NPS Oral History Collection (HFCA 1817)
Herbert Evison's National Park Service Oral History Project, 1952-1999

Horace M. Albright
July 26, 1961

Interview conducted by S. Herbert Evison
Transcribed by Unknown
Digitized by Casey L. Oehler

NPS History Collection
Harpers Ferry Center
PO Box 50
Harpers Ferry, WV 25425
HFC_Archivist@nps.gov

START OF TAPE

Horace Albright: I didn't have anything to do with __ book.

Herbert Evison: No, I know.

Horace Albright: He says I did but I didn't.

Herbert Evison: No. In his book he says of the National Parks Association, this is a quote, "which promoted and defended the parks, sometimes too stridently", that's the end of one quote and then in another "in 1916 Yard was put in charge of the educational section in the Park Service but the work failed to catch on and Yard turned to the organization of the National Parks Association in 1908."

Horace Albright: 1918.

Herbert Evison: Yes, 1918. "Yard and his associates were fearless indeed, but sometimes he was lacking in tact and judgment and at times his relations with Mather were a bit strained."

Herbert Evison: All that I read because I don't have a very - or at least there have been conflicting reports as to Yard's separation from the Service and with respect to the establishment of the National Parks Association, and I wonder if you would go back in your memory and clarify some of that for me.

Horace Albright: Well, Bob Yard was an old friend of Mr. Mather's from the days when Mr. Mather was on the New York Times here in New York. He was the best man at Mather's wedding, and Mather had always kept in touch with him. So when Mather went to Washington in January 1915, to become assistant to the secretary and to have charge of the National parks he decided he needed someone down there to help him with his public relations and to overhaul the publications perhaps get out new publications and to help him in his planning in reference to mainly public relations, publicity and rounding up of friends that he needed to have. So he took Bob Yard, who was at that time the editor of the Sunday New York Herald, the Sunday magazine of the New York Herald. He brought him to Washington at a salary of, I believe, $5000 a year, which he paid out of his own pocket. Now there was no educational section. Dr. Ise gives it the wrong name; it was you might say, a public relations section. Mr. Mather had him overhaul the national park publications, give them a new appearance. He also got out a press bulletin, stories about the parks. I have a set of them; they were in long sheets, gotten out two columns to the sheet, and were sent out to newspapers.

Horace Albright: And then he and Yard and Mather together looked up these various newspaper people and got in touch with newspaper men around Washington, and newspaper women. And then he sent Yard out in the field. Cowling - H. T. Cowling - whose was the photographer for the Reclamation Service - that was in 1915, the same year he got Cowling assigned to him and they went out and took a lot of pictures. Yard sort of supervised the kind of pictures he wanted and out of that developed the National Park Portfolio.

Herbert Evison: Now, I am not so much concerned - my question isn't so much concerned about what he did, what the circumstances resulted in his going out, rather, I know rather pretty well his career in the Service, but the circumstances resulted in his leaving the Service and establishment of the National Parks Association.

Horace Albright: Oh, I understand what you want. Well now, his leaving the Service was due entirely to an act of Congress. There was a senator from California by the name of John D. Works (WORKS) and he was an ardent Christian Science. He found out that the American Medical Association was subsidizing the preparation of publications for the Public Health Service, not the Public Health Service but the Bureau of Education, with the idea of having certain types of medical service taught in the schools. And the Congress hadn't appropriated money for the preparation of these articles and possibly for the detail of competent writers to the Bureau of Education these publications were coming out under the imprint of the Bureau of Education but being prepared by doctors or money provided by the American Medical Association. So he put a government amendment through on one of the appropriation bills prohibiting the use of any government money for the payment of private parties which prohibited the subsidizing of people outside the government service. And you couldn't augment the salaries of government men. Well Yard had an appointment as a collaborator at about $1.00 a year so he could use franked envelopes and government stationary and then all the rest of his salary was paid by the Mr. Mather. This law caught Bob Yard and several other employees that Mr. Mather had on his own payroll and he had to let them go as of July l, 1919, I am quite sure that was the date, the beginning of that fiscal year. It could possibly have been July l, 1918, but I think it was July l, 1919. Well, Bob Yard took the position that Mr. Mather had taken him away from a lucrative place in New York and that he really owed him a living but Mr. Mather took the position that it was only a year to year employment and Mr. Yard knew that and that he had had him employed for several years and more than he really expected. He didn't know when he went down there, whether he would only be there a year. Mr. – did know whether he would be there more than a year himself. So Mr. Yard

took that chance when he went down there. But Mr. Yard was persistent that Mather wasn't looking out for him the way he should so Mr. Mather gave him a severance pay. If my recollection is, it was $10,000. It was with that fund that Mr. __ and Mr. Yard set up the National Parks Association, stayed in Washington and set up the National Parks Association which Mr. Mather thought was wholly unnecessary. He took the position that the American Planning and Civic Association had done so much to get the Park Service created and it helped in many other ways, particularly in thwarting his efforts to break into the parks during the war. He was friendly with Dr. Horace McFarland and he didn't see the need for the National Parks Association. So far as I know, he didn't even join it. I certainly didn't join it but that is the way it was established and had nothing whatever to do with the disagreement. Now, Yard having established the Association found it was very difficult to get money. He couldn't get enough memberships to keep it going so he had to go out and get contributions. He found it was very difficult to get contributions unless there was a controversy. So after the war when the movements were on to dam Lake Yellowstone and get the Beckler River Basin Reservoirs and do some other attempts to break into the parks it was manna from heaven for Yard because he had been crying the parks were being destroyed, they were being invaded and the money came rolling in. That confirmed his opinion that was the way to get funds. The result was that the National Parks Association under Yard's direction was never very much interested in advancing the parks and the new parks with boundary revisions and things of that kind. He was always looking for some invasion of the parks, some attempt to destroy something. So he began developing more and more this tourist idea of don't touch them, that they were set aside to be absolutely primitive. So the idea being, in Yards mind, was that anything you didn't do was wrong, don't you see. It enabled him to get more money. So that’s why, that's why __ disagree. Finally, Mr. Mather came to the point where Yard was opposing the proposition like the Rockefeller project in Jackson Hole because Jackson Lake had a dam which was built long before there was any park idea. Just because the dam was there it was not eligible for park status, even though God Almighty had put those Tetons there it made a world famous scenic area, we still couldn't have a park because of the dam. So he opposed it. And he was in Mr. Mather's way at every turn, don't you see, so Mather finally had to tell him he wasn't going to give him anymore information; he wasn't expecting anything of him and that he had better call it a day so far as their official relations were concerned and that was the way it was when I became director.

Herbert Evison: What I am interested in is your recollection of the circumstances that led to bringing the Public Health Service into the sanitation problems of the Park Service.

Horace Albright: Well, I would not be able to tell you the exact year but, of course, we realize there was really no attention given to sanitation in the parks except in securing good water supplies for the hotels and camps. There was no good disposition of sewage and of course with campers coming in after the automobile became an important factor in the parks, people were camping along the streams into which sewage was going, don't you see, or could go. So Mr. Mather who was a very good friend of Surgeon General Hugh S. Cumming, they got to talking about things around the Cosmos Club and General Cumming said he would detail a man to look into the situation. He sent, very fortunately, Harry Hommon. Harry Hommon first went to the Yellowstone, at that time, was the most heavily populated park and to Yosemite Valley. I guess he went to Yosemite Valley, too; wherever there was a heavy concentration of traffic Harry Hommon went and made a study of the situation. I think he had with him another man whose name I can't recall now. About the second year he had a man called Mendellson but the first year I don't know if he had someone with him or not. But he found conditions very, very serious but potentially very serious. He doesn't think any disease had ever started from this but it was potentially a very dangerous situation. After he made a study of the Yellowstone, he came to me there and I think that was the first park he came to, I am not sure about that, and he quietly said to me, of course, I think you probably know the situation here; the way the sewage is handled and I would tell you that if I did my full duty I would close this park today. He said it should not be kept going but he said, of course, I know that really cannot be done. With the dangers to the economic life in the community and the communities around here and the park itself, it can't be done but he said we must immediately get busy on sanitation. That's where, beginning from that time on he was putting in estimates for, giving estimates for sewage systems and we began building them and as fast as we could, taking the most heavily populated parks first and also of course, testing the water supplies. He became, what it amounted to, a chief sanitary engineer of the Park Service and that was the position he was in the rest of his official life. He had an office in San Francisco in the Claw(?) Building which beginning in 1921, it must have been 1921, quite possibly it might have been 1920 but it was certainly by 1921 he was well into park affairs and I made my headquarters with Harry Hommon in the old Claw(?) Building on New Montgomery Street not very far from where the present regional office in the Park Service is during the winters of 1921, 1922 and 1923. I had desk in there with Harry Hommon.

Herbert Evison: Now, it really was a part of Mather's philosophy wasn't it, where he could get services from outside like the Public Health Service and the Bureau of Entomology or what have you, he would rather do that than build a big bureau himself.

Horace Albright: Absolutely. He had a theory, keep your bureau small and beg, borrow and steal all the services you could from anybody else. Have you ever seen the old chart where they were tied in with these other agencies.

Herbert Evison: No.

Horace Albright: Well, there was an old chart that showed how that was worked out and we followed that for a good many years even up until my time. It was a certain chart with the Interior Department, National Park Service, under that lines going out to the other departments and then divisions. Tied into the Bureau of Entomology, Forest Service and the Biological Survey, Public Health Service, Geological Survey, for all for one thing or other Bureau of Public Roads after a while beginning 1925 and he was never to add a bureau, division or branch or service, technical or otherwise, to the Park Service if he could help it. If he could borrow it from somebody else. He had no difficulty getting the help from other bureaus, because they all wanted to work for the Park Service, they all liked to work for him and get out in the parks and see them and they were almost clamoring for opportunities to get out in the parks, so he had no difficulty in getting help. One of his first collaborators was Doctor Hopkins of the Bureau of Entomology. He was one of the first that made study of insect infestations and so forth in the forests. So that was a strong feature of Mather's administration.

Herbert Evison: Well, as you look back on that particular time, don't you consider or do you consider that was the sound thing to do during the growing period?

Horace Albright: Yes, and I still think it is a good theory. I still don't see why one bureau should duplicate the work of the other if it could help it particularly if there are specialized services. Now I think there are certain services you have to have, for instance, in your interpretive work, naturalist activities, historians and archeologists in the Park Service. Because of their relationship to the public where you are teaching the public and interpreting the park. I think you have to have technicians inside your service but if you want, if you are talking about excavating a ruin in the national park, doing a technical job of excavating a ruin, I don't know why you should do it with your own people, I think it should be taken up with the Bureau of Ethnology in the department of the Smithsonian Institution and have it done by specialists in archeology or done by some outsider. To some extent the Park Service is doing that now by contracting for

university work and so forth. But you must not try to do everything yourself.

Horace Albright: For a long time we stuck with building our own roads not because we didn't believe in our theory of having others do it, because the bureau wrote standards that were so high and the work so expensive that you didn't get anywhere. So when we were getting these very small amounts of money, we were more interested in revising what roads we had, widening them and now and then building a new piece and not building it to the very high standards of the Bureau of Public Roads. Of course, even public roads standards in those days were not what they are today. But we did in 1925, before we came to the conclusion that you have to go to something like this, that is when Mr. Mather kicked over the first survey of the road across Glacier Park that is where he made his decision, the road across Glacier Park we called the Golden Pass Road, or the Going to the Sun Highway. That's where he __ over and that caused George E. Goodwin, the chief engineer of the Park Service to resign and leave the service and we then established a liaison after the Mesa Verde Conference in 1925, Mr. Mather delegated me to work with Dr. Hughes in working out a better bureau agreement under which we would operate with them. And that idea in connection with that the man whose set up to show what we might do with the Bureau of Public Roads, the way we told them was Frank – and we were so impressed with the accuracy and steam with which Frank got up a fine program that we asked to have him detailed as chief engineer. We thought he was a very able engineer. So that was the way we went at that sort of thing. We didn't go into it until we had to, if we were forced into doing something for ourselves we did it but if we could get rid of it, give it to somebody else we would continue to do that.

Herbert Evison: Well you did find when you got into a real huddle with the Bureau of Public Roads that they were prepared to accept something somewhat different within the parks from their ordinary road standards as I remember reading of.

Horace Albright: That was largely due to Dr. L. I. Hughes in San Francisco. Hughes was a very reasonable, sensible fellow having immense influence with his own people in Washington after a little while he __ chief __ Thomas H. McDonald around to that viewpoint too, so it was always McDonald was in Washington and Hughes was in the West they had charge of all road building throughout the west the Park Service faired all right they had no difficulties.

Herbert Evison: Another question. I think probably my question might be do you yourself consider that yourself a fair appraisal of the attitudes of the states generally. Do you think that generally speaking the Federal government is

saddled with a load of cost and then the states rather unfairly get tax advantages from us?

Horace Albright: I don't think so except in Yellowstone Park. You see the states as a rule, in almost every case, except Yellowstone Park the states were in the parks before the Park Service. The earliest roads were usually built by the states and counties and the same with trails in many cases, and police work was done by them. So they have the power of taxation of private property. They couldn't tax anything the federal government had but they could tax private property and then, of course, they also levied special taxes as sales taxes, or something like that, or gasoline taxes that was applicable over the whole state. Now it when we got jurisdiction of the state, police jurisdiction was ceded to us by the state over a national park was was done in most of the parks and they withheld the right to tax. In other words, they said we are going taxing private property and our other taxes will apply in these areas and federal government had to accept that that was only condition that they could get police jurisdiction. Now the only way that you could say it was unfair was it was they didn't __ service in there after that. They maintained schools in all the parks, they kept them up and they had school buses to collect children but in the case of Yellowstone, which was created ahead of the states, it does not belong to any state, it lies in three states and does not belong to any of them. So they had no right to do any taxing at all. And they didn't have until just a few years ago when the Attorney General construed a statute that really related to military reservations. That was a rather broad law under it said that the states could tax federal reservations and the Attorney General took the position that Yellowstone was a reservation and in there and they collect sales taxes and gasoline taxes. And they are taking a couple of hundred thousand dollars out of Yellowstone for which they render no service whatsoever not even schools, they don't even maintain the school in Yellowstone. They have never been able to tax private property. They can't tax the hotels or transportation facilities or gasoline stations or anything else that you only collect sales tax in Yellowstone. Now in the other parks you collect all kinds of tax and in return for that about all they give you is schools. Now some parks that haven't ceded jurisdiction, like Grand Canyon and Grand Teton and some other parks, there are several of them that haven't surrendered jurisdiction, they also provide police and judicial service, that is they keep the judge or a justice of the peace, sheriffs and deputy sheriffs and so forth, in addition to the rangers or they provide other services of that kind as well as school services. They give about the same services, on the other hand, you must remember that the states and counties tax on all the national forests, yet the forests provide roads and they not only do that but they return to the states 25% of the income in lieu of taxation.

Herbert Evison: Now there has been agitation from time to time in favor of turning a percentage of the revenues of the national parks

Horace Albright: over to the states

Herbert Evison: In other words, put them more nearly on a par with the Forest Service with respect to the state government, what do you think of that idea?

Horace Albright: Well, they have no sound basis of claim for their stand. They are getting enough economic benefit out of the parks without allowing them, without trying to give them any tax money, although in the case of Grand Teton National Park for 20 years they do get some return that's a special case. There is no reason why, from their standpoint they should have any of the revenues but from the standpoint of the National Park Service there was one good reason why it might be a good idea to get on that National Forest bandwagon because in getting new national parks or extensions of old national parks, one of the worst obstacles you have to overcome is the fact that you took anything for from a national forest and added it to a national park the lost taxation. It was a handicap for the Park Service to be in that position that they couldn't say you get some tax money from us, you get something in lieu of taxes, like you do in the forest. In other words the Forest Service had the advantage over the Park Service on account of that. They used it very strongly too, still do.

Herbert Evison: A little bit related to that, I am wondering what your ideas are about the obligation of the federal government with respect to the acquisition of lands that are needed for national park purposes and I am not talking merely about the purchase of inholdings but say a new area were authorized as for instance, the Cape Cod area which is in a fair way to being authorized. Do you feel that the old requirement that those lands be purchased and presented to the government should be followed or do you think a 50-50 arrangement is better, or do you think the federal government is genuinely a federal project ought to go in and buy those things?

Horace Albright: Well, I always felt that the federal government should acquire these areas. Now if you could get the states to put up the money, so much the better but if it is worth having from a national standpoint it was a benefit of the people of the country, the federal government should be prepared to step in and do it. It was a terrible handicap to us in establishing this Park Service, moving ahead the fact that we couldn’t, didn’t have money for acquiring land.We had to go out and solicit and eventually we managed by dint of long years of pleading and arguing and discussing that got Congress to agree put up 50-50 with private donors. Now I am very glad to say, Congress now appropriates money every year that does not have to

be matched. Now they didn't expect other agencies to match. For instance beginning in 1911, with the Weeks Act (?) and they began buying national forests out over the country beginning up in the White Mountains about 1911. They bought lands for forests. They bought lands for military reservations, for naval stations, post offices for almost every other thing they needed but they wouldn't buy anything for national parks. We felt that was a very limited viewpoint to take and unfair one to take in many respects if you expected the bureau to develop. One of the reasons that persisted so long was became we didn't have a National Park Service for so long. It was a late bureau coming, no centralized agency and nobody was building the system of parks. You had to have a National Park Service and a group of men and women who were doing nothing but working on park problems which didn't get until 1916.

Herbert Evison: Of course this transfer took place, the actual transfer took place within a relatively few weeks before you went out as director but that statement would certainly have applied to you since having dealt with something purporting to have happened before the transfer. Now I wonder if you had any comment on the - his statement it is said anyway, it has been said the Park Service agreed verbally to take only four and when the time came they took them all?

Horace Albright: Well, there is nothing to that but my resignation took effect the day the order took effect. The order was issued June 10, 1933, to be effective 60 days later, August 10, 1933, I felt my organization work was done I resigned but I had everything to do with the working out of that order. We never made any promises to the Forest Service about anything. We intended to take all the national monuments we felt the Park Service should have them all, some of them were under the War Department and we intended to take all of them. We intended to take all the military parks and we had to take all the parks in the District of Columbia. We had to take all the national monuments and then when the order was finally put through we got a lot of things we didn't want or didn't expect including the cemeteries - including Arlington and all the public buildings we didn't want. We had Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Fine Arts Commission. All to be put under the Park Service. My job became too much after that order went out the remaining two months that I was there became the principal thing I had to do was to get those orders modified so that we didn't have all those extras things. We, with the aid of Frederick A. Delano who was chairman of the Capital Park and Planning Commission we got that put back as an independent agency and Charles Moore was in charge of the Fine Arts Commission and we got that made independent again and all we agreed was that the Interior Department and the Park Service would do the housekeeping for those two commissions. Then we

had the job of getting rid of the cemeteries. Now the release of Arlington. I certainly didn't want Arlington because the job of telling where you should bury and where you shan't bury and their own policies of the Army that was entirely out of our line of doing.

Herbert Evison: Your transcript has a very interesting account of

Horace Albright: Gettysburg Cemetery

Herbert Evison: I thought that was very interesting. Now here is something - what is your remembrance of the influence that Ben Thompson, I mean George Wright and that group had in effecting the Park Service's attitude toward predators in the park.

Horace Albright: Well, you must understand when the Park Service was created - when Mr. Mather first went there before the Park Service was created there was already a campaign on to reduce or exterminate certain predatory species and that was initiated by the Biological Survey. The Biological Survey had just been a scientific research agency for a good many years and then the cattle and sheep interest in the West succeeded in getting them larger appropriations and it was the biggest appropriation, I guess, they were getting, the Bureau of Biological Survey was for predatory animal control. Because the animals, the coyotes, the mountain lions and some wolves and so forth were decimating the sheep and cattle herds. Well, that was extended to the parks because the parks were regarded as breeding places for these animals and they come on out in the surrounding country always cattle and sheep and in some cases in those days there were cattle and sheep in the national parks, and they hadn't gotten the cattle and sheep out of them by any means. So we were at the mercy of the cattle and sheep interests that were pulling for predatory control. Also, of course, they claimed they held down the animal species and the animals, the deer, elk, and buffalo and other animals the tourists saw were regarded by everybody including ourselves as much more important to the public for the enjoyment of the parks than were the predators. So we continued that but in a very small way. There was nothing like the killing after the Park Service was created as there was before. I do not believe there was a mountain lion killed in Yellowstone National Park after the Park Service was created. I don't believe there was one. Now the wolves, we ourselves began letting up on that sort of thing, we didn't attempt any campaigns didn't have any special hunters like they had before. Jay Bruce(?) was the mountain lion hunter in California, he was the official lion hunter of California. He killed lions in Yosemite National Park. Those lions, Mr. Mather had his picture taken with them, caught by Jay Bruce(?). Well Jay Bruce wasn't employed anymore in the parks and when I became superintendent of Yellowstone it was no part of my interests at all that we

did much killing except on the antelope range. We had a little killing on the north of coyotes and we killed a few wolves but suddenly we discovered that there were no more wolves. I think it was the winter of 1922, long before we had George Wright we came to the conclusion you shouldn't kill another wolf because you just couldn't see any more wolves and there has not been a wolf killed since 1921 or 1922 in the parks. What they did was not only make these good studies of predators and the importance of predators but they did convince us that they were a faction that the public might be interested in but the difficulty they had and they really still have in my judgment is these national parks are not biological units. In other words, you have to have control and they are now, they won't, as I understand it they won't kill a predator because they want the predators to kill the other animals. The animals that the people are interested in and they are the ones that are being killed. It is an all time question, how can we get rid of some elk or how can we kill more buffalo. I noticed in the bulletins just yesterday they were going to contract to kill a couple hundred buffalo in Yellowstone. Well you can't see buffalo anymore in the Yellowstone and it isn't very often you see other animals but you do see coyotes. I saw coyotes, many of them this past month in Yellowstone and its a question even today as to whether they are too much interested in predators as compared to the desirables that the public want to see. Another feature of it, still controversial, is as far as all animal life in these parks are concerned we are growing more technical in the Service. We are more interested in the scientific side of these things than we are in the public side. It is something that has to be - maybe its all right but they are more interested in some species of grass or some species of flowers, plant life and so forth that might be endangered or cut down by overgrazing in certain parts of the parks. So we take off the animals. Well, then of course, it is all due to the fact that national parks are not biological units. If they were, these animals and plants could all live together. So the Park Service is going to have to face always the question of what are you going to do, suppose you do wipe out a few pieces of grass or a few pieces kind in certain section you couldn't wipe out the whole species to save your life. Anymore than you could wipe out the coyotes, you couldn't wipe out the coyotes to save your life. He is spreading all over the country going to Alaska, he is coming East but you could wipe out mountain lions, wolves and therefore they aren't killed under any circumstances.

Herbert Evison: California grizzlies.

Horace Albright: The California grizzly was wiped out. Now there is a danger of our grizzlies being wiped out. It is possible, there is an open season on them all around Yellowstone and Glacier Parks. Then the Park Service has got

to be careful they don't get on the point of killing the grizzly everytime he turns up some place.

Herbert Evison: Killing what?

Horace Albright: Killing the grizzly. Some grizzly turns up in a camp ground someplace, kill him. They never did that in my day. We wouldn't have killed a grizzly, we would have captured and shipped him some place. We wouldn't have killed him.

Herbert Evison: Do you think that it happens very often that - nowadays - that the grizzly is killed. I know

Horace Albright: I don't think they do kill them and I know they kill a lot of other bears. I think they kill too many. There was one killed in Grant Teton just the other day. He was tipping over garbage cans on the edge of Johnny Lake Lodge. The tourists were all upset about it. They didn't see any reason why that big bear should be killed. They are too ready to kill bears. They don't want to bother with them. They just want them out of the way. I am still a friend of the bears. Somebody is always going to be bitten by them because they just keep on feeding them. The biting is not due to the bear and 99 times out of 100 that biting is due to the tourist trying to get one more picture when his food is all gone and he gets his finger bitten. They don't get infected, it doesn't hurt them, as a matter of fact, it only a whale of a souvenir. I think I emphasized that in my (interrupted by Evison laughter). It is a great souvenir to take home, bear bite.

Herbert Evison: Well, I am very interested in that answer as a whole and realizing that there was a realization of the place of the predator in the picture. (interruption by Albright) scientific studies began.

Horace Albright: Well, furthermore, not only that but I don't want to take any credit away from these fellows; they did great work but what they did more than focus on predator work they began making studies of animal relationships and problems and doing ecological studies and other things that weren't necessary. Should have been undertaken from several standpoints, not only from the standpoint of administration but the standpoint of interpretation of the park. They contributed enormously. Now I myself got contributions for employment of Bill Rush in Yellowstone. He was kind of like Joe Dixon, he was an animal specialist of Joe Dixon's caliber. See George Wright and Ben Thompson were neither of them trained technologists. They were not technologists or ornithologists. They were liberal arts students who had an interest in these things. But Joe Dixon was a mammalogist, he was a zoologist so was Bill Rush but Bill Rush we got from the Forest Service. We borrowed him from the Forest Service.

Herbert Evison: Wasn't he also a writer? Didn't he write Yellowstone Scout?

Horace Albright: Yes. I don't - I think he did.

Herbert Evison: Seems to me I remember seeing that name in that

Horace Albright: He wrote several books. I think he wrote a novel, and a couple of other books. I know he wrote the Idaho Wildlife.

Herbert Evison: Getting back to Colonial for a minute. You're account of it doesn't say very much about how lands were acquired for that park. A friend of mine, you may remember him by the name of Everett Bacon. Does that name strike any responsive cords?

Horace Albright: Which Everett Bacon? There are two of them.

Herbert Evison: J. Everett Bacon

Horace Albright: Did he live in Washington?

Herbert Evison: Yes, out in Silver Spring. He told me one time he was and old friend of ours had had a hand in buying some of the land for Colonial and if my memory serves me correct the state put quite a lot of money into the purchase of land there. Is that right?

Horace Albright: Only for old Jamestown.

Herbert Evison: Only Jamestown.

Horace Albright: The - Yorktown we had __ buy Yorktown did buy Yorktown. One of the first things we did was buy the big Ferris tract, it was owned by Mr. Mather's friend Judge Ferris of Cincinnati. He had not only large pieces of the battlefield but he also had lots in town and we had to buy the whole thing and the authority was big enough so we did. We suddenly found ourselves with owning a lot of the town as well as a large part of the battlefield. Later on we added to it. But in the case of Jamestown we couldn't get anywhere with the woman that owned it. She was out there in Ohio. Of course the APBA had one end of the island, small piece of one end of the island which was about 3,000 acres. The major portion of the island belong to this woman living out in Ohio and we couldn't get anywhere with her. We had appropriation, as I recall, of $60,000. It was either $60,000 or $100,000 that we could use in buying that island and that was as far as we could go was within that money. We had to __ within that money and we couldn't get anywhere so the State of Virginia undertook to condemn its powers and to provide any extra money and after condemnation the property was awarded to the State of Virginia for $160,000, that was what the lady finally got out of it. Do I tell in there about the negotiations?

Herbert Evison: No.

Horace Albright: Well, Mr. Rockefeller had bought a tract of land to tie the two parts George Washington Birthplace together. The part where the graves were and the part where the house had stood. He bought the piece of land in between and I don't know just - can't remember the exact date - lets just done some figures 100 acres at $125,000 the cost - that's not too far from the figures. But this lady out there in Ohio knew about this purchase of George Washington's Birthplace, so she used just simple proportion in calculating the value of Jamestown. She said, "100 acres of the birthplace of George Washington is worth $125,000 then what must 3,000 acres of the birthplace of the nation be worth." Well, you can put any figure you want on it and it runs way up, don't you see. She had it up in the millions. That is what happened and that is what she stood on. She just stuck right there. Just on that principle, so we had to turn it over to the state to be condemned. We acquired all the other land, now the state did acquire some land by gift through this way through Will Carson who was a conservation commissioner. He persuaded certain timber owners and landowners of the right of way of the Parkway to convey their lands to us and I think it was in some cases where he paid them small sums of money out of his conservation fund. I think in that way, certain situations were cleared up that we couldn't do directly ourselves. I think to that extent Virginia did give some help.

END OF SIDE 1

BEGINNING OF SIDE 2

Horace Albright: Now Virginia, of course, acquired Shenandoah National Park and she had to acquire the right of way from the Blue Ridge Parkway so Virginia must be given an awful lot of credit for the things she did.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Horace Albright: All away along the line. But she didn't buy too much of the Colonial.

Herbert Evison: But she did make it possible for the federal government to acquire Jamestown?

Horace Albright: To acquire Jamestown, absolutely. I don't know whether we would have ever gotten it if it hadn't been for Virginia.

Herbert Evison: As you look over the years since your first association with the Department or since the establishment of the Park Service, can you note any major changes in the relationship of the Service and the Department?

Horace Albright: Well, I don't know exactly what you mean.

Herbert Evison: I am not too sure but here, I think of this thing.

Horace Albright: Procedural changes, I can give you a lot of

Herbert Evison: Well, that would be one of course, if you think of important procedural changes. I would be interested in that.

Horace Albright: Well, I think there is a very great deal of in the recent years there has been a tendency to build super bureaus in the Department. I think the Department - the Secretary's office - the satellite assistant secretary set-ups are really little bureaus in themselves and they exercise a great deal more influence on procedures and policies than they ever did in the old days. Now up to the time I left there in 1933, there wasn't any change in 20 years there. The Secretary was up at the top and he had a couple of secretaries of his own and he had a chief clerk who looked after the property and he had a finance officer and a personnel officer and it was an appeal office, it was an office that had general supervision and exercise in general policy. The bureau chiefs were in the nature of cabinet officers, little cabinet officers, for the secretary and had occasional staff meetings. They had two assistant secretaries the first assistant secretary might be compared to the under secretary. The first assistant secretary was the outcome of the under secretary and the assistant secretary. Just the two. The bureaus were placed roughly under them. Now their supervision was largely very general. They didn't lay down much policy themselves. They collaborated with the bureau chiefs in working out policy. But mainly they were signatory officers. That is the law requires so many things be signed by the secretary - the secretary shall do this, the secretary shall do that - and so it required an enormous amount of papers to go through. The secretary couldn't possibly sign and these assistant secretaries did it. But you are at liberty to go past the assistant secretary to the secretary. He was at liberty to go through past his assistant secretary to you. It was a very close relationship between bureau chiefs and assistant secretaries and secretary. This was a very small top organization. Now it is a very big top organization. There are four or five assistant secretaries, four assistant secretaries plus the administrative assistant plus the under secretary.

Herbert Evison: That's right.

Horace Albright: There is a secretary for irrigation and reclamation. There is an assistant secretary for Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines. There is an assistant secretary for land, that includes the Park Service Bureau of Land Management and Indian Bureau. There is an assistant secretary for Wildlife and that is the most curious set up in the whole government service. They got one assistant secretary for Wildlife and they have a commissioner of wildlife and under the commissioner they have two

bureaus. That is a fantastic bureaucratic setup. Nobody ever heard of anything like that. So they got the under secretary and got the administrative assistants. So that is a huge __ and then they've got committees of various kinds and every assistant secretary has got several assistants and I understand that in this administration they have straightened that out and put in back nearer to what it used to be. But under the Eisenhower administration, under the Truman administration, those men were practically robbed the bureau chiefs of their authority and power even an assistant to the assistant up there could call up the bureau chief to have him run upstairs to see them. Nothing like that happened in the old days. So I would say there is very much less autonomy in the bureaus than there was in those days. The bureau chief hasn't the authority, he can't be nearly as certain of himself as he could in those days. He had a much broader authority.

Herbert Evison: I think I got a very good answer to that question of mine. You certainly put your finger right on a major difference. Now do you think there is adequate public understanding of what the relationships are of a bureau like the Park Service to the Department of which it is a part? I ask that question for this reason, back during the Dinosaur controversy, of course, it was known that the Park Service had opposed the dams in Dinosaur. Mr. Chapman made a decision yes. We will go ahead with the dams. There were a lot of people who somehow or other had the idea that the director of the National Park Service had gone right on going out everywhere and declaiming the decision of the Secretary of the Interior was wrong. So I guess my question - do you think the people understand that a bureau chief isn't an autonomous little king but that he does have to follow the leadership of the Department.

Horace Albright: Well, I will say this. Anybody that knows anything about government in Washington wouldn't have any trouble understanding that the Park Service director is subject to the secretary. The secretary is final order but I don't think many people know anything about the secretary. That has been my experience. Very few people know the setup in the federal government. They don't - couldn't name the cabinet officers, they can't even name the cabinet departments and they don't know what bureaus are under the departments and they don't know the relation between the officers and the departments. There is a very big ignorance on that subject.

Herbert Evison: Even a lot of congressmen don't.

Horace Albright: Oh, congressmen have not been sure about it. That's right. It certainly takes them a long time to find out. But so I don't think you can count on too much what the public knows about the thing. I think out in the field where a bureau like the Park Service has a big area or the Forest Service, I

think the people understand who they are and they may understand what department they are under because they get publications and see the name Department of Agriculture or Interior. But I don't think they know anything about how policy is made and don't know what influence the secretaries make. I think in that case the bureau and man is in his right place. They understand his position and respect it. They may not like it but they respect it.

Herbert Evison: Now, I really want to turn you loose on what is nearly the question I want to ask you. About some dreaming about where the National Park Service should go.

Horace Albright: Well, I think a great deal depends upon where the National Park Service should go is going to depend on the outcome of this outdoor - National Outdoor Recreation Review Commission's report. I think there is going to be a growth in the National Park Service in the field of recreation. I think we are going to have a good many more recreational units. That might include, for instance, the Alagash (phonetic) in Maine, Cape Code, Padre Island, Point Reyes in California, the Oregon Dunes all the things of that kind that would be recreation would be in the class with Lake Mead Recreation Area where you wouldn't be so concerned with certain private holdings. There would be fishing, hunting and the other recreational doing your best to keep the country in its natural condition. You would be more willing to make modifications and change it around to administer it somewhat differently. I would say the ideal one would be Cape Hatteras Seashore it seems to be a very well run operation. I think the Park Service might pick up quite a number of areas of that kind and might run into quite a good deal of acreage that might run to two to three million acres, I don't - there will have to be some land that the Park Service is going to round out its scenic areas the areas __ probable of what are in the National Park that is in the national parks that is in the 30 - just in the 30 national parks going to have to take them out of the Forest Service. It isn't going to run to ten or fifteen million acres. That's more than has ever been taken from the Forest Service. I would think Glacier Peak in the Rockies would be one and that might be a million acres. The Cascades, I think that might be one, we had that in mind way back in 1915 or 16 Mr. Mather and I planned to go up to Lake Chelan into that country one time. We didn't, it was late in the fall, late in the season, or something some storm or something kept us out. I think that we have got to get back if we are going to have certain lands to the parks like putting back the minaretts to Yosemite that was taken out in 1905. I would like to see the southern half of Rocky Mountain Park, the Rocky Mountain Park was only half created. The southern half was never made a park.

Herbert Evison: The Arapaho

Horace Albright: The Arapaho country, Gray's Peak, around that section. But it wouldn't add up to anything more than outside two or three million acres at the very outside. But the Forest Service is going to have to face giving up some land and then there are certain areas they are running as national parks or national monuments rather that they ought to have to give up, like for instance, Bristle Comb Pine Forest in the White Mountains east of where I was born. There is very unique areas, clearly national monument character and the Forest Service ought to be willing to let it be created to a national monument and turn it over to the parks. Another thing they are doing right today, they have got the earthquake area just outside of Yellowstone and they are running it as a park. They have it reserved, they have guide parties they have lectures they are running it exactly like a park and here it is within just a few miles of the park. Yellowstone Park could easily do what they are doing down there. And there is no reason why it shouldn't be set aside as a great scientific area that earthquake toppled that mountain off and build a special dam, build a lake there its got these great cracks in the earth around, its a natural for the National Park Service with its interpretive work to handle. But on the other hand the Secretary Udall has got a program which I have seen outlined. He invited me to a meeting on April 5th, I think it was, it was the first time I had met him and I sat there with officers from the Bureau of the Budget, Park Service and a few men from the White House and some of his own staff and listened to him actually lecture for over an hour with charts and diagrams and maps as to what he hopes to do in the park in the expansion of the Park Service. It was a very thrilling thing and if it could be carried out it could be a tremendous development but my own impression is – was that he was a young man and hadn't been around administrative work very long and he was running rather fast and he was going to knock over a lot of hurdles and he wasn't going to get what he wanted. Thats my feeling after 50 years experience nearly around government that he just isn't going to get it. But on the other hand, I was glad to see him try. Now, he went down in the Canyons of the Green in Colorado in the Green the other day with a party of the governor of Utah, Harold Fabian, he is on the Park Commission, Tom Allen of the Park Service, he had quite a number of other people, visitors, quite a big party and he laid out a park down there in that Wild horse mesa country, dead horse, I guess it is.

Herbert Evison: Dead horse

Horace Albright: and the Canyons of the Green and some of the tributary canyons laid out a park of 1200 square miles. He laid it out right on this trip, don't you see. Of course, he had people there who knew about the area but he was

premature in my judgment in saying anything about it because he announced it in rather way that forces reaction and opposition developed. The governor was against it, congressmen were against it and there was already a wide body of opposition. If he has a program like this he ought to develop it very, very carefully before he begins to give it to the press that's my judgment. He told me himself when I was with him that he got in trouble with Denver, he said he was flying over the mountains and he looked down and saw Mt. Elbert. He said you know Mt. Elbert is the second highest mountain in the United States next to Mount Whitney. I said, yes, I know it is and thought it was 14,020 feet or something like that and we discussed it a little more and he said, well I was looking down on it and I didn't see any communities, I saw nice canyons and forests and I said well here is a natural park in southern Colorado hasn't got a national park and the Rockies are entitled to more than one national park so when he got to Denver the newspaperman crowded around me and wanted to know what I had on my mind so I outlined a possible Mt. Elbert Park. He said the next day when they put it in the papers by the time I could get to my office the next morning Washington had all kinds of oppositions. Said all four congressmen and both senators were against it. So, of course, I thought but I didn't say so, well its enthusiastic secretary shouldn't build monument - parks from the air that way it is kind of an air castle and then he shouldn't have talked about it to the newspapers. So he is moving so fast on these things I don't know how many things he is going to get. Of course, I told him the first time I was with him that you ought to find someway you could get the Forest Service back into the Interior Department that would be the easiest way you could get a lot of these things things through. I said every secretary has tried it for 50 years and hasn't gotten anywhere so I don't think you going to.

Herbert Evison: I thought that editorial in the Times the other day kind of calling the two departments to follow the presidents admonition was a very good one.

Horace Albright: John Oakes wrote that. I saw him that very day down at the Century Club.

Horace Albright: Well you saw my article in the Sierra Club Bulletin on that subject didn't you?

Herbert Evison: Yes. I even reprinted some of it.

Horace Albright: Harpers magazine is after one along that line now but I don't know if I will get a chance to write it.

Herbert Evison: Of course, I tried to sell one to Harpers magazine along that line to, but

Horace Albright: I didn't ask __ ; they asked me but I didn't know if I could but I'm not any writer.

(Note: The following are excerpts discussed only by Evison)

Herbert Evison: Let's follow this now with some excerpts from the transcript of Horace Albright's Columbia University interviews.

Question: Speaking of camping, Grand Teton as I recall when it was first set up was to be retained as the wilderness, it was not to have concessions and roads built in it and so forth.

Albright: Well that's the original park. It doesn't say anything against concessions but it does say there can't be any roads built in it.

Albright: But you couldn't build any roads in it anyhow except maybe just in foothills because the ground is too rugged but we intentionally put that provision in there because we didn't want anybody in the future to blast those mountains to pieces with roads. If somebody wanted to build a road in there they would tear up and make a terrible eyesore to do it. That's about the only park that has that kind of provision.

Albright: The question with respect to the effort to get the thoroughfare region into Yellowstone Park.

Albright: Now what good is a wilderness. Can people go into it or can they stand by a lake somewhere and see it reflected or what.

Albright: They can go into it but they have got to walk in or ride in. A real wilderness doesn't have any roads in it but you are getting down now to a philosophical subject that there has been an awful lot of debate about. There has been a bill in Congress for several years to set up a wilderness system. That wilderness thing is a big one and it's still up, they haven't been able to get these bills through. It's the livest subject there is in conservation in Washington as to whether you should set up a wilderness system including not only the parks but a lot of lands in the forests and some of the Indian reservations and some on the public lands. The idea being to set aside a very considerable part of all these reservations as areas that you can only go into on foot or on horseback. There is a lot of opposition to it. There again it's the same old opposition - timber men, cattlemen. But there is a feeling also that, of course, a lot of people say, just what you did, what good is it. That's a questions that's asked. What good is it? If you can't get into these areas what's the use of having them. Well there is another part of this philosophy that you can get a wilderness experience without going in it. You can get on the edge of the Grand Teton range and just realize there is a piece of old America as it always was. And you can feel if you are in the mood at all, that you are having a wilderness experience. Or even you can go up on top of a mountain like Mount Washington that you can get up in an automobile and you look out

and there is a thousand square miles to the east of you that there are no roads in, it is just wild country, just as wild as it ever was. Uncut forests, untouched grazing lands, wild animals in there nothing but game trails, you get a feel of the wilderness you don't have to ride into it.

Question: Doesn't this also have a scientific use?

Albright: Oh, yes indeed it does indeed. That's one of the important features of these areas. I can give you a lot of literature on that wilderness subject. They are actually working with it right now in Washington. Lawrence Rockefeller's commission on outdoor recreation, as to what a wilderness is and just recently he took his commission out to Wyoming and gave them a little wilderness experience. They worked out into the Grand Teton range and up into the Yellowstone.

Question: What is the national park's responsibility for people who come into the national parks. Is there an obligation to keep them in good health and can you discharge obligation if you have got large wilderness areas that you are letting them get lost in where there may be fires.

Albright: You can't very well get lost because they don't go into these areas without checking with the ranger and if they don't come out within a reasonable time the ranger will go and get them. They can't climb mountains of a dangerous character without getting permission. That is strictly true of Mount McKinley Park in Alaska and Mount Rainier Park in Washington and in the Tetons. You have got to prove that you know how to climb a mountain before you can go because that's on the grounds you can't afford to have rangers spending all their time rescuing people. It’s the same way with water. There are certain bodies of water they don't, you can't go through the Grand Canyon in a boat without getting permission from the Park Service and proving that you are with a person who knows how to handle boats and you know how to handle them yourself. They wouldn't let you go through alone anyway. You are pretty well protected from any dangers by controls they've got on it.

On page 807 in connection with a discussion of the American Planning and Civic Association Albright said, “the regrettable thing about these Associations of this kind is that we do not seem to have men coming into them nowadays who will be willing to put the time and effort and spirit into this sort of thing we had years ago. Now some of these organizations are languishing, the American Planning and Civic Association is one, for men to take hold where the old-timers dropped out.

Question: How come, do you know?

Albright: I don't know why they haven't done it maybe because there has been a proliferation of associations. Maybe you have too many other societies and organizations to look after. Well just take for instance in the field that this association began working in 60 years ago. The field of national parks, well now we have the National Parks Association, of which I am also a director, and the Wilderness Society, which overlaps what we have been doing a good deal. We have this National Trust for Historic Preservation which overlaps to some extent. And then the professional organizations have grown up like the American Society of Landscape Architects, American Institute of Architects, American National Planning Institute. There are several planning associations, so this organization that used to coordinate all these activities and used to accomplish so much now either is overshadowed or its duty has been taken up by another and people can't afford to give the time to it that they earlier did. I am not complaining about the younger generation, although I haven't seen many that are the equal of those old-timers like Frederick Delano or Jay Horace McFarland, or General Grant, who were willing to devote themselves wholeheartedly to this kind of thing.

Regarding the establishment of resources for the future Albright says on page 813 at the bottom:

I was called out when we got to the point of organizing this corporation, putting in officers and discussing the kind of organization which it had to have which we thought we would station in Washington. I was called out to the long distance phone and I was out there quite a while when I came back I found I had been elected president, which taught me a lesson I'll never forget. If you are engaged in the business of organizing something don't ever go out no matter what the reason might be, you're liable to get elected.

END OF TAPE