time until 1886, the cattle industry flourished in the valley. Inflation of the cattle market, overstocking, overgrazing, and the disastrous winter of 1885-86 caused the cattle industry to suffer greatly and it was not long before ranching was of secondary importance in the vicinity of Scotts Bluff. Homesteaders moved into the North Platte Valley and staked out claims in the early 1880's. Towns soon made their appearance. Gering was platted in 1888 and became a center of farming and ranching activity. Other towns soon came into being.

The last large town to be platted was Scottsbluff. When the Burlington railroad reached up the valley on the north side of the river in 1900, a rush was started to build along this route across the river from Gering. Ten years later the Union Pacific railroad came up the south side of the river. The Burlington had a jump on the people on the south bank of the North Platte, however, and Scottsbluff steadily grew into the largest town in the County of Scotts Bluff. Today, Scottsbluff has a population about 14,000, while Gering, the county seat, has about 5,000.

During the late years of the nineteenth century, the old Oregon Trail was used mostly by the military between Forts Kearny and Laramie, for cattle drives, and by freighters, ranchers and farmers, and travelers between the communities which had sprung up along the south bank of the North Platte. The Oregon-California Trail soon became a part of history.



First interpretive marker was placed in Mitchell Pass by the State of Nebraska in 1912, seven years before the Monument was established.

The National Park Movement

"History has not recorded who originally conceived the idea of making Scotts Bluff a National Monument, but it turned out to be a good idea."[16] Although there was undoubtedly some talk about the area being of national importance before 1914, it was not until then that any real action was taken. On March 28 of that year, Senator G. M. Hitchcock wrote Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Adolph C. Miller, inquiring about making Scotts Bluff a National Mon-

ument. Senator Hitchcock noted that Mayor F. S. McCaffree of Scottsbluff was interested and thought a Monument should be set aside.[17]

Evidently, nothing came of this first inquiry since there are no records on the subject until 1916 when more interest was aroused. Early that year, Congressman Moses P. Kinkaid wrote to Stephen T. Mather, Assistant to the Secretary of the Interior, requesting information about Scotts Bluff and how it could be made a National Monument or a National Park.[18] At this time, H. J. Wisner, editor of the **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald**, also wrote Mather requesting the same information. These inquiries were duly answered, but the officials of the Interior Department seemed to have little or no interest in such a project at this time.

After the establishment of the National Park Service as an agency of the Department of the Interior, on August 25, 1916, more interest in this project was created all over Nebraska. Congressman Kinkaid did not waste much time in applying to Franklin K. Lane for a proclamation establishing the area as a National Park. This petition, dated October 5, 1916, was signed by Nebraska's Senators and Representatives in Washington, in duplicate, by G. M. Hitchcock, G. W. Norris, Charles Sloan, A. C. Shellenberger, C. O. Lobeck, and also by Dan V. Stephens.[19]

In March, 1918, another petition arrived on Director Mather's desk, signed by the Mayor of Gering, T. L. O'Harra; Dr. W. M. Faught, Mayor of Scottsbluff; H. T. Bowen, President of the Scottsbluff Commercial Club; A. B. Wood, President of the Gering Community club; and M. R. Humes, Secretary of the Scotts Bluuff Country Club.[20] A. B. Wood, editor of the **Gering Courier**, H. J. Wisner, editor of the **Scottsbluff** Daily Star-Herald and Will Maupin, editor of the **Gering Midwest** gave credit to the idea in their newspapers.

With all of this interest being shown, Secretary Lane directed Mr. Mather to investigate the feasibility of having Scotts Bluff incorporated into the National Park System. The Bureau of Land Management was asked to make studies of the matter. Memoranda circulated among the various em-

ployees in the National Park Service office in the Interior Building and from the various Assistant Secretaries. Robert L. Yard, National Parks Publicity Chief, informed Assistant Director Horace Albright that he was dubious about Scotts Bluff's importance.[21] Albright sent Mather a memorandum stating that he was against the establishment of Scotts Bluff as a Monument.[22] It should be noted that Mr. Albright later reversed his views and became a staunch supporter of Scotts Bluff, visiting it twice while he was Director, and was largely repsonsible for inaugurating the "era of development" in 1933.

In October, 1919, more office memoranda circulated. The following is significant:[23]

"October 26, 1919

Dear Mr. Mather:—

I don't know what has led you to thinking that Scotts Bluff should be a National Monument. It seems to me to be but a bump of land. Have you given it your personal attention? If you have, won't you let the Secretary have a memorandum as to just why you think it should be withdrawn.

Cordially yours,
(Sgd) Cotter,
Administrative Assistant."

To this Director Mather replied:[24]

"Memo. for Mr. Cotter:

Yes, I have personally considered this matter. It is true Scott's Bluff [sic] is only a bump of land, but it is some bump. It's historic associations, coupled with the fact that it is possible of development for the tourist and visitor, make it attractive for national monument purposes. The Old Oregon Trail, the pathway of the settlers of the Northwest, passing through Mitchell Pass within its limits, and the fact that the bluffs served as a landmark and rendezvous for the early pioneers make it . . . worthy of preservation . . . It is time that a few of these historic spots be properly marked and kept in

their original state. Without such forethought the march of economic development westwardly will before many years make such reservations impossible. I think the reservation of this monument will be a step ahead, and in the right direction.

(Sgd.) Stephen T. Mather,
Director"

Local support for the area as a National Park or Monument was given much publicity in the newspapers at this time. No records are known to show any opposition to the idea, although Congressman Kinkaid is said to have been criticized for not having the area established as a full fledged National Park, rather than a National Monument.[25]

By December, 1919, a proclamation had been drawn up and set before President Wilson. Since this proclamation had the support of the Director and the Department, there was no hesitancy shown on the President's part in signing it, and he duly signed on December 12. Although there are erroneous statements in the document, it is the original and legal instrument for withdrawing the area and preserving it for the benefit of future generations of Americans.[26]

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Custodian Maupin

After the proclamation was signed, it became necessary to appoint a custodian for the Monument. In these early days of the National Park Service, it was financially impossible to establish regular employees at each area and the custom was formed of appointing some responsible and interested local citizen to look after the Government's interests. In 1921, for example, the entire budget appropriated for all National Monuments was only $12,500. Today, Scotts Bluff alone enjoys an annual budget of about $40,000.

The first such custodian for Scotts Bluff was Willie Major Maupin, editor of the **Gering Midwest**, and staunch supporter for its establishment. His appointment took effect on April 10, 1920, at an annual salary of $12. "Will" Maupin had been in the newspaper business most of his life and had

Scotts Bluff National Monument Custodians



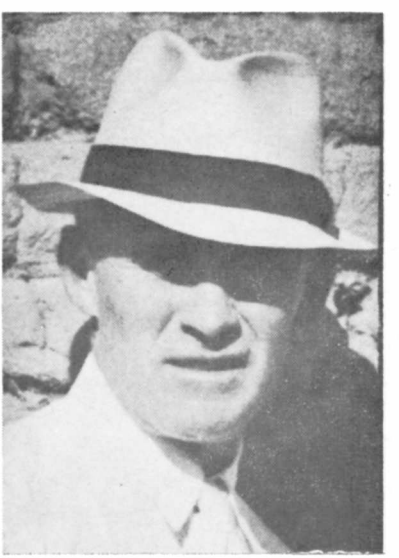
Will M. Maupin
1920-1924



A. N. Mathers
1925-1934



Harold J. Cook
1934-1935



Charles E. Randels
1935-1938

been State Labor Commissioner from 1909 to 1911, and Director of Publicity from 1919 to 1920. After leaving Gering in 1924, he served on such newspapers as the **Omaha Bee, Omaha World-Herald**, the **Commoner**, and the Clay Center, Nebraska, paper. He was one of the founders of the Nebraska State Federation of Labor. He died in Clay Center in 1948, at the age of 85, after serving on the State Railway Commission from 1934 to 1941.[27]

Mr. Maupin's nominal position as custodian did not prevent him from making recommendations to the Director for various improvements to the area. He proposed, for example, that a private corporation be formed to construct a road from Mitchell Pass to the summit of the bluff, that 25c admission be levied, and that an "amusement resort" consisting of a pavillion and cafe be erected there.[28] Acting Director Cammerer replied that there were no funds for such activity and that it was against National Park Service policy to permit such an undertaking.

Custodian Maupin was truly interested in the Monument and never ceased to recommend improvements. He sent the following letter to the Director.[29]

"September 15, 1920

Mr. Stephen Mather, Director,
National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Mather:

Shortly after my appointment as custodian, a party of Boy Scouts from Gering and Scottsbluff acting under my direction, greatly improved the pathway to the summit . . . Apart from this one thing there has been nothing done in the way of improvements.

(Sgd.) Will Maupin,
Custodian"

Again, on December 20, he wired the Washington Office:[30]

"Marauders cutting trees on Scottsbluff [sic] Monument grounds impossible for one man to patrol ask

permit to employ two men at six dollars a day each for next four or five days."

Acting Director Cammerer was able to comply with this request:[31]

"Can only authorize one patrol six dollars day not more than five days account lack of funds. Post warning in newspapers that vandals will be prosecuted."

Cammerer"

Even after he received authorization to spend a limited amount of funds for protection, Custodian Maupin could not hire his "patrolman" since a blanket of snow covered the area and the tree cutting ceased.

There is little doubt about Maupin's enthusiasm concerning his new duties. He evidently went to the Monument quite often during his tenure of office. His frequent correspondence with the Washington Office indicates this. Although Mr. Maupin did not entirely understand the various policies which apply to National Park Service administration, rules, and regulations, he was sympathetic with all directives and orders from the central headquarters, and quite often went about the task of making temporary improvements under his own initiative and expense.

In February, 1922, he wrote the Director a letter (he evidently did not know or understand the correct procedure of communications by memoranda and always sent letters or telegrams; the former were usually under the letterhead of the **Gering Midwest**), explaining the matter of his own expense of running the Monument, but that he was quite willing and able to do so. Despite receiving repeated denials of requests for funds for various matters, he seemed undisturbed and continued his requests during his tenure. He earnestly requested a regulation revolver, a holster, belt, and ammunition, a regulation rifle, a motorcycle, and a typewriter.[32] Again, the financial situation for National Monuments was such that these requests were denied, but he later received a badge and a pair of binoculars as substitutes.[33]

During the last days that Mr. Maupin served as Custodian, his own business in Gering began to fail. When he had the chance to sell his newspaper he accepted the offer and resigned his office as Custodian, effective July 1, 1924.

In spite of all these setbacks, Custodian Maupin did achieve some improvement. His report for 1921 indicates he was able to install "several" picnic tables near the foot of the original slanting trail to the summit on the east face. These were paid for by the Scottsbluff Commercial Club and perhaps by local donations, although existing records are not clear on this point. He did receive one allotment of $50 from Washington on April 2, 1923. This amount was finally approved, after strenuous efforts on his part, to improve the small picnic area referred to. With it he built one fireplace and repaired the tables already set up.

Mr. Maupin also granted one grazing permit to A. S. Bracken who had been using the Monument for several years. When the Monument was withdrawn from public use, it was necessary that Mr. Bracken be issued a temporary permit for grazing with the stipulation that all such grazing activities would cease within three years. Mr. Bracken's permit was valid from January 1, 1921, through December 31, 1921, for which he paid an $88 fee.[34] He made no effort to renew this permit and grazing stopped in the area until 1943 when the war effort required grazing on certain National Park lands.

Visitation records for the first five years of the Monument are almost nonexistent. Acting Director Arno B. Cammerer wired Maupin for his estimate for the year 1920, the first year of operation. The Custodian replied that some 2,500 people used the old foot trail and wooden ladder at the summit (placed there before the Monument was established) and that another 5,000 had picnicked on the "slopes" of the bluff between April 15 and October 15.[35]

After Mr. Maupin left Gering in July, 1924, the Monument was without a Custodian for over a year and there are no records for that period.

Custodian Mathers

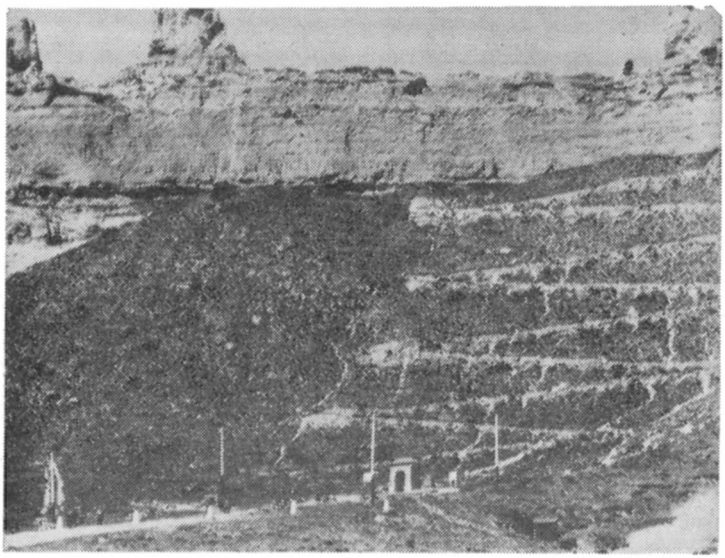
Director Mather had difficulty in finding a new Custodian after Will Maupin's departure. The position was nominal and few local men would agree to take on the responsibilities at a salary of $12 a year. However, in August, 1925, Nebraska Congressman Robert Simmons recommended to the Director, Mr. Albert N. Mathers as Custodian.[36]

Mr. Mathers, President of the Gering National Bank, accepted the position when notified by the Washington Office, and took office on September 4. He had been a resident of Nebraska most of his life, having been born at Nebraska City. When he died on April 18, 1951, at the age of 69, he was still President of the Gering bank.[37] He served as Custodian of Scotts Bluff until June 15, 1934, when he resigned to run for Congress.

Evidently the persistent recommendations and proposals of Mr. Maupin had made an impression in Washington. In June 1926, Custodian Mathers was surprised to receive $100 for new picnic tables and other accommodations at the small picnic area. The entire allotment for the Monument for fiscal 1927 amounted to $162. The remaining amount was for personal services (salary) and for sanitation and garbage disposal.[38]

With the $100, Mr. Mathers was able to have constructed one "double closet," two cement fireplaces, and 15 posts.[39] After much correspondence with the Washington Office, Mr. Mathers was also able to start plans on another project. This was the construction of a new trail on the east side of the bluff to replace the original slanting foot path. It was agreed that a total of $1,000 would be spent on this project. The National Park Service would match funds amounting to $500 to be raised by Mathers through donations, subscriptions and contributions. Actual direction of the work would be carried out by Park Service personnel.[40]

With this agreement, preliminary work commenced. Mr. Bert H. Burrell, civil engineer from Yellowstone National Park, arrived soon after the first of the fiscal year and spent about one month at the Monument surveying and staking out



"Scout Trail" was constructed by laborers in 1927 and often was called the "zigzag trail." The first picnic grounds were located at the foot of this trail.

the route of the new trail. It was decided at this time the best and easiest ascent could be made by zig-zagging the trail from the base of the bluff at the site of the picnic area to the point where the wooden ladder or stairway was located.[41] Another route could be taken by the hiker near the top of the trail by walking along a ledge on the west side of the projection known as "saddle rock"[42] and thence to the summit by means of another zig-zagging path.

Actual construction work was held up until Custodian Mathers could raise the stipulated $500. During the winter months of 1926-27, many organizations contributed to the project and citizens from all over the North Platte Valley sent in their pennies and dollars to help raise the necessary funds. Each contributor received a signed certificate giving him or her permission to use the new trail. This was merely an honorary permit since no fee was charged for using the trail.

By the end of April 1927, the $500 was rasied and the Government promptly matched this amount. Mr. Arthur

W. Burney, National Park Service Engineer who was at Yellowstone National Park at the time, left there on May 16 to take charge of construction.[43]

Many organizations and business firms had contributed to the project. The Gering and Fort Laramie Irrigation District donated explosives for use in blasting out rock along the route. The Boy Scouts of America, through the scout troops of Scottsbluff and Gering, contributed time and manpower to the job. Because of the cooperation of this organization in helping to raise funds the new trail was officially designated the "Scout Trail," although most people referred to it simply as the "zig-zag" trail.

In June 1927, Mr. Burrell returned to the area and inspected the work. He reported on June 18 that the trail was completed and in use.[44] The $1,000 had been spent—mostly for the payroll of laborers and tools and equipment. Both the **Gering Courier** and the **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald** sung their praises of the new trail.[45] Organizations began using the improved picnic grounds for meetings and outings. One of the first to do so was the National Editorial Association convention in June.

With all of these improvements, it seemed that even more were needed. Vandals took their toll of the picnic benches and tables and would-be auto "hill-climbers" would test the abilities of their "jalopies" by seeing how far up the new trail they could drive before they stalled or found the trail narrowed down to a point beyond which they could not go.[46]

Custodian Mathers attempted to remedy this situation by erecting signs at various points along the pathway. People taking short-cuts from one section of the trail to another and sliding down across the trail started erosion problems. One new large wooden sign proclaimed:

"READ THIS

FEDERAL LAW: HORSES OR MOTORCYCLES FORBIDDEN ON THIS TRAIL. KEEP ON THE PATH. ALL CUTTING ACROSS CORNERS, OR FROM PATH TO PATH, OR SLIDING, IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.

OFFENDERS WILL BE PERSECUTED [sic]. CASH REWARD PAID FOR NAMES OF ALL VIOLATORS. THE GOVERNMENT NATIONAL PARK SERVICE."

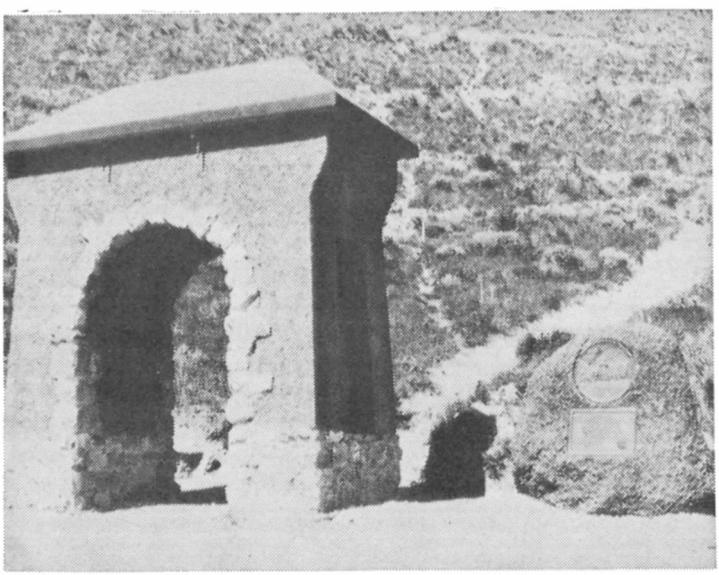
Custodian Mathers was ordered to change the wording to:[47]

"READ THIS

HORSES OR MOTORCYCLES FORBIDDEN ON THIS TRAIL. KEEP ON THE PATH. ALL CUTTING ACROSS CORNERS OR FROM PATH TO PATH, OR SLIDING, IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR"

Other improvements were made to this area during the years of 1928, 1930, and 1931. In August 1928, the cities of Scottsbluff and Gering cooperated in having a power line run into the picnic area and street lights were installed. The



Hiram Scott Memorial Arch and bronze plaque were located at the foot of the Scout Trail. Both were erected by the Katahdin Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, in 1930.



William Henry Jackson at dedication of the Hiram Scott Memorial Arch and bronze plaque at the foot of the Scout Trail, July 8, 1930.

local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1930 had a "Memorial Arch" erected at the foot of the new trail. A bronze plaque in memory of Hiram Scott was embedded in a granite boulder erected at the site. This was just to the north of the Memorial Arch while the wooden "Federal Law" sign was just to the south of the arch.

Custodian Mathers had a new interpretive sign made and placed at Mitchell Pass just a few feet away from the original granite marker erected there by the State of Nebraska in 1912. The new sign contained some misinformation but was a step ahead in explaining the significance of the area to the interested visitor. It read:

"MITCHELL PASS

BETWEEN 1830 AND 1865 MORE THAN TWO MILLION PEOPLE PASSED HERE, WESTWARD BOUND. ALONG THIS HISTORICAL OREGON TRAIL MORE THAN FORTY THOUSAND EMIGRANTS ARE BURIED. THIS PASS WAS A FAVORITE INDIAN AMBUSH. THE BLUFF WAS NAMED FOR CAPTAIN SCOTT

WHO DIED AT THE SPRING, ONE MILE NORTHEAST FROM HERE. FORT MITCHELL WAS LOCATED ONE-HALF MILE WEST AND TWO MILES NORTH FROM THIS PASS, AND FORT LARAMIE 52 MILES UP THE RIVER. THE OREGON TRAIL IS THE LONGEST IMMIGRATION TRAIL IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY.

SCOTTS BLUFF NATIONAL MONUMENT
A. N. MATHERS, CUSTODIAN

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR"

This sign remained in the pass until 1939 when it was replaced by a more accurate sign affixed to a pylon structure.

There was still some opposition to having Scotts Bluff as a National Monument in the late 1920's. The National Conference of State Parks proposed to the Director in 1928 that the National Park Service transfer Scotts Bluff to the State of Nebraska for the purpose of making it a State Park. There was some feeling that the Federal Government was not paying enough attention or expending adequate funds for some of the Monuments. National Parks seemed to be getting the lion's share of the appropriations.[48] There was still considerable local pressure to further develop Scotts Bluff and this, perhaps, had some hand in getting such a proposal through the Conference. Stephen T. Mather denied this proposal, but his time as Director was growing near the end, and when he resigned in January 1929 the position went to one-time opponent of the Monument, Horace Albright.

Interest in the building of a road or highway to the summit of the bluff seemed to grow in the mid and late 1920's. Custodian Maupin's 1920 proposal, although laughed at then, had not been fogotten. Just before leaving office, Maupin had received a copy of a resolution by the Yoder, Wyoming, Chamber of Commerce to the Director.[49]

"Whereas, the Scottsbluff National Monument is a beautiful and worth while attraction, and especially to our community which is devoid of hills and mountains.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that we request the Hon. S. T. Mather, Director of National Parks and Monuments, to appropriate sufficient funds to provide a highway

so that the Monument may be accessable [sic],

. . . . .

And, That an automobile road be constructed from the base of the monument to the top thereof,
And, That sufficient funds be appropriated for the putting of a well on the top of the bluff,

And, That the forest reserve be requested to provide and plant suitable trees on the monument."

Following this resolution, which was publicized in several local newspapers, more letters and requests followed. The **Gering Courier** and the **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald** editorialized on the merits of such a project and several letters to the editors of both papers supported the idea. Only one or two letters opposed it and the **Scottsbluff Pioneer** went on record as opposing any such project which would spoil the scenery of the bluff.[50]

Director Albright was invited to visit the Monument and see for himself what could be done to promote the bluff as an attraction to visitors from other states. He agreed and arrived on June 16, 1931, with F. A. Kittredge, Chief Engineer of the Service, and Clifford Shoemaker, Chief Engineer of the Bureau of Public Roads, District 5. A general survey had been going on by the Bureau for the past several weeks and this visit coincided with the final report.

Custodian Mathers, Congressman Simmons, A. B. Wood, H. J. Dollinger, and H. J. Wisner accompanied Director Albright on a tour of the Monument. They hiked the foot trail to the summit, drove to Mitchell Pass, and met with a committee of interested persons concerning the future development of the area. Albright stayed three days and approved verbally the construction of a road to the summit. The report of the Bureau of Public Road surveyors allowed that such a road could be constructed.[51] Mr. Albright was evidently impressed by the view from the summit and is

reported to have said that he had no idea of the scenic and historic significance of the Monument.[52]

In spite of all of the enthusiasm for development, lack of funds still prevented any real work to be started. The Monument's annual budget for fiscal 1931 was $212 of which $12 was for salary and $200 for campground improvement. At this time, there were 20 picnic benches at the site and reports indicate that it was being used almost continuously during the summer months.

Director Albright was determined to develop the Monument and returned the next year for another inspection. On Sunday, September 11, 1932, he was accorded a public reception and picnic at the picnic area. The **Star-Herald** reported that 2,000 people attended the gathering and the Scottsbluff municipal band participated.[53] Albright spoke at this event and stated that construction of a summit road was now assured since more federal funds were being made available to help fight the depression which was then in full progress. The reception was sponsored by the Associated Chambers of Commerce of the North Platte Valley. Returning with Mr. Albright on the second trip was Mr. Shoemaker. Other guests included Verne Chatelaine, National Park Service Historian; Howard W. Baker, Landscape Architect (now Regional Director of Region Two); Edward B. Rogers, Superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park; and Edward Freelund, Superintendent of Wind Cave National Park, South Dakota.[54]

At this time, some talk and discussion was given to a proposed Oregon Trail National Parkway. Although nothing ever came of this idea, it remained a live issue well into the late 1930's. Mr. Albright favored this project at the time, but later National Park Service records indicate that conflicts of land interests and other considerations prevented any real action toward achievement.

Bureau of Public Roads officials had also returned to the Monument and staked out the approved route of the new road during the summer. Now, only funds were needed to start construction.

With the advent of increasing federal funds to help fight the effects of the depression, the picture at the Monument looked brighter. This was especially true with the change of administrations in March, 1933. Custodian Mathers received enough funds from federal appropriations to start rough grading to the site of the first of three tunnels to be blasted through projections along the route of the summit road. Work also began on construction of a parking area at the east end of Mitchell Pass where a museum was also to be located. Construction of a new foot trail from Scotts Spring to a junction with the Scout Trail near the top of "Saddle Rock" was started at the same time. To reach this junction, a small tunnel was blasted through "saddle rock." Although records are not clear on these various aspects of early construction, it is known from subsequent reports that all phases were carried out by a private contractor, the E. W. Nichols Construction Company,[55] and that the total contract allotment was $9,000. Howard W. Baker, landscape architect, was in immediate charge of these operations while the Bureau of Public Roads directed actual work on both the road and trail.

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Era of Development

With these projects under way, the "era of development" was now a fact. It is true that there were times during the six-year period, from 1933 to 1939, that construction activities were suspended due to lack of funds, but the step had been taken and Scotts Bluff National Monument was assured a lasting place in the National Park System.

After Franklin D. Roosevelt took the oath of office as President of the United States on March 4, 1933, he summoned up the vast resources of the nation to combat the grip of depression in which the country found itself. One of the earliest of the "alphabetical" relief agencies was the Civil Works Administration. It did not take long before this agency was called upon to continue the work at the Monument and on November 24, 1933, it was authorized to start construction.[56]

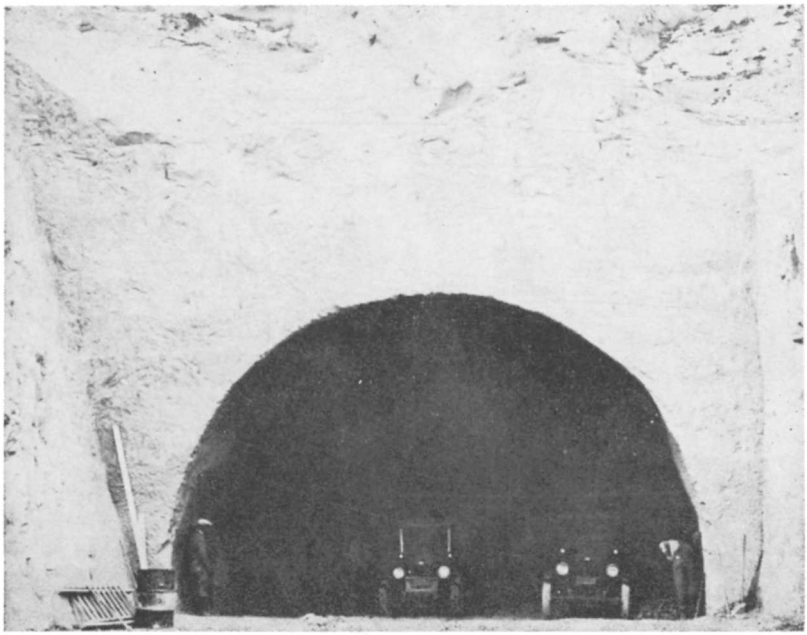


Civil Works Administration laborers start work on the parking area on the summit of Scotts Bluff, December 20, 1933.

The first allotment amounted to $61,977. This was to carry the work until February 15, 1934, when an additional allotment of $2,500 was authorized to carry the project on a reduced basis until all C.W.A. work stopped at the end of April. [57]

David L. Froerer, Highway Engineer of the Bureau of Public Roads, had taken immediate charge of the road work on December 9. Francis D. LaNoue, Assistant Chief Ranger of Yellowstone National Park, had arrived on December 13 to assume temporary charge of administrative duties connected with this work. About 213 men were employed on the project and all were hired from assignments of the Scotts Bluff County Re-employment Office.[58]

Oddly enough, work started on the upper parking area of the bluff at the same time as on the first tunnel. This was due to the desirability of placing a large force of men to work immediately. It was not possible to employ a large number of men on the tunneling where the confined area interfered. Men working on the summit parking area excavation were obliged to climb the new foot trail to work each day taking hand tools and wheelbarrows with them. No heavy equipment was used on any of these projects at this time except for a few trucks to haul dirt and rock away from the tunneling operations.[59]



Civil Works Administration workmen start the portal of the first tunnel on the Summit Road. Trucks were filled with dirt and rock and hauled away. This photograph was taken by Clifford Shoemaker, January, 18, 1934.

At the time this construction work was getting under way, a Historical and Archeological Recconaissance Survey was organized with C.W.A. funds to explore the immediate region to locate historical and archeological sites for later excavation and obtain other data for inclusion in the proposed museum at the base of the summit road. Dr. Harold J. Cook, of Agate, Nebraska, undertook the formation and organization of this research group on December 18, 1933. Six men worked on this survey.[60]

Work continued on all of these projects from early December, 1933, until April 28, 1934. In addition to the road construction and upper parking area excavation, workmen started seeding and planting operations to help control erosion at certain key points in the Monument and collecting fossils and other prehistoric remains. Rock inscriptions of

Oregon Trail emigrants were recovered during road construction.

Two tunnels of the summit road project had been dug through the bluff and work had been started on the third and last tunnel when all C.W.A. work stopped. It is interesting to note that plans for this last tunnel called for two one-way roads with a center wall between the two. This plan was abandoned due to the softness of the Brule and sandstone material and the third tunnel is now the same as the others.

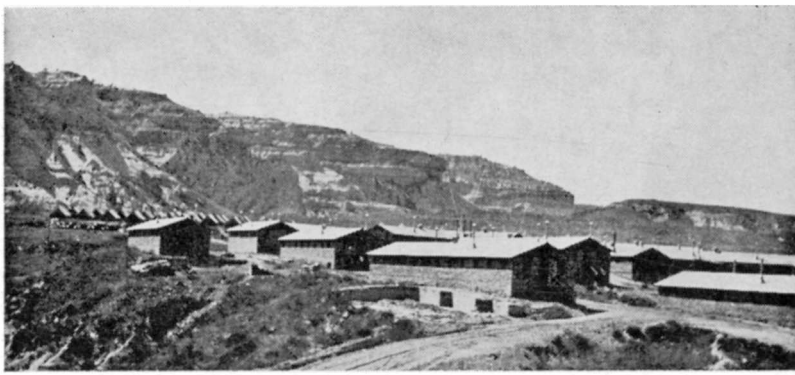
Virtually all construction work at the Monument stopped between April 1934 and April 1935. Some funds were made available from time to time through the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. The National Park Service contrbiuted funds when possible. In order to retain the services of Dr. Cook, the National Park Service appointed him a seasonal ranger on May 16, 1934, and he was able to continue work on his reconnaissance project to a limited extent.[61] Thus, Dr. Cook became the first ranger at the Monument, and the first employee to be paid on a monthly, rather than a token basis.

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Custodian Cook

When Custodian Mathers decided to run for Congress, he was obliged to resign his position.[62] His resignation became effective on June 15, 1934. Dr. Cook was made Acting Custodian and later on December 20 he was appointed Custodian and thereby became the third man to hold this position. The custodian's salary remained at $12 per year.

Dr. Harold J. Cook, born at Cheyenne, Wyoming, on July 31, 1887, had been a resident of Nebraska most of his life. As a paleontologist and geologist, he has been associated with the American Museum of Natural History, the Nebraska State Geological Survey, the Colorado Museum of Natural History, the Chadron State Teachers College, the Western State College in Colorado, and the Cook Museum of Natural History. He is a rancher, consulting geologist, lecturer, and author and resides at Agate, 50 miles north of the Monument.[63]



Civilian Conservation Corps Camp 762 was located in the "Badlands" area of the Monument from April, 1935, through May, 1938. As many as 200 men were stationed at this camp.

Through the Public Works Administration (P.W.A.), limited funds were made available for laborers to continue some grading and filling on the summit road. Plans were also formulated for construction of a museum, a new picnic grounds south of Mitchell Pass, and for water and communications systems.

A General Land Office Survey of the Monument boundaries in 1933, surprisingly, showed that all of the development on the east slope of the bluff was on privately owned land and not within the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. Henceforth, all attention was focused on the west side and nothing further was ever done with the facilities at the base of the Scout Trail.

It became apparent by early 1935 that more action was needed to speed up operations. Working through Congressman Terry Carpenter, before he left office in March, and with other interested persons assisting, Custodian Cook was able to get a Civilian Conservation Corps camp built in the "badlands" area of the Monument in April. A large consignment of C.C.C. men moved in immediately to commence work where the C.W.A. and P.W.A. crews had left off.[64] As many as 200 men were stationed at this camp at various times. The camp, No. 762, was constructed mostly of wood and adobe and was evidently intended to be semi-permanent. Other C.C.C.

camps nearby included one near Mitchell, Nebraska, and one at the Wildcat Hills State Park. Crews from each of these camps stayed at Camp 762 for a short time while their own were being built.

With the advent of C.C.C. labor at the Monument and new work projects being planned and executed, it was decided by the Washington Office that Dr. Cook should be appointed as Project Superintendent. Although this designation did not take effect until April 30, Cook had been informed of his new appointment and that his position as Custodian would have to be terminated. He was, however, designated as Acting Custodian until the end of June. The correspondence on this reads:

"April 11, 1935

Dr. Harold J. Cook,
Custodian, Scotts Bluff Nat'l Monument [sic]

Dear Dr. Cook:

You are hereby designated Acting Custodian . . . of Scotts Bluff National Monument for the duration of your employment under ECW as Project Superintendent. Formal notification of this appointment will follow as soon as effected.

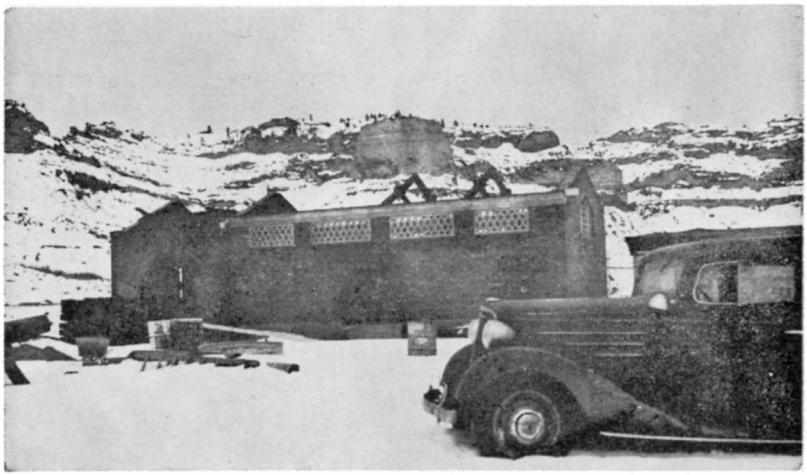
Sincerely yours,
(Sgd.) A. E. Demaray
Acting Director"

"April 24, 1935

Mr. Harold J. Cook
of Nebraska.

Sir:

You have been appointed by the Secretary of the Interior, subject to taking the oath of office, a Project Superintendent Gr. 10 on Emergency Conservation Work, at a salary of $2,300 pa. effective on the date of entrance on duty; assigned to Scotts Bluff National Monument, Nebr., terminating Exc. A, as Custodian at $12 pa., regular service.



Oregon Trail Museum under construction during October of 1935.

This appointment is for emergency work for such period of time as your services may be required on such work and funds are available therefor, but not to extend beyond June 30, 1935 . . .

Respectfully,
(Sgd.) Guy W. Numbers
Acting Chief, Division of
Appointments, Mail and Files."[65]

During the year and a half that Dr. Cook served at Scotts Bluff, it would seem that he held five or six different positions at one time or another: Leader of the Research Group, Temporary Ranger, Acting Custodian, Custodian, Project Superintendent, and again, Acting Custodian.

Charles E. Randels, National Park Service engineer, arrived at the Monument at this time to assist in planning and supervising actual work. Mr. Randels divided his time between Scotts Bluff and Devils Tower National Monument where certain phases of federal relief programs were being conducted.

By late spring plans for the museum and headquarters building[66] had been completed and funds were made available

for construction. The Fullen Construction Company of Gering (now located in Scottsbluff) was awarded the contract on their low bid of $9,507.[67] This contract was for construction of one room and a small lobby which was completed in the fall of 1935. This room was known as the "History Room" until 1960 when its name was changed to the Oregon Trail Room."

The C.C.C. crews resumed grading and filling operations on the summit road soon after establishing their camp in April 1935. Work also commenced on the new picnic grounds west and south of Mitchell Pass, a road from the site of the museum to the camp in the badlands by way of Scotts Spring and the Scotts Bluff Country Club, a water supply system, fencing of the federally-owned boundaries, and seeding and planting operations. The water supply system was vital since the demands of the camp were great. Pipelines were dug and pipe laid underground to the new picnic area and to reservoirs on the bluff above headquarters. This system, with some later modifications, is still being used for the water supply at headquarters.

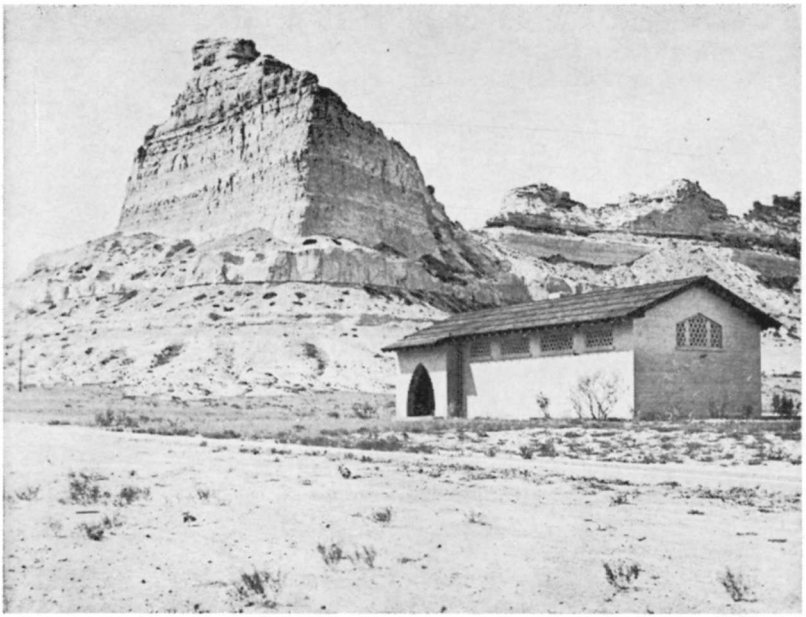
On June 15, 1935, Custodian Cook was notified that he was being relieved of his position at Scotts Bluff. He continued, however, as Acting Custodian and Project Superintendent until July 15 when Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, notified Mr. Randels that he was appointed to succeed Dr. Cook.[68]

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Custodian Randels

Charles E. Randels was the first regular National Park Service employee to hold the office of custodian at the Monument. He carried the designation of "acting custodian" during the three-year period he was in charge. Randels was also responsible for all construction work until he left on June 25, 1938.[69]

Merrill J. Mattes arrived on October 1, 1935, from his seasonal ranger position at Yellowstone National Park and was given the designation of Junior Historian. He took



First building at Scotts Bluff National Monument was the one room Oregon Trail Museum shown here in early 1936. Two additional rooms and offices were added later.

charge of the interpretive program of the Monument and worked out of the new one-room museum building when it was completed by the contractor in the fall of 1935.[70]

At this time, C. B. Turner was appointed superintendent of the C.C.C. camp, but he resigned in November 1936 and Harlan G. Hutchins was appointed in his place.[71] Mr. Hutchins was also part-time superintendent of the C.C.C. camp located at the Wildcat Hills State Park. Among the foreman in charge of the various operations were Charles E. Humberger, C. W. Nichols and E. L. Hoyt. Camp 762 also published its own newspaper, the **Adobe Echo**, a monthly, printed by the **Gering Courier**.

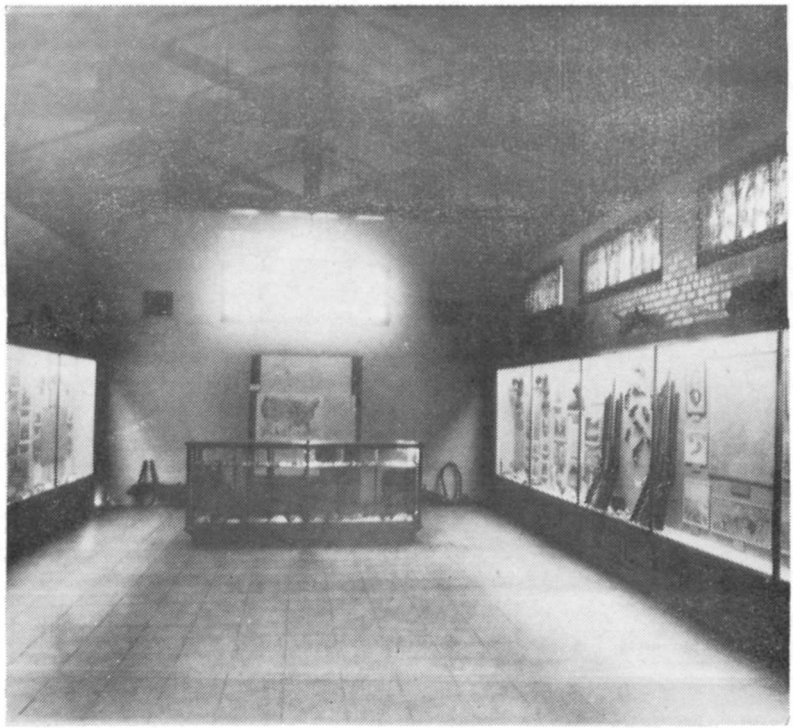
After the excavation of the third tunnel and the guniting of all three tunnels by the contractor Gross & Stevens,[72] all excess rock and dirt were removed from the summit road and grading and filling operations were completed so that



The Oregon Trail museum was dedicated on July 16, 1936. The dedication coincided with the annual Oregon Trail Days celebration. Custodian Charles E. Randels left, is shown talking to William H. Jackson who was the principal speaker at the dedication ceremonies. —Charles Downey

paving could be done. The Northwestern Engineering Company of Rapid City, South Dakota, won the contract for this phase of the work and spent the summer of 1937 laying the cement paving.[73]

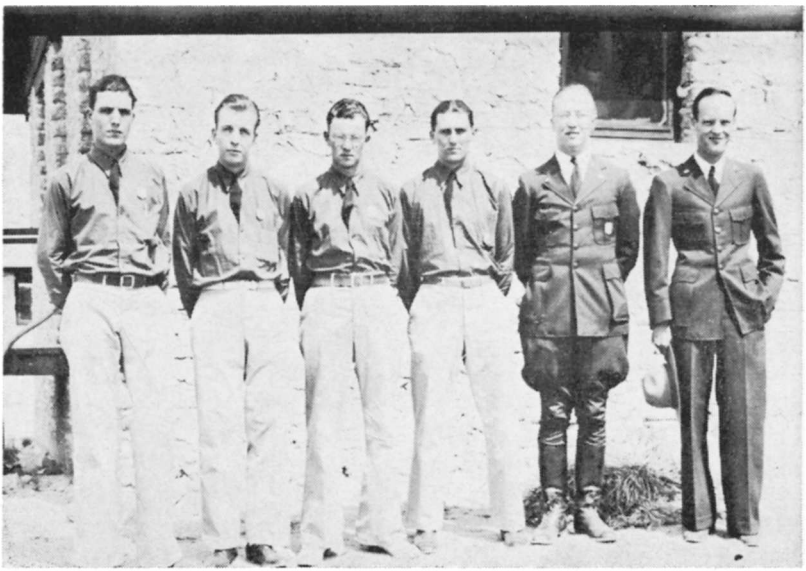
Meanwhile, the new museum building (renamed the Visitor Center in 1956) was completed. Art exhibits from the Western Museum Laboratory at Berkeley, California, together with objects from donors, were installed. It was decided to officially dedicate the facility with appropriate ceremonies. Thursday, July 16, 1936, was chosen because of its connection with the Oregon Trail Days, an annual celebration held in Gering. H. J. Dollinger, Secretary of the Scotts-



The photo above shows the interior of Oregon Trail Museum as it looked on dedication day, July 16, 1936. —Charles Downey

bluff Chamber of Commerce, acted as Master of Ceremonies for the dedication. Speakers on the program included Acting Custodian Randels, A. B. Wood, former Custodian Mathers, T. L. Green of Scottsbluff, and H. J. Wisner, editor of the **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald.** William Henry Jackson, 93-year-old artist and photographer of the West, was the principal speaker of the afternoon. Jackson had passed through Mitchell Pass 70 years before on his way to California as a bullwhacker with a wagon train. (An interpretive marker in Mitchell Pass marks the site where he and his group of freighters camped in August, 1866.) Sioux Indians and band music added color to the dedication.[74]

The summit road was completed and officially opened on Sunday, September 19, 1937. A reported 550 cars used the



First staff of seasonal rangers: Hollingsworth, Mapes, Fredenberg and Harry Jantze. Ranger Wolcott and Historian Mattes are on the right. Photo taken at C.C.C. camp, August, 1936.

new facility the first day.[75] During this time C.C.C. workers started work on a new adobe wing of the museum for geological and paleontological displays. Offices and a rest room were also added. Other construction at headquarters included a three-room residence and a utility building. Landscaping and planting operations continued to help erase the scars of construction around headquarters, on the summit road, and the parking areas. These operations continued until the abandonment of the C.C.C. camp on May 31, 1938.[75]

Increased visitation to the Monument and the heavy use of the picnic grounds made it necessary to employ additional protective officers. In 1935, a seasonal ranger was provided and in 1937, a second such position was added. Paul O. McGrew, who was the first seasonal ranger in 1935, became a C.C.C. foreman in 1936, and in that capacity took charge of archeological and paleontological collections. He was again a seasonal ranger during 1937. Kenneth Wolcott was the

seasonal ranger during 1936. Nearly 64,000 people visited the area in 1937.[77]

When most of the planned work was nearing completion in early 1938, it was decided to remove the C.C.C. camp and transfer the men to other assignments. Dismantling operations started and were completed in April 1939 by skeleton crews from the camp near Mitchell and W.P.A. labor.[78]

By May 1938, the second wing had been added to the museum building,[79] along with the two offices (upper and lower), and the "tower" room. The adobe residence was completed and Historian Mattes moved into it in early May.[80] During the last months that C.C.C. labor was available, the old road between the Scotts Bluff Country Club and headquarters was obliterated (this was a "short-cut" road which led from headquarters to the C.C.C. camp) and the Mitchell Pass highway, State 86, (now State 92) was nearly finished. The reconstruction of graveled trans-monument Highway 86 had begun in 1937 with realignment, grading, and filling and sodding on the shoulders as a C.C.C. project. It was continued as a W.P.A. project with the State of Nebraska oil-surfacing it in 1940. The designation of this highway was changed from 86 to 92 in early 1961.

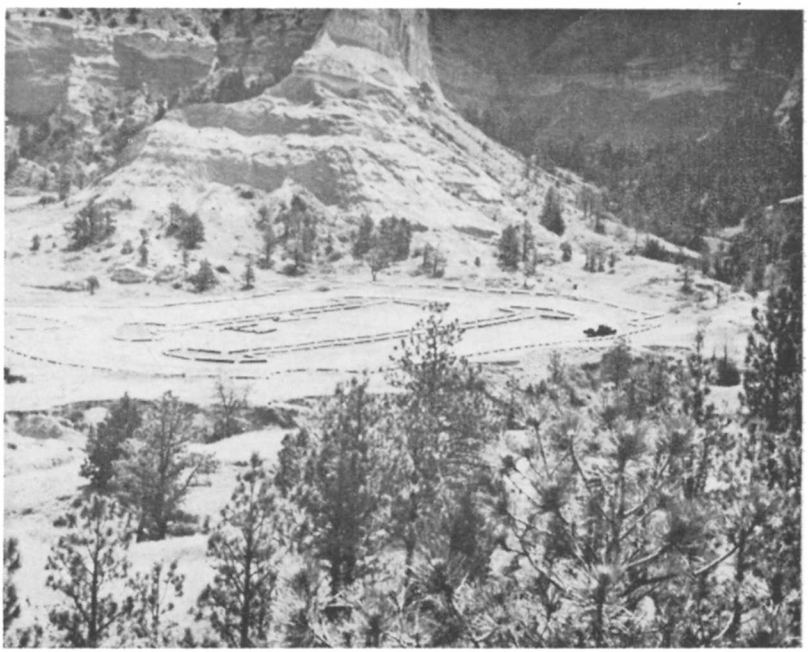
Acting Custodian Randels left Scotts Bluff at the time the C.C.C. camp was dismantled. He continued to work as an engineer with the Region Two Office of the National Park Service and died in April 1944 at Tucson, Arizona. Merrill J. Mattes succeeded Randels as Custodian on June 25, 1938.[81]

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Custodian Mattes

Merrill J. Mattes was born at Congress Park, Illinois, in 1910, but had lived in Kansas City, Missouri, during most of his life before entering the National Park Service. He holds degrees from the University of Missouri and the University of Kansas.

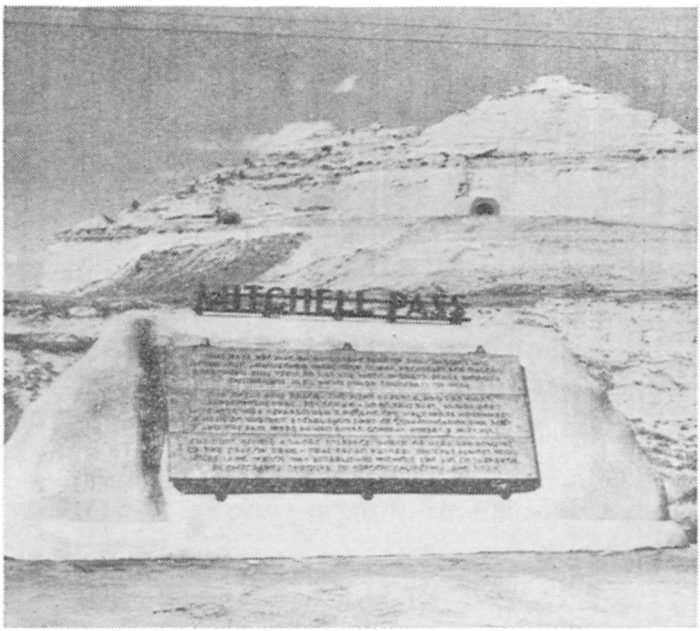
During the years that Mr. Mattes was stationed at Scotts Bluff, he completed much important and valuable



A picnic site with parking area was located south of Mitchell Pass from 1936 through 1939. Vandalism and misuse prevented it from being re-opened.

research concerning the westward migrations, fur trade, and other historic activities. Over fifty articles and monographs have been published. He is the author of the Scotts Bluff National Monument handbook and other Government publications. He has written authoritative works on Chimney Rock, Hiram Scott, Robidoux Pass, Fort Mitchell, the Pony Express, Fort Laramie, and other Oregon Trail topics, most of which have appeared in the **Nebraska Historical Quarterly** and the **Annuals of Wyoming.** His first book, **Indians, Infants, and Infantry**, was published in 1960.

For his achievements in research, writing, and planning fields, Mr. Mattes received the Distinguished Service Award and medal of the U. S. Department of the Interior in November 1959. He was also designated Nebraska Civil Servant of the Year in 1958.



Mitchell Pass interpretive marker constructed by W.P.A. labor in early 1939. This marker is still in place. It replaced original 1930 sign of misleading information. —Highway Magazine

After serving a few months in the wartime office of the Director, in Chicago, Mr. Mattes was transferred to the Region Two Office, Omaha, Nebraska, to become the Historian for the Missouri River Basin Surveys. In January, 1950, he became Regional Historian.

Improvement activities tapered off with the abandonment of the C.C.C. camp and by 1940 no construction of any major importance was being done. After the camp moved out, Works Projects Administration crews continued to do some work in the area. This final phase of development lasted until June 30, 1939.[82] Small crews accomplished, among other things, enlargement of the picnic grounds parking area, construction of barriers to the headquarters area, construction of entrance pylons along State Highway 92, and improvement of the parking area at Mitchell Pass, construction of interpretive markers there and at "Observation Point" on the

summit. These crews also worked on State Highway 92, the building of display cases for the second, or "Prehistory Wing" of the museum, and improvement of the road which runs through the badlands.[83]

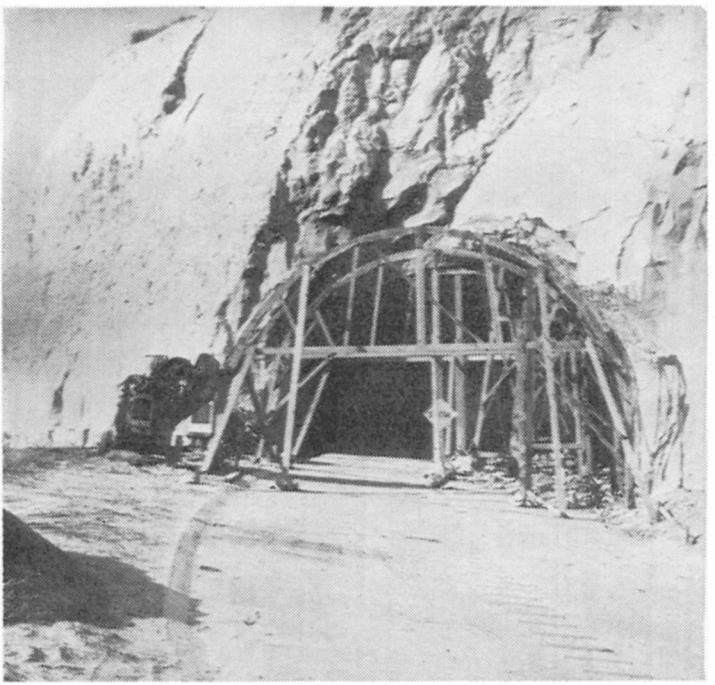
The granite boulder located at the base of the Scout Trail in 1930 was moved to Scotts Spring in June 1938 when the old picnic grounds were abandoned. The bronze entablature furnished by the local chapter of the D.A.R. was left intact.

Since the bronze entablature memorialized Hiram Scott, it was thought that Scotts Spring was not a good location for it. There is no historical evidence that Scott died at this spring, but a memorial to him there might lead visitors to believe that he did actually die there. The granite boulder was moved to the site of the unknown graves of pioneers in Robidoux Pass in October 1941 where it remains. The entablature was removed at this time and is kept at headquarters. A memorial plaque to Scott was placed on the summit of the bluff in 1959 and current thinking is that such a memorial is best located there.

In August, 1938, the Oregon Trail Memorial Association held its annual meeting at Scottsbluff and at the Monument. At this time, Dr. Howard R. Driggs, President of the Association, presented to Custodian Mattes the two bronze memorial plaques that now hang on the wall of the museum lobby. At this time, too, William Henry Jackson paid his last visit to the Monument. He drove a stake at the site of his 1866 camp site at Mitchell Pass.[84] The original sign located here, marking the camp site, was removed in 1959 when a new routed wood interpretive marker with attached reproductions was installed.

During the summer of 1938, Custodian Mattes also served as "Acting Custodian" for the newly established Fort Laramie National Monument (now Fort Laramie National Historic Site), 55 miles west in Wyoming.

Mr. Mattes was gone from the Monument during the winter of 1938-39. He had accepted a Yale University fellow-



Construction of Summit Road tunnels was finished in 1939 when gunite was used to stabilize the portals. This work was done by private contractor. It required six years to construct the Summit Road which cost over $200,000.00.

ship[85] and left the middle of September.[86] David de Lancy Condon, a district ranger at Yellowstone National Park, arrived on September 15 to assume duties as acting custodian in Mr. Mattes' absence.[87] Mr. Condon remained at Scotts Bluff only until November 1. Temporary ranger Charles E. Humberger, on duty the summer of 1938, was granted several extensions of his appointment and became acting custodian, serving until Mr. Mattes returned the following June.[88] Mr. Humberger had been a C.C.C. foreman before the camp was abandoned. He directed W.P.A. operations during his tenure.[39]

The year 1939 saw the first Soap Box Derby at the Monument. This unofficial event was held at the base of the summit road each year until 1951, except during the war years.[90] In 1939, a reported approximately 10,000 people

gathered to witness this regional running,[91] some 12,000 in 1940,[92] and 7,500 in 1941.[93] The attendance dropped off after the war years until, in 1951, only about 850 attended. Lack of interest and too few entrants were among the chief reasons for discontinuing this annual event.[94] In 1939, 1940, 1941, and 1946, assistance was requested from Rocky Mountain National Park and several rangers from there were on hand to help regulate traffic and parking during the event. In following years, Scotts Bluff personnel handled the affair themselves, except in 1947 when the Nebraska State Safety Patrol helped to regulate traffic in the general area.[95]

In 1939, the last of the Summit Road work was completed. This was the stabilizing of the tunnel portals and sideguards with gunite by a private contractor.[96] Total construction cost of this road was $200,265. Work done since then has been limited to routine patching and maintenance. Automobile use permit fees started in 1941. Before this time, a 10 cent fee was charged for museum admission.

The year 1939 saw the last use of the picnic grounds located south of Mitchell Pass. Custodian Mattes had written to Superintendent Canfield of Rocky Mountain National Park concerning the condition of the area.[97] Previous to this, a conference held at Rocky Mountain between Regional Director Thomas J. Allen, Jr., and Superintendent Canfield, resulted in a decision to establish a policy of not providing picnic facilities at Scotts Bluff.[98] The Washington Office had approved this policy,[99] and Custodian Mattes released the following news item on September 15, 1939:[100]

> "The Mitchell Pass picnic grounds will be closed effective Monday, September 18, it was announced today by the National Park Service. In this connection, the following statement was issued by Merrill J. Mattes, custodian [sic] of Scotts Bluff National Monument.
>
> For three years the picnic grounds at Scotts Bluff National Monument have been open to the unrestricted use of the public. The popularity of this recreation area has grown far beyond original expectations, with

five to six thousand people picnicking here each month, during the summer season.

Unfortunately this overuse of the grounds and facilities has resulted in the gradual destruction of vegetation. The grass cover has been cut away and ground down under several inches of dust. In spite of posted regulations to the contrary, trees have been stripped of branches and chopped down, leaving unsightly stumps. Ravines and gullies have been littered with rubbish. The grounds are becoming denuded and unsightly.

It is the policy of the National Park Service to preserve its parks and monuments in as natural condition as possible. To conform with this policy, we find it necessary to close the picnic grounds, in order to prevent further damage, which would inevitably result in a dust-bowl condition. Eventually picnickers themselves would abandon this area in favor of more pleasant surroundings.

By closing this picnic area for an indefinite period, vegetation will have an opportunity to recover, and it may be possible to open the grounds for restricted use, at a later date."

This release explained in frank terms the reasons for its closing. At this time, it was intended to close the area for only an "indefinite period," but by the spring and summer of 1940 it was further decided to abandon it altogether,[101] and an appropriate news item appeared in local papers. A few "letters to the editor" appeared in the **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald** during the month of April 1940, complaining about its closing, but there appeared to be no concerted effort on the part of local citizens and organizations to re-open it at this time.[102] Rocky Mountain National Park participated in the decision to close the picnic grounds as by 1939 it was involved in Scotts Bluff National Monument affairs.

During the early days of administration, the custodians were directly responsible to the Director. After the "era of development" became a reality in 1933, it was found that additional help was sometimes needed from accounting and administration standpoints.

On August 1, 1937, the National Park Service was regionalized. Scotts Bluff National Monument fell under the jurisdiction of Region Two, with offices in Omaha, Nebraska. It was also thought expedient to have certain of the smaller Monuments consolidated under one coordinating superintendent, and in June 1939 Scotts Bluff and Fort Laramie came under the jurisdiction of Rocky Mountain National Park. Nearly all operations of Scotts Bluff were under the Superintendent of Rocky Mountain and the Custodian was obliged to report directly to him. The Superintendent, in turn, had to concur with any reports, requests, or recommendations that the Custodian had to make before sending them on to the Regional or Washington offices.

In 1950, plans were formulated to have each Monument Superintendent once more administer his own area. By 1951, this became a reality and Superintendent Budlong received word to the effect that ". . . operations at your areas will no longer be under a Coordinating Superintendent, except the functions necessarily integrated with accounting operations will continue to be performed by Rocky Mountain National Park . . . You are responsible to this office for all other phases of the operation of your areas . . . You will report on all matters to the Regional Director . . . You will be expected to assume full charge of administration at your area . . ."[103] Later the Regional Office assumed accounting and purchasing responsibilities for these smaller areas.

By early 1941, work was under way eliminating all picnic grounds facilities and there were no serious local repercussions concerning this.[104] Tables and benches were transferred to the Wildcat Hills State Recreation Area south of Gering and fireplaces were obliterated. However, when summer came a flood of oral and written protests were received concerning the re-opening of this facility.[105] Despite these formidable protests, the Service stood firm on its declaration of policy and the picnic grounds were not reopened.

Public sentiment remained dormant during the years of the Second World War, but in 1945 further protests arrived in the Custodian's office.[106] These were referred to the

Washington Office and the picnic grounds remained closed. There have been no written protests or requests for its use since 1945, but visitors still frequently ask when it will be opened again. The issue is now evidently dead so far as any official consideration is concerned, and it is highly unlikely that there will ever be another picnic or camping area set aside within the Monument boundaries. The last six picnic tables left from the site were transferred to the Bureau of Reclamation at Lake Minatare, Nebraska, on August 4, 1946.[107]

A short ceremony was held on August 13, 1943, at headquarters to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the mass migrations along the Oregon Trail. Although travel was light due to war-time restrictions, a good crowd was on hand to hear the talks given. Among the distinguished visitors present was Dr. Howard R. Driggs, President of the American Pioneer Trails Association. Other appropriate ceremonies were held at the site of Fort Mitchell and Robidoux Pass. Custodian Mattes read historical research papers at the dedication ceremonies for new markers near Fort Mitchell and at the nameless graves site in Robidoux Pass. Liberator bombers from the Scottsbluff Air Force Base flew through Mitchell Pass during the event at the Monument. Boy Scouts, soldiers, and members of the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution gave assistance.[108]

There were also several personnel changes during these years. Mrs. Ethel L. Meinzer was appointed clerk-stenographer on August 3, 1942,[109] to succeed John M. Burruss who had held the position since August 2, 1940.[110] Mrs. Meinzer had transferred here from Rocky Mountain National Park where she had held a like position. When Mrs. Meinzer was transferred back to Rocky Mountain National Park, this position was filled locally by Miss Louise Ridge on June 18, 1943.[111] In addition, from 1941 to 1946 Custodian Mattes served as Acting Historian for Fort Laramie National Monument doing special research work relating to restoration of historic structures at that area. This work, together with Jackson Hole research, led to several publications and valuable research reports appearing in the **Pacific Northwest Quarterly**, the **Annals of Wyoming**, and other journals



Charles E. Humberger
Acting Custodian, 1938-1939



Merrill J. Mattes
Custodian, 1938-1946



David de L. Condon
Acting Custodian, 1938



Robert R. Budlong, Custodian and Superintendent, 1946-1954

The first permanent ranger at Scotts Bluff was A. Lynn Coffin, who was transferred to the Monument from Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico, June 5, 1940.[112] He assumed duties on July 5 after taking a month's leave.[113] He in turn, was replaced by G. Lee Sneddon, who arrived in March 1943 from Rocky Mountain National Park.[114]

Visitation during these years dropped off from the high of 105,151 in 1940 to 25,982 in 1944.[115] Soldiers stationed at the Scottsbluff Army Air Base and at the Prisoner of War camp and from other nearby installations were responsible for keeping the annual visitation at a respectable level. The visitation of the Monument through the calendar year 1960 has never reached the 1940 level.

During these critical years, Custodian Mattes also served as Acting Regional Historian for the Region Two Office, making frequent trips to Omaha to undertake special assignments. The most important of these was his historical research and writing that led to the defense of Jackson Hole National Monument at a court case in Sheridan, Wyoming, in 1944.

Three other activities of note which took place during these years were grazing of livestock on Monument lands, development of exhibits for the paleontology wing, and the establishment of a concessions operation in the lobby of the museum.

During the war years, it became the general policy to permit grazing on National Park Service lands as part of the war emergency. Mrs. B. M. Downar was granted a permit on June 2, 1943, renewable for three grazing seasons, or until September 30, 1945.[116] This permit gave Mrs. Downar the right to graze 20 head of cattle on about 300 acres of land in the southwest section of the Monument in the vicinity of the abandoned picnic grounds.

Another permit was issued to S. R. Young to graze 20 head of cattle on about 20 acres of grasslands in the southern portion of the Monument south of South Bluff. This permit was limited to a short period of time between August 12 and August 31, 1944, and was not renewable.[117]

The cases in the paleontology room were largely empty until 1941. During that year Custodian Mattes and Ranger Coffin improvised displays of the geology and fossil collections at the Monument, supplemented with fossils donated by other museums, photos, maps, and artwork. The new exhibits were unveiled September 1, 1941, when the American Society of Vertebrate Paleontology met at the Monument.[118] These exhibits remained intact for over 12 years.

A Miscellaneous Service Permit was issued to Charles Downey of Downey's Midwest Studio, Scottsbluff, on July 1, 1940, to " . . . sell picture postcards, colored photographs, Kodachrome transparencies and moving picture prints of views pertaining to Scotts Bluff National Monument, and neighboring Oregon Trail sites . . ."[119] This permit was re-issued in 1941, 1942, 1943, and 1944. However, due to the shortage of help and supplies, this operation ran only until May 1944 when all operations ceased. Mr. Downey did not apply for renewal of his permit in 1945.[120] All sales items at the Monument now are handled by the Oregon Trail Museum Association.

Merrill J. Mattes received notice in January 1946 of his assignment to the position of Historian, National Park Service, Branch of History, in the Director's Office then located in Chicago, Illinois.[121] However, Mr. Mattes did not leave the Monument until March 23, a few days after the arrival of Robert Ross Budlong (on March 19) from Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, Virginia, who transferred to Scotts Bluff as the new Custodian.[122]

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Custodian Budlong

Custodian Budlong, who had been with the National Park Service for some time, had been custodian at Appomattox Court House, Virgina, and Fort Jefferson National Monument in the Dry Tortugas, in the Gulf of Mexico, before coming to Scotts Bluff. He became the first person to hold the title of Superintendent at Scotts Bluff. The title of Custodian was changed to Superintendent at the end of the 1948 calendar year.

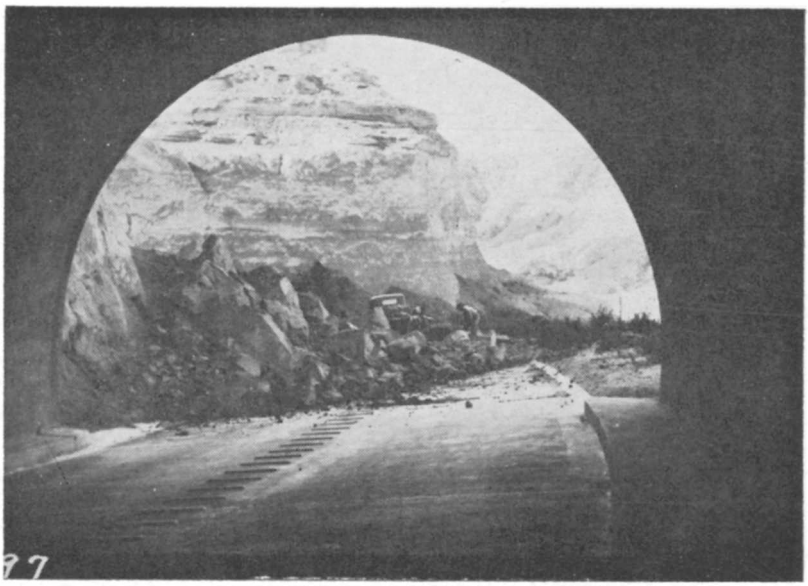
Other personnel changes were made in the post-war period. During the war, Ranger G. Lee Sneddon entered the service as an Ensign in the U. S. Navy and was gone from the Monument for about two years.[123] To fill this vacancy, Herbert W. Marcellus was hired on a war time temporary basis to continue until Mr. Sneddon's return to duty.[124] Mr. Marcellus resigned February 21, 1946, when Mr. Sneddon's return was imminent.[125]

When Ranger Sneddon transferred to Dinosaur National Monument on November 7, 1946,[126] Mr. David L. Hieb replaced him.[127] Ranger Hieb remained at the Monument for only about five months, and then transferred to Fort Laramie National Monument to assume duties as Custodian there.[128] Forrest M. Benson, Jr., succeeded Ranger Hieb on June 15, 1947, but resigned April 15, 1948,[129] and was succeeded by Luther S. Winsor on July 31, 1948.[130] Ranger Winsor, in turn, left for his new assignment at Acadia National Park, Maine, on May 26, 1951,[131] and was replaced by Coyt H. Hackett on June 12.[132]

At this time, an important addition was made to the Oregon Trail Museum. The American Pioneer Trails Association, of New York, very generously donated to the Government miscellaneous sketches, paintings, and personal mementoes of the late William Henry Jackson, famous photographer and artist of Western scenes. In order to display many of these paintings, this Association furnished the funds for the construction of a "William Henry Jackson Memorial Wing" which was added to the east end of the museum and administration building (now called the Visitor Center).

The cost of the Memorial Wing was nearly $10,000. The local chapter of the American Pioneer Trails Association raised $2,000 of this amount by popular subscription. The Fullen Construction Company of Scottsbluff won the bid for the work and started actual construction on June 29, 1948.[133] Completion date was April 5, 1949.

Previous to this, a pre-dedication ceremony was observed on July 1, 1947, when Dr. Driggs, President of the Association, turned the first spade of earth for the Wing.[134]



Rock slide is shown on the Summit Road in the month of May of 1942.

On August 2, 1948, a steel box containing various Jasksoniana was embedded into one of the masonry walls of the addition.[135] Formal dedication ceremonies were held on August 8, 1949, when Director Newton B. Drury, Clarence S. Jackson, and Dr. Driggs were the main speakers.[136] About 40 paintings and drawings are on display in this wing.

The Roush Construction Company of Gering constructed a concrete floor in the basement under the Paleontology Wing (now the Landmark Room) in April 1948.[137] A second bedroom and utility room were also added to Residence No. 1 occupied by the Superintendent.[138] J. B. Wilson of Scottsbluff had this contract. Also installed was an oil-burning furnace and a 275-gallon tank for fuel oil. Up to this time, the residence was heated by a small oil space heater located in the living room.

During the years 1949 through 1952 huge rock slides frequently closed the Summit road. In March 1949, for example, a reported 309.4 tons of rock blocked the road for many days. Heavy equipment and dynamite were used on

several occasions to remove these obstructions.[139] In June 1952, Superintendent Budlong described the situation:

> ". . . the road suffered from a constant succession of heavy slides, and finally this resulted in a dangerous condition with overhangs above the road. We closed the road and called for expert opinion. Regional and BPR engineers and an NPS geologist came to the area, inspected the trouble spot, and were unanimous in pronouncing it unsafe. We kept the road closed, pending a solution to this problem (funds); it is still closed at this writing due to no solution to the problem (no funds) . . ."[140]

The road remained closed from June 26 to August 21 and had been closed during most of May and June. Many visitors to the area were disappointed that they were unable to drive over this 1.6 mile of road and it is reported that complaints were numerous.

Besides the maintenance work being done on the Summit Road during these years, much stabilization was also started on trails and other places on the bluff subject to erosion. In 1953, the Scout Trail up the east face of the bluff was officially closed to public use and signs placed notifying visitors. It is said that in certain sections of this trail, the sides facing away from the bluff were above a person's head. This was filled in and seeded.[141]

The system of foot trails on the summit which lead from the parking area to the north section were paved by Berggren & Sons of Scottsbluff in 1953.[142] Before this only paths were used and these were becoming greatly eroded. Other minor paving was done here at various times during the 1950's.

Two non-conforming uses of Monument lands were stopped in 1949 and 1951 after years of misuse and abuse. These were the Gering Golf Course, located north and northwest of Dome Rock, and a rifle range used by the local National Guard unit and personnel from the Scottsbluff Prisoner of War camp during the latter part of World War II.

It is not known exactly when the Gering Golf Club



Gering Golf Course near Dome Rock was used from about 1927 until 1950, when the National Park Service did not renew the permit.

started to use the area near Dome Rock but records seem to indicate that it was in use as early as 1928. When Associate Director A. E. Demaray visited the area in early 1935, he was somewhat surprised to find this activity in the Monument, and explained the situation in a memorandum to the Director. Mr. Demaray explained that:

". . . The existing and partly completed club house is to be demolished and the site cleaned up. It was also understood that if and when the Monument lands now occupied by the Golf Course are needed for Monument purposes, the Government would have a right to obliterate the present greens and end the present golfing use."[143]

Since the course had been in use for some years previous to this, it was decided that the Government would provide a durable and finished club house for the organization and allow them to continue to use these facilities by permit. By 1950 use of this course had dropped off to almost nothing and Superintendent Budlong decided that the time was ripe for ending all use of the course.[144] The last permit issued the club was signed in late 1949 and stipulated that: "This permit will expire December 31, 1950, and may not thereafter be renewed."[145] There was evidently no objections raised by members of the club and the shelter house was torn down and the greens covered and seeded the following year.[146]

The rifle range, on the other hand, had been in use since 1925 when Company E, 134th Infantry Regiment, located at Scottsbluff, had inquired about such use of Monument lands. Custodian Mathers had allowed this unit to set up a small range just south of present headquarters at that time, but in 1931 this unit requested a formal permit allowing them to continue to use the area. Custodian Mathers received a letter from the Washington Office stating that such use was contrary to policy, but that he might issue a permit to the unit.[147] After this, permits were issued for periods of three years until 1948 when it was decided that further use would only mar and deface this area. Associate Director Demaray notified the War Department of this decision,[148] and no further use of Monument lands was permitted the Guard unit. While this decision was contested verbally by the unit all activities ceased on the old range and all equipment and property was removed by them in the spring of 1949.[149] This range was at first located on the south side of the trans-Monument highway, near headquarters, but was later moved to the south side of Dome Rock. Just prior to the war years, it was again moved to the north side of Dome

Rock, or near the golf course. Use was very sporadic during the war years while the unit was away, but the Army Air Base near Scottsbluff made some use of it as did the Scottsbluff Prisoner of War camp. Private or local gun clubs never used the area officially.

The State of Nebraska, having received a special use permit in 1953 to construct and maintain a highway through the Monument, undertook the realignment and paving of the original road, State Highway 86, now 92, constructed from 1937 to 1940, and referred to previously. The work within the Monument boundaries started on July 23, 1953, and ended on October 29 of that year.[150] In 1954 and 1955, the section from the east boundary of the Monument to Gering was paved, completing concrete pavement from a point just beyond the west boundary of the Monument to Gering. When the original special use permit expired in 1956, another one was drawn up and signed by Acting Regional Director George F. Baggley and L. N. Ress, State Engineer, on February 20, 1956. This permit will expire on July 31, 1975, but can be terminated by the Director at his discretion.[151] It is interesting to note here that the National Park Service did not surrender any of its legal authority upon the 80-foot right of way.

Superintendent Budlong was transferred to the same position at Lava Beds National Monument, California, and left Scotts Bluff on July 19, 1954.[152] Ranger Coyt H. Hackett was Acting Superintendent until the arrival of Frank H. Anderson, the new Superintendent.

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Superintendent Anderson

Superintendent Frank H. Anderson's assignment to Scotts Bluff was effective September 5, 1954. A native of New Jersey, he had been stationed in Yellowstone National Park for about 24 years previous to this.

It was during the summer and fall of 1954 that the Frontier Broadcasting Company of Cheyenne, Wyoming began testing facilities on the summit of the bluff. When these

tests proved satisfactory the company applied for a permit to construct a television station and tower on the summit:

"KFBC-TV
Cheyenne, Wyoming

September 18, 1954

Mr. Conrad Wirth, Director
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

This is to make application for permission to locate the television station, Construction Permit for which was recently granted by FCC, within the boundaries of Scotts Bluff National Monument.

Our engineering studies have shown conclusively that this is the only feasible location for the station, to serve the entire community, known generally as the valley (Valley of the North Platte River, in the vicinity of Scottsbluff, Nebraska).

Enclosed are various maps, narrative statements, which will disclose how these conclusions were reached.

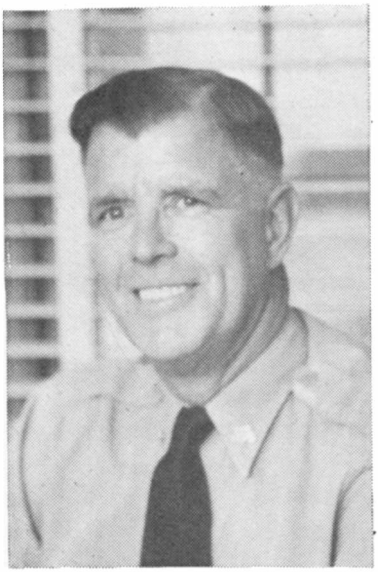
The population in the area to be served, approximately 54,000 people, are presently without TV service, and the proposed station would appear to be their only chance in the foreseeable future to get service.

We would appreciate an early decision, so that construction can be commenced in time to be completed before bad winter weather sets in.

Any additional information requested will be furnished immediately.

Very truly yours,

Frontier Broadcasting Company
By /s/ Wm. C. Grove
Wm. C. Grove, Treas.[153]



Frank H. Anderson
Superintendent, 1954-1958



John W. Henneberger
Superintendent, 1958-1962

This formal request started a storm of controversy which raged until the late spring of 1955. Probably every person in the North Platte Valley discussed the merits of such an undertaking. Resolutions were passed by nearly every important organization in the Gering-Scottsbluff area, either supporting the project or opposing it.[154] That the advent of TV in the valley was inevitable or that it would be a great benefit to viewers and business was never questioned. The issue revolved around the use of Monument lands for such a non-conforming structure.

Director Wirth answered this initial request on October 1 denying it and advising location of the station and tower at another location.[155] National Park Service policy was outlined and reference was made to the establishment Act of 1916. Other letters and requests were received from Senators, Congressmen, and other officials. Mr. Wirth answered all of these, explaining Service policy on such matters.[156]

However, due to the strenuous efforts of the Frontier

Broadcasting Company, with help from all of Wyoming's delegation to Congress and the Governor, as well as from many local citizens and various service and civic clubs and other groups, it was decided to hold a public hearing in Washington on January 10, 1955. Superintendent Anderson attended this meeting as did representatives of the broadcasting company, several local citizens and business men (all of whom favored the project), Congressman A. L. Miller, and Wyoming's delegates.

During December 1954, field tests had been made by local television sales concerns cooperating with Ranger Hackett. These tests were conclusive in showing that an alternate site, some 10 miles north of Scottsbluff, adjacent to State Highway 87, was much superior to the proposed Monument site.[157] The results of these tests were significant in the meeting of January 10 and the National Park Service used them as an aid in again refusing the application.

Director Wirth denied the application for a second time on February 8, 1955.[158] Senator O'Mahoney appealed this decision to the Department of the Interior, but the Department upheld the Director's decision,[159] and the issue was closed. The Frontier Broadcasting Company then accepted the alternate site as the best place for their station and construction began there in May.[160]

When Ranger Hackett was transferred to the position of Museum Curator at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, St. Louis, Missouri, in March 1956, it was decided to reinstate the title of Historian for the single permanent uniformed employee for the Monument under the Superintendent. Eli "Dan" Potts was selected for this position from a list of Civil Service eligibles[161] and assumed his duties on June 11, 1956.[162] He remained at the Monument for little more than one year before resigning to accept a teaching position.

On June 20, 1956, the Oregon Trail Museum Association was organized at Scotts Bluff. This association is a cooperating organization with the National Park Service and offers various publications, post cards, color slides, and other materials for sale in the Visitor Center lobby. It is non-profit and uses

its funds to assist the Government with its library facilities, interpretative program, land acquisition, and other educational activities at the area. It was incorporated in March 1959.[163]

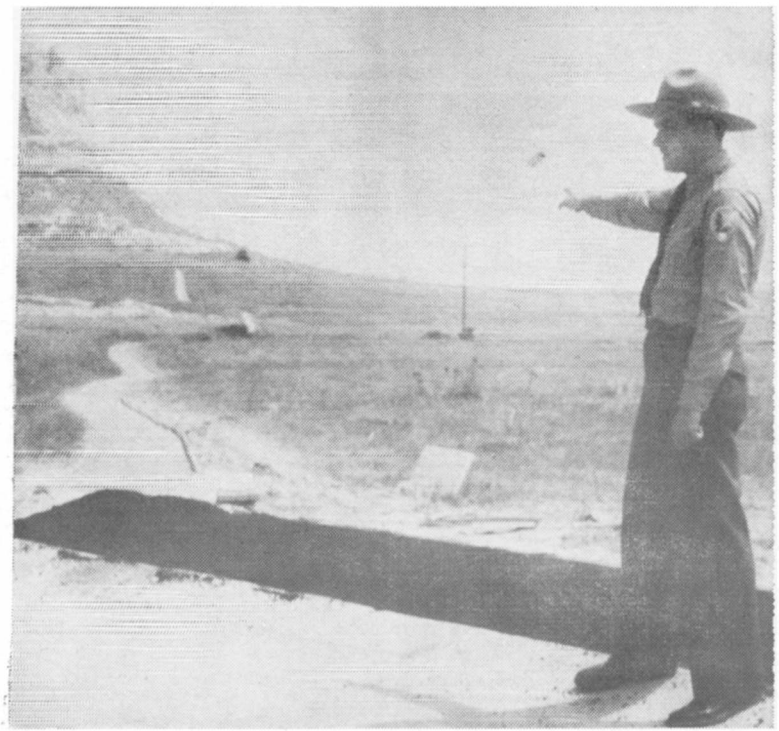
Before this time, the Rocky Mountain Nature Association had operated a subsidiary sales counter in the lobby. These sales started in June 1943,[164] and continued until Scotts Bluff organized its own association. The first sales item at the Monument was the 16-page information bulletin written by Custodian Mattes in 1941. Sales started about the first of May in 1942.[165] When this booklet was out of print, about 1955, Mr. Mattes completed a historical handbook which was printed in December 1958 and went on sale almost immediately. This handbook is the only official sales publication which deals with the Monument.

On August 9, 1956, Chimney Rock was designated a National Historic Site by the Secretary of the Interior. This famous Oregon Trail landmark is located about 23 miles east of Scotts Bluff near the town of Bayard. While the State of Nebraska owns the 83-acre site, it is jointly administered by the town of Bayard, the Nebraska State Historical Society, and the National Park Service. The Superintendent of Scotts Bluff National Monument handles inquiries concerning the site and provides advice on various interpretive matters. The National Park Service prints the informational folder for the site, prepared by Park Historian Harris, in 1957. The Site is undeveloped, except for a small roadside picnic area built in 1961. The rock itself is about 1½ miles south of State Highway 92.

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Mission 66

Another "era of development" for the Monument began with the advent of MISSION 66, a ten-year conservation program for the National Park System which proposes to develop and staff these parks so as to permit their wisest possible use, maximum enjoyment for those who use them, and maximum preservation of the scenic, scientific, and historical resources which gave them distinction. The program commenced



"Mission 66" at the Monument included construction of new foot trails and the paving of old ones such as the trail from the Museum to Scotts Spring. Historian Harris points the way. —Courier Photo

July 1, 1956 and is to be completed in 1966, the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the National Park Service.

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Superintendent Henneberger

When Historian Potts left on July 28, 1957.[166], Earl R. Harris was transferred to Scotts Bluff from Mount Rushmore National Memorial, South Dakota. Late that same year, Superintendent Anderson was notified of his promotion and transfer to Harpers Ferry National Monument, West Virginia. He left on January 25, 1958[167] and was succeeded by John W. Henneberger[168] who had been stationed at Olympic National Park, Washington. On March 23, 1958, clerk-stenographer

Louise Ridge was promoted to the position of Administrative Assistant at the Monument.

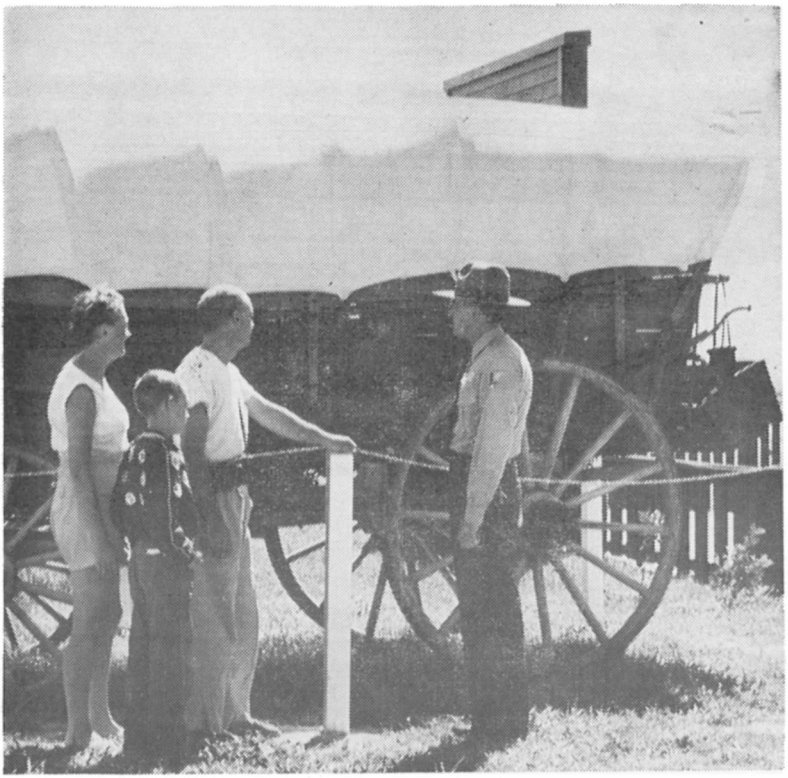
The planning of the MISSION 66 program for Scotts Bluff had been accomplished during Superintendent Anderson's tenure between 1955 and 1957. Construction activities, land acquisition, and boundary revision proposals were carried out during Superintendent Henneberger's tenure of office with the exception of the electrification and improvement of the water supply system which was completed by I. H. Peters of Alliance, Nebraska on September 23, 1957.

A "package" development in 1958 included construction of a second residence at headquarters, a two-stall addition to the utility building, and a new 460-seat amphitheater, or "campfire circle," for summer evening interpretive programs. This is located directly behind the visitor center. Also included was a concrete vault in the basement of the visitor center for protecting valuable Jackson material and other artifacts and items. Other improvements included in the package contract were air conditioning of the visitor center, construction of wood fences, terraces and walks, and bituminous surfacing of driveways at headquarters.

In 1958, Harry F. Berggren & Sons was awarded the contract for paving the trail from headquarters to Scotts Spring and from the parking lane in Mitchell Pass to the Jackson campsite. Under this contract, existing summit trails were improved and a new one constructed from the parking area there to a "south summit" overlook.

Wayside exhibits and interpretive signs were installed along the newly constructed trails and at other key points on the summit during the summer of 1959. These included the Hiram Scott memorial marker, two routed aluminum signs and nine routed wood signs. MISSION 66 also called for the seeding and planting of grass, trees, and shrubs at headquarters and this project was completed in 1959 by day labor.[169]

The Andresen Construction Company of Scottsbluff was the general contractor for the majority of these construction projects and this work continued from April 4, 1958[170] to



Historian Harris showing original Conestoga Wagon to Monument visitors in July, 1959. Wagon was purchased by the Oregon Trail Days committee of Gering, and the Oregon Trail Museum Association. —Courier Photo

October 31, 1958.[171] Total cost of the MISSION 66 program was $92,466.40. (This figure does not include cost of installation of new exhibits and cases in the Visitor Center.

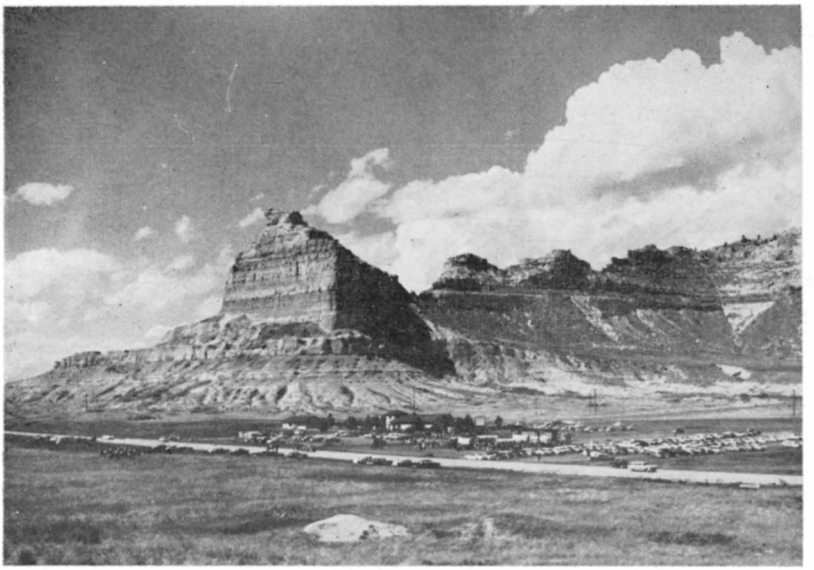
The revision of exhibits in the Visitor Center was started in 1960. Exhibits were completed in the fall of that year in the History Wing and the name of the wing was changed officially to the "Oregon Trail Room." The name of the "Paleo" or "Prehistory Wing" was also changed to the "Landmark Room" and 1962 will complete exhibit revision for this room.

Conservation programs under MISSION 66 at the Monument included soil and moisture work for erosion control on the summit and at Mitchell Pass. Visitor use is heavy at these two places and causes much "human" erosion. Although removal of the Bureau of Reclamation power line through Mitchell Pass is a part of MISSION 66, it is not anticipated that this will be completed until near the end of the program.[172]

The National Park Service is responsible for preserving the Oregon Trail ruts and maintaining the natural setting consistent with the period of Trail use. To enable the Service to do this, Monument boundaries should include sufficient lands to insure the protection or restoration of the scenic integrity of the principal bluffs and adjacent landmarks such as Dome Rock, the Badlands, and the North Platte River. To accomplish this objective, a boundary revision study, which had been going on for many years, was completed in 1959. This work was done by the Boundary Studies Section of the Division of Recreation Resource Planning in the Region Two Office. A bill, introduced by Congressman Don McGinley of the Fourth Nebraska Congressional District on March 2, 1960, would have put these boundary proposals into law. However, some controversy concerning a section of this bill which would have changed the designation of the National Monument to a National Historic Site, caused delay and no action was taken. The bill, minus the designation change, was reintroduced and passed in 1961 in the 87th Congress, by Congressman David Martin.

Two important land acquisitions were made during this period, however, and both are in line with the proposal. The first of these was the purchase of 27.43 acres of land within the proclaimed boundary in the northeast section of the Monument known as the "badlands." Title to this land was received on April 10, 1959, when $1,500.00 was paid to Mrs. Sadie Hise, owner.[173]

The second purchase concerned about 20 acres of land comprising the east half of Dome Rock. The Oregon Trail Museum Association bought this historically important acreage from Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gering for $2,000.00 on June 3, 1959.[174] This land will become part of the Monument.



On-to-Oregon Cavalcade camped at Scotts Bluff National Monument, May 26, 1959. **—Christian Studio**

Such a boundary revision would be the fourth since the original proclamation of December 12, 1919. Others were: Executive Order of May 9, 1924[175], eliminating 160 acres from the reservation located in the southeast section; the Proclamation of June 1, 1932[176], adding certain lands along the east boundary of the Monument, including Scotts Spring; and the Proclamation of March 29, 1940[177], adding certain lands along the north Boundary of the Monument, including certain islands in the North Platte River.

All of these revisions, deletions, additions, and purchases have changed the total acreage of the Monument several times. On February 1, 1960, Scotts Bluff National Monument contained a total of 3,451.52 acres of land, 2,198.78 of which are federally owned.[178]

Substantial progress has been made on the staffing and fiscal portions of the MISSION 66 program of the Monument. During the 1956-1969 period the Monument staff was increased

with the creation of a permanent Forman I—Cartetaker position. Edward Wolf who had held a similar position on temporary basis was reassigned to the full-time position on August 25, 1958. Adequate appropriations were given the Monument to maintain the facilities that were constructed so that the Monument has an adequate staff and sufficient funds to properly protect, interpret, and maintain the Monument land and facilities.

All the uncompleted phases of the MISSION 66 program for Scotts Bluff National Monument except the removal of the Bureau of Reclamation transmission line through Mitchell Pass are expected to be accomplished by 1966.

Superintendent Jones



Harold R. Jones
Superintendent, 1962-

Mr. Henneberger was notified of his transfer to the Region IV office, San Francisco, California, in late December, 1961, and was succeeded by Harold R. Jones in March, 1962. Mr. Jones had been stationed at the Region II office, Omaha, Nebraska. He previously served as Ranger at Rocky Mountain, Wind Cave, and Yellowstone National Parks.

Appendix A

SCOTTS BLUFF NATIONAL MONUMENT NEBRASKA

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By The President of The United States of America

A PROCLAMATION

Whereas Scotts Bluff is the highest known point within the State of Nebraska, affording a view for miles over the surrounding country; Whereas Mitchell Pass, lying to the south of said bluff, was traversed by the Old Oregon Trail and said bluff was used as a landmark and rendezvous by thousands of immigrants and frontiersmen travelling said trail enroute for new homes in the Northwest; and

Whereas, in view of these facts, as well as of the scientific interest the region possesses from a geological standpoint, it appears that the public interests will be promoted by reserving the lands upon which the said bluff and the said pass are located as a national monument:

Now, Therefore, I, Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the power and authority in me vested by section two of the Act of Congress entitled "An Act for the preservation of American antiquities," approved June 8, 1906 (34 Stat., 225), do proclaim that there are hereby reserved from all forms of appropriation under the public-land laws, and set apart as the Scotts Bluff National Monument, the following described lands, to-wit: the northwest quarter, north half of the southwest quarter, southeast quarter of the southwest quarter, southwest quarter of the northeast quarter and the west half of the southeast quarter of section four, township twenty-one north, range fifty-five west; lots one, two and three, south half of the northeast quarter, north half of the southeast quarter, southeast quarter of the northwest quarter and the northeast quarter of the southwest quarter of section five, township twenty-one north, range fifty-five west; the northeast quarter of section nine, township twenty-one north, range fifty-five west; lots six and seven, section twenty-seven, township twenty-two

north, range fifty-five west; lot four, southeast quarter, and said township and range; the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of section twenty-nine, said township and range; the east half of the east half of section thirty-two, said township and range; and the north half, southwest quarter, north half of the southeast quarter and the southwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section thirty-three, township twenty-two north, range fifty-five, all west of the Sixth Principal Meridan in the State of Nebraska, and that the boundaries of the said Scotts Bluff National Monument are as shown on the diagram hereto attached and made a part hereof.

Warning is hereby given to all unathorized persons not to appropriate or injure any natural feature of this Monument, or to occupy, exploit, settle or locate upon any of the lands reserved by this proclamation.

The Director of the National Park Service, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, shall have the supervision, management and control of this Monument, as provided in the Act of Congress entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service and for other purposes," approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat., 535).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done in the District of Columbia This 12th day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand
(SEAL) nine hundred and nineteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and forty-fourth.

WOODROW WILSON

By the President:
Robert Lansing,
Secretary of State.

Appendix B

Annual Visitation to Scotts Bluff National Monument
(Calendar Year)

1936	63,257	1949	57,069
1937	63,585	1950	60,344
1938	90,090	1951	56,542
1939	90,476	1952	56,542
1940	105,151	1953	50,706
1941	73,955	1954	57,672
1942	39,631	1955	54,937
1943	34,110	1956	73,700
1944	25,982	1957	79,230
1945	33,490	1958	82,162
1946	56,367	1959	95,814
1947	48,900	1960	91,460
1948	50,220	1961	92,272

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Appendix C

List of Custodians and Superintendents since Establishment

Name	Title	Period of Service
Willie (Will) M. Maupin	Custodian	4-10-20 to 7- 1-24
Albert N. Mathers	Custodian	9- 4-25 to 6-15-34
Dr. Harold J. Cook	Acting Custodian	6-15-34 to 12-20-34
Dr. Harold J. Cook	Custodian	12-20-34 to 4-11-35
Dr. Harold J. Cook	Acting Custodian	4-11-35 to 7-15-35
Charles E. Randels	Acting Custodian	7-15-35 to 6-25-38
Merrill J. Mattes	Custodian	6-25-38 to 3-19-46
David de Lancey Condon	Acting Custodian	9-15-38 to 11- 1-38
Charles E. Humberger	Acting Custodian	11- 1-38 to 6-16-39
Robert R. Budlong	Custodian	3-19-46 to 1- 1-49
Robert R. Budlong	Superintendent	1- 1-49 to 7-19-54
Frank H. Anderson	Superintendent	9- 5-54 to 1-25-58
John W. Henneberger	Superintendent	2- 2-58 to 1- 9-62
Harold R. Jones	Superintendent	3- 62 to

Appendix D

List of Rangers and Historians since Establishment

Name	Title	Period of Service
Dr. Harold J. Cook	Temporary Ranger	5-16-34 to 6-15-35
Merrill J. Mattes	Junior Historian	10- 1-35 to 6-25-38
Charles E. Humberger	Temporary Ranger	7- 5-38 to 12-12-39
A. Lynn Coffin	Park Ranger	6- 5-40 to 3- 4-43
G. Lee Sneddon*	Park Ranger	3- 5-43 to 11- 7-46
Herbert W. Marcellus**	Park Ranger	9- 7-44 to 2-21-46
David L. Hieb	Park Ranger	11-15-46 to 5- 1-47
Forrest M. Bensen, Jr.	Park Ranger	6-15-47 to 4-15-48
Luther S. Winsor	Park Ranger	7-31-48 to 5-26-51
Coyt H. Hackett	Sup. Park Ranger	6-12-51 to 3-12-56
Eli (Dan) Potts	Park Historian	6-11-56 to 7-28-57
Earl R. Harris	Park Historian	7-29-57 to

*Ranger Sneddon was absent on military furlough from 6-25-44 to 4-22-46.

**Herbert W. Marcellus was hired on a War Service Indefinite Apointment.

List of Clerical Employees Since Establishment

Name	Title	Period of Service
John M. Burruss	Jr. Clerk-Stenographer	8- 2-40 to 1-28-42
Ethel L. Meinzer	Jr. Clerk-Stenographer	8- 3-42 to 5-15-43
Louise Ridge	Administrative Assistant	6-18-43 to

Maintenance Personnel

Edward Wolf	Foreman I — Caretaker	8-25-58 to

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Rollins Philip Ashton, ed., **Discovery of the Oregon Trail: Robert Stuart's Narratives,** Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1935.

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1. Effinger, William L., **Outline of the Geology and Paleontology of Scotts Bluff National Monument,** p. 3.
2. Mattes, Merrill J., **Scotts Bluff National Monument,** p. 56.
3. **Ibid,** pp. 58-59.
4. **Ibid.,** p. 2.
5. **Loc. cit.**
6. Dunbar, Seymour, **A History of Travel in America,** vol. IV, pp. 1132-1134.
7. Stuart, Robert, **The Discovery of the Oregon Trail,** (Robert Stuart's Narratives).
8. Irving, Washington, **The Adventures of Captain Bonneville,** pp. 34-35.
9. Brand, Donald D., **The History of Scotts Bluff, Nebraska,** p. 32.
10. Mattes, **op. cit.**, p. 20.
11. Mattes, Merrill J., "Robidoux's Trading Post at 'Scotts Bluffs', and the California Gold Rush," **Nebraska History,** vol. XXX, June, 1949, pp. 95-138.
12. Green, Thomas L., "Scotts Bluff, Fort John," **Nebraska History,** vol. XIX, pp. 175-190.
13. Mattes, Merrill J., "Fort Mitchell, Scotts Bluff, Nebraska," **Nebraska History,** vol. XXXIII, pp. 1-34.
14. Mattes, **Scotts Bluff National Monument, op. cit.,** pp. 44-45.
15. Brand, **op. cit.,** p. 54.
16. Mattes, Merrill J., "Scotts Bluff is Venerable Landmark for Trails West," article in **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald,** August 2, 1950.
17. Senator G. M. Hitchcock to Assistant Secretary Adolph C. Miller, March 28, 1914, National Archives, Washington, D. C.
18. M. P. Kincaid to Stephen Mather, February 18, 1916, National Archives.
19. Kincaid to Secretary Lane, October 5, 1916, National Archives.
20. Petition to Lane. March 4, 1918, National Archives.

21. Office memorandum, Yard to Albright, March 22, 1918, National Archives.
22. Office memorandum, Albright to Mather, March 25, 1918, National Archives.
23. Memorandum, Administrative Assistant Joseph J. Cotter to Mather, October 26, 1919, National Archives.
24. Memorandum, Mather to Cotter, undated, National Archives.
25. Mattes, **Star-Herald** article, **op. cit.**
26. See Apendix A. The Proclamation erroniously makes reference to Scotts Bluff being the highest known point in Nebraska. The highest point in the state is a point in southwestern Kimball County, 5,424 feet above sea level. Scotts Bluff is 4,649 feet in elevation. South Bluff is 4,692 feet high.
27. Faris, John, (ed.), **Who's Who in Nebraska**, p. 719.
28. Letter, Maupin to Director, June 12, 1920, National Archives.
29. Report, Maupin to Director, September 15, 1920, National Archives.
30. Telegram, Maupin to Director, December 20, 1920, National Archives.
31. Telegram, Acting Director Arno B. Cammerer to Maupin, December 21, 1920, National Archives.
32. Letter, Maupin to Director, February 7, 1922, National Archives.
33. Memorandum, Director to Maupin, July, 1923, National Archives.
34. Correspondence between Maupin and the Washington Office, 1920-1921, National Archives.
35. Report, Maupin to Director, 1921, National Archives.
36. Letter, Congressman Simmons to Director, August 1, 1925, National Archives.
37. Faris, **op. cit.**, p. 1,016.
38. Memorandum, Acting Director Cammerer to Mathers, June 4, 1926, National Archives.
39. Letter, Mathers to Director, June 25, 1926, National Archives. Mathers was premature in spending the $100 allotted for this purpose and was reminded of this by subsequent memoranda from Cammerer. The builder, Mr. T. C. Reeder, of Gering, was not paid until after July 1.
40. Correspondence between Mathers and the Washington Office, 1926, National Archives.
41. Reports of Burrell to the Washington Office, July-September, 1926, National Archives.
42. "Saddle Rock" is also referred to by a variety of other names, such as, motorcycle rock, grandpa's toes, steamboat rock, etc. Some of these appellations also refer to other bluffs and rocks in the North Platte Valley outside of the Monument, and should not be confused with them.
43. Burney to Director, May 16, 1927, National Archives.
44. Report, Burrell to Director, June 18, 1927, National Archives.
45. Newspaper Articles, May and June, 1927.

46. Letters and Reports, Mathers to Washington Office, 1927-1928, National Archives.
47. Memorandum, Washington Office to Mathers, 1930, National Archives.
48. Report, National Conference on State Parks, 1928.
49. Resolution, Yoder, Wyoming, Chamber of Commerce, to Director, June 24, 1924. It should be noted that many people did, and still do, spell Scotts Bluff as one word instead of two. This confusion is due to the spelling of the city of Scottsbluff. Other doubtful usage and spelling in this resolution are that of the Yoder Chamber and not this writer.
50. Newspaper editorials and articles appearing at various times, 1925-1932.
51. **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald** article, June 18, 1931.
52. **Loc. cit.**
53. "Auto Road to Top of Bluff Assured," article in **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald**, September 13, 1932.
54. **Loc. cit.**
55. Shoemaker, Clifford, Civil Works Administration Final Report, Bureau of Public Roads, Scotts Bluff National Monument, April 26, 1934. Many stories circulate concerning the foot tunnel through "saddle rock". The author was told by one woman that she had walked through this tunnel in 1916. Others state that the Boy Scouts built the tunnel. None of these is true. The foot tunnel was constructed by private contractor during the first two weeks of June, 1933. Articles in local newspapers and Monument records substantiate this.
56. Shoemaker, Clifford, **op. cit.**
57. **Loc. cit.**
58. Report, Francis D. LaNoue to the Director, April 27, 1934.
59. Report, Francis D. LaNoue, **op. cit.**
60. Report, Harold J. Cook to the Director, April 26, 1934.
61. Notice of Appointment, Guy Numbers to Harold J. Cook, May 16, 1934.
62. Letter, Cook to R. M. Holmes, June 25, 1934.
63. Faris, **op. cit.,** p. 1,061.
64. Correspondence between Cook and the Washington Office, November 1934 through April 1935.
65. Although this notice is dated April 24. 1935, it was not received at the Monument office until April 30, at which time Cook took office.
66. The first business office was located on 10th street in Gering in a building owned by Mrs. Ella Goist. This was moved in early 1935 to the **Gering Courier** building. In early 1938, the office was moved to the Monument, to the Ranger's residence at first, then to the museum.

67. Notification of acceptance of contract, Cook to Fullen, February 15, 1935.
68. Telegram, Cook to Cammerer, July 9, 1935. Telegram, Ickes to Randels, July 15, 1935: "You are directed to assume charge immediately . . . and will also act as Custodian."
69. Telegram, Demaray to Mattes, October, 3, 1935: ". . . Engineer Charles Randels is to continue as Acting Custodian Scottsbluff [sic] during construction period stop Accordingly you are to work under Randels supervision until further notice . . ."
70. Mr. Mattes was certified by Civil Service Commission for the position of Custodian, Scotts Bluff National Monument. (Telegram, Verne E. Chatelain to Mattes, August 7, 1935.) Mr. Randels, temporarily Acting Custodian, requested Acting Director A. E. Demaray to appoint him as Acting Custodian until all work stopped (letter, Randels to Demaray, September 25, 1935). Mr. Mattes arrived at Scotts Bluff on October 1, and notified the Director of his arrival and that he had assumed the duties of Custodian (letter, Mattes to the Director, October 2, 1935). On October 3, Mr. Mattes received the telegram quoted in 69 above, and formal notification from Acting Director Demaray on October 14, that Mr. Randels was appointed Acting Custodian during the construction period and that, ". . . You are hereby designated as Historian of Scotts Bluff National Monument and you are to work under Acting Custodian Randels' supervision until further notice . . ." (Letter, Demaray to Mattes, October 14, 1935.)
71. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, November 1936.
72. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, May 1936. Actual work got under way on May 23 and lasted until August 25.
73. Work started on June 8, 1937 and was finished by early September. The bid was for $80,504.91. Letter, Thomas J. Allen, Jr., Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, to the Dircetor, June 7, 1937.
74. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, July 1936.
75. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, September 1937.
76. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Reports, July 1936 through June 1938.
77. Public Travel Tabulation by Months, File No. A3015.
78. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, April 1939.
79. This wing has been called by various names since its completion. Such names as "Pre-History Wing, the North Wing, Geology Wing, and the "Paleo Room," have been used. In early 1960, the designation "Landmark Room" was officially approved and will be thus applied until any later changes.
80. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Reports, April and May 1938.
81. Letter, Acting Associate Director R. O. Jennings, to Mattes, June 22, 1938.
82. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, June 1939.

83. Custodians Monthly Narrative Reports, June 1938 through June 1939.
84. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, August 1938. Mr. Jackson drove the stake at the site of his 1866 encampment on August 23.
85. Letter, Roswell P. Angier, Associate Dean, Yale University Graduate School, to Mattes, April 22, 1938.
86. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, September, 1938. Mr. Mattes left Scotts Bluff on September 15, 1938.
87. **Loc. cit.**
88. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, November 1938. Mr. Mattes returned to the Monument and relieved Mr. Humberger June 16, 1939.
89. Correspondence, Washington Office to Humberger, dated as follows: June 18, 1938; October 21, 1938; January 9, 1939; April 19, 1939; and May 17, 1939.
90. Custodian's and Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Reports, 1939 to 1951.
91. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, July 1939. The first derby was held on Sunday, July 30, 1939.
92. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, July 1940. Held on July 21.
93. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, August 1941. Held on August 3.
94. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, July, 1951. Held on July 15.
95. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, July 1947.
96. Custodians' Monthly Narrative Report for September 1939 indicates that all work was completed on September 29. This work was under the supervision of the Bureau of Public Roads and was done by the Orshek and Christiansen Company of Fremont, Nebraska. Total cost was $14,839.83.
97. Memorandum, Mattes to Canfield, September 5, 1939.
98. Memorandum, Regional Director Allen to the Director, June 30, 1939.
99. Memorandum, Acting Dircetor John R. White to Regional Director Allen, August 4, 1939.
100. This news release was printed in most newspapers in the vicinity.
101. Memorandum, Regional Director Allen to Superintendent Canfield. September 19, 1939. News release, April 5, 1940. It is now contrary to federal policy to provide picnic facilities for local use in national historical areas.
102. Memorandum, Custodian Mattes to Canfield, May 6, 1940.
103. Memorandum, Acting Regional Director John S. McLaughlin to Budlong, August 20, 1951.
104. Memorandum, Superintendent Canfield to Regional Director Allen, January 1, 1941.
105. Among the individuals and local organizations to make formal protests were: Kiwanis International, Scottsbluff; International Lions

Club, Gering; Senator Hugh Butler; Congressman Harry P. Coffee; Senator George W. Norris; and the Senior Class of the Bayard Nebraska high school.

106. Memorandum, Custodian Mattes to Superintendent Canfield, December 10, 1945.
107. Memorandum, Superintendent Canfield to Custodian Mattes, June 17, 1946. Undated note in Scotts Bluff file: "6 picnic tables were transferred on August 4, 1946 from the old picnic area to Bureau of Reclamation at Lake Minatare, Nebraska."
108. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, August, 1943.
109. Telegram, Acting Regional Director to Superintendent Canfield, May 25, 1942. Notice of Employment, August 3, 1942.
110. Notice of Temporary Employment for Emergency Work in the Field, August 2, 1940.
111. Notice of Employment, June 18, 1943.
112. Letter, Mrs. J. Atwood Maulding, Director of Personnel, to Coffin, June 5, 1940.
113. Memorandum, Custodian Mattes to Superintendent Canfield, July 6, 1940.
114. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, March 1943.
115. See Appendix B.
116. Grazing permit, signed by Mrs. B. M. Downar and Merrill J. Mattes, May 26, 1943.
117. Grazing permit, signed by S. R. Young and Merrill J. Mattes, August 8, 1944.
118. Article, **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald,** September 2, 1941.
119. Miscellaneous Service Permit, signed by C. D. Downey and Acting Custodian A. Lynn Coffin, October 1, 1940. A previous agreement had been signed by Downey and Mattes on June 17, 1940.
120. Memorandum, Mattes to Regional Director, May 9, 1945.
121. Notice of Promotion and Reassignment, undated.
122. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, March 1946.
123. Ranger Sneddon was absent from June 25, 1944 until April 22, 1946.
124. Ranger Marcellus entered on duty September 7, 1944: Notice of Temporary Appointment, September 7, 1944.
125. Memorandum, Marcellus to Superintendent Canfield, February 14, 1946, resigning position effective February 21, 1946.
126. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, November 1946.
127. **Loc. cit.**
128. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, May 1947. Mr. Hieb left May 1.
129. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, April 1948.
130. Telegram, Budlong to Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, August 2, 1948.
131. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Report, May 1951.
132. Memorandum, Budlong to Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, June 19,1951.

133. Telegram, Budlong to Regional Director, June 22, 1948. The bid was $9,962.00.
134. Memorandum, Budlong to Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, July 10, 1947.
135. Memorandum for the File, Budlong, August 3, 1948.
136. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, August 1949.
137. Custodian's Monthly Narrative Reports, April and May 1948.
138. Memorandum, Superintendent Canfield to Budlong, June 6, 1949.
139. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Reports, March and April, 1949.
140. Quotation from Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, July 1952.
141. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, July 1953.
142. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, June 1953.
143. Memorandum for the Director, Demaray to Director, July 4, 1935.
144. Memorandum, Budlong to Canfield, October 11, 1950.
145. Special Use Permit, undated but issued in late 1949, signed by Superintendent Budlong and Harry Thurman, Secretary-Treasurer of the club.
146. Memorandum, Budlong to Superintendent Canfield, April 23, 1951.
147. Letter, Acting Director Cammerer to Mather, May 7, 1931.
148. Letter, Associate Director Demaray to Chief of Engineers, War Department, August 26, 1948.
149. Memorandum, Budlong to the Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, May 23, 1949.
150. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Reports, July and October 1953.
151. Special Use Permit, issued to State of Nebraska, Department of Roads and Irrigation, February 20, 1956.
152. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, July 1954.
153. Letter, William C. Grove to Wirth, September 18, 1954
154. Among the organizations sending in resolutions and letters opposing the project were: **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald**, **Omaha World--Herald**, American Association for State and Local History, the Isaac Walton League, the Sierra Club, the Nebraska State Historical Society, Wildlife Management Institute, Gering Junior Chamber of Commerce, National Parks Association, Western Nebraska Council for Social Studies, The Nebraska Council of the American Pioneer Trails Association, the U.S. Highway 26 Association, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and many private citizens.

    Organizations supporting this project were: Morrill, Nebraska Chamber of Commerce; the City of Torrington, Wyoming; the **Morrill Mail**; American Legion Post 139, Minatare, Nebraska; Scottsbluff Chamber of Commerce; Torrington, Wyoming Chamber of Commerce; Gering Chamber of Commerce; City of Scottsbluff; the Nebraska Association of County Officials; the Mitchell, Ne-

braska Chamber of Commerce; city of Bridgeport, Nebraska; city of Minatare, Nebraska; and several private citizens.

155. Letter, Wirth to Lewis E. Bates, Administrative Assistant to Senator Frank A. Barrett, Wyoming, October 1, 1954. Bates had forwarded the application to Wirth from Grove with an attached letter.
156. Among the various government and state officials who wrote the Director concerning this proposal were: Wyoming Senator Frank A. Barrett, Nebraska Congressman A. L. Miller, Governor-elect Milward Simpson of Wyoming, Wyoming Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney, and Congressman Keith Thompson of Wyoming. It should be noted that of the various officials who voiced an opinion or an interest in this controversy, only one was from Nebraska, Congressman Miller. All the others were from the neighboring state of Wyoming, and they were quite vociferous in their appeals. All were in favor of this proposal.
157. Memorandum, Acting Superintendent Coyt H. Hackett to Regional Director, January 2, 1955.
158. Letter, Director Wirth to Senator O'Mahoney, February 8, 1955.
159. Letter, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Orme Lewis to Senator O'Mahoney, April 19, 1955.
160. Newspaper article, **Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald**, May 28, 1955.
161. Letter, Anderson to Potts, March 30, 1956.
162. Notification of Personnel Action, June 11, 1956.
163. See File A42, Oregon Trail Museum Association.
164. Memorandum, Acting Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park, George W. Miller to Custodian Mattes, June 4, 1943.
165. Consignment account, Superintendent of Documents to Custodian Mattes, April 22, 1942.
166. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, July 1957.
167. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, January 1958
168. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, February 1958
169. Completion Reports of construction projects, in Monument files.
170. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, April 1958.
171. Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report, October 1958
172. Records do not show exactly when this line was installed through Monument lands. A memorandum dated February 11, 1954 from the Regional Director to the Bureau of Reclamation Regional Director in Denver, Colorado quotes E. V. Lindseth, Assistant Director of the Bureau, as saying that it was first constructed in 1928.
173. Letter, K. G. Hise to Acting Superintendent Harris, April 10, 1959.
174. Letter, Executive Secretary Harris to Superintendent Henneberger, June 4, 1959.
175. Executive Order 4008 by Calvin Coolidge, May 9, 1924.
176. Proclamation 1999 by Herbert Hoover, June 1, 1932.
177. Proclamation 2391 by Franklin D. Roosevelt, March 29, 1940.

178. Summary Sheet of Land Acquired, Scotts Bluff National Monument, File L1415, Sheet No. 1

About the Author

Earl R. Harris is a native of New Brighton, Pennsylvania, where he attended public schools. In 1945 he moved to Deadwood, Souuth Dakota, and later attended Black Hills Teachers College. He is a veteran of the Korean conflict and was a professional musician for four years before becoming associated with the National Park Service, in 1953, at Mount Rushmore National Memorial, South Dakota.

Besides the B.S. Ed. degree in music, he also holds a Master of Arts degree in American History from Colorado State College. He has written a number of articles and monographs which have appeared in newspapers, quarterlies, and trade magazines.