

*Views from the Lake:
International
Harmony
and Historical
Erasure in
Photographs of the
Waterton-Glacier
International
Peace Park*

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Depuis les photographies topographiques du XIX^e siècle jusqu'aux cartes postales et à la documentation touristique du XIX^e siècle, les images du parc national des Lacs-Waterton, qui fait désormais partie du parc international de la paix Waterton-Glacier, ont toujours présenté le lieu comme un symbole de paix internationale et de libre circulation. Pourtant, ces mêmes représentations effacent stratégiquement l'histoire coloniale de la délimitation des frontières et du déplacement des communautés autochtones, dont les terres ont été scindées en deux par le quarante-neuvième parallèle. En retraçant les tropes visuels récurrents d'ouverture et d'harmonie, cet essai examine comment les pratiques photographiques des colons ont renforcé le narratif sur l'unité, tout en masquant la violence, l'exclusion et l'exploitation environnementale.

Waterton Lake sits at the centre of Waterton Lakes National Park in Alberta, Canada. The two sections that make up this body of water, Middle Waterton Lake and the larger Upper Waterton Lake, to the southwest, are connected by a shallow channel. Formed over millennia of glacial movement and geological process, Upper Waterton Lake (from here forward Waterton Lake unless otherwise indicated) is long and narrow, stretching around 10.5 kilometres in length and reaching depths of 150 meters, making it one of the deepest lakes in the Canadian Rockies. More notable still is that the lake itself spans across two National Parks in two countries. The bottom third of Waterton Lake crosses out of Canada and into Glacier National Park in Montana in the United States. If you have half a day and some good hiking shoes you can walk the Lakeshore Trail along the lake's entire western edge from one country to the other. Beginning at the Waterton Townsite, the trail ascends over the base of Bertha Peak, followed by dense forests, meadows of wildflowers and the constant accompaniment of the gentle sounds of moving water, rustling leaves, and of the wildlife that inhabits the lake. The mountain views surround you for the length of the hike, as the lake is situated between Mount Richards to the west, with its geological striations and lushly verdant sides, and Mount Boswell across the lake to the east, with striking slopes that come to sharp peaks.

As you reach the eight-kilometre mark, you arrive at the border between parks and nations. It is characterized by a "cut line" of about six meters wide that was razed along the forty-ninth parallel in the last decades of the nineteenth century as part of Canadian, United States, and British boundary demarcations, and is still maintained, cleared, and enforced by both Canadian and United States agencies. At the point where the cut line intersects the Lakeshore Trail are two cairns, one placed by the North American Boundary Commission and the other marking the formation of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, placed in 1932. Standing a meter and a half high, they are directly in the cut line and visually move your line of sight across the lake and along the cut line in both directions. If it wasn't for the intervention of the cut line and the cairns, one would have no idea that a national border was crossed.

The southernmost point of the trail is named Goat Haunt for the many mountain goats that roam both parks. This area, part of Glacier National Park, which you traverse for the last seven or so kilometres of the hike, is accessible only by trail or boat. Goat Haunt is located where the Waterton River feeds into the lake and features a ranger station, a dock, and an International Peace Park Pavilion, the United States counterpart to the Canadian International Peace Park site located in the Waterton Townsite, where this very hike began. The hike itself is a unique experience not only for the extraordinary mountains that encircle you, or the fact that one gets to cross through the cut line, but also for the coordinated binational efforts to bookend Lakeshore Trail with sites and monuments that represent the ideas of peace, sharing, and unanimity between the two parks. This was the vision of the Rotary Clubs of Alberta and Montana when they proposed uniting the two parks into the

Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park in 1931. With the royal assent of the Act respecting the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park in 1932, the park became a signal of goodwill between Canada and the United States, bringing openness to a site that historically and practically demarcates the border.

The hike along the Lakeshore Trail should encapsulate this premise, one that has aptly been described as the “governments of the United States and Canada [making] a conscious effort to attenuate the existence of the international boundary in the name of peace and ecosystem conservation.”¹ This sense is reinforced by the openness of traversing the cut line, the lack of checkpoint at the physical border, and the feeling that you, animals, and nature are moving free of imposed determinations of boundary and access. The visual continuity of the lake and the mountains that surround it, be it looking northward or southward from either end of the lake, or even upwards towards the unbroken horizon of mountain and sky, echo this sentiment. Completing this hike, however, is far from free of constraints.

To hike the Lakeshore Trail in its entirety requires advance planning and legal documentation. When heading south, all hikers must present themselves to United States Customs at the Goat Haunt Ranger Station with a valid passport or NEXUS Card between 11:15 and 17:00. If moving northward, hikers must call Canadian Customs upon arrival to Waterton Townsite with presentation of valid passport or NEXUS Card. Unless you choose to return to your origin point, essentially doubling the hike, you either need to advance purchase a return trip by chartered water shuttle as designated by the International Peace Park or have someone who also has valid passport identification cross the border by road to shuttle you. If you're not up to taking on the legal and logistical challenges, there are scheduled Peace Park Hikes led simultaneously by educational interpreters from both parks.

These practical and bureaucratic obstacles sit in tension with the intention of conveying a feeling of international harmony proposed by the establishment of the International Peace Park in 1932. This idea is captured in the storied meeting of the two parks' earliest rangers, Canadian George “Kootenay” Brown (1839–1916) and American Albert Henry “Death-on-the-Trail” Reynolds (d. 1913), and with the recent culmination of the two parks' single designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1995 for the ecological reason of occupying “a pivotal position in the Western Cordillera of North America, resulting in the evolution of plant communities and ecological complexes that occur nowhere else in the world.”² In fact, the establishment of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park was the first effort of its kind, an example that was not repeated again until the creation of La Amistad International Park between Costa Rica and Panama in 1982, which was followed by the creation of several other peace parks over the next twenty years. In its 2001 document *Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Co-operation*, the World Conservation Union defines peace parks as “transboundary protected areas that are formally dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity and of natural and associated cultural resources, and to the promotion of peace and cooperation.”³ On the cover of the document, a photograph of parks representatives from Canada and the United States shake hands at the border beside a cairn on the shore of Waterton Lake. No matter the effort towards unity or the experience of uninterrupted nature, however, the performance of goodwill found in the photograph, the definition, and the

1 Randy Tanner, Wayne Freimund, Brace Hayden, and Bill Dolan, “The Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park: Conservation amid Border Security,” in *Peace Parks: Conservation and Conflict Resolution*, ed. Saleem H. Ali (MIT Press, 2007), 193.

2 “Waterton Glacier International Peace Park,” UNESCO World Heritage Conservation, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/354/>.

3 The World Conservation Union (IUCN), World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), Trevor Sandwith, Clare Sine, Lawrence Hamilton, and David Sheppard, *Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Co-operation* (IUCN, 2001), 3, <https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/documents/PAG-007.pdf>.

establishment of peace parks in general remains just that: a performance. In actuality, the territorialization of the national border, a colonial act that bisected plant, animal, and human activity, is omnipresent despite best efforts to keep it out of sight.

The picture on the cover of the World Conservation Union document is just one example of how the international agreements at Waterton Peace Park have been represented. Placed within a longer history of visual representations of the park and their circulations, photography provides a fascinating manifestation of the ways that ideas of place and movement are formed and perpetuated. This essay aims to elucidate how, by whom, and for whom were photographs made that reinforce notions of international peace and harmony. What subjects and forms were employed to shape specific conceptions about the parks and their significance? And, how did the resulting images minimize, or hide from view altogether, the violent and contentious act of settler-colonial boundary-making and territorialization?

The focus of this study is on the circulation of popular photographs as they appear in the form of postcards and brochures throughout the twentieth century, specifically leading up to and after the joining of the two parks in 1932. Writing about photographic postcards of nearby Jasper National Park, Keri Cronin has suggested that these image-objects “define the tourist experience and allow visitors to situate themselves within National Park Nature. Further, postcard imagery becomes iconic in that it reduces a landscape to a series of familiar visual symbols.”⁴ The widespread dissemination of this photographic material tangibly shapes popular perceptions of place. Art historian Lucy Lippard has described how such imagery creates “photographic clichés” by constructing “a consensus of what viewers hope to see.”⁵ Tourism and photography go hand in hand here. Discussing promotional brochures, art historian Paula Johanna Saari has likewise suggested that the “tourism industry works by ‘scripting’ space—a process which gives tourist destinations identities and symbolic meanings, conforming to expectations, which then shape visitor experience of a place.”⁶ Such scripting is very much at play in the Waterton Lake region, where scholar and photographer Trudi Lynn Smith has spoken of coming up against “practices of commensurability [or] following what has come before.”⁷ I would further suggest that Cronin and Saari are offering us an unspoken caution. If the proliferation of photographic images of Waterton Lake and of the International Peace Park consist of conventionally composed iconic sites, then we must be aware that there has also been an exclusion of the non-iconic and of those ideas, feelings, features, and sites that do not reinforce the premise of international collaboration and openness. In this respect, the coming together of Waterton Lakes National Park and Glacier National Park offers an opportunity for study that might also yield insight into other border parks and tourist sites. In addition to thinking through the operations of photographic material cultures, this study will address the complexities of border aesthetics, heeding Johan Schimanski and Stephen F. Wolfe’s assertion that “it is crucial to study the complex workings of border aesthetics because once the relationship between borders and aesthetics solidifies, we can interrogate how certain types of borders or border practices remain visible, or legitimate, or acceptable.”⁸

4 J. Keri Cronin, *Manufacturing National Park Nature: Photography, Ecology, and the Wilderness Industry of Jasper* (UBC Press, 2011), 54.

5 Lucy Lippard, *On the Beaten Track: Tourism, Art, and Place* (New Press, 1999), 138. J. Keri Cronin also references this quotation in *Manufacturing National Park Nature*.

6 Paula Johanna Saari, “Marketing Nature: The Canadian National Parks Branch and Constructing the Portrayal of National Parks in Promotional Brochures, 1936–1970,” *Environment and History* 21, no. 3 (August 2015): 405.

7 Trudi Lynn Smith, “The Anthropology of Historical Photography in a Protected Area: Life and Death in Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta,” *Anthropologica* 56, no. 1 (2014): 125.

8 Johan Schimanski and Stephen F. Wolfe, *Border Aesthetics: Conceptions and Intersections* (Berghahn, 2017), 6.

THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPHS

In 1858 and 1872, topographical surveys were commissioned by the governments of the United States, Britain, and Canada to map and mark the boundary along the forty-ninth parallel between the United States and the colonial holdings of British North America. The North American Boundary Commission survey took place in two parts over the span of nearly fifteen years. The first survey, from 1858 to 1862, moved eastward through the Rocky Mountains to Cameron Lake, just west of Waterton Lake and east of the provincial boundary between Alberta and British Columbia at the Continental Divide. The second, from 1872 to 1876, moved westward from Lake of the Woods' Northwest Angle in Minnesota to the previously established terminus just beyond Waterton Lake. At Waterton Lake, the meeting point for both surveys, a physical boundary marker (marker 276) was placed during the first survey, but it was the second survey that brought about significant policy interest in the area. Initial explorations suggested rich natural resource potential in the region that resulted in further surveys and in increased federal interest in controlling the land. The finalization of the boundary led to the commencement of land surveys and settlement on both sides of the border.⁹

These colonial processes of mapping and dividing were done with little regard to the histories or present human use of the land. Traditionally known by the Blackfoot as Paahtómahksikimi, or “inner sacred lake,”¹⁰ the region was renamed by the members of the 1857–60 Palliser Expedition after the British naturalist Squire Charles Waterton (1782–1865), someone who had never visited the area.¹¹ Indigenous communities including the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla, the Ktunaxa, the ȩyāhé Nakón məkóce (Stoney), the Niitsítapii (Blackfoot/Niitsítapi), and the Tsuut'ina, who have lived on and cared for the land of the Waterton area since time immemorial and into the present, were subjugated to these processes. On the Canadian side, Treaty 7 was established and signed in 1877, granting Indigenous groups reserve lands as well as a schedule of payments from the government in both money and cattle. Almost from the outset, the signing of the treaty was recognized as disadvantageous and misleading to the Indigenous signatories. The consequence was that Indigenous lands, movement across them, and the lives and culture contingent upon them were restricted.¹²

Photographs were made on both the 1858 and 1872 surveys, with Waterton Lake photographed during the latter survey in 1874. The British contingent supplied Sappers, soldiers trained specifically in photography in military and surveying contexts at the Corps of Royal Engineers' School in

9 For primary sources on these topographical commissions, see Marcus Baker, *Survey of the North West Boundary of the United States 1857-1861* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900); Archibald Campbell, *Reports upon the Survey of the Boundary Between the Territory of the United States and the Possessions of Great Britain from the Lake of the Woods to the Summit of the Rocky Mountains, authorized by an Act of Congress approved March 19, 1872* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1878). For recent scholarship on the history and photographs, see Andrew Birrell, “The North American Boundary Commission: Three Photographic Expeditions, 1872–74” *History of Photography* 20, no. 2 (Summer 1996): 113–21; Elizabeth Anne Cavaliere, “Claimed, Imagined, Idealized: Survey Photographs from the North American Boundary Commissions of 1858 and 1872,” in *Survey Style: Landscape Photography Across the Globe* (Routledge, 2022), 108–39; *Beyond the Border: Tensions Across the Forty-Ninth Parallel in the Great Plains and Prairies*, ed. Kyle Conway and Timothy Pasch (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013); James Eason, “When Narrative Fails: Context and Physical Evidence as a Means of Understanding the Northwest Boundary Survey Photographs of 1857–1862,” *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 2, no. 2 (2015): 2–20; Bruce Miller, “The ‘Really Real’ Border and the Divided Salish Community,” *BC Studies* 112 (Winter 1997–1997): 63–79.

10 “Blackfoot Culture & Waterton,” Paahtomahksikimi Cultural Centre, <https://paahtomahksikimi.ca/pages/blackfoot-culture>.

11 “Park History: Waterton Lakes National Park,” Government of Canada, Parks Canada, <https://parks.canada.ca/pn-np/ab/waterton/culture/histoire-history#>.

12 This paper focuses on settler visual production and its role in shaping settler perceptions of place. While the emphasis remains on settler history, it is important to acknowledge the deep and ongoing presence of Indigenous histories and cultural knowledge in the region. Sites such as Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park exemplify the continuity and resilience of Siksika Nation traditions, language, and cultural practice, survivals that persist despite efforts at erasure. See also Theodore Binnema and Melanie Niemi, “Let the Line Be Drawn Now”: Wilderness, Conservation, and the Exclusion of Aboriginal People from Banff National Park in Canada,” *Environmental History* 11, no. 4 (October 2006): 724–50.

Chatham, Kent, UK, a skill that had become part of the school's curriculum.¹³ Made in service of the documentation needs of the survey, these visual records set the foundation for the ways that settlers would visually understand and experience Waterton Lake and both parks comprising the International Peace Park well into the twentieth century.

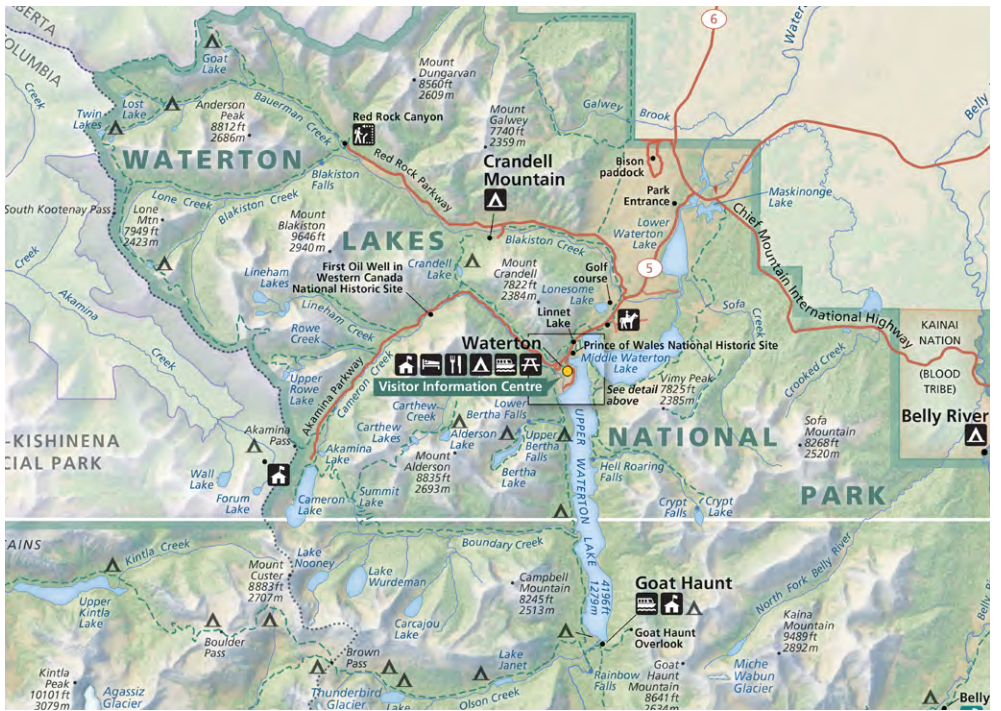
In the photograph "Waterton Lake from the North Shore," one of the many included in the *North American Boundary Commission* album, one of which is held in Library and Archives Canada, the Sapper-photographer stood at the north end of Waterton Lake, just west of the small narrowing now known as Bosphorus / fig. 2 /. The view looks south down a lake so long and open that its southern end blends into the horizon line. The mountains on both sides visually reinforce the length of the lake by emphasizing the depth of the picture plane. Having travelled across expanses of uninterrupted flat prairie on their journey up to this point, the Sappers would likely have been impressed at the different land formations encountered here. In fact, they produced more pictures in the Waterton area than anywhere else during the survey. In addition to the photographs, several of the party members produced sketches in the form of drawings or watercolours. It was a common practice throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for surveyors and soldiers to include drawings as part of survey documentation and record making. Both Donald Roderick Cameron, the Canadian commissioner of the 1872 party, and George Mercer Dawson, the naturalist appointed to the party, made drawings of Waterton Lake / fig. 3 /.

These photographs and drawings were produced from the collaborative commitment of multiple nations to map and mark the border, a shared work that led to the hard and fast territorialization of land. It is, however, jarring to consider the other photographs that accompanied this one in the *North American Boundary Commission* album. Just pages before this vision of serenity, as well as in following pages, are numerous images of dead bodies and grave sites all identified in the album as those of Crow and Sioux warriors. There was, at the time of the 1872 boundary survey, significant fighting amongst Indigenous groups of the area brought on, specifically, by the harm inflicted through colonial administration, settlement, and missionaries, which forced Indigenous groups away from the traditional practices that had previously defined their engagements and relationships with one another and the land.¹⁴ While in their historical moment such images would have reassured settlers that any threats from Indigenous groups were being held in check by military order, acting as a reinforcement of the idea of Indigenous people and culture disappearing through death or assimilation, it is difficult, in hindsight, to look at this juxtaposition of photographs within the album and not feel a whiplash between the records of violence and the sense of calm and harmony that emanates from the photograph of Waterton Lake.

This whiplash, and the violence that passes through it, was set in this moment of bordering and territorialization. Like the "borderless" hike from Waterton Townsite to Goat Haunt Ranger Station, the uglier aspects of the park's colonial history have been hidden from view in the photographs made and circulated. In many ways, it is no surprise that the settler visual production to come out of the region works hard to reinforce the ideas of openness, flow of movement, and harmony. Over the course of the twentieth century these ideas were solidified into visual tropes that were repeated in photographs

13 A Sapper is a soldier trained by the British Corps of Royal Engineers who performs specialized work in the field, often of a scientific or engineering nature. For more on Sappers, their training at the Royal Engineers' School and work in British Columbia, see Beth Hill, *Sappers: The Royal Engineers in British Columbia* (Vancouver: Horsdal & Schubart, 1987).

14 See Leroy Little Bear, "Jagged Worldviews Colliding," in *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*, ed. Marie Battiste (UBC Press, 2000), 77–85.



/fig. 1/ Detail of “Park Map - Glacier National Park,” United States National Park Service, <https://www.usgs.gov/media/images/map-glacier-national-park>. Created on June 10, 2022.



/fig. 2/ “183. Waterton Lake from the North Shore, 4 miles north of Boundary line & 757 miles west of Red River,” in *North American Boundary Commission Photographs 1872–1875*. Photograph mounted on album page. D.M. Beach Old & Rare Books Collection, Library and Archives Canada, R2171-2-8-E.



/fig. 3/ Donald Roderick Cameron, "On Lake Waterton, Rocky Mountains," 1874. Aquarelle on wove paper. Library and Archives Canada, R10770-144-4-E, volume 1.

made of the area.¹⁵ Markers of violence, however, are always there too—you don't even need to look hard to find them, but you do need to be willing to recognize them. For example, the sketches by Dawson and Cameron were made from a near identical vantage point, an indication that certain views of the lake were especially visually enticing. Like the photograph made by the Sapper, these sketches convey openness, expansiveness, and fluidity of passage. There are no border cairns or cut lines, though they were in the process of being made in this very moment. The lone figure in the Cameron aquarelle is particularly compelling as an image of quiet contemplation, aligning with the romantic views expressed by certain surveyors. The British Assistant Astronomer Captain Featherstonhaugh, for example, wrote of Waterton Lake as a "beautiful piece of water" that reminded him of Switzerland's Lucerne Lake.¹⁶ His American counterpart, the astronomer Captain W.J. Twining, also marvelled at the "comprehensive view of lake and mountain scenery, which, for picturesque beauty and grandeur, is probably not excelled, equaled, by any on the continent."¹⁷ Interestingly enough, for all the sensitivity of his drawing, George Mercer Dawson took a decidedly more factual approach in his 1875 *Report on the Geology and Resources of the Region in the Vicinity of the Forty-Ninth Parallel, from the Lake of The Woods to the Rocky Mountains*. Though no reproductions of photographs were included in this volume, it did describe in detail the composition of the rocks and inventories of geological and natural specimens, a reminder that for all the grandeur of the place, Waterton Lake was also a site of possible resource extraction.

The emptiness of the Sapper photographs and the sketches by Dawson and Cameron is suggestive of unoccupied land that is ready and available for extractive industry. The *Dominion Lands Act* or *Homestead Act* of 1872, particularly in the 1884 amendment that established "Forrest Parks," reserved land as protected for the purposes of preserving nature, while also permitting the working of mines, pasturage of cattle, and management of hay lands. Designated as Waterton Lakes Forest Reserve in 1895, the area around the lake was understood as a utility for local settlers to extract lumber, mineral, and oil. Within the bounds of what is now Waterton Lakes National Parks is a site that Parks Canada describes as "Western Canada's first oil well." Drilled in 1902, this is the well around which the short-lived Oil City was formed. The rigs, bunkhouses, and a dining hall were quick to be built, only to be abandoned when the well dried up in 1906.¹⁸ This type of settlement around extractive sites is common to Albertan (as well as Canadian and United States) histories. It is one of the reasons that the North American Boundary Commission survey was ordered and why attached members like Dawson made detailed records that could reveal potential sites for resource exploitation. In addition to mapping, establishing borders allowed each nation to lay claim to extractive potential without much regard for the people, animals and plants that inhabited these ecosystems. Despite their utilitarian prospecting aims, the photographs produced as part of this documentation set the parameters for the Waterton area's "visual clichés" even as the scripting of this landscape began to shift from extraction to tourism.

15 For more on the relationship between visual meaning-making and topographical practices see: Elizabeth Cavaliere, *Mediated Landscape/Mediating Photographs: Surveying the Landscape in Nineteenth-Century Canadian Topographical Photography* (PhD diss., Concordia University, 2016); Robin Kelsey, *Archive Style: Photographs and Illustrations for U.S. Surveys, 1850-1890* (University of California Press, 2007); Joan M. Schwartz, "The Geography Lesson: Photographs and the Construction of Imaginative Geographies," *Journal of Historical Geography* 22, no. 1 (1996): 16-45; Jonathan Bordo, "Jack Pine - Wilderness Sublime or the Erasure of the Aboriginal Presence from the Landscape," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 27, no. 4 (Winter 1992-1993): 98-128.

16 Captain Featherstonhaugh, *Narrative of the Operations of the British North American Boundary Commission, 1872-76* (Woolwich, UK: A.W. and J.P. Jackson, Library, Thomas Street, 1876), 45-46.

17 "Report of Capt. W.J. Twining, Corps of Engineers, Chief Astronomer, Appendix A," in *Reports upon the Survey of the Boundary between the Territory of the United States and the Possessions of Great Britain from the Lake of the Woods to the Summit of the Rocky Mountains*, 313.

18 "First Oil Well in Western Canada National Historic Site," Parks Canada National Historic Sites, <https://parks.canada.ca/lhn-nhs/ab/puits-well/culture>.

PHOTOGRAPHIC PROMULGATION OF LEISURE

Leisure was as crucial for colonial settlement as the extraction industry. In 1911, the creation of the *Dominion Forest Reserves and Parks Act* led to the formation of a new branch of the Department of the Interior: the Dominion Parks Branch. Less than a month after its assent, Glacier, Yoho, Rocky Mountains Park (now Banff), Jasper, and Waterton Lakes were established as federally run parklands.¹⁹ At this time, Waterton Lake's designation officially shifted from reserve to park. However, Waterton Lakes was distinct in that, unlike other parks, it was not understood by its administrators as a tourist destination.²⁰ National parks scholar Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands has suggested that there was a practical reason for this. Without connection to the Canadian Pacific Railway, as the other parks had, Waterton Lakes was dependent on the newly established Glacier National Park to its south, a destination on the Great Northern Railway of the United States, for seasonal tourists.²¹

It was through the aid of photography that Waterton Lakes as a place of recreation and leisure was made known to a wider public. Consider the photograph of "Waterton Lake from the North Shore" made by the Sapper as part of the Boundary Commission records. It served the survey by accompanying British, Canadian, and United States reports. It also fed the imagination of the public. The reports from the survey were widely circulated, with Dawson's report reviewed and recounted in newspapers across Canada. *The Daily Telegraph* in Saint John, New Brunswick, for example, produced a three-part summary of the report, which described it as "a word picture of a vast expanse of our territory as complete as the opportunities afforded enabled a painstaking, a well-educated, and very good observer to produce."²² This report and others like it remained key sources of information for government and tourist purposes well into the twentieth century. The *Pocket Guide: Waterton Lakes Park*, a brief but heavily illustrated publication issued by Canadian parks authorities in 1930, lists Dawson's report as being of interest.²³

It is not surprising, then, that so many of the photographs that followed in pamphlets, guides, and postcards visually echoed those produced by Border Commission Sappers. For example, a short publication titled *Waterton Lakes National Park* contains thirty-six photographs across forty-six pages produced by a handful of photographers. Printed in 1927 and penned by Mabel Berta Williams, then acting as publicity agent for Dominion Parks Branch, this was among the first guidebooks produced by National Parks of Canada, though not a first for Williams, who by this time had already produced similar guidebooks such as *A Spring of Mountain Heather: Being a Story of the Heather and Some Facts about the Mountain Playgrounds of the Dominion of Canada* in 1914, *Through the Heart of the Rockies and Selkirks* in 1921, and *The Banff Windermere Highway* in 1923.²⁴

A photograph captioned "The Beautiful Upper Lake" that appears on page ten / fig. 4 / shows a southward view of the lake accompanied by the following passage: "The prose of a work-a-day life, indeed, has hardly been left behind when suddenly the valley turns southward, revealing a landscape

19 For detailed policy histories, see Graham A. MacDonald, *Where the Mountains Meet the Prairies: A History of Waterton Lakes National Park* (Canadian Heritage Parks Canada, 1992); and Gordon E. Olsson CLS, "National Parks: Property Rights and Boundary Systems on Canada Lands" (Association of Canada Land Surveyors, 2007), <https://www.acls-aatc.ca/files/english/publications/Chapter%209.pdf>.

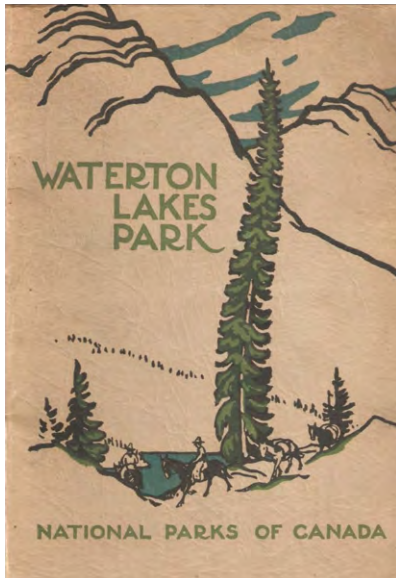
20 MacDonald, *Where the Mountains Meet the Prairies*, 46.

21 Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands, "The Geology Recognizes No Boundaries: Shifting Borders in Waterton Lakes National Park," in *The Borderlands of the American and Canadian Wests: Essays on Regional History of the Forty-ninth Parallel*, ed. Sterling Evans (University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 309–33.

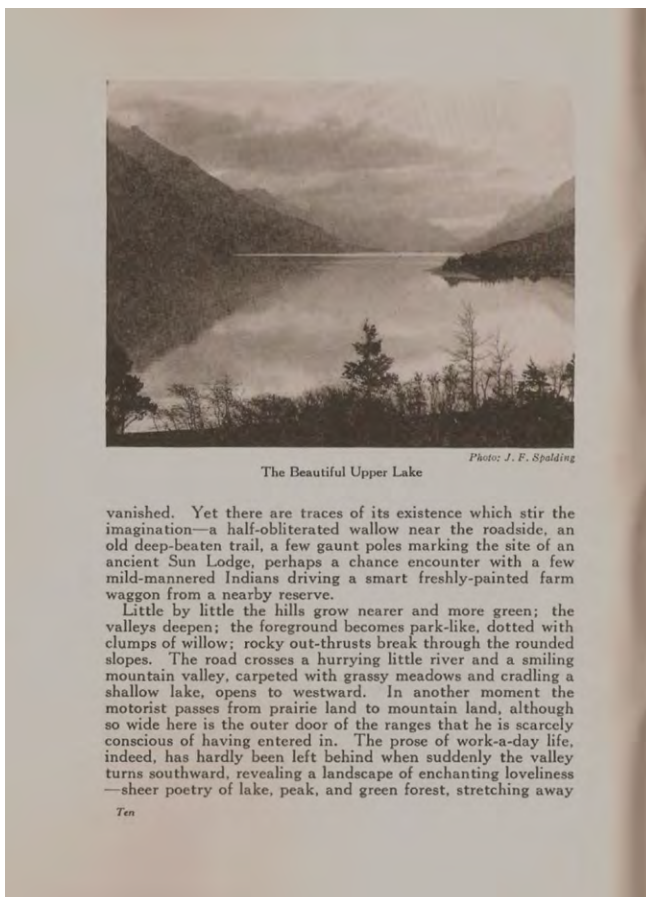
22 "The British North American Boundary Commission," *The Daily Telegraph*, Saint John, first appearing on October 4, 1875. Clippings located in the McGill University Archival Collections, Dawson-Harrington Families Fonds, MG 1022, File 043.

23 *Pocket Guide: Waterton Lakes Park* (Ottawa: F.A. Acland King's Printer, 1930).

24 See Alan MacEachern, "M.B. Williams and the Early Years of Parks Canada," in *A Century of Parks Canada, 1911-2011*, ed. Claire Elizabeth Campbell (University of Calgary Press, 2011), 21–52. For an accessible and comprehensive collection of Williams's publications, see her profile at the Canadian Writing Research Collaboratory: <https://cwrc.ca/islandora/object/cwww%3Ace23f3cb-5f35-42d9-8bdb-0217a7d6b336>.



/fig. 4a/ Mabel Berta Williams, *Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta Canada* (Department of the Interior, Canadian National Parks, 1927), cover, publications.gc.ca/pub?id=9.833933&sl=0.



/fig. 4b/ Mabel Berta Williams, *Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta Canada* (Department of the Interior, Canadian National Parks, 1927), p. 10, publications.gc.ca/pub?id=9.833933&sl=0.

of enchanting loveliness—sheer poetry of lake, peak, green forest, stretching away as far as the eye can see into blue, aerial distances, in such beauty as brings pain to the throat, a sudden smart to the eyes.”²⁵ In describing the border to her readers, Williams writes that its presence is signalled by “two official boundary posts and a wide green swath cut through the forest on each side of the lake.” However, she continues, “no customs officials are present to remind one of any greater barrier between the two national parks, which together form an international playground and wildlife sanctuary probably unique in the world.”²⁶ Embedded within this text, the photographic illustrations visually amplify the notion of an “international playground”—distinct from her previous references to “mountain playgrounds,” as her 1914 publication was titled—and surely helped to precipitate its designation as a National Park under the National Parks Act in 1930 and the establishment of the International Peace Park two years after that.

The photograph of Waterton Lake included in Williams’s guide is credited to Joseph Frederick Spalding, a photographer whose images are found in many other publications about Waterton Lakes. Best known for his photographs of Fernie, British Columbia, Spalding began to produce photographs for the Tourism Association of Southern Alberta and Southeast British Columbia in 1919.²⁷ It is likely this work that first took Spalding to Waterton. Spalding’s photograph is reminiscent of the Sapper’s photograph, framing Waterton Lake as a long and narrow body of water surrounded by mountains that seem to recess infinitely into the depth of the photograph.

The southward viewpoint was so visually synonymous with Waterton Lake that, when a decision was made to build a major hotel on the shore, this location was chosen for its construction. The Prince of Wales Hotel was opened in 1927 on a knoll overlooking the Waterton Townsite and the entire southward expanse of the lake. The view and the location made it the ideal site on which to build, as did the fact that most of the views of Waterton Lake seen by the public would have been taken from this vantage point. Like the Boundary Commission, the construction of the hotel was an international effort. Louis W. Hill (1872–1948), the president of the Great Northern Railway of the United States, understood the potential to extract commercial value from the site and, in the 1930s, he oversaw the extension of the American rail network into Canada. One of these branches led directly into Waterton Lakes National Park, which Great Northern Railway brochures touted as “a playground that straddles the Great Divide and the International Boundary” (see /fig. 8 /). In her essay “Marketing Nature,” Paula Johanna Saari expands on this connection between the creation of park infrastructure and the idea of a playground, a common description used by national parks across Canada in the early twentieth century, writing that “postwar brochures put emphasis on how many modern conveniences had been brought to nature. Parks were promoted as playgrounds. National parks were vacation spots of grand scale, with the postwar culture of nature mass tourism clearly dominant.”²⁸

25 Williams, *Waterton Lakes National Park*.

26 Williams, *Waterton Lakes National Park*, 24.

27 “The Life of Joseph S. Spalding,” Fernie District Historical Society and the Community Research Alliance program at the University of Victoria, <https://maltwood.uvic.ca/spalding/spalding.html>; Fernie Museum Digital Photo Archive has a substantial collection of Spalding photographs, specifically of Waterton Lakes National Park, which are available online through British Columbia Regional Digitized History: <https://bcrdh.ca>.

28 Saari, “Marketing Nature,” 423. See also J. Keri Cronin, “An Invitation to Leisure: Picturing Canada’s Wilderness Playground,” in *Manufacturing National Park Nature*; John Sandlos, “Nature’s Playgrounds: The Parks Branch and Tourism Promotion in the National Parks, 1911–1929,” in *A Century of Canada’s Parks, 1911–2011*, ed. Claire Elizabeth Campbell (University of Calgary

Press, 2011), 53–72; I.S. MacLaren, *Culturing Wilderness in Jasper National Park: Studies in Two Centuries of Human History in the Upper Athabasca River Watershed* (University of Alberta Press, 2007); William Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature,” *Environmental History* 1, no. 1 (January 1996): 7–28; as well as period references to the notion of a wilderness “playground” such as Department of Interior, *A Sprig of Mountain Heather: Being a Story of the Heather and Some Facts about the Mountain Playground* (1914); Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, *The North American Alps, Canadian Rockies, Mount Robson Route: New Trails through New Playgrounds for the Tourist, the Alpinist and Sportsman* (1916).

Hill proposed a hotel at the site, a common feature of many national parks in both Canada and the United States.²⁹ Its construction was quick and, upon its completion and opening in July of 1927, a photographer named T.J. Hileman was hired to promote the hotel. Not much is known about Hileman except that he produced an extraordinary photographic record of the region, now distributed between the collections of the Hockaday Museum of Art in Montana and that of the Glenbow Museum in Alberta. In 1924, he was hired by the Great Northern Railway to produce photographs of both Glacier and Waterton Lakes National Parks to be included in promotional materials. To undertake this commission, he was granted mobility between the parks, including paid transportation and board, and was permitted to set up his own photographic studios at key locations to develop and print photographs for tourists as well as sell his own views, of which he retained the copyright.³⁰ What is certain is that his photographs circulated widely in the form of prints and postcards, as well as in brochures and advertisements.

Of the hotel and the view, Williams writes in her guidebook that, “every window frames a glorious view—to the south over the sunlit lake, to the north to the foothills and the prairie lands beyond.”³¹ This description of the southward view, the same one in Spalding’s photograph, suggests a tranquility and, most importantly, the sense of an uninterrupted view to the south that carries the eye beyond one park and into the other without interruption. It is also echoed in another view within the book where she discusses the boat launch that shuttles travelers northward on Waterton Lake from Goat Haunt, titled “Looking up Waterton Lake, Mountains of Glacier National Park in Distance.” The photograph and Williams’s discussion of it reciprocates the view from the Prince of Wales Hotel and reinforces the ease of movement between the two parks. The sentiment is one that carries through her writing about the park, especially when discussing trails and water routes to Glacier National Park in the United States.

Both Spalding and Hileman were quick to capitalize on the scenic potential of the Waterton area to sell photographic views. It was an idea that generated business onsite, while also drawing in further tourism by producing images that could circulate beyond the park. The popularity of these photographs is evidenced by the multitude of archive and museum collections that have bodies of postcards by Spalding, Hileman, and others, as well as a large presence in secondary collector markets.³² Perhaps more important than their sheer numbers was the popularity of the subjects depicted in these photographs. Landscapes of grand topographical features of mountains and lakes positioned them as unique and desirable places to see, thereby generating the “visual clichés” to which Lippard points. Postcards disseminated representations of the park beyond its boundaries while also drawing tourists to the places pictured. The construction of facilities, such as the Prince of Wales Hotel, supported these growing numbers of tourists, while at the same time becoming landmarks in and of themselves.

Consider these three views by Hileman: a photograph of Waterton Lake from the same southward perspective as the Sapper photograph from at least forty years prior; a picture postcard of the interior of the lobby of the Prince of Wales Hotel; and a postcard featuring a colour illustration

29 For more on the development of infrastructure and tourist revenue, see Macdonald, *Where the Mountains Meet the Prairies*, 107–108; and Ray Djuff, *High on a Windy Hill: The Story of the Prince of Wales Hotel* (Surrey, BC: Rocky Mountain Books, 1999).

30 “T.J. Hileman,” Hockaday Museum of Art, <https://hockadaymuseum.com/artist/hileman/>; Michael Ober, “History: Glimpses of Glacier,” *Big Sky Journal* (Fall 2021), <https://bigskyjournal.com/history-glimpses-of-glacier/>; Glenbow Museum Archives, T.J. Hileman fonds, GLEN-1187. Photographs

by both are found in the Dr. Robert Lampard Postcard Collection at the University of Lethbridge and in the Peel’s Prairie Provinces collection, University of Alberta.

31 Williams, *Waterton Lakes National Park*, 25.

32 Photographs by Hileman are in the collections of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art (Texas), Hockaday Museum of Art (Montana), and the Glenbow Museum (Alberta). Photographs by Spalding can be found in the collections of the University of Victoria (British Columbia).



／fig. 5／ T.J. Hileman, “View of Lake from Prince of Wales Hotel, Waterton National Park,” ca. 1900–1925. Negative b/w safety film. Library and Archives Canada, box number RV3 059, item 581.



／fig. 6／ T.J. Hileman, “Lobby Prince of Wales Hotel, Waterton Lakes Park,” ca. 1927. Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta Canada. Dr. Robert Lampard Postcard Collection, University of Lethbridge.



／fig. 7／ C.T. Art-Colortone, “Lobby, Prince of Wales Hotel, Waterton Lakes National Park, Alberta Canada,” ca. 1927. Postcard based on photograph by T.J. Hileman. C.T. Art Colortone, a five-color process made on linen finish stock from a black and white photo. Dr. Robert Lampard Postcard Collection, University of Lethbridge.

based on the latter /figs. 5–7/. In the black and white picture postcard, the view out the lobby window is expansive, though somewhat lacking in sharpness and detail, as capturing interior and exterior planes within a single negative is a difficult feat even for modern cameras. In the colourized version, however, the window view has been adjusted to match the vantage and detail of the exterior photograph. This pictorial version accentuates both the land and the hotel as important symbols of Waterton Lakes National Park. In this case study of visualizing boundaries, or the lack thereof, this particular view together with a hotel built by a United States railway corporation on Canadian land, reinforces the physical and visual openness of place and the international collaboration that supported it. The view has become, to use Saari's notion of "scripting space," indissociable from Waterton's script.³³

The script of international harmony and freedom of movement that were circulated through picture postcards and illustrated brochures had an impact on a range of audiences including tourists, conservationists, and policymakers. Spalding and Hileman's photographs thus participated in the creation of a visual narrative that emphasized the parks as spaces of peace and natural beauty, a potent narrative that would eventually lead to direct policy action. In 1932, the Alberta and Montana chapters of Rotary International banded together to lobby for the formation of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. Their goal was to express the peace, goodwill, and cooperation between Canada and the United States in managing the adjoining parks. It was an acknowledgement of heritage and conservation efforts, as well as a nod to the intertwined histories of tourism at the site. While Waterton Lakes and Glacier would continue to be managed by their respective federal entities, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park encouraged further collaborative efforts around policy making, particularly around the protection of plant and animal species whose habitats spanned the border.³⁴

MODERN MOVEMENT PHOTOGRAPHED

The importance of freedom of movement within the swath of land that would become the Peace Park long precedes its foundation. There has always been the natural movement of plants, animals, and water across the border. In the nineteenth century, there was the movement across and along the border by surveyors of the Boundary Commissions to establish and mark it. From this time onward, there was also the movement of tourists and workers and the construction of infrastructure to support this movement. The expansion of the Great Northern Railway was quickly followed by the construction of highways to move people to and through the parks and, in 1927, a bus service was also developed to shuttle people along this road network. That same year the M.V. International cruise ship was launched on Waterton Lake, ferrying a capacity of 250 people around the International Peace Park's shared body of water. The aspects of movement and mobility that characterize the International Peace Park took a new and prominent role in cultural activities and the photographic outputs that accompanied them.

In the first half of the twentieth century, automobiles provided the general population with a newfound independence. Where trains might be limiting in terms of destination and timetables, automobiles enabled travellers to go anywhere they desired at any time. As Ben Bradley, historian of automobiles and tourism in Canada, writes, "driving could make travelers feel like active explorers of the landscape that surrounded them, rather than passive consumers, as had been the case with the predetermined routes and timetables of railway

33 Saari, "Marketing Nature," 405.

34 For a complete history of the relationship, see MacDonald, *Where the Mountains Meet the Prairies*, 124–28.



fig. 8 / Great Northern Railway Company, "The Old West goes international," ca. 1930s. Collection of the author.



fig. 9 / Great Northern Railway, "Glacier National Park in the Montana Rockies: A great place to go... a great way to get there" (St. Paul, Minnesota: Great Northern Railway Company, 1952). Map, 75.5 × 65 cm, folded 21.5 × 9.5 cm. From the David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.

and steamboat companies.”³⁵ Clubs for automobile enthusiasts appeared across the United States and Canada, flourishing especially in the expansive prairie regions to become a driving force in the expansion of road networks.

Historian of national parks Graham A. MacDonald has described how the highway linking the two Waterton parks set a precedent for large-scale road work in the 1930s. “The United States Government,” he writes, “set a new standard, well before the onset of the depression, with the development of the ‘Going-to-the-Sun’ Highway in Glacier National Park between 1925 and 1932. This outstanding scenic road became a measure for southern Alberta tourism advocates in their promotion of similar improvements.”³⁶ Accompanying this growing infrastructure were maps and guides. The Great Northern Railway was quick to produce marketing materials that highlighted integration between rail and road. An advertisement from the 1930s promotes many of these connective aspects: the linkage of Waterton Lakes and Glacier parks; the straddling of an international boundary and the continental divide; and the many modes of transportation that a tourist might employ—“boots, saddle, or bus and launch” and, of course, train / fig. 8 /. Visually, all of these modes are present in the image, which again takes the southward view from the Prince of Wales Hotel, which can be seen on the right-hand side.

Long into the twentieth century, the Great Northern Railway would promote their services as providing multi-modal access to the park. In a pocket brochure from the 1950s, timetables, maps, and photography are used in a similar fashion to illustrate the ways one can move through the park / fig. 9 /. Notice, again, that southward view from the hotel, though this time the M.V. International boat moves with your eye into the landscape. Mortimer-Sandilands has written about the ways that tourists sought out parks in order to perform the role of explorer and discoverer, suggesting that “land is aestheticized in a particular way, overdetermined with a significance conferred by the presence of the white discoverer, and mastered in the moment of its appearance as having been ‘discovered.’” She goes on to note that, “erased [...] was, of course, the considerable infrastructure (and prior destruction) necessary to transport both tourists and provisions to this (apparent) edge of empire. These absences were part of the active emptying of the land that the park performed.”³⁷ Indeed, erased while in plain sight.

Both the advertisement and the timetable use the language of colonialism and settlement: “the Old West goes international,” “land of 1000 new sights a day,” and not least the names of the trains “Empire Builder” and “Oriental Limited.” The implication is that one can feel as though they are doing the very same exploration as those Sappers of the Boundary Commission, but with the convenience of new modes of travel. In the advertisement, the infrastructure gives way, at the lake, to the natural. In the pamphlet, photographs of luxury travel are juxtaposed with those of unspoilt nature. Both also imply an experience that includes an encounter with Indigenous people and objects: the advertisement in its harkening to the “Old West” and the brochure more directly in its inclusion of a photograph of a Blackfoot tipi in the lower right amongst the many sights within the parks to be “discovered.” However, instead of positioning the tipi as part of a living culture with a rich significance of use,³⁸ the brochure presents it as an object for touristic visual consumption. There is

35 Ben Bradley, *British Columbia by the Road: Car Culture and the Making of a Modern Landscape* (UBC Press, 2017), 3.

36 MacDonald, *Where the Mountains Meet the Prairies*, 70.

37 Catriona Mortimer-Sandilands, “The Cultural Politics of Ecological Integrity: Nature and Nation in Canada’s National Parks, 1885–2000,” *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, no. 39–40 (2009): 164–66.

38 While settler colonialism did much to erase and trivialize Indigenous culture, here the tipi reduced to tourist attraction, it is crucial to recognize Indigenous survivance that emphasizes an ongoing and dynamic presence of Indigenous people and culture. See Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance* (University of Nebraska Press, 1999). For more on the use and design of tipi, see “Niitoy-Yiss-Blackfoot Tipi/Teepee,” <https://blackfootcrossing.ca/wordpress/niitoy-yiss-blackfoot-tipi-teepee/>.

no shortage of postcards and pamphlets that include photographic reproductions of Indigenous people and culture in this early twentieth-century moment. Erased from view in such images for tourist enjoyment and leisure is the history of harm to Indigenous peoples through the colonial claiming, settling, and bounding of the parks and the violence of these histories.

In addition to the all-expenses-paid packages offered by railway companies like Great Northern, tourists were also captivated by automotive travel. The freedom of movement and the proximity to attractions both natural and human-made were central to the popularity of this mode of tourism. The visual cultures that emerged around nascent car culture put this captivation front and centre. Postcards of natural vistas and iconic landmarks positioned the automotive elements—roads, busses, cars, dashboards—within these scenes in celebration of this new form of transport, signaling the individual freedom of movement and the privilege of viewing remote locations that it brought.

Photographers Hileman and Spalding were quick to capitalize on this growing interest. Spalding even produced an automotive travel guidebook detailing his own travels across the Canadian West from British Columbia to Saskatchewan.³⁹ In the process, key scenic viewpoints were refitted to foreground automotive travel. Take, for example, depictions of Chief Mountain in Glacier National Park. An engraving of the mountain was reproduced on the frontispiece for Archibald Campbell and Captain W.J. Twining Campbell's *Reports upon the Survey of the Boundary*⁴⁰ as well as on the cover page of a collection of maps published by the boundary survey / fig. 10 /. A nearly identical view of the mountain can also be seen in the bottom left corner of the pamphlet above / fig. 9 /. and was photographed and reproduced as a postcard by The Photogelatine Engraving Co. Here, however, the sweeping view before the mountain contain a wide and winding road / fig. 11 /. The perspective is such that one might envision themselves driving on the road following the lead of the little car that occupies the centre of the image. The viewpoints established by the lenses of the Sappers in the earliest instances of settler image-making of the area were reinforced over time. From Boundary Commission to postcard, this specific perspective of Chief Mountain remains consistent even through the changing interests from territorialization to automotive leisure.

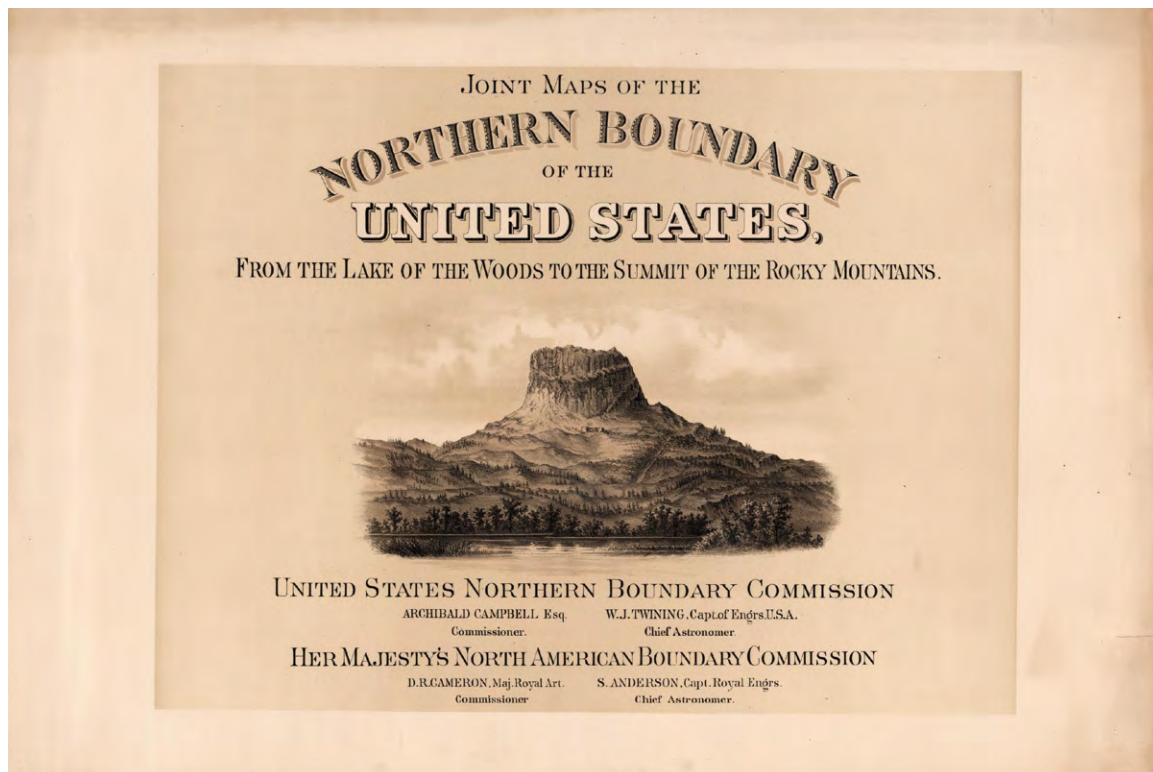
Chief Mountain was not only a popular tourist site and sight, but it was also the namesake of a border crossing opened within this period of early twentieth-century automotive flurry. In fact, it was the principal border crossing for anyone traveling north-south along the eastern edge of the International Peace Park, as it was the logical point of crossing for Glacier National Park's newly finished Going-to-the-Sun-Road, also known as Glacier Route 1 Road, which traverses the park with winding and sometimes hairpin turns in an east-west direction across the Continental Divide. The road leads visitors through the spectacular Logan's Pass and along Saint Mary Lake before connecting to Highway 89 on the eastern edge of the park, to Chief Mountain Highway, completed in 1936, and to the Chief Mountain Border Station crossing. The route was immediately popular with motorists as well as with a fleet of motor coaches launched in 1930. A 1938 Canadian National Parks Bureau brochure points to the crossing as a highlight of Waterton Lakes, stating: "The most popular route of approach from the United States is via the new Chief Mountain International Highway, which was opened for travel in 1936."⁴¹

39 J.F. Spalding, *Official Automobile Road Guide for British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan* (Vancouver: Callopy-Holland Advertising Co. Ltd, 1918).

40 "Chief Mountain (Looking West)," in Archibald Campbell and Captain W.J. Twining Campbell, *Reports upon the Survey of the Boundary between the Territory of the United States and the*

Possessions of Great Britain from the Lake of the Woods to the Summit of the Rocky Mountains, frontispiece.

41 Department of Mines and Resources; Lands Parks and Forests Branch; National Parks, Bureau, *The National Parks of Canada: A brief description of the Scenic and Recreational Activities*, 3rd edition (Ottawa: J.O. Patenaude I.S.O King's Printer, 1938), 23.



/fig. 10 / Title page from *Joint Maps of The Northern Boundary of The United States, From the Lake of the Woods to the Summit of the Rocky Mountains* (United States Northern Boundary Commission, 1878). From the David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.

In photographs of border sites, the automotive was utilized as a visual tool to reinforce ideas of openness and freedom of movement that characterized visualizations of the parks from the outset. However, unlike the pamphlets and advertisements that functionally erased the rail infrastructure that enabled tourists to access nature, the road signals the culmination and completion of the tourist's discovery through mastery over land. In a postcard featuring a photograph credited to the National Parks Bureau, a road stretches long from the foreground into the centre point with a horizon of mountains in the expanse / fig. 12 /. The perspective again positions the viewer on the road, gesturing towards the experience of freedom of movement through place. Borders are invisible in this iconographic register. Even when border markings are present, movement through them is unhampered. In another postcard, one of the many motor coaches purchased by Glacier crosses seamlessly through two boundary cairns and across the cutline receding into the background / fig. 13 /.

Viewing and experiencing the International Peace Park from one's car became a subject not limited to professional photography. Along with postcards, archives hold thousands of photographs from private or personal collections that visualize automotive leisure. Perhaps the most striking is a series taken by Marion Post Wolcott. By no means an amateur, Wolcott was a professional photographer employed by the United States Government's Farm Security Administration and is best known for her photographs of rural United States during the 1930s and '40s. But, in 1941, just as she made the decision to retire from this position, she left her assignment at a dude ranch in southern Montana to vacation in Glacier National Park. The extensive series she made of the park in September of 1941 was not an FSA assignment and did not circulate in print publications, as with much of her FSA commissioned work, though as part of her archives it did end up in the collection of the Library of Congress with the entire body of FSA photographs. On this trip, she turned her camera not to the lives of the rural poor as she often did on professional assignment, but to her own experience of place and border, where the dashboard of her car became her view finder / figs. 14–15 /.

In her essay "Romancing the West: Photographs by Marion Post Wolcott," Mary Murphy writes that, "Wolcott, too, was a tourist to the West."⁴² Wolcott herself remarked about her experience in Glacier that "the fact that I did take some pretty pictures was a result of my own feeling about the country. I would do them as I drove along because I felt good, I thought it was beautiful." She goes on to write, "the weather in cloud effects were so dramatic, & such a startling change, & the mountain so terrific, that I just kept taking pictures [...] trying to get the weird, strange, quality & feeling that a human sometimes has in seeing mountains and 'being on top of the world,' and not exactly a part of it anymore."⁴³ Indeed, it's easy to feel the way that Wolcott did. In 2011, long before I could even have conceived of writing this essay, I found myself in Glacier National Park photographing the mountain, road, and my experience as encapsulated by the framing of my very own dashboard / fig. 16 /. There was a feeling of freedom of movement, an experience of place and, in hindsight, I can recognize that my need to photograph from this perspective was no doubt informed by a lifetime of looking at photographs that showed me how to do so. My feeling of open movement, like Wolcott's of being on top of the world, was one that willfully ignored the practical restrictions of movement, not least the fact that travellers by car were confined to places where the roads went and only during those times of year where the weather permitted travel on them.

42 Mary Murphy "Romancing the West: Photographs by Marion Post Wolcott," *Journal of Women Studies* 25, no. 1 (2004): 166.

43 Quoted in Mary Murphy, *Hope in Hard Times: New Deal Photographs of Montana, 1936–1942* (Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society Press, 2003), 149.



/ fig. 11 / Photogelatine Engraving Co. Limited, "Chief Mountain from the Chief Mountain International Highway, Glacier National Park. Montana. Waterton International Peace Park, Canada," ca. 1930. Postcard. From Peel's Prairie Provinces collection, University of Alberta.

/ fig. 12 / National Parks Bureau, Canada, "Chief Mountain, International Highway, Waterton Lakes Nat. Park, Alta.," ca. 1935. Produced by Canadian Art Deeptone Series. From Peel's Prairie Provinces collection, University of Alberta.

/ fig. 13 / Photogelatine Engraving Co. Limited, "Bus from Glacier National Park crossing the International Boundary into Waterton Lakes National Park, on the Chief Mountain International Highway International Peace Park, Canada," 1944. From Peel's Prairie Provinces collection, University of Alberta.



/ figs. 14-15 / Marion Post Wolcott, "Glacier National Park, Montana" (with Little Chief Mountain) and "Going-to-the-Sun highway. Glacier National Park, Montana," 1941. Safety film negatives. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington D.C., Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection, Lot 115, LC-USF34-058353-D and LC-USF34-058110-D.

Waterton Lake itself, for all that it stands for as a natural connection between the two parks, is not directly accessible by road from the United States.

The idea of open road and automotive leisure was pervasive in this historical moment and in no way unique to the International Peace Park. The automobile had become central to the consumption of natural spaces and the pursuit of recreation everywhere in North America. In Canada, one only need look to the National Film Board of Canada's 1940 film "The Banff-Jasper Highway" to get a sense of how automotive leisure was a key component of federal policies put in place to enable and promote this form of leisure for tourists across Canada. The eleven-minute film begins with mention of mappers and surveyors, the arrival of trains as "steam drove the way through the mountains," then becoming the "playground of the continent," to a road that offers "the most thrilling drive in North America" where one sees "peaks so numerous many of them are unnamed."⁴⁴ The film echoes the settler history of many national parks including Banff, Jasper, and Waterton Lakes, but it was the popular saturation of photographs that repeated the vistas long established by the earliest settler photographs and drawings, present even when new and modern modes of access were added to the scene, that shaped understandings of openness and mobility. What is particular to Waterton Lakes National Park is that this mobility transcended, or appeared to transcend, a national boundary.

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

The circulation of photographic images strategically minimized and often entirely hid the contentious history of settler-colonial boundary-making and territorialization. By focusing on the natural beauty and the themes of international peace, collaboration, and movement, these photographs perpetuated a narrative that conveniently overlooked the underlying realities of colonialism: harm to Indigenous communities, exploitation of resource extraction, and the administrative bounding of land through nationalist policy. The process of bordering land mapped out by the North American Boundary Commission set into motion a violent history of colonial administration, not just at the location of two future national parks, but along the entirety of the Canada-United States border. The establishment of two national parks at this site and their eventual connection into an International Peace Park is fascinating for the ways that it interrupts the idea of the firm and impenetrable border that first motivated its mapping and marking. Similarly, the understanding of a shared federal responsibility to care for the land and to conserve its flora and fauna arose from a shared recognition of the extractive potential of this location. Think of Oil City, where the legacy of oil extraction would later fuel automotive cultures of tourism in the area.

A joint 1938 publication produced by Canada's Department of Mines and Resources, the Lands Parks and Forests Branch, and the National Parks Bureau paints a picture of friendly unity with the country's Southern neighbours: "Stretching over the invisible International Boundary like a great arm lies Upper Waterton Lake, linking together the two countries, and forming an interesting natural channel of communication between its lovely shores."⁴⁵ An invisible border, togetherness, and channels of communication are part of Waterton's script and part of the settler-colonial legacy of this place. This message is not, in and of itself, a bad thing, nor is it incorrect, but it papers over the complexities of competing national agendas, government-driven environmental conservation, and the annexation of land under the continuing drive of

44 National Film Board of Canada, *The Banff-Jasper Highway*, 1940, <https://www.nfb.ca/film/the-banffjasper-highway/>. See also Keri Cronin, "Do Not Feed the Bears," *Photography and Culture* 6, no. 2 (July 2013): 213-16.

45 Department of Mines and Resources; Lands Parks and Forests Branch; National Parks, Bureau, *The National Parks of Canada: A brief description of the Scenic and Recreational Activities*, 3rd edition. (Ottawa: J.O. Patenaude I.S.O King's Printer, 1938), 20

colonialism. Nor does it adequately reflect the very real restrictions one comes up against in crossing this border site. Photographs are prone to fall victim to this oversimplification as well. Visual tropes of freedom of movement and unbounded vistas, motifs that have increasingly gained traction in the history of the park, simultaneously reinforce and yet hide from view tensions of connectivity and demarcation, access and remoteness, presence and absence.⁴⁶

While efforts towards environmental conservation encouraged a shared responsibility to care for a nature that has existed and continues to exist regardless of a human-made boundary, this concern did not extend to people. It certainly did not extend to the people of Indigenous nations whose communities were forcefully bisected by the border and by the bounding of land claimed for parks, and whose ways of life and relationship to the land were severely impacted. It is no surprise that the Blood Tribe/Kainaiwa, whose lands range from the Kootenay (Waterton) to St. Mary Rivers, have made repeated submissions to the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (1997) and Indian Claims Commission (2003) for breach of both Treaty 7 and of the *Indian Act*. The Supreme Court of Canada eventually ruled in favour of the Blood Tribe, declaring that “having provided the Blood Tribe with a reserve of 547.5 square miles in area, dishonourably breached the treaty land entitlement provisions of Treaty No. 7.”⁴⁷ The territorialization of land around the border also had the effect of restricting movement across the border for Indigenous peoples. In his PhD dissertation, Ninna Piiksii (Mike Bruised Head) has explored how restriction of movement in the Waterton area erased Blackfoot names and impacted traditional practices. He opens his dissertation by writing: “Here on the Montana side, we come to fast at Ninastako (Chief Mountain), which is ideal for fasting. But at the same time I thought, ‘I wonder how it would be to fast on the Canadian side?’ Then I thought, ‘how can I fast there when I don’t know the spiritual names of the mountains? Would I be sleeping or sitting there for nothing?’”⁴⁸

Here, we have focused on settler visual culture, not to centre it but to destabilize it by bringing into focus what has been removed from view, namely the barriers of checkpoints and access, the extraction of resources, and the traditional uses and present rights to land of the Blood Tribe and other Indigenous peoples. The visual clichés and the script that accompany settler perceptions and use of Waterton Lakes National Park have been promulgated through photography to the point where it is difficult to see anything else, not least the violence inflicted on land and people through this process. Selective and repetitive representation of place, from the first photographs made by Sappers on the Boundary Commission to twentieth-century postcards, have played a significant role in shaping settler and tourist perceptions, fostering a myth of untouched wilderness and harmonious cross-border cooperation that obscures the ongoing struggles and histories of Indigenous communities.

The use of photography to circulate notions of international harmony and freedom of movement in the context of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park illustrates how visual culture can both shape and conceal historical and social realities, perpetuating specific narratives while marginalizing others. In the moment in which I write this paper, where relations between Canada and the United States have become increasingly strained,

46 Nicholas Brown, “Landscape, Justice, and the Politics of Indigeneity: Denaturalizing Structures of Settler Colonialism in the Alberta/Montana Borderlands” (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, 2013), 95.

47 Indian Claims Commission, “Blood Tribe / Kainaiwa Big Claim Inquiry” March 2007. https://portal.usask.ca/docs/ICC/Blood%20Tribe-Kainaiwa_Big%20Claim%20Inquiry.pdf and Shot Both Sides v. Canada, 2024 SCC 12 <https://decisions.scc-csc.ca/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/20392/index.do>

48 Ninna Piiksii, Mike Bruised Head, “The Colonial Impact of the Erasure of Blackfoot Miistakitsi Place Names in Paahatomahksikimi, Waterton Lakes National Park” PhD, University of Lethbridge, 2022.



/fig. 16/ Travelling north on U.S. Route 2 towards Lake McDonald and Going-to-the-Sun-Road, 2011. Photo by author.

marked by rising nationalism, border anxieties, and divergent policy directions, the Peace Park stands as both a hopeful symbol and a crucial reminder to confront what has long remained invisible: the histories of exclusion that underpin these spaces by rethinking the narratives of peace and mobility embedded in the ways such sites have been visually represented in the past. That Parks Canada has been actively working in collaboration with Indigenous communities to address these questions, including in Waterton Lakes National Park, is an encouraging start.⁴⁹

49 See "What We Heard: Summary of Public and Indigenous Community Comments on the Management Plan Review," Government of Canada, Parks Canada, Waterton Lakes National Park, 2022, <https://parks.canada.ca/pn-np/ab/waterton/info/index/directeur-management/nouveau-new-entendu-heard/entendu-heard-1>.