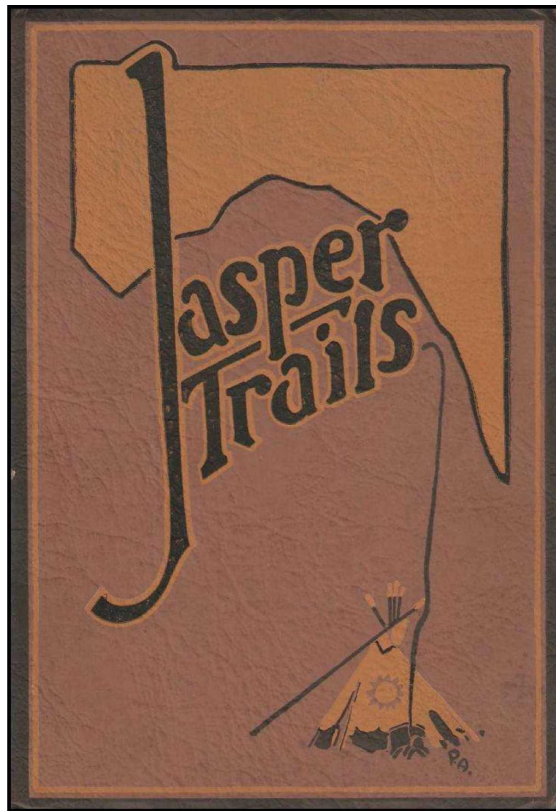


Jasper Trails

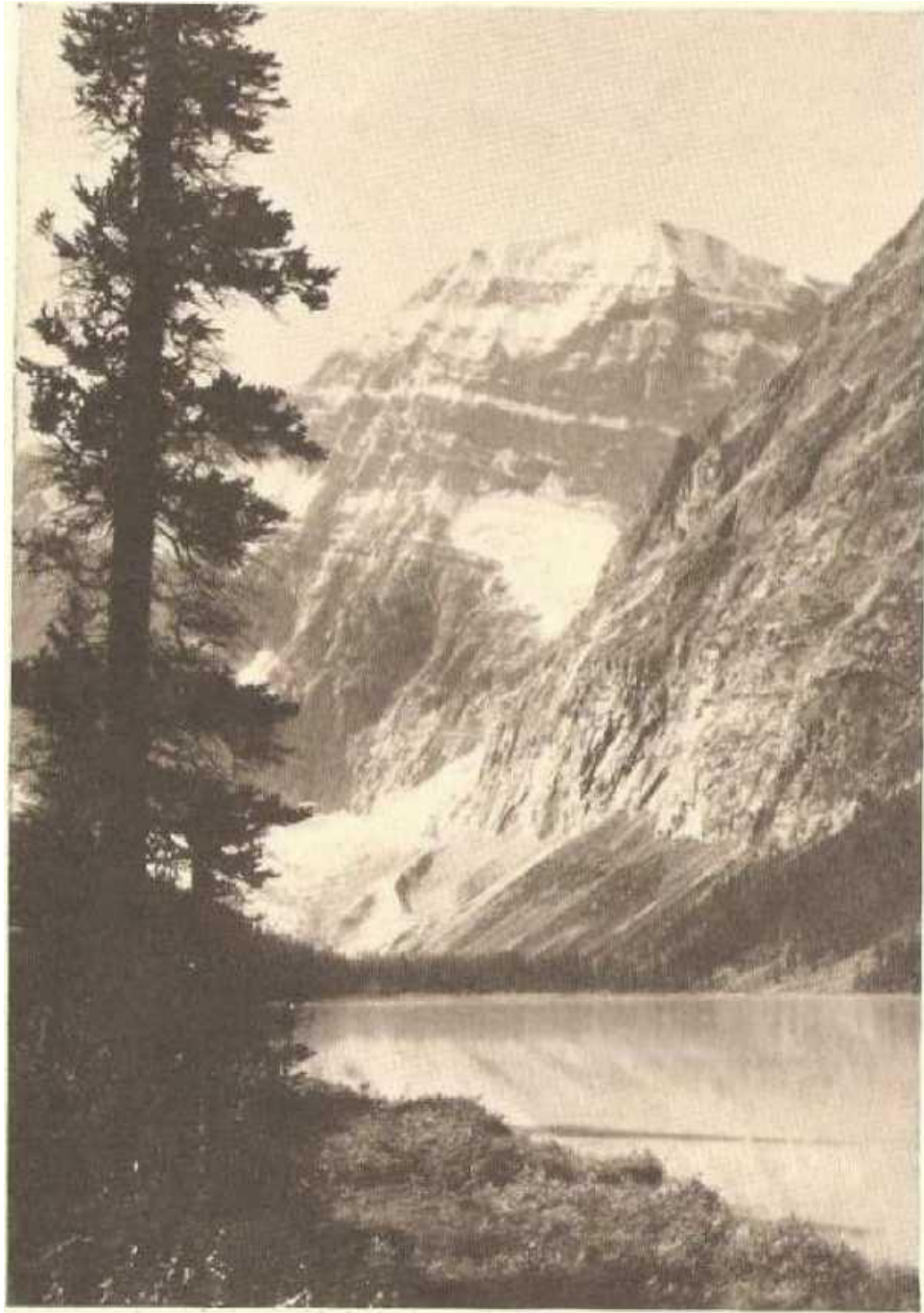
M. B. Williams



1930(?)

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Mount Edith Cavell, a beautiful memorial to the British heroine

WITH the building of the transcontinental railways across the Yellowhead pass, a new door was opened to the Canadian Rockies, a new and wonderful alpine district was made accessible to beauty lovers of the world. Yet unlike many other parts of



the mountains, this was no unknown region. The steel rails from Edmonton to the Divide had retraced two of the oldest and most travelled trails across the mountain fastnesses—the highways of the fur trade in its most glorious days, routes rich in history and romance and famous in the literature of a century. Here for over fifty years went the explorer and fur trader, the pioneer missionary, scientist and artist; fighting their way across the snows of the Athabaska pass to the Columbia, or up the stony valley of the Miette to the “Leather’ pass, as the Yellowhead summit was first called. In spite of the toils and perils of the journey many of these early travellers found time to record their impressions and adventures in a journal. These pages, written by weary men, by the dim light of a wilderness campfire, form some of the most fascinating volumes of Canadian literature, and paint for a less heroic generation, a vivid picture of those earlier days.

With the dwindling of the fur trade the glory of the “Athabaska Trail” departed. The picturesque cavalcades, with their bales of costly furs—led by dignified and often titled officers—disappeared. The jingling horse bells, the skirl of the pipes, the jests and gay song of the voyageur, which had set the wilderness ringing twice a year, no longer started the mountain echoes. The rival posts were deserted and fell to ruins ; the bands of Indian hunters and half-breeds sought other hunting grounds and only an occasional explorer, scientist or trapper followed the half obliterated trails.

The project of the Grand Trunk Pacific railway revived interest in the Yellowhead pass, which surveyors half a century before had pointed out as one of the lowest and most easily accessible routes for a railway across the Rockies. As soon as the location of the new road by this route was decided upon, before even a steel rail had been laid through the mountain gateway, the Canadian Government set aside a great reservation from the foothills to the Divide as a perpetual possession of the people under the name of “Jasper National Park.” To-day, this beautiful mountain region, redolent of many deeds that have gone to the upbuilding of Canada, has become one of the great playgrounds of the continent. The region, once the scene of so many conflicts and adventures has been set aside in the name of the people and the nation itself stands as host at its gateway.



Wild Deer

Area

The present area of the park is 4,505 square miles. Its boundaries form an irregular parallelogram extending from the watershed of the Brazeau river and the Columbia ice-field on the south to the fifty-third parallel on the north, and from the foothills on the east to the Great Divide on the west. Sweeping through the centre of the reserve, and dividing it roughly into two equal parts, is the wide valley of the Athabaska. This noble river, called by the Indians *Mistahay-Shakaw-Seepea*, or Great River of the Woods, takes its rise in the Columbia ice-field and flows at first almost north to Jasper townsite then northeast across the ranges to the eastern boundary of the park, gathering up practically all the drainage of the park within a basin roughly 50 by 96 miles. Its main tributaries are the Poboktan, Chaba. Whirlpool, Astoria, Miette, Maligne, Rocky, Snaring and Snake Indian rivers. The wide open nature of the Athabaska valley makes it an excellent route for travel and the ascent to the Yellow head pass on the Divide is one of the easiest crossings of the Rockies. Entering the park from the east the railway follows the valley as far as Jasper then turns up the tributary Miette valley which slopes gently down from the pass, with a grade of 237 feet in 18 miles.



The curious natural effigy of Old Man mountain rises above the golf links

Name

The name “Jasper” is one long associated with the region. For many years the Athabaska valley, from the eastern gate of the Rockies up the river as far as what is now the town of Jasper, was known as the “Jasper Valley.” Early writers refer to the two guardian peaks which flank the eastern entrance as the “Jasper Portals, while the shallow lake formed by the widening of the river was called then, as it is to-day, “Jasper Lake.’ It is believed that the name was derived from that of a clerk of the North-West Company, in charge of the first post on the Upper Athabaska about 1813, who was called Jasper Hawse or Hawes. Old records refer to this post first as “Jasper Hawse’s House”—obviously a difficult mouthful—and later as “Jasper’s House.” Finally it was converted into “Jasper House” and became known to history under that name. When the national park was set aside in 1907 the Government chose this old name so long associated with the valley, for the designation of the park.



**Beautiful Lac Beauvert
‘Where all enchanted hours prepare
Enchantment for tomorrow’s wear.’**

Lakes

One of the chief characteristics of the park is the variety and beauty of its mountain lakes. Near Jasper itself, set in the wide park-like benches on each side of the Athabaska, there are at least a dozen of them—crystalline jewels reflecting almost every hue, from the pale topaz of Chrome lake, the lapis lazuli and sapphire of Patricia and Pyramid, the vivid emerald of Beauvert, to the fire-like opal tints of lake Edith. The vivid colouring of the water is due to glacial matter held in suspension. Farther away are other lakes each beautiful in its own way: Medicine and Jacques lakes, Cavell lake, the Amethyst lakes in Tonquin valley, Brazeau lake to the south and Twin Tree lake to the north. Largest and perhaps supreme among them all in beauty is Maligne lake, whose remarkable setting has given it a rank among the great landscapes of the World.

Canyons

Outstanding, too, both for number and depth are the canyons, each with its turbulent stream and often a fine waterfall as well. Maligne and Athabaska canyons, the Rocky river. Fiddle creek and Ogre canyons to the east, the Snake Indian canyon with its magnificent fall, are among the most spectacular and the best known but there are many others, some of them perhaps equally fine, but inaccessible until further trails are built.

Approaches to the Park.

Jasper park may be reached by the Canadian National Railway transcontinental lines which traverse the reserve. On the west two routes are open from the city of Vancouver—the all-rail route via the Fraser and Thompson valleys, or the combined boat and rail trip from Vancouver via the inland passage to Prince Rupert and thence overland to Jasper. The two lines meet about 25 miles west of the Divide near Mount Robson station and the line enters the park by the Yellowhead pass. The respective distances are 535 miles for the train route in 23 hours, and 1,215 miles in 4 days for the combined boat and rail trip.

On the east the main line is taken from Edmonton, the capital of the province of Alberta, which is 236 miles east of Jasper. A gravelled highway is now under construction from Edmonton. Although not finally completed, a number of cars have already come into the park by this road. The park section from the east gate to Jasper is now ready. Full information with regard to the provincial section may be obtained from the Alberta Automobile Association at Calgary or Edmonton.



Highway to the Eastern Boundary
“Across the hills and o’er the hills,
By valleys green and gold.”

Accommodation

The chief accommodation in Jasper park is "Jasper Park Lodge," maintained by the Canadian National Railways. The hotel, which is of the bungalow type with a central social building surrounded by a colony of separate cottages, is delightfully situated. Set in a grove of pine, spruce and Douglas fir, it faces the exquisite Lac Beauvert and looks across to the snow-covered summit of mount Edith Cavell, one of the finest peaks in the park. Connected with the Lodge are tennis courts, an open air swimming pool, and a golf links which ranks among the finest in North America. The fees for the golf links are \$3 a round, or day; \$15 per week. The hotel, is managed on the European plan and is open from June 1st to October 1st. In the town of Jasper there are also several moderately priced hotels. The Athabaska and the Astoria hotels maintain a dining room; Pyramid hotel and the National hotel have rooms only.

At lake Edith. 3 miles northeast of Jasper Lodge, and 6 miles from Jasper, the Y.M.C.A. maintains a summer camp.

Information with regard to any of the above may be secured from their respective managers.

Furnished rooms and cottages are also available. A list may be obtained upon application to the Park Superintendent. Tea Rooms and Chalets are to be found in the town and at Maligne canyon, mount Edith Cavell. Maligne lake and Medicine lake.

The town of Jasper

The town of Jasper, situated at the confluence of the Miette and Athabaska rivers, is a divisional point on the Canadian National railway and has a permanent population of about 1,300. The townsite is owned and administered by the Government, which operates all public services and leases land for business or residential purposes. There are several good stores, churches, a bank and a small hospital. Facing the square is the Administration building attractively built of glacial boulders part of the thick deposit of debris left along the sides of the valley by the glaciers of the Ice Age—and containing the office and residence of the Park Superintendent.

Totem Pole

One of the chief objects of interest in the town is the large totem pole near the station. This fine specimen of Haida workmanship comes from Massett, Queen Charlotte Islands. British Columbia. The pole is about 65 feet long, 9 feet being buried underground. The emblems indicate that it belonged to a family of the Raven fratary, or clan, having the raven as its tutelary spirit or supernatural ancestor. The uppermost figure is a raven; beneath it is the figure of a man protected by the raven's wings; then the figure of a bear, head downward, showing its subservience to the raven.



Breaking Camp

MOTOR TRIPS FROM JASPER

There are about 100 miles of motor highways in Jasper park giving access to a number of outstanding features. For the visitor with limited time at his disposal this is the easiest way of getting an impression of the general character of this great playground. Motor charabancs make each of the principal trips once or twice daily, or private cars may be hired in the town or at the "Lodge."

Mount Edith Cavell Drive. Return trip from Jasper 36 miles.

This is one of the finest drives in the park, extending almost to the foot of the famous Angel glacier on mount Edith Cavell and affording magnificent high views of the Upper Athabaska valley. The return trip can be made in one-half day though if the visitor wishes to go out on the glacier, a full day will be required.

Leaving Jasper the highway follows the west bank of the Athabaska river and in less than a mile crosses the Miette river, the old route of the fur traders to Yellowhead pass. To the right are "Whistlers" mountain and Indian Ridge. To the left, across the valley. Signal mountain and mount Tekarra stand sharply out, with mount Hardisty and mount Kerkeslin to the south. Between mounts Curator and Tekarra can be seen the notch forming Shovel pass, one of the highest in the park and the route for the return journey from Maligne lake.

On the right three successive streams hurry down to join the Athabaska over boulder-strewn beds. These are Whistler's creek, Portal creek and Astoria river, the last named in honour of the fur post "Astoria," established by John Jacob Astor at the mouth of the Columbia. After the failure of the post several of the partners and clerks returned east by way of the Big Bend and Athabaska pass, travelling along the same route now followed in part by the highway.

After crossing the Astoria the road turns up that valley, climbing in a wide spiral that affords a magnificent panorama. Soon, ahead, is seen the shining glacier of Throne mountain and a little later mount Edith Cavell, named in honour of the heroic services of the British nurse in the cause of the Allies during the late war. comes into view. About a mile from the mountain is Cavell lake, a small tarn one-half mile long and a quarter of a mile wide which serves as a mirror for the mingled gleam and shadow of the peak.

From the end of the road a trail leads to the tongue of the glacier which can be crossed without danger though care should be taken on account of the numerous crevasses, some of which extend downwards for nearly 100 feet. From the high ridge on the opposite side of the valley the best view of the Angel glacier is obtained. This beautiful hanging glacier is fed by two lateral glaciers and the outline from certain angles presents a curious likeness to a flying figure with extended wings.

Maligne Canyon Drive. Return trip 12 miles from the Lodge, 18 miles from Jasper.

This is a charming drive through the woods, passing the beautifully coloured lakes Beauvert, Mildred, Trefoil, Annette and Edith, and rising in sweeping curves to the top of the river benches where extensive views are obtained of the central valley of



The Angel Glacier on Mount Edith Cavell

the park. To the north the curious profile of Roche Bonhomme, or Old Man mountain (8,185 feet), the outline of which bears a remarkably life-like resemblance to a human head, is the dominant feature. This peak forms part of the Colin range of mountains lying between the Maligne and Jacques Creek valleys.

Maligne Canyon

Maligne canyon is said to be one of the most wonderful pot-hole canyons on the continent. Its great depth, 188 feet, its narrowness— in places it is scarcely more than a slit between dark walls of rock— and the great size of the pot-holes, worn by the water in the course of ages, all make it of extreme interest to the geologist and the nature lover.

The Maligne valley is one of the “hanging” type, with an elevation of approximately 600 feet above that of the Athabaska which it joins. At one time, at the close of the Glacial period, the melting waters from the glaciers in pot-hole canyons on the upper Maligne and Medicine Lake valleys may have leaped over the lip of the upper valley in a wild falls. Then, finding some fault in the Devonian limestones, the river began to carve an ever-deepening path down the rock. With only rushing water and imprisoned boulders for tools, it has cut its way down through strata after strata representing the deposits of millions of years. Huge pot-holes worn by the swirling boulders, now left deserted and empty high above its bed, show where through long centuries the stream has been at work.

A trail leads along the side of the canyon to its mouth and several bridges afford excellent views of the gorge and waterfalls.

Those who follow the canyon to its outlet will observe that the volume of water which emerges is about four times as great as that entering at its upper end. This is due to the re-emergence in the gorge of underground streams, believed to represent the submerged waters of Medicine lake, which, except in high water, has no visible outlet.

Pyramid Lake. Return trip from Jasper 8 miles.

Another delightful drive is to Pyramid lake, 4 miles northeast of Jasper, at the base of Pyramid mountain. The colouring of the water is exceptionally fine—green and peacock blue in which the vividly coloured strata of mount Pyramid create a mingling of colours rich as a Persian carpet.

Pyramid lake is one of the best fishing waters of the park and boats and canoes may be obtained by those who wish to test their skill. In addition to Rainbow and Lake trout, it contains the Ouananiche, or land-locked salmon, and is the only water into which these fish have been successfully transplanted. Grayling also are very plentiful. As one approaches the lake to the right of the motor road there is a fine grove of ancient Douglas firs, while along its shore wild flowers grow in great profusion and variety. A tea-room and dance pavilion faces the lake.

Half a mile before reaching Pyramid lake the road passes Patricia lake, a slim blue sheet of water named in honour of Her Royal Highness the Princess Patricia of



Maligne Canyon in Winter



Sunset, Maligne Lake

**“Still pursuing the day the swift horsemen of night
Follow close on the Hanks of the chariots of light.”**

Connaught, daughter of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, former Governor General of Canada, who spent several holidays in the park.

Pocahontas and Eastern Ranges Drive. Return trip from Jasper 62 miles.

A fine drive for those who are interested in the history and geology of the park as well as for the nature lover is the Jasper highway to Pocahontas. The road extends to the eastern boundary of the park and forms a section of the new' Edmonton-Jasper highway. This was the route followed by the old Fur Brigades in the days of the great North-West and Hudson's Bay companies and here went many famous explorers and adventurers. Two posts which played an important part in the early history of the valley—Henry House and Jasper House—were on the west side of the valley. Henry House was a few miles from Jasper, Jasper House was almost opposite the mouth of the Rocky river.



As one goes eastward the character of the landscape shows a marked change. The Athabaska becomes broad and shallow, widening out into Jasper and Brulé lakes, with small lagoons and low, willow fringed shores. Instead of rounded peaks clothed with green, one finds bare limestone ridges, sharply tilted, with ragged knife-edge spines

and striking fractures. The tributary streams flow down through narrow contracted valleys with deep canyons and curious rock formations along their way.



Moose

In these outer ranges the force of that great thrust which crumpled the earth's crust into folds a couple of miles high is most clearly apparent. The solid rock has been bent, thrust over, twisted down and pushed up as if the gods of the hills had been having a gigantic taffy-pull. In some places the strata form a complete S. In others vertical has been piled on horizontal and horizontal again on that, and rocks that are aeons older set on top of relatively recent formations.

Roche Miette (7,599 feet) and Pocahontas.

Approaching Pocahontas one of the most striking peaks is Roche Miette, a landmark to all travellers along the old "Athabaska Trail." The name is said to be derived from an adventurous voyageur named Miette, who climbed to the summit of the peak and sat with his legs hanging over the abyss. The mountain may be climbed in 3 or 4 hours from the northeast side. Pocahontas was formerly a thriving mining town but in recent years operations have been shut down.

Punchbowl Falls

A few minutes' walk from Pocahontas is an interesting waterfall on Punchbowl creek. Dropping from a ledge above the stream falls into a narrow cleft in the rock which has been carved by the action of the water into a beautiful rocky bowl resembling a Grecian urn.

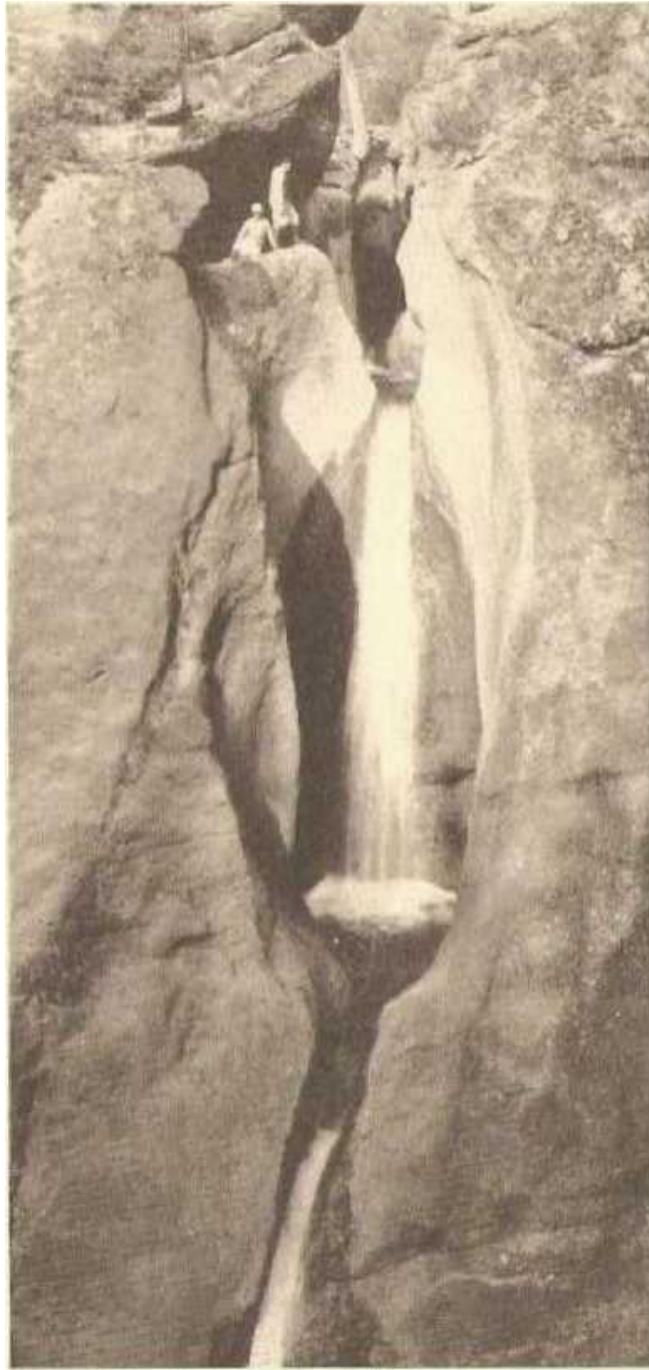
Miette Hot Springs

Ten and a half miles from Pocahontas are the Miette Hot Springs, locally famous for their efficacy in rheumatic and kindred complaints. An analysis of the waters shows that their constituents resemble the well-known springs at Banff, but several of these springs have a higher temperature. The hottest reaches 128.5°; the second, 118°; and the third 110°. No modern bathing establishment has yet been built but each year many scores of invalids seek the springs and some astonishing cures have been reported. The springs are found in an extremely narrow valley, so contracted that there is scarcely room for any kind of building. More than a dozen steaming jets issue from the rocks and a number of these have been collected into rustic pools in which a bath may be enjoyed. The temperature of some of these is so hot as to be unbearable unless one begins with those of a cooler nature, accustoming one's skin to the heat by a progression of pools each a little hotter than the last. It is said that some of these old boulder-lined and moss-chinked pools were built by the "coureurs de bois." traders and trappers a hundred years ago. Several of the old records contain references to "volcanic springs very useful in diseases" found in this vicinity.

There is as yet no accommodation for visitors at the Hot Springs and parties going in to remain overnight must take tents with them. A limited number of tents can be rented from guides and packers at Pocahontas. A motor road is now under construction to the springs but at present access is by pony-back. From Lu scar on the east there is a secondary pack-trail through the foot-hills to the Hot Springs about 40 miles in length. Each summer guides bring people in from this district.

Fiddle Creek Canyon

About 4 miles northeast of Pocahontas, Fiddle Creek enters the Athabaska. A walk of about 2 miles from the highway will bring the visitor to Fiddle Creek canyon, a remarkable example of contorted rock formation and erosion, where the strata walling the canyon is standing practically on end.



Punchbowl Falls

ONE-DAY TRAIL OR HIKING TRIPS

Cabin, Marjorie, Hibernia and Caledonia Lakes. Return 7 miles.

This charming little group of lakes lies on the benches of the Athabaska river west of the townsite. Cabin lake, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the town is the source of the town's water supply; Caledonia, about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, is one of the best fishing lakes in the park having been stocked with trout.

About 5 miles farther on is another group known as the Dorothy lakes, including the Iris, Viri, Christine and Dorothy lakes.

Summit of Whistlers Mountain. Eleven miles return from Jasper (8,085 feet).

The forest-covered mountain standing in the triangle made by the meeting of the Miette and the Athabaska is known as the "Whistlers" from the numerous colonies of Whistling or Mountain marmots found on the upper slopes. Their call, something like a policeman's whistle, is apt to startle the newcomer. A good trail leads to the summit and ponies may be taken all the way. A fine panorama of the Athabaska valley and surrounding peaks is obtained from the top.

Summit of Signal Mountain. Return trip from Jasper 20 miles, 16 from the "Lodge.

Signal mountain, directly east of Jasper, also presents a good one-day trip for either the hiker or trail rider. The route follows the Maligne drive for about 4 miles from the Lodge then strikes off through the woods, zigzagging across the face of the mountain and affording fine views. Ponies are left about 700 feet from the summit and the rest of the climb is made on foot.

Buffalo Prairie. Return trip 20 miles from Jasper, 14 miles from Lodge.

These beautiful open meadows on the east side of the Athabaska make a good objective for a day's hike, ponyride or fishing party. In the days of the Fur Brigade the spot was known as "Prairie de la Vache" because buffalo had been seen feeding here. Nearly all expeditions crossing the mountains camped here on account of the abundant herbage and it was frequently used as a winter pasture for horses used in crossing the pass. The Wabasso lakes on Buffalo Prairie supply good fishing but are not scenically remarkable.

TWO-DAY TRIPS

Athabaska Falls. Return 40 miles

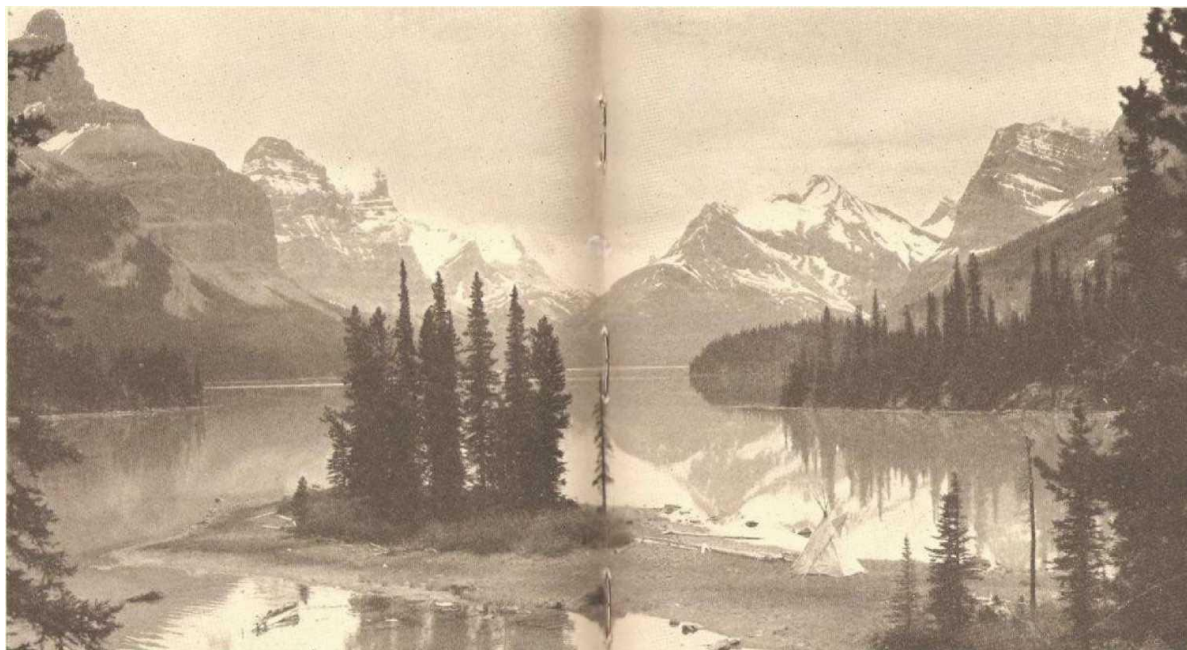
An easy trail trip, suitable for the beginner, is to the Athabaska falls. Motors can be taken via the Mount Edith Cavell highway to the Astoria bridge and thence via the tote road to Whirlpool river. From this point ponies can be taken the remaining 4 miles to the falls or the trip can be made on foot. When horses are used the return trip is frequently made by way of the east side of the Athabaska via Buffalo Prairie and the Wabasso lakes. There is no all-night accommodation so tents must be taken if two days are given to the trip.





Guides Preparing Supper

The falls occur at the head of a deep canyon and are remarkably fine. The historic river, hurrying down from its distant source in the great Columbia ice-field, has gathered volume from its chief upper tributaries, the Poboktan, the Chaba and the Sunwapta. until it is here nearly 200 yards across. Milky with silt from many glaciers, it comes sweeping around the base of mount Kerkeslin and, taking a sudden turn, finds its channel suddenly blocked and contracted by outjutting rocks.



Maligne Lake

“Cupped to the marge with beauty.”

Forced between these it leaps wildly into a deep basin below, its watery curtain divided into three parts, the central portion carrying the main body of water, while foaming cascades tumble down over sharp ledges at each side. The fall to the left is especially graceful, descending by a series of steps over the horizontal strata. The main body of the river, striking the opposite wall with terrific force and a boom like thunder, is hurled back into midstream where it boils and churns about, seething and tossing, swirling about in great caverns and recesses carved in the rock, and flinging up columns of spray far above the tree tops. In a few yards, once again contracted, it is forced down into a dark gorge, 80 feet deep, with walls so narrow that they are in places only a few feet apart.

Tonquin Valley. Elevation 6,450 feet. Return 21 miles.

The Tonquin valley is one of the most beautiful and impressive in the park. It lies almost at timber line, at the feet of the tremendous group of peaks known as the Ramparts, Park-like groves of dark spruce and balsam dot its floor, interspersed with

green meadow-lands through which run glistening streams carrying the waters from half a dozen glaciers. Near the southern end is a beautiful sheet of water 3 miles long and about 1 mile wide divided by a rocky promontory into two parts and forming what are known as the Amethyst lakes. On its western side the valley is walled by a giant arc of peaks, castellated in form, with black precipices rising into splendid towers and pinnacles. At the foot of these walls numerous small glaciers project to the valley. The first peak of the Rampart group to the north, is Barbican. Next, towering above the whole line, lifts the splendid pile known as mount Geikie, the highest peak of the range, with Turret mountain. Bastion peak, Redoubt. Dungeon and Paragon following one another in close formation. Over Bastion may be seen the head of Postern mountain with Casemate to the south, while south of the range the dark ice-hung mass of mount Fraser stands as an outpost to the line. Mount Erebus with its beautiful Eremite glacier rises directly south of mount Fraser.

Tonquin valley can be reached in one day from Jasper. As a rule ponies are sent ahead to the Portal creek bridge on the Mount Edith Cavell highway and cars taken to this point. Turning up the valley of Portal creek the trail cuts through deep woods to Circus valley and thence across Maccarib pass to the Tonquin valley. The return journey is usually made via Meadow creek to Geikie station in the Miette valley where ponies can be left and the train taken to Jasper. The loop route from Portal Creek bridge to Geikie is about 21 miles. The trip can be taken either way but owing to the steep ascent from Geikie on the Meadow Creek trail, which is very hard on horses, it is better to go in by the Portal Creek route and return as recommended.

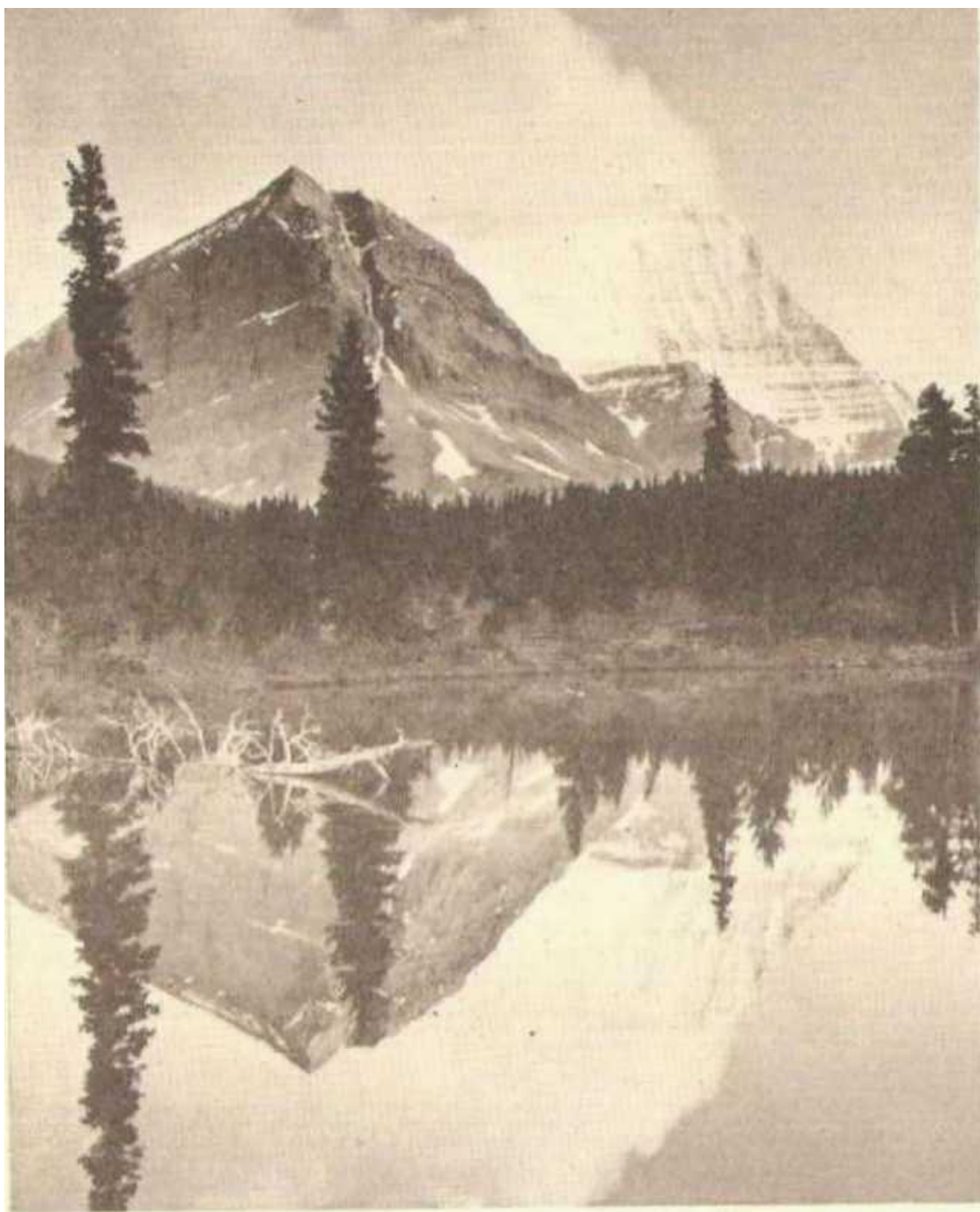
[[m-b-m-b-williams-jasper-trails-18.jpg]]**Tonquin Valley and the Ramparts**
“A giant valley

Asleep and vast and still and far away.”

Mount Robson (12,972 feet). Return trip 2 to 3 days.

Mount Robson, the highest peak of the Canadian Rockies south of Yukon, stands at the western boundary of Jasper park and can be reached in one day from Jasper by taking the morning train from Jasper to Robson station. At this point, if arrangements are made in advance, ponies will be found waiting. The trail leads via the Grand Forks valley to Berg lake. There are overnight chalets at both lakes. Emperor falls, probably the finest cataract in the Rockies, is passed en route. Berg lake lies at the base of the western face of the mountain and serves as a mirror for the beautiful snow-crowned head of mount Robson and for Tumbling or Berg glacier, a gigantic ice-fall which hangs, in apparent contradiction of all the laws of gravitation, almost perpendicularly upon the slope, with its nose touching the blue waters of the lake. From time to time great blocks of ice, sometimes tons in weight, break off from the glacier and float about on the water.

Directly east of Berg lake is the detached mass known as mount Rearguard (9,000 feet). About it flow the two great ice streams, Robson and Berg glaciers, which descend from the mighty ice-field lying upon the north shoulder of mount Robson. Robson glacier is not difficult to travel and may be followed to its head in the magnificent



Mount Robson. Monarch of the Rockies
“Whose sun-bright summit mingles with the sky.”

Robson cirque. From the centre of the ice-field rises a rugged rocky peak known as the Helmet (11,160 feet). Farther south, like lonely stacks lifting above a sea of ice, are The Dome (10,098 feet) and the shining head of mount Resplendent (11,173 feet).

THREE TO FOUR DAYS' TRIP

Maligne Lake and Shovel Pass (58 miles).

This is one of the finest pony trips in the park. The trail is not difficult and overnight camps have been established at Medicine and Maligne lakes which add considerably to the comfort of the traveller. Maligne lake itself is one of the gems of the Rockies, presenting at its upper end a mountain landscape scarcely to be surpassed for alpine beauty and grandeur. From the camp at the lower end of the lake a motor boat is taken about 9 miles up the lake to the Narrows. Passing through a narrow channel guarded by lance-pointed spruce the visitor enters the beautiful upper lake, a place as yet wholly untouched by human habitation.

Circling about, in an enormous wall that rises almost directly from the water, are more than a score of glorious peaks, silver gray, tawny or snow-crowned, a company of alpine Titans lifting their solemn heads high into the blue. Flung over their airy battlements, brilliantly white against the blue dome of the sky, hang more than twenty glaciers, which sweep down to thick masses of green forest absolutely unscarred by fire. Everywhere one looks, some commanding mass meets the eye. Great towers face in all directions, presenting almost every type of mountain architecture, culminating at the head of the lake in snowfields and glaciers of dazzling purity.

To the south the great ice-fields of mount Brazeau and mount Henry MacLeod gleam brilliantly white, while, especially on the western side, other glaciers hang down so near the water's edge that they appear to be within a few minutes walk. The whole makes up one of those perfect pictures of alpine grandeur—bold rocky forms, green ice and snow gleaming against the sky, dark forest and blue lake below found only among the great alpine regions of the world.

The trip to the lake is usually made by the motor highway to Maligne canyon and thence along the tote road, over which cars can be taken in good weather, to Medicine lake. Here, if arrangements are made in advance, horses will be found waiting and the remainder of the trip can be taken on pony-back. Return may be made by way of Shovel pass (7,500 feet), one of the highest passes crossed by tourists, which affords unsurpassed panoramas of both the Maligne and the Athabaska valleys. Little Shovel pass, a high alpland crossed before the true summit is reached, is in early summer a veritable alpine flower-garden, a riot of blossoms of every hue. From the western end of the pass the trail drops down to the Athabaska valley, meeting the trail on the east side of the valley from Athabaska falls, and leading via Buffalo Prairie to the Lodge.



Crossing lofty Shovel Pass

LONGER TRIPS

Athabaska Pass and Committee Punchbowl. Return 60 miles.

This is the old fur route across the Rockies by way of the Athabaska and Whirlpool valleys. The trip to the pass is three or four days ride from Jasper and for a good part of the way there is as yet no standard trail. From the Cavell highway the trail follows the route to the Athabaska falls as far as the mouth of the Whirlpool, then turns up the west side of the Whirlpool. For the first few miles the going is easy, then the trail becomes a little more difficult to follow, crossing and re-crossing the river or running along the shaly flats of the river bed. Throughout the last 12 miles the scenery is exceptionally fine with thrilling views of the great Scott ice-field and glacier and snow summits south of the Divide. The two famous peaks, mount Brown and mount Hooker, guard the pass. On the summit lies the small lake known as the Committee Punchbowl, historic meeting place of the western and eastern brigades in the days of the fur trade.

Fortress Lake and Pass. Return 102 miles.

Fortress lake, only four days travel from Jasper, is a spot of such beauty that it seems destined to become one of the famous resorts of the park. Although as yet but little visited, its name is already well known and the few travellers who have reached its shores have been loud in their expressions of admiration. The lake lies in a deep, narrow valley extending westward from Fortress pass, about one mile across the Divide. The distance by trail from Jasper is about 51 miles. The route is by way of the Mount Edith Cavell highway to the Astoria river. 9 miles, thence up the Athabaska river to Sunwapta falls. 26 miles, and from Sunwapta falls to the Chaba river and up the Chaba to Fortress lake, 15 miles.

Columbia Ice-field. Return 120 miles.



**The Committee Punch Bowl, summit of Athabaska Pass
Famous meeting place of Hudson's Bay officials in the days of the Fur
Brigades**



Crossing Bastion Glacier

This great sea of snow and **rowing Bastion Glacier** j_{ce} made up of the accumulations of untold centuries, represents the climax of the snow and ice deposits of the Canadian Rockies. Lifted high upon the shoulders of a score of mighty peaks, it sends down glaciers and wildly broken ice-falls to the valleys below and forms the geographical centre of the water system of one quarter of the continent. "Mother of Rivers." it has well been called, for from this vast ice sea issue streams which take their way finally to three oceans, and carry life and fertility to thousands of miles of valley and plain.

The largest of its great ice tongues is the Saskatchewan glacier, which extends for six and a half miles down to the valley, with a width of one mile. The Athabaska glacier is second in area. The first sends its waters by way of the Saskatchewan to lake Winnipeg and thence by the Nelson river to Hudson bay and the Atlantic, while the second gives rise to the historic Athabaska which flows to the Peace and the mighty Mackenzie, losing itself at last, after more than 2,000 miles of travel, in the icy waters of the Arctic sea. On the west, the east branch of the Bush river and Tsar creek carry some of the melting waters to the great Columbia and so to the Pacific ocean.

In the very centre of the ice-field and practically astride of the watershed, rises a curious snow-covered peak which forms the hydrographic centre of the field, known as the Snow Dome (11,340 feet).

The snowfield is surrounded by some of the noblest peaks of the Rockies. Midway of its northern boundary rises the great gable of mount Columbia (12,294 feet), the second highest peak of the main range. Mount Bryce (11,507 feet) holds the centre of the southern boundary. Mount Athabaska (11,452 feet) stands guard at the eastern edge, mount King Edward VII (11,400 feet), towers to the northwest, while the imposing mass of mount Saskatchewan (10,964 feet), stands at the southeast limit of the field.

On the northeast side, towards the Sunwapta, the *mer de glace* breaks off in an abrupt and lofty escarpment with glaciers clutching wildly at its rocky edge and hanging in beautiful ice-falls to the valley. On the south and east the field slopes gently downward, reaching its greatest breadth in the neighbourhood of battlemented mount Castleguard (10,096 feet).

The route usually followed from Jasper is by the Maligne valley. Maligne pass and Poboktan and Nigel passes to the foot of the Saskatchewan glacier or by the Athabaska and Sunwapta valleys and Wilcox pass. On the south of the ice-field the best way of approach is by the Castleguard valley.

Jasper to Field. 200 miles.

A personally conducted trip from Jasper to Field and return, visiting the ice-field, Castleguard valley and other interesting points en route, leaves Jasper each year on July 1, reaching Field, twenty-five days later, returning on August 1, and reaching Jasper about August 25. The distance from Jasper to Field is approximately 200 miles. Halts of a few days' duration are made along the way and an opportunity is given of exploring some of the more important ice-fields and glaciers or of making a climb which affords a panorama of this intensely interesting section of the Rockies. This trip



Medicine Lake—a blue jewel in a setting of silvery limestone peaks

has been made by a number of ladies and while difficult, for those who have some experience in trail-riding in the mountains, it affords unequalled experiences.

Brazeau, Southesk and Rocky River Loop. 150 miles.

The Brazeau river, which forms the southern boundary of the park, takes its rise at Sunwapta pass and flows northeasterly to the plains. Its valley is picturesque and is noted as a haunt of big game. The route followed is up the Athabaska, Sunwapta and Poboktan to Brazeau lake, thence down the Brazeau to the east boundary of the park, returning via the Brazeau forest reserve and the Rocky river and then by the highway to Jasper. The loop route is about 150 miles.

Snake Indian Valley. Byng Pass and Mount Robson. 130 miles.

This is another long loop route, circling through the northern area of the park and returning by way of mount Robson and the valley of a Thousand Falls. Horses are usually sent ahead to Devona and the train taken to that point. From Devona a good trail leads up the Snake Indian valley, past the beautiful Snake Indian falls to the Middle Branch, which is followed to its headwaters near the northern confines of the park, an area particularly rich in big game. Crossing Byng pass the trail then turns south following the Smoky river to lake Adolphus at the foot of mount Robson and returning via the Robson trail to the railway at Robson station.

Game

Jasper national park is a wild life sanctuary. No hunting is permitted within the park and all firearms must be sealed upon entry. Guns will be sealed free of charge at the Superintendent's office or by any of the park wardens. Wild birds, their nests and eggs are rigidly protected.

Everywhere one goes in the park wild life is encountered. Bear, sheep, goat and deer are found practically in all parts of the reserve and they are noticeably losing their sense of fear.

These unexpected meetings with wild creatures as one goes along a road or trail form one of the great charms of a visit to the park. To look up and see a band of beautiful big-horn sheep or a few goat on the rocky ledges high above, or from your tent door in the early morning to watch a graceful doe and fawn drinking from a mountain lake; or, as you motor, to catch a half glimpse of a velvet black or rich brown coat making off through the underbrush—perhaps even a couple of young cubs swinging in the top of a slim jack pine these are among the most charming events in the day. Of late years the animals are growing so tame that they are even entering the townsite and camera lovers with either still or motion picture cameras have thus a unique opportunity to secure pictures of these interesting inhabitants of the wild.

The principal species are mountain goat, bighorn sheep, black or grizzly bear, elk or wapiti, cariboo, mule and Virginia deer, moose, porcupine, beaver, marten, fisher, muskrat, otter, weasel, mink, wolverine, lynx, timber wolf and mountain lion or cougar.



Fish and Fishing

Many of the beautiful lakes and streams in Jasper park contain game fish, and during recent years restocking Operations have been widely carried on by the Government, which have resulted in a steady improvement in fishing. Among the indigenous species are the rainbow trout (*Salmo iridens*), cut-throat trout (*Salmo clarkii*), Dolly Varden or bull trout (*Salvelinus parkei*), and salmon trout (*Cristivomer namaycush*). Loch Leven trout (*Salmo trutta Levenensis*), which spawns in late September and early October, and ouananiche or land-locked salmon (*Salmon salar ouananiche*), both non-indigenous fish, have been introduced in some of the suitable waters with good results, especially in Pyramid lake, where a few four- or five-pound specimens of ouananiche have been caught with the fly.

The best fishing waters within easy reach of Jasper are Caledonia lake, $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of the town, Pyramid lake, 4 miles north of Jasper and the Wabasso Lakes, about 8 miles south on Buffalo Prairie. The latter have so far furnished the best average weight in rainbow trout. Hardisty creek, 20 miles south, near the Athabaska falls, affords good sport, Jacques lake, 30 miles, reached by 10 miles of trail from the upper end of Medicine lake, is noted for consistently good catches of Dolly Varden trout. After high water whitefish can usually be taken in the Athabaska river.

No licence is required for fishing in the park but application should be made to the Superintendent for copies of the regulations with respect to catches and seasons.

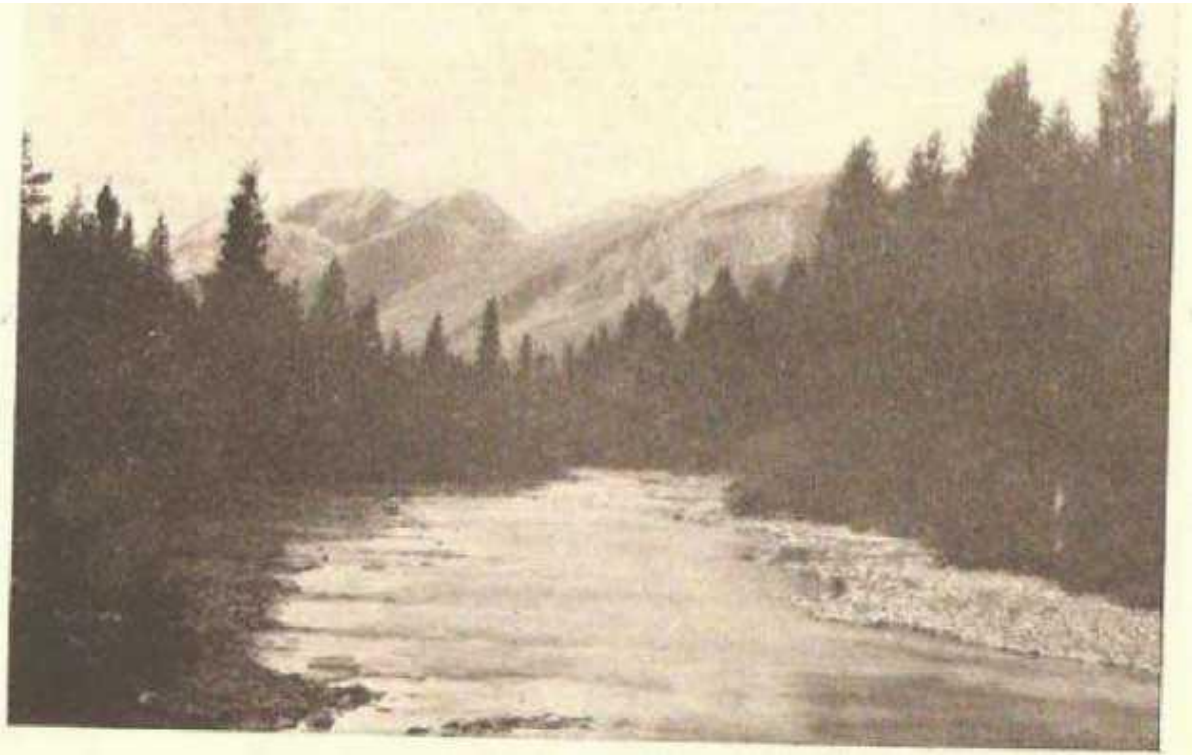
Alpine Climbing

Jasper park offers an almost bewildering choice to the alpine climber. Over seventy per cent of the highest peaks in the Rockies are found either within the present boundaries of the park or can be reached with Jasper as a starting point. Among the outstanding summits are mount Robson (12,972 feet), the highest peak of the main system; mount Columbia (12,294 feet), the second highest; the North Twin (12,085 feet), the third; and mount Clemenceau (12,001 feet), the fourth; mount Alberta (11,874 feet); the South Twin (11,675 feet); mount Bryce (11,507 feet); mount Lyell (11,495 feet); mount Athabaska (11,452 feet); mount Kitchener (11,500 feet); and a number of others well over 11,000 feet. Practically every kind of rock and ice work is to be found, and there are abundant climbs of sufficient difficulty to test the most experienced.

The great attraction to many climbers, no doubt, is the opportunity the region affords for first ascents. There are many important peaks, still unconquered and even unnamed, and whole regions waiting to be explored. The headwaters of the Snaring and of the southern branch of the Snake Indian, parts of the Whirlpool section and the mountains west of Maligne lake are as yet unmapped. A great deal also remains to be cleared up in the northern and northeastern section of the park between the Snaring and the Great Divide and north to the northern boundary of the park, while the whole immense region from Athabaska pass to Bow pass, with the great Columbia icefield as



Tumblins Glacier and Berg Lake, Mt. Robson



Outlet of Twin Tree Lake



Crossing Jonas Pass on the trail from Jasper to Field

its centre, will beckon to explorers for many years. By the latter part of July the snow is all gone from the northern slopes and climbing conditions are at their best. Swiss guides can be secured at Jasper and there are a number of good outfitters who can outfit a party for an expedition with only a few days' notice.

Climate and Seasons

Visitors often ask what is the best season in which to visit the mountains. It is a question to which there is no general answer. To lovers of the Canadian mountains every season has its own beauty. Spring with its rush of melting snows and brilliant flowers, the long temperate summer with its abundant sunshine, autumn with its windless days and glory of colour, the shining majesty of winter—each brings its special delight,

From the first of June to about the fifteenth of September in Jasper park the weather is usually delightful for outdoor enjoyment. Thunderstorms are rare and the absence of reptile pests—no poisonous snakes of any kind



Beaver

are found in the park— the comparative freedom from mosquitoes, all add to the comfort of outdoor life. The moderately low altitude of the Athabaska valley, too, compared with many other parts of the Rockies, makes it possible for many to enjoy Jasper who find the higher regions too trying. The average temperature during the day registers 65° to 75° F.; the nights are always cool. The long twilights, with the pale yellow of the afterglow lingering behind the peaks, sometimes for hours after the sun has gone, lengthen the day's enjoyment. And even when full darkness comes the

east will hold that ghostly glimmer of these northern latitudes, which is known as the “false dawn.”

Whatever the season the greatest charm of a mountain landscape remains its constant variability. Like the sea the peaks never appear the same for two days or even two hours together. Clouds, sunshine and changing light weave over them their infinite mutations. Sunrise and sunset, moonlight, clear, dark nights bright with stars, rain, mist and even the brief snow-storm of midsummer— each brings its own particular beauty to the mountain world. The month of June in the valleys and July on the high passes are the best for flowers. As one goes upwards the hand of the year moves backward and one may often find the first spring flowers opening their eyes in some high mountain meadow when the lower valleys are haunting their midsummer bloom. While the flowers of the lower woods and valleys are more abundant and beautiful than in many other regions it is on the high alplands and passes that nature’s loveliest gardens are found. Here colour and fragrance run riot, as if life, compressed into so short a span, grew more intense and lovely. In July, places like Little Shovel pass or Marmot pass are a perfect vision of beauty, a mosaic of colour — blue forget-me-nots and larkspurs, golden arnicas, scarlet-tongued paint-brushes, stately green and white zygadenes, or the fragrant white heliotrope. About 6,000 feet up, most of the trees give up the struggle against the bitter cold, though the alpine larch and Engelmann spruce often hold their own for 500 feet more. But the frail Howers still push upward—the white heath and red heather cover many an airy alpland with a glorious robe, “the little speedwell’s darling blue.” shines from the edge of some harsh moraine, while still higher, at an elevation of even 10,000 feet, at the very edge of the eternal snows, you will find the audacious little snow-lily, starry patches of moss campion, or the magenta blossoms of the dwarf alpine willow-herb, waving a last flag of colour against the all conquering white and grey.

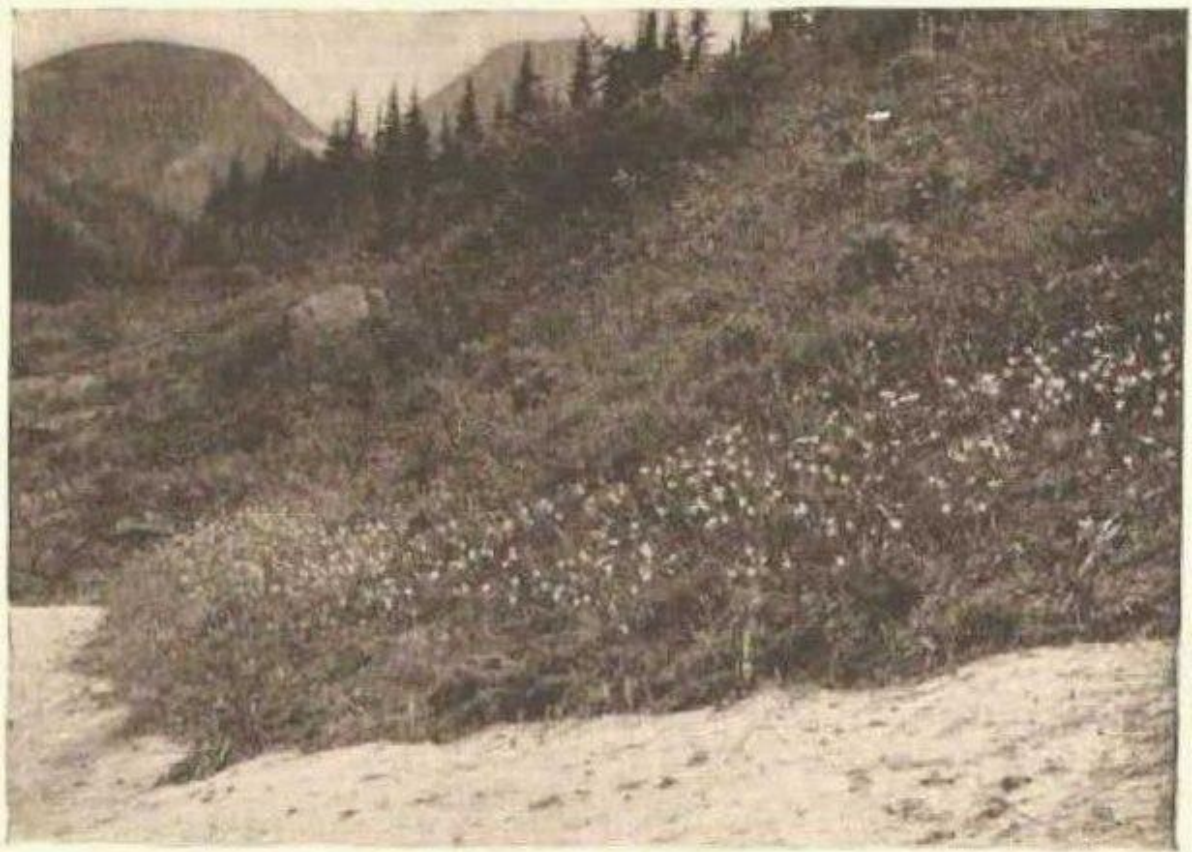
For the camera lover there are unlimited possibilities for either still or moving pictures. Sunlight and shadow, lakes, streams, and woods, snow-capped peaks and glaciers offer wonderful backgrounds while the tameness and abundance of wild life makes it possible to secure unique pictures of bear, sheep and deer.

ADDENDA

National parks are administered by the Department of the Interior at Ottawa, through the National Parks of Canada Branch. The local administration is in the hands of a superintendent whose office is located opposite the station. Jasper. Copies of parks’ and motor regulations and literature dealing generally with the parks may be had free of charge on application.



Mountain Daisies



Snow Lilies at Edge of Glacier



Snake Indian Falls

Caution

Visitors to the park should not undertake trail or climbing expeditions without competent guides and equipment. Experienced outfitters and licensed guides can be obtained at Jasper.

Visitors are warned against feeding bears or placing food for them at camps.

Camping

Be careful with fire. Keep camps clean. Leave them clean. Burn or bury all refuse promptly even tin cans to prevent flies and to get them out of sight.

Build your campfire on dirt. Scrape around it, removing all inflammable material within a radius of from 3 to 5 feet. Put your fire out. In ten minutes go back and put it out again. Never build a campfire against a tree or log, in leaf mould or in rotten wood. Build all fires away from overhanging branches.

Each year fires escape after campers have thought they were extinguished. It is advisable to soak thoroughly all embers and charred pieces of wood and then cover them with dirt. Feel around the outer edge of the fire pit to make sure no fire is smouldering in charred roots or leaf mould.

Break your match in two before you throw it away. Make it a habit.

Drop pipe, cigar or cigarette ashes only on dirt. Then stamp them out.

Should you discover a forest fire report it immediately to the chief warden or the nearest park official.

Never defile water.

Never break bottles (glass is dangerous) or leave them where the sun may focus through them and start fire.

Do not bark or chip trees needlessly, or drive nails in them—this might shatter a saw some day.

Do not set fire to pitch or moss on trees.

Wild Flowers

Protect the wild flowers. Don't pull them up by the roots. Don't pick many of them and particularly along roadsides where they can be enjoyed by all. Don't take the rare kinds at all. Help to preserve them for future years. Help to keep the parks beautiful.

The Park Superintendent will be glad to have any suggestions you may care to offer for the improvement and betterment of the Parks service. Any complaint from you will have his careful attention.

TRAIL TRIPS

Trail Trips Radiating from Jasper

1. *Jasper to Jasper Lodge* By motor highway to the Athabaska bridge, three-quarters mile, and thence by trail to Jasper Lodge 3 miles.
2. *Jasper to Yellowhead*—Following the Miette river westerly to Yellowhead summit—18 miles.

Extension Trips

- a. Meadow Creek—From Geikie up Meadow creek to Amethyst lakes in the Tonquin valley, thence down Portal creek to the Edith Cavell road—19 miles.
- b. Whistlers Mountain From the upper Miette bridge up Whistlers mountain—4 miles.
3. *Jasper to Athabaska Falls* From Jasper via Edith Cavell motor road to the Astoria river, 9 miles, thence up the Athabaska river to the falls. 11 miles. Return can be made on the east side of the river via Buffalo Prairie to Jasper—21 miles.

Extension Trips

- a. Whirlpool River From the Whirlpool river crossing up the Whirlpool river to the Committee Punch Bowl—30 miles.
- b. Sunwapta Falls—From Athabaska falls up the Athabaska river to Sunwapta falls—15 miles.
- c. Fortress Lake—From Sunwapta falls up the Athabaska river to the Chaba and up the Chaba to Fortress lake— 15 miles.
- d. Poboktan Pass—From Sunwapta falls up Poboktan creek to Poboktan pass—24 miles.
- e. Wilcox Pass From mouth of Poboktan creek up the Athabaska river to Wilcox pass—20 miles.
- (f) Southesk—From Poboktan pass to Brazeau lake, thence down the Brazeau river to the Southesk river—29.5 miles.

4. *Jasper to Medicine Lake*—From Jasper to Maligne canyon by motor road 9 miles; tote road, available for motor to within 1 mile of Medicine lake, thence by trail—9 miles.

Extension Trips

- a. Maligne Lake From Medicine lake up the Maligne river to Maligne lake 10 miles.
- b. Poboktan Creek—From Maligne lake over Maligne pass to Poboktan creek—24 miles.

- c. Shovel Pass— From Maligne lake via Shovel pass to the Athabaska river and to Jasper—30 miles.

Note.— Round trip from Jasper to Maligne lake and return via Shovel pass—58 miles.

- d. Jacques Lake—From Medicine lake to Jacques lake 9 miles.
- e. Rocky River North From Jacques lake to the Rocky river and thence down the Rocky river to the Jasper highway—18 miles.
- f. Rocky River—From Jacques lake to the Rocky River valley— $18\frac{1}{4}$ miles.
- g. Signal Mountain From Maligne canyon up Signal mountain—3 miles.
- h. Athabaska From Jasper Lodge along the Athabaska river to the Maligne river, and up the latter to Maligne canyon—8 miles.
- i. Rocky River-Southesk—From Osborne pass to Southesk river—30 miles.

Note.—Round trip from Jasper via Athabaska, Sunwapta, Poboktan, Brazeau, Southesk and Rocky rivers and return to Jasper—150 miles.

5. *Cabin Lake*—From Jasper to Cabin lake— $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Extension Trips

- a. Caledonia Lake—From the Cabin Lake trail to Caledonia lake—I mile.
- b. Dorothy Lake—From Caledonia lake to Dorothy lake and Beaver dams—5 miles.
6. *Miette Hot Springs*—Via the Jasper highway to Pocahontas—24 miles—thence up Punchbowl and Fiddle creeks to the Miette Hot springs— $10\frac{1}{2}$ miles.
7. *Drennon Flats*—Via the Jasper highway to Drystone creek—34 miles—thence to Drennon flats and the west fork of the McLeod river—18 miles.
8. *Snaring-Solomon Creek, Outside of Ranges*—From Jasper to Snaring river via Jasper highway— $11\frac{1}{2}$ miles—thence along the west bank of the Athabaska to Solomon creek—27 miles.

Extension Trip

- (a) Solomon Creek—From the Athabaska river up Solomon creek to the park boundary—8 miles.

9. *Snake Indian Valley*—From Jasper via Jasper highway and trail to the mouth of the Snake Indian river—20 miles—thence up the Snake Indian river, passing the falls, to Willow creek—25 miles.

Extension Trips

- a. Willow Creek—Up Willow creek to Rock lake—10 miles.
- b. Deer Creek—From Willow creek following up the Snake Indian river to Twin Tree lake and thence up the Smoky river to the Interprovincial Boundary —68 miles.

Note.—Trail trip from Jasper to mount Robson can be made via the Jasper highway, Snake Indian, Deer creek, and Smoky River trails to mount Robson station—130 miles. Return may be made from mount Robson station by train.

The Ted K Archive

M. B. Williams
Jasper Trails
1930(?)

Ottawa: Department of the Interior. Republished on the Environment & Society
Portal. <www.environmentandsociety.org>

This guidebook by M. B. Williams offers a concise exploration of Canada's Jasper
National Park. Public domain.

www.thetedkarchive.com