Capitol Reef: the Forgotten National Park

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CAPITOL REEF: THE FORGOTTEN
NATIONAL PARK

by

Jonathan Scott Thow

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

History

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1986
FOR MY GRANDPARENTS,

GORDON AND MARY THOW
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Jonathan Scott Thow
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ABSTRACT

Capitol Reef: The Forgotten National Park

by

Jonathan Scott Thow, Master of Science
Utah State University, 1986

Major Professor: Dr. Charles S. Peterson
Department: History

The purpose of this study was to examine the changing relationship between the National Park Service and the residents of Wayne County, Utah. In 1937, Capitol Reef National Park was created as a result of the efforts made by local residents looking for a solution to their economic problems. Over the next five decades, the anticipated economic upturn spurred by the National Park did not develop. Instead, the relationship between the parties involved underwent a radical change because of conflicts over private landholdings, grazing and mineral rights, expansion, development, and road building. While this study does trace the growth of Capitol Reef into a national park, it is not an administrative history of the site. Its focus is on failure of the Park to live up to the expectations of its early supporters and the resulting deterioration of the relationship between local residents and the National Park Service.

(177 pages)
CAPITOL REEF NATIONAL PARK is one of the five national parks, six national monuments and two national recreational areas found in the state of Utah. The Park is also one of the national park units clustered in the Four Corners region that were established to protect the wealth of natural and human history found in the deserts and canyons of the region. This group of sites includes the well known areas of the Grand Canyon, Zion, Bryce Canyon, Mesa Verde, Arches, Canyonlands and Capitol Reef national parks, as well as the lesser known Pipe Springs, Hovenweep, Rainbow Bridge, Natural Bridges, Chaco Canyon, Navajo and Canyon de Chelly national monuments. A national historic site and a national recreational area are also included in the circle of Park Service units in the region. This collection is the greatest concentration of National Park facilities in the United States. Within a few hours drive of other sites in the system, they are very important to the development of the tourist industry in southern Utah (see maps on page 19 and 20). Each year hundreds of thousands of people visit the national parks and monuments in southern Utah and with them come millions of dollars that are added to the economy of the state.

Capitol Reef, while being one of the lesser known parks in southern Utah, is an important part of the National Park System.
While the purpose of this work is to examine the development and economic consequences of Capitol Reef, it is necessary first to discuss something about the land and the people who developed it. For it is the land that has brought the national attention to region and attracted the hundreds of thousands of visitors who have stood in silent awe before the cliffs of Capitol Reef National Park, and the resident population has played a major role that gives the Park's history specific significance.  

Capitol Reef is located 220 miles south of Salt Lake City in the heart of southern Utah. The 215,000 acre national park has its headquarters in Fruita, Wayne County, and has grown in the last fifty years to extend its boundaries into four Utah counties. The original national monument was set aside by presidential proclamation in 1937 to protect some of the remarkable geological features of the Waterpocket Fold. It should be made clear at this point that the name "Capitol Reef" has been used to refer to two different regions, thus the name Capitol Reef National Park is actually misleading. In the early 1970's the name Capitol Reef was applied to a very broad and diverse region when the original monument was expanded by almost six times its initial size. However, the monument established and named in 1937 included just the area around the cliffs on the northern end of the Waterpocket Fold. This is the area that is the geographic Capitol Reef or the region that the early settlers referred to as Capitol Reef. Thus, the name Capitol Reef can be
applied today to the whole Park or just to the escarpment section which was set aside in 1937. To avoid confusion, the term Capitol Reef will be used to refer to the political boundaries of the National Park and the terms "escarpment" or "headquarters section" will be used when referring to the geological Capitol Reef. It is the escarpment section of the Park that most visitors are familiar with. The north district of the Park encompasses Cathedral Valley, and the south district runs the length of the Waterpocket Fold to Glen Canyon National Recreational area. Because of problems with access into these regions, an overwhelming majority of the visitors never see anything other than the headquarters section of the Park.

In the geological context of the Colorado Plateau, Capitol Reef is in an area of transition between the "canyonlands of the Colorado River watershed" and the "high plateaus of central Utah." The Colorado Plateau covers an area of 150,000 square miles in southern Utah, northern Arizona, northwestern New Mexico and southwestern Colorado. It can actually be divided into six subsections, but our concern lies with the center of the Plateau, or the Canyon Lands section. The Plateau is part of the Colorado and Green rivers watershed and is generally between 5,000 and 7,000 feet above sea level (see map on page 21). It is within a region that has been uplifted by the forces of nature and contains remarkable geological features that have been protected at Capitol Reef, Arches and Canyonlands national parks, as well
as the Grand Canyon itself. During the millions of years it took to form the Plateau as it appears today, a series of folds developed in the earth's crust from the pressures of the uplifting. The greatest of these folds, the Waterpocket Fold, runs for over one hundred miles from Thousand Lake Mountain to the Colorado River.\(^4\) While a fold in the earth's crust is not that uncommon, the Waterpocket Fold is unique for its length and for the features that erosion has uncovered. When visitor's travel through Capitol Reef National Park today, they are looking at millions of years of geological history exposed by the ravages of water, ice and wind. What remains are the multicolored layers of sandstone and sedimentary rock which were deposited over millions of years, uplifted and shifted by the forces of nature, and exposed by erosion. The results are spectacular to see and are the primary reason that Capitol Reef National Park exists today. The geological history of the Waterpocket Fold is a complex story and is one that started long before man walked the face of the earth.

The oldest exposed rock formation visible at Capitol Reef today is the white Kaibab Limestone that is found only in the deepest canyons of the Park. This limestone was laid down between 230 and 270 million years ago when a large shallow sea covered the Colorado Plateau. This period of deposition ended when the Plateau underwent a period of uplifting and the seas withdrew from the area. When the seas left, the Kaibab formation was
exposed to erosion and an undeterminable amount of the limestone was washed away. Starting about 200 million years ago, the area was again covered by a shallow sea and the Moenkopi and Chinle formations were laid down. These two formations, together over a thousand feet thick, are predominantly dark red, but also have bands of purples, lavenders, greens and whites running through them. The Moenkopi and Chinle formations are seen today as the base of the giant cliffs near the Visitors Center in the Park. The Windgate Sandstone was deposited on top of the Chinle Formation when the seas withdrew and the area was covered with sand dunes hundreds of feet deep. Over time the sand became stone and today appears as the predominant red cliffs viewed around the Park. Another cycle of seas and deserts deposited the Kayenta Formation and Navajo Sandstone, completing the formation of the sites most visible to tourists visiting the headquarters section of the Park today. The Navajo Sandstone forms the giant gray-white domes that cap the escarpment. It was the white domes that reminded the early settlers of the dome on the Capitol building and inspired the "Capitol" in Capitol Reef. The word "Reef" is an old sailors' term for a barrier at sea and the expression was given to the Waterpocket Fold, for its steep cliffs and deep canyons are indeed a barrier to travel across southern Utah.

The Navajo Sandstone was deposited about 190 million years ago, but this did not mark the end of the formation process of
the Waterpocket Fold. The cycle of inland seas inundating the area and withdrawing continued throughout time. Each return deposited a different layer of sediment, each with its own distinctive color, texture and stability. The Carmel Formation can still be seen in a few places capping the Navajo Sandstone in the highest elevations of the escarpment section. Several other formations can be viewed in other areas around the Park, but the Navajo Sandstone is the last remaining formation found throughout the escarpment section of the Park. It is estimated that before erosion started its work in the region, there were an additional 5500 feet of sediments lying on top of Capitol Reef. In relatively recent geological time, approximately 60 million years ago, another uplifting of the Colorado Plateau occurred and with it came the creation of the Waterpocket Fold.

Starting about 60 million years ago, shifting forces beneath the earth's crust caused dramatic landform changes in the West. These forces resulted in the Rocky Mountains and the Colorado Plateau being further uplifted. As is seen today, the uplifting of the Rocky Mountains was very uneven and the result was the creation of a rugged mountain range with high peaks. The pressures beneath the Colorado Plateau were much more uniform causing fewer major disturbances to the surface of the land. One major exception to this occurred at Capitol Reef. Here, a folding occurred in the earth's crust and the layers of sedimentation laid down over millions of years were turned on end and thrust
into a vertical position. The fold was named by geologists for the numerous waterpockets or watertanks that have eroded into the soft sandstone. 8

The final, and ongoing, geological process at Capitol Reef is that of erosion. There have been thousands of feet of deposits ripped away by rains, runoff, glacial activity and winds since they were laid down millions of years ago. Thus, water not only played a major role in laying down the formations, but returned later to wash much of its work into the Colorado River and on to the Pacific Ocean:

Ancient seas cemented the limestones, shales and sandstones as deposition occurred. Rivers carrying tremendous silt loads ground away at rocks and cliffs, carving canyons and valleys. Ice created pressures which forced rocks apart, and glacial ice pulverized rocks and boulders, making them part of the soil. Raindrops softened and eroded the hard materials and transported them to other areas. Water, then, in its many forms was the tool which chiseled and sculptured the landscape, leaving it as it is today.

It is this final process of erosion that has left behind the spectacular arches, the soaring spires and cliffs, and the deep narrow canyons of Capitol Reef.

The region of rugged canyons, plateaus and mountains of the Colorado Plateau left the region around Capitol Reef one of the last areas in the United States to be explored by whites. Capitol Reef is also surrounded by land forms that made penetration into the area very difficult. On the west it is bounded by "two high ridges of the Wasatch Range" and to the east by the "impassable
canyons of the Colorado River." To the south lies the Kaiparowitz Plateau and to the north Thousand Lake Mountain and the San Rafael Swell. To the southeast lie the Henry Mountains, preventing easy penetration of the Waterpocket Fold from that direction. The nature of the landscape made travel through the region very difficult and kept government explorers from studying the area until after the Civil War, and it slowed Mormon expansion into the region until very late in their settlement of Utah. However, before the explorers and white settlers arrived in the late nineteenth century, the region was inhabited by groups of Indians who left behind evidence that can still be seen today.

The earliest people inhabiting southern Utah were hunter-gatherers, the Basketmakers, who occupied the region from 8000 B.C. until around A.D. 500, when their culture was replaced by the Fremont Indian culture. Although they doubtlessly existed at Capitol Reef, they left few remains compared to the Fremonts whose remaining clues to their culture and artifacts are another reason why Capitol Reef is a national park today.

There is still a great deal of debate surrounding the question of where the Fremont culture originated. It is generally agreed that between A.D. 500 and 700 a new cultural group emerged in Utah and replaced the earlier Basketmaker culture. What is not agreed upon by archaeologists is where this new culture came from. The more recent theories generally focus on the Basketmaker
culture being changed over time by the diffusion of traits from the Pueblo culture centered in northern Arizona and New Mexico. However, other theories contend the Fremonts and the Pueblos evolved differently from a common heritage with the Anasazi, another early Indian group. There have been others who believed the Fremonts evolved out of a mix of Pueblo and Athabaskan culture, an Indian group from Alaska and the northwestern plains that migrated into the area. Another hypothesis is that the Fremont culture was simply a bridge between the desert culture of the earliest Basketmakers and the Shoshonean people who are the ancestors of modern Indians found in the region.\textsuperscript{13} Regardless of the exact process of cultural development, by A.D. 1000 there was a well established Fremont culture spread throughout most of Utah, including a group living along the Fremont River at the site of today's National Park.

The Fremont Indians were the first horticulturists in Utah. Along the Fremont River in Wayne County they raised corn, beans and squash, hunted and gathered grass seeds and pinenuts to supplement their crops. They lived in pit houses and left behind a few glimpses of their lives through petroglyphs and pictographs which can be viewed on the cliffs at several sites within the Park. The lava stone foundations of their pit homes and the huts they built into the cliffs to store their grain can also be seen at the Park today. Surviving evidence indicates that the Fremonts
"led rich creative lives in addition to working at day to day survival."\textsuperscript{14}

However, this apparently productive and creative culture was short lived. In a period of just a few hundred years, the Fremonts reached a cultural peak and then disappeared almost overnight. As with their arrival, archaeologists are not completely agreed upon why the culture died out. A common theory holds that a long period of drought existed during the thirteenth century, forcing the Fremonts to return to hunting and gathering for survival. Some believe that these hunter-gatherers were the ancestors to the Shoshonean people; others feel that they drifted back on to the southern plains and were the predecessors to the Indians living in that region when the whites arrived. Yet another possibility was that a fiercer nomadic group, possible the early Shoshonean people, moved into the area and overwhelmed the Fremonts with superior weapons.\textsuperscript{15} Despite the lack of an exact reason, we do know that the Fremonts "were replaced, displaced or absorbed by peoples of a different cultural and linguistic background" sometime after A.D. 1200.\textsuperscript{16} Whoever these new people may have been, they left little evidence behind and made no attempt to maintain any permanent home in the area of today's Park.

During the next several hundred years the area was used by nomadic Indians during the winter months as shelter from the cold long winters on the high Colorado Plateau. During the seventeenth
century small bands of Paiute Indians moved into the region and maintained summer hunting and fishing camps around Fish Lake and wintered in low lying areas around the Park. These small nomadic bands made no attempt at establishing permanent homes for themselves as the Fremont Indians had done. Indeed, the region remained largely unoccupied until the first white settlers arrived in the late nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{17}

The rough terrain and harsh winter climate of the Colorado Plateau not only slowed the movement of Indians into the region, but were also responsible for keeping the whites away from Capitol Reef until late in the nineteenth century. "It was . . . quite late in American history before the white man appeared. . . . In fact, Capitol Reef was the last explored territory in the continental United States-- about the middle 1800's."\textsuperscript{18} Many trappers, mountain men and government explorers, including John C. Fremont, came close to the Waterpocket Fold, but the ruggedness of the land prevented anyone from venturing into the Fold to explore it and leave a record of their findings until the 1870's.

The first recorded exploration of the area around Capitol Reef occurred in August 1866, when a group of sixty-two officers and men were led into the region by Captain James Andrus. The military expedition set out from St. George, in southwestern Utah, to examine the area bordering on the Kaibab Plateau and the Colorado and Green rivers and to chastise hostile Indians who had
been raiding southern Utah settlements. Andrus was ordered to learn all he could of the "facilities and resources of the country" and to make an accurate report of the campaign.\textsuperscript{19} In early September, the Captain marched his men along a well-known route to Kanab. From there the group proceeded in a general northeasterly direction until they reached the summit of Boulder Mountain, where they looked down into the Waterpocket Fold from an elevation of 11,000 feet. Adjutant Franklin B. Woolley, who wrote the official report of the expedition, reported that the "view satisfied us entirely of the utter impracticability of any trail crossing the basin . . . either to the Mountains boarding it or to the river."\textsuperscript{20} Andrus had been ordered to explore the region as far east as the Green River. However, the terrain appeared so impenetrable that he turned west and returned home through Grass Valley, Circleville and Parowan. By the time they returned to St. George, Andrus' men had traveled 464 miles and had been to places that few whites had visited before. While the Andrus expedition came very close to entering the Waterpocket Fold, they did no more than view it from the heights of Boulder Mountain. The only mention of the Capitol Reef area in Woolley's report was the reference to the problems crossing it would present.\textsuperscript{21}

The geography of the region continued to keep explorers and travelers from penetrating the Waterpocket Fold for many years. In 1869 and 1871-72 Major John Wesley Powell made two trips down
the Colorado River while exploring the region, but neither he nor his men ever ventured into the Fold. In 1875 E. E. Howell, a government geologist, made the first geological inspection of the area. The following year G. K. Gilbert made mention of the Fold in his detailed report on the Henry Mountains. However, by this time other forces had come into play, and the area was not only being explored, but it was being settled by members of the Church of Jesus Christ Of Latter-Day Saints.

In 1873 it had been over twenty-five years since the Mormons had arrived in the Salt Lake Valley and Brigham Young had uttered his legendary statement, "This is the place." In the years after 1847, the Mormon Church sent thousands of members throughout the Great Basin to establish a Mormon claim on the area and to set up new outposts and settlements for their ever-growing numbers. The church also sent scouts onto the Colorado Plateau, but they returned with negative reports on the value of the land for settlement and farming. In a relatively short period of time, many of the ideal sites in the Great Basin were colonized. By the early 1870's the leaders of the church were looking for new areas to settle their members in. Powell's activities on the Colorado River and his use of Mormon scouts to explore the region caused renewed interest by Brigham Young in the area around Capitol Reef. This was one of the few remaining areas in Utah that had not been explored and settled by the church. In early June 1873, Brigham Young sent twenty-two men, led by George Bean and A. K.
Thurber, to explore the region, and to try and negotiate a treaty with any Indians living in the area so that the region could be peacefully occupied. Bean and Thurber were successful in their efforts with the Indians in late June, when they signed a treaty with them at Fish Lake which granted all of the area that is now Wayne County to the Mormons.

The men who first explored the area for the Mormon Church quickly saw the value of the land around Capitol Reef. The Fremont River would provide water for agriculture, but even more importantly, they had found a valley that was full of grass for grazing cattle during the winter months. The original settlers spoke of "grass that 'you could have mown'" and they told of "working horses all day and turning them 'out on the hill' at night where they foraged to such an extent that they were able to do spring farm work on such feed." The early settlers to Rabbit Valley, the area in Wayne County to the west of today's park, found a land that was perfectly suited for the winter grazing of cattle. It was full of grass, had sufficient water, and the winters were mild. It was cattle that brought the settlers to Wayne County. According to Fount D. Brian, in his short history of Loa, Utah, the main reason people settled in this valley was for grazing purposes. Practically all the settlers had their small herds of cattle and their first idea was to range these animals.
After Bean and Thurber made their investigations and reported their findings, it did not take long for the first cattle herds to arrive. The year following their inspection of the area, Bean returned with a large herd of Church owned-cattle to graze along Pleasant Creek. He was followed in rapid order by several other cattlemen, primarily out of the Sevier Valley, who came to use the area around Capitol Reef as winter grazing range. Several of these cattlemen brought their families with them for their winter stay and in 1879 the first permanent buildings were constructed and the town of Loa was born. That year also saw the construction of the first homes in Fremont, Burrville, and Thurber, later Bicknell. The next year, Ebenezer Hanks led a group of polygamists through Capitol Reef and down the Fremont River to a site thirty-six miles east of today’s park. Here they founded the community of Hanksville. The polygamist families that Hanks led through Capitol Reef were looking for a place to escape trouble from federal authorities and "for many years this was the 'end of the road.'" There the polygamists were unmolested in their retreat. It is difficult to put an exact date on the settlement of all the towns in the county, because isolated cabins were often constructed in an area before a formal township could be laid out. However, it was around 1880 or shortly after that, that the settlements of Teasdale, Cainesville, Gile and Junction were first organized.
Junction, the community that this work is the most concerned with, was first settled in 1880. It was the only settlement within the boundaries of Capitol Reef and today serves as the headquarters for the Park. In 1879 Franklin W. Young, a squatter, took a claim at the junction of the Fremont River and Sulfur Creek. He held on to it for only a short time, passing it on to Samual Rogers, who then passed the site on to Niels Johnson. In 1889 Niels Johnson built the first cabin at the junction of the two rivers and is credited with being the first settler of Junction. Johnson was also responsible for the first fruit trees being planted along the banks of the streams. Eventually the fruit trees became the major source of income in Junction and are still being maintained by the Park Service today. 30 The elevation of Junction, or Fruita, as the name became at the turn of the century, is several hundred feet lower than the towns built to the west on the Aquarius Plateau. The warmer temperatures resulting from the lower elevation, along with the water from the Fremont River, turned the settlement of Fruita into a green oasis tucked into the red cliffs of Capitol Reef. Johnson used the fruit from his trees to provide "homemade wine to cattlemen driving herds through Capitol Gorge" and later supplied prospectors passing through Capitol Reef with "fresh and dried fruit, flour, meals, lodging, whiskey and wine." 31 At its height, because of the limited amount of land along the Fremont River, Fruita only supported eight to ten families.
The population of the region, attracted by the mild winters and the possibilities for winter grazing in the area, grew at a rapid rate for the remainder of the nineteenth century. There was no formal census taken in the area until 1920, so it is difficult to determine the actual population of the county. However, in 1880 it was estimated by a man named Wheeler, in a letter to the Deseret News, that there were "60 or 70 families in the valley" and "only one 40 acre man," meaning only one man without a family. Based on the estimation of Wheeler, there were probably three to four hundred people living in the area by 1880. A year later, a local bishop reported to the Deseret News that there were "about 600 inhabitants" living in the valley. It is likely that one of these men made a mistake in his estimation of the population, but, nonetheless, their reports indicate the population of the region had grown rapidly since its opening in 1873. It was estimated by Ann Snow in her history of Wayne County, that the county population was about 1900 at the start of the twentieth century. Thus, as the new century opened, Wayne County had almost two thousand people living within its boundaries. While the location of the region limited it in many regards, it appeared that Wayne County had a bright economic future in the livestock and agricultural industries. The importance of livestock continued well into the twentieth century, but by the early 1920's men with new economic ideas emerged in southern Utah. These men brought with them ambitions
for a new industry in the region and they changed forever the people and economy of Wayne County.
CAPITOL REEF NATIONAL PARK AND VICINITY
END NOTES

9. Olson and Olson, Capitol Reef, 4.
11. For further description of the Waterpocket Fold and the Colorado Plateau see C. Gregory Crampton, Standing Up County (New


18. Olson and Olson, Capitol Reef, 20.


27. Brian, "History of Loa, Utah," 5.


CHAPTER II

EARLY PROMOTION: 1921 to 1937

The second decade of the twentieth century saw the lure of the West develop into a new industry for the Western States. The practice of Easterners traveling across the nation to visit the scenic wonders found west of the Rocky Mountains was not a new phenomenon in the 1920's. However, in the years following the First World War, the tourist trade in the West changed and took on new economic importance. The first tourists to the West, who came soon after the settlement of the region was underway, were viewed by the residents as being potential investors or settlers into their fledgling communities. These early visitors of the 1870's through to the 1890's were generally wealthy Easterners who went West to spend a few weeks in the luxury resorts along the West Coast. They never came in large numbers, but they stayed in elegant style at places like Hotel Del Monte in Monterey, Hotel Raymond in Pasadena, the Cliff House in San Francisco, and the Hotel Del Coronado in San Diego. However, after the depression of the 1890's, a change started to develop in the strategy of the Western States. Although the importance of the visitors as potential investors and settlers was not forgotten, it became apparent that even greater economic gain could be made by providing an atmosphere affordable to a larger number of people.¹
By the 1920's the West was actively promoting itself not only to attract new settlers, but to gain visitors to support a growing tourist industry. During the 1920's the slow change from the train to the automobile as a major means of transportation gave birth to a new traveling public. The visitors to the West in the 1920's were no longer just rich Easterners. While it was still an expensive trip to the West, a man could now bring his whole family by automobile for the same price as a single railroad ticket. As this new traveling public headed into the West, whole new economic possibilities were opened to the communities able to service them. Many regions in the West started advertising their scenic wonders to draw new travelers into their local economy. The state of Utah joined in the contest to win tourists and the economic gain that came with them. In this effort Utah developers had an advantage: they possessed the incredible scenery of southern Utah.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, while the United States was undergoing the transformation offered it by the automobile, another change took place that was important to the development of the West. After decades of waste and abuse of its natural resources, the country slowly turned in the direction of conservation and preservation. The battle was led by Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot and John Muir who quickly gathered a small band of loyal followers. The movement was important to the West, because, by 1900, most of the area east of the Mississippi
River had already been exploited. The West offered Americans another chance at preserving their national heritage. Alfred Runte, in *National Parks: The American Experience*, contends that the national park idea did not originate out of a "deep and uncompromising love of the land for its own sake," but, rather, out of a cultural need. The United States was a young nation, with few monuments or major cultural achievements to draw upon and claim as being uniquely American. The West presented Americans with incredible scenery that they could claim as theirs and use as a cultural cornerstone. The United States did not possess ruins from a long-lost society to claim cultural ties with, but they did have geological wonders such as Yellowstone, Yosemite and Zion. These were places that were very much American and the followers of Roosevelt, Pinchot and Muir made sure that these places were protected from the kind of exploitation and development that had ruined areas in the East.\(^3\) By the start of the twentieth century, several areas had been set aside to be saved by Presidential order. Even more sites were protected after the passage of the National Antiquities Act on June 8, 1906. However, it was not until 1916 that Congress established the National Park Service to administer the use of Federal Areas known as National Parks, Monuments and Reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wild life therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.\(^4\)
These two important events coming at the turn of the century, the growth of a traveling public and the creation of the National Park Service, may seem to be worlds apart, but they came together in the following decades to play a major role in the development of southern Utah.\(^5\)

Zion National Park, located in the southwestern corner of the state, became Utah's first national park. It took years to awaken the citizens of Utah's Dixie to the economic possibilities of scenery, but Governor William Spray made tours of the area in 1912, 1913 and 1916 and recognized the economic importance of the region.\(^6\) Mukuntuweap National Monument was established in 1909. Ten years later its name was changed to Zion and it was upgraded to a national park. During this period, other areas in Utah were also set aside by executive order under the provisions of the National Antiquities Act. National monuments were established at Natural Bridges in 1908, Rainbow Bridge in 1909 and at Dinosaur Quarry in 1915. These areas were followed during the 1920's with the establishment of Hovenweep, Bryce Canyon, Timpanogos Cave and Arches national monuments.\(^7\) While development was slow or even non-existent in coming to many of these areas, the existence of national monuments in southern Utah increased the attractiveness of the state to potential tourists. The success of Zion National Park in drawing tourists into the region opened the eyes of people in other regions of Utah to the economic possibilities of tourism as a new industry. With all this interest in the West, it
appeared to a small number of people living in the shadows of Capitol Reef that tourism might be the solution to the economic problems suffered in the region. Indeed, the campaign to create a national park out of Capitol Reef originated from a local effort initiated by Joseph S. Hickman, a life-long resident of Wayne County.

Joseph Hickman, a grandson of Bill Hickman, an infamous early Mormon pioneer, was born on September 30, 1887, in Milford, Utah. While still a young child his family moved to Wayne County, settling first in Cainsville and then moving west to Loa, the county seat. Here he was raised just a few miles from the site of today’s national park. As did many of the people living in the county at the time, his family survived by raising cattle on the winter range found in the area. Hickman, however, did not follow in his father’s footsteps as a rancher. Instead, he pursued a college education, attending, at different times, the University of Utah, Brigham Young University and Utah State Agricultural College, where he finally received his teaching degree in 1913. Following graduation, he returned to Wayne County and became the school teacher at the one-room school house in Torrey. His education and intelligence allowed him to advance quickly through the education system in the county. In 1918 he became the principal of the high school at Bicknell and just a year later was appointed superintendent of schools for the whole county. Hickman was an outdoorsman, a lover of nature and a lifelong
promoter of a national park in Wayne County. He had a deep appreciation for the beauty of the region and for years he worked tirelessly to bring to the attention of the nation the wonders found at Capitol Reef.

In 1921 a local boosters club was organized in Torrey by Hickman and E. P. Pectol, his brother-in-law, to promote the scenery of Capitol Reef. They raised money to print fliers advertising the region and were successful in getting a few articles published as part of their promotional efforts. However, the Boosters Club was basically a two-man operation and it received little local support. The concept of tourism as an industry came very slowly to the majority of residents in the county. In an effort to expand their base and influence, Hickman merged the Boosters Club with the Wayne Commercial Club in 1924. The Commercial Club had been established earlier for the purpose of gaining better roads, telephone service and increased tourism for the county, so the goals of the two groups were very similar. A short time later, Hickman formed the Wayne Wonderland Club, a civic club composed of the Richfield Chamber of Commerce, the Salina Lions Club, and the Wayne Commercial Club.9

It was evident by 1925 that Hickman’s efforts on a local level were already spreading to include businessmen and political leaders from surrounding communities and that the movement was gaining considerable momentum. The promotional campaign continued to broaden into the 1930’s and eventually Capitol Reef’s
promotion became part of a regionalized effort to develop a tourist industry throughout southern Utah and northern Arizona. This regional effort was led by business leaders who saw tourism as a way to increase the money flow into the region and, hence, to expand their profits. In the process, changes that would come with the tourist industry and, eventually, with the Park Service, were overlooked by the residents of the region. While the campaign was led by a relatively small group of individuals, the general population of the area was supportive. The region's population anticipated an economic boom from tourism and did not foresee the negative effects that would come with it.

Joseph Hickman was given his biggest chance to promote Capitol Reef in 1924, when he was elected to serve Wayne County in the state legislature. During the 1925 session he succeeded in getting legislation passed creating the State Parks Commission, whose duty was to establish and administer state parks. He was himself appointed to the Parks Commission, were he was able to get one hundred and sixty acres of public land near Fruita, including a natural bridge which now bears his name, set aside as the first state park in Utah.¹⁰

Wayne Wonderland State Park was dedicated in grand style on the weekend of July 19 and 20, 1925. The celebration committee, headed by Hickman, planned events for two days and invited dignitaries from all over Utah. Those attending the dedication included Governor George H. Dern, Congressman Don B. Colton,
Secretary J. H. Rayburn of the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce, and representatives for Heber J. Grant, President of the L. D. S. Church. The events opened on Saturday with a rodeo in Bicknell and an automobile caravan to Capitol Reef to view the scenery. The celebration continued throughout the weekend, with the formal dedication of the park held Sunday afternoon in a bowery constructed near Fruita.

Several speakers addressed the crowd that gathered, but Governor Dern and Congressman Colton were the ones who recognized the significance of the event and foresaw what the future could bring. Governor Dern came to the heart of the matter as he spoke of the economic importance of the scenery to Utah:

Some people are hard to wake up to the commercial possibilities of scenery. Switzerland, for example, is a very prosperous country, and its chief source of revenue is the tourist travel. California has developed the tourist trade. Colorado has made it the state's leading industry. I am told that the tourist business brings more money into Oregon than any other industry.

The desire to travel and see the wonders of the world is one of the strongest human impulses. By providing men with beautiful scenery to delight their senses, and with suitable accommodations so that they may enjoy such delights, we are fulfilling one of their wants and they cheerfully pay out money for that sort of entertainment.

In exploiting our scenery, we are rendering a service. We are not taking money for nothing. We have no right to feel that we are buncoing the tourist. If we have scenery of real merit, he will go his money's worth if we make it possible for him to see it comfortably and safely.

We have in Utah some of the most wonderful scenery of the world. The people of Wayne county, assisted by
those of Sevier and Sanpete, have just added a new feature, and from what I saw of it on this and a former trip, I feel sure that the Wayne wonderland will greatly add to Utah's fame as reservoir of scenery.  

The governor was expressing what many people in southern Utah were slowly starting to realize. The supporters of Wayne Wonderland were proud of the land and its scenery, but it was a difficult land that they had to live with everyday. Now, however, it appeared that the land was finally going to provide more than hardship for the people struggling to survive on it.

Congressman Colton followed the governor to the podium. The Richfield Reaper called Colton's address "a little gem in oratory," noting that it received "a salvo of applause that reverberated from the peaks surrounding the place." Colton anticipated future wants when he said, "when the time comes and if the state park commission sees fit to request it, the national government will take hold of the Wayne Wonderland. . . . When it is made a national park there will be good roads not only within the park but leading to it as well." He also reminded the people not to forget that they were the best source of advertisement for the state.

Dern and Colton's predictions for a bright future for the region made the people of the county proud of what they had accomplished and excited about their future. The enthusiasm and excitement, however, suffered a blow just a few days later. On July 24, Joseph Hickman was involved in a boating accident on
Fish Lake and drowned. He was only thirty-seven years old. His death thrust E. P. Pectol into the position as local leader of the campaign for national attention of Capitol Reef. Pectol had worked very closely with Hickman during the early efforts in the county and had served as the first president of the original Boosters Club in Torrey, so he was well prepared to continue the fight.

Ephraim Portman Pectol was born on May 16, 1875, in Glenwood, Utah. When he was thirteen years old his family moved to Cainsville, where they remained until the Fremont River finally washed them out in 1910. After leaving Cainsville, Pectol moved to Torrey where he built a small home for his family and opened a general store. While in Torrey, Pectol became the local bishop for the Mormon Church and remained in this role for the next seventeen years. According to Charles Kelly, "Pectol was peculiarly blessed with a love of nature not always shared or appreciated by his neighbors." During his years in Cainsville, and after moving to Torrey, Pectol had many opportunities to travel the rough path through Capitol Reef. To most pioneers it was "merely a rough stretch of road" and an "obstruction to travel." To Pectol, however, it was one of the beauty spots of Utah and he hoped that some day it would become easily accessible to the traveling public.

Although keenly aware of the economic potential of tourism, Pectol was less interested in national attention bringing profit
than he was in simply showing the incredible beauty of Capitol Reef to anyone he could interest. Indeed, he dedicated his life to promoting the scenery of the Waterpocket Fold and to gaining national attention for the area he called "Wayne Wonderland." This name has stuck and is still used today to describe the canyon country lying between Capitol Reef and the Colorado River. One way in which Pectol promoted the area was to exhibit the large collection of Indian artifacts he had gathered in the 1920's. This personal collection, while removed from federal lands before the area became a national monument, later became an issue, and ultimately ended up the property of the Park Service, which today uses many of the artifacts as exhibits in the Visitors Center at the Park. While Pectol was busy displaying his artifact collection to increase public awareness of Capitol Reef, other events were unfolding in southern Utah that would have a major impact upon the region.

In the late summer and early fall of 1930, a movement to create a regional organization to promote all of southern Utah began to develop. After a series of meetings, the Lions Clubs of Southern Utah initiated a movement to advertise the "resources, recreational advantages and scenic wonders of southern Utah." They called for civic clubs throughout southern Utah to send representatives to an organizational meeting to be held in Richfield during the last week of August.
The initiating effort by the Lions Club was successful when representatives from Kane, Garfield, Piute, Sevier, Sanpete, Washington, Iron, Beaver, Wayne and Carbon counties established the Associated Civic Clubs of Southern Utah (ACCSU). As the Association's governing body, they organized a board of directors with one representative from each county. F. G. Martines of Sevier County was elected president and George Jefferson of Milford was picked to serve as vice president. Wayne County was represented on the Board by George M. Hunt. With hopes high, the ACCSU reported in the Richfield Reaper that:

The purpose of the associated clubs will be to foster, encourage and provide by every honorable means the growth and development of the communities of southern Utah, their actual and potential industries and resources, in close cooperation with the entire state and neighboring states to carry on an education campaign throughout the United States, designed to give publicity to the scenic and commercial resources of southern Utah, and to exploit systematically the products of southern Utah for exporting and consumption.

Throughout the 1930's the primary goal of the ACCSU was to promote economic development in southern Utah. Tourism was seen as the most promising prospect by the Club's leaders because of its potential for contributing badly needed money to the established local economy, as well as actually creating a whole new industry. To the end of attracting tourists, the ACCSU played a major role in bringing better highways, airports, telephone service and focusing national attention upon southern Utah. In time the Club became a very effective lobbying force and was
responsible for launching a nationwide advertising program for the region. An even more significant achievement was the role of the ACCSU in promoting U.S. Highway 89 through the length of the entire state and the development of a feeder system of paved roads connecting most points in southern Utah.

The 1920's were not a period of economic growth for the rural communities of the state. As a region based on agriculture and cattle, southern Utah was already suffering serious economic problems by the middle of the decade. When World War I ended and the United States stopped feeding Europe, inflated farm product prices fell and the overextended American farmer found himself in serious trouble. The Great Depression that started in 1929 for the rest of America, was a fact of life for the farmer by early in the 1920's. It was no coincidence that the ACCSU was organized in 1930. The people of the region were trying to improve their economic situation by working together to find new economic solutions to their problems. To meet their goal of attracting more tourists to the region, the ACCSU made the establishment of Capitol Reef National Park one of their primary projects. While Hickman and Pectol played important roles in bringing early attention to Capitol Reef, it was the entrance of the ACCSU into the campaign that started the serious attempt to interest the federal government in the area.

In July 1931 Wayne County hosted one of the first meetings of the ACCSU. The purpose of the meeting was to organize and
focus the effort to promote Wayne Wonderland as a national park. The meeting was attended by Governor George H. Dern, Senator Reed Smoot, Representative Don B. Colton and the superintendent of the Zion and Bryce National Parks, Thomas J. Allen. While the establishment of a national monument in Wayne County was still years away, this early meeting actually started the slow wheels of the federal bureaucracy moving.

On the 15th of July, following the meeting with the ACCSU, Superintendent Allen wrote to the director of the Park Service drawing attention to the area as a possible national park site. His letter brought the attention of the Park Service to the Capitol Reef area and resulted in the visit of Roger Toll, the superintendent at Yellowstone National Park, to Wayne County in 1932 and again in 1933. During his four day visit in November 1933, Toll was guided through Capitol Reef by Pectol and was impressed with the scenic and geological values of the area. In his official report to Aaron B. Cammerer, the director of the National Park Service, Toll reported that "it seems desirable to set it [Capitol Reef] aside for future public use, if the members of Congress from Utah endorse such action." While it appeared that the Park Service favored some kind of action on the area, it would take more pressure from within Utah before any action would occur. However, the necessary support from the ACCSU for the creation of Capitol Reef was postponed for several years while they busied themselves putting people to work, providing public
relief, lobbying for highway and airport construction and promoting tourism for all of southern Utah. In the meantime, however, others forces were still at work trying to draw national attention to Wayne County.

In 1932 E. P. Pectol was elected to represent Wayne County in the state legislature, a position that Hickman had used eight years earlier to get a state park established in the county. During the 1933 session of the legislature, Pectol introduced a resolution supporting the establishment of a national monument in Wayne Wonderland. The two houses approved it unanimously, the governor signed it and it was sent off to Congress for action. The motion passed by the legislature had no force to it, for only the President could establish a national monument, but Pectol and the legislature were trying to show Washington D.C. how important the issue was to them. The creation of a national monument would bring more national attention to the area and was seen as an important step toward the building of an east-west highway connecting the scenery of Colorado, southern Utah and northern Arizona. This connection, which is something the ASSCU worked for over the next several decades, would connect over a dozen sites together into a "golden-circle" of national parks and monuments located in the Four Corners Region. Such a highway would bring thousands of visitors into the region each year and would be a major development in the campaign to attract visitors into southern Utah. The creation of another national park would make
the highway that much more attractive to potential tourists. By tying the creation of another national park into the construction of a east-west highway, the promoters of Capitol Reef were making their project more important to the development of southern Utah. 23

After the lull in ACCSU promotion, 1934 opened on a positive note for Wayne County. In their first meeting of the new year on January 13 and 14, the ACCSU outlined their plans for the new year. They decided to focus on three projects; one of them was to induce the federal government to set aside Wayne Wonderland as a national park. 24 A committee was named by the board of directors and quickly went to work on the Capitol Reef project. By the end of January they had sent petitions off to the proper federal agencies asking for help in gaining favorable congressional action during the year. 25 Their petitions claimed that the ACCSU "represented all Civic Clubs and organizations, and the 110,000 people residing within" the eleven counties represented on the board of directors. The petitions stated that "the traveling public of America is anxiously awaiting the creation of a national park . . . in 'Wayne Wonderland'" and that "the prehistoric value and scenic beauty of this area is fast being depleted for want of supervision by the national government." 26 Senator Elbert Thomas replied that he would be "very happy to give the proposition his support" and Senator William King wrote that he would "immediately take this matter up with the proper
officials and if it needs legislation . . . I shall offer a bill in the senate for that purpose. . . . I shall give the matter my immediate attention."

Before the year was six weeks old, it appeared that Wayne County was on its way to getting a national park.

Once the petitions reached Washington D.C., however, they got caught in the bureaucratic machinery and the momentum initiated in January by the ACCSU was lost. The proposals were passed on to the Department of Interior to be studied for feasibility, and by the end of May, with the congressional session drawing to a close, it appeared that no action would be taken in 1934. It was revealed in early June that the delay on the Park Service feasibility study was being caused by sources within Wayne County. The president of the ACCSU, Frank G. Martines, received a letter from Congressman Abe Murdock, informing him that action by the Park Service was being held up because of an adverse petition from cattle and sheep men in Wayne County. The stockmen of the area, concerned about the possible loss of grazing and watering rights, had banded together and sent a petition to Washington signed by ninety-one residents of the county. Their petition, in reaction to the claims made by the ACCSU, stated that

through newspaper articles . . . it is apparent that certain organizations and individuals are sponsoring a move to create a National Park here in Wayne County. . . . It is apparent that these people are in most cases not residents of Wayne County and not interested in the
well-fair of the local residents. . . . We feel that it would be unjust and a determent to permit the passage of any bill that would authorize the creation of a National Park, thereby causing the curtailment or withdrawal of our grazing privileges.

This petition is evidence that the effort was no longer the local one that Hickman had started in 1921, but part of a larger regionalized attempt to create a stronger tourist industry in southern Utah. In the process, the desires of all the people affected by such action could not be considered. The cattlemen of the region, fearful of losing grazing privileges, were not interested in developing an industry that was to benefit others. They were much more concerned with protecting their traditional use of public lands for grazing. This conflict between the needs of the many and the desires of a few was never resolved and remains a problem today. The welfare of the ranchers in the county was overlooked in favor of the overall positive impact the project would have upon the region. Indeed, although the problems with the stockmen were temporarily resolved when Martines met with them and convinced them that the proposed boundaries would not adversely affect them, the conflicts with the local stockmen were just beginning. They withdrew, for the time being, their petitions, but with the 1934 session of Congress drawing to a close, it was too late to get congressional action on Wayne Wonderland that year. 30

Despite the problems encountered during the year, 1934 closed on a promising note for the supporters of Wayne
Wonderland. It appeared that the problems with the stockmen were solved, and Congressman Murdock and Senator King were promising personally to push bills in Congress to make the area a national park. The General Land Office had completed the task of drawing up proposed boundaries and had delivered its report to the director of the National Park Service. All that remained was the major hurdle of getting Congress to take action. It looked like 1935 might see the establishment of a national park in Wayne County, but to the disappointment of its supporters, the movement was sidetracked again.

By February 1935, it was evident that the problems with the local stockmen had not been resolved. The ACCSU was informed in a telegram from Congressman Murdock that the Park Service had decided to recommend Wayne Wonderland as a national monument, not as a national park. The continuing problems with the local stockmen resulted in the Park Service decision. While the size of the area set aside would be the same, a national monument would be easier to establish, because it would be done by presidential proclamation. A national park, however, required an act of Congress and it was possible that the problems with local stockmen would prevent it from being approved. The ACCSU was disappointed, but agreed to accept the recommendation while continuing their work for a park. Their major concern was with future appropriations for development of a monument. The liberal spending of the New Deal policies seemed to assure money for the
time being, but during normal times monuments had never received regular appropriations. National parks, on the other hand, received definite amounts each year for improvements and development. The creation of a park would insure the development of facilities for tourists as well as bring more federal money into the local economy.  

In March 1935, officials from the Park Service visited Wayne County, and in the company of ACCSU members, including E. P. Pectol, surveyed the boundaries of the proposed monument. The Public Land Office had already recommended an area of almost 38,000 acres to the Park Service, but because of the problems with local stockmen, the Park Service sent its own people to survey the area. At the time of the visit, P. P. Partraw, the superintendent of Zion National Park, assured the group that in his opinion there was "no question that the President will proclaim the area a national monument." He also said that the "uniqueness of the scenery and the value of the area as a scenic attraction" would make the monument a good addition to the parks and monuments already established. In his official report to Washington, Partraw said that "the lands within the recommended area possess low to negligible grazing value." He felt that the problems with local stockmen could be solved by slowly phasing grazing out on the Monument over a long period of time. Partraw recommended that an area of 37,711 acres be established as Capitol Reef National Monument.
The positive statements from Petraw, and the continued letters from Congressman Murdock assuring the people that presidential action was just weeks away, convinced many local people that the creation of the Monument was going to happen anytime. The promises continued throughout 1935, 1936 and into early 1937. But the continuing problems with stockmen, the question as to whether Fruita should be in or out of the Monument, and the general bureaucracy of the government slowed the creation of Capitol Reef National Monument to a crawl. E. P. Pectol and the ACCSU kept applying pressure in Washington D. C., but all they could really do was wait and be patient. The proposed monument worked its way through the bureaucracy of Washington D. C., undergoing some minor changes, until late June 1937. At that time Congressman Murdock reported to the ACCSU that the presidential proclamation was in the final process of being approved by the various government offices and soon would become an actuality.

The event that E. P. Pectol had dreamed of for much of his life finally became a reality on August 6, 1937. On that day, a Friday, the proclamation that Franklin Roosevelt had signed four days earlier was released to the public. It was a very short proclamation, filling less than a page in the Federal Register, but it was the fulfillment of the fight that had started almost two decades earlier. It established Capitol Reef National Monument.
The dedication of Capitol Reef National Monument took place at Singing Rock, in the Capital Gorge area of the Monument, on September 24th and 25th. It was the largest celebration that the county had ever seen. Silent for the moment were the animosities between the promoters and opposition, as the crowd of over 2500 listened to Governor Henry H. Blood, E. P. Pectol, Congressman Abe Murdock, and past and present leaders of the ACCSU. Bishop Pectol, who served as toastmaster, was called the "father of the movement to designate Wayne Wonderland" and was thanked for his lifelong efforts to bring attention to the scenic and historic sites of Wayne County. Congressman Murdock expressed his gratitude to the "day dreamers who put their dreams into action" and fought for the creation of the Monument. Congressman Murdock was received with a special round of applause when he said, "I have hope that maybe some day, you people willing, we might change the name back to Wayne Wonderland." The Park Service had made the name change, on the recommendation of Petraw, and it was very unpopular with the people who had worked so long for the creation of the Monument; to them it would always be Wayne Wonderland.

The long fight for national recognition seemed to have reached a successful and dramatic conclusion with the dedication on September 25, 1937; but the struggle to bring tourists and development to Capitol Reef continued beyond the dedication so full of hope and excitement for the future. Roads were very slow
in coming, few trails were built, no campgrounds were set up, no administrative structure was put in place, and no scenic highway was constructed connecting Capitol Reef with the other monuments and parks in southern Utah. People still came to see the staggering scenery, but the number of visitors and dollars spent did not grow significantly. The goal to establish a national monument in Wayne County had been achieved through the hard work of Hickman, Pectol and the ACCSU, yet little changed in the years following the dedication. The attention of America was focused on events taking place in the world, and it was to Europe and the Pacific that the money went, not to a small national monument in southern Utah. The hoped-for development waited for almost twenty years. Indeed, the Monument was not placed on active status until 1950, and it was the late 1950's before development was finally initiated. Instead of an increase in tourism and an improved economy spurred by the Park Service, the people of Wayne County ended up with a neglected national monument and a crass individual named Charles Kelly as the sole representative of the Park Service in the county. These two things, neglect and Charles Kelly, would come together to change the excitement for the Park Service into contempt for the federal government.
END NOTES


11. *Deseret News,* July 20, 1925; *Richfield Reaper,* July 9, 1925; *Richfield Reaper,* July 23, 1925.


27. *Richfield Reaper,* February 8, 1934.

29. Toll to Cammerer, April 13, 1934.
30. Richfield Reaper, June 14, 1934.
33. Toll to Cammerer, April 13, 1934.
34. Toll to Cammerer, April 13, 1934.
35. Richfield Reaper, April 18, 1935; Richfield Reaper, May 2, 1935; Richfield Reaper, May 23, 1935; Richfield Reaper, August 1, 1935.
36. Richfield Reaper, June 24, 1937.
CHAPTER III

THE KELLY ERA: 1941 TO 1959

The story of Capitol Reef National Monument from 1937 until well into the 1950's was one of neglect. By the time the area achieved monument status, the attention of the United States had turned to focus on the critical events in Europe. Promoters anticipated that the spending of federal money on developing the Monument would spark the economic recovery of Wayne County. After all, the Roosevelt solution to the depression of the 1930's was the implementation of massive federal spending programs and local interests hoped that some of this government money would come to Wayne County in the form of development funds for the new national monument. However, the outbreak of fighting in Europe in 1939 and the United States' eventual involvement in the Second World War put the development of the whole National Park System on hold. Development finally come to Capitol Reef during the 1950's, but until that day came, the citizens of Wayne County found few advantages from having a national monument in their backyard. Indeed, Capitol Reef National Monument did not go on active status or receive any operational funds from Congress for the next seventeen years. Instead of receiving a boost for their struggling economy, the Park Service gave the residents of Wayne County Charles Kelly, a Mormon-baiting historian and Western trails buff.
The Kelly Era at Capitol Reef lasted from 1940 to 1959. He was there during the years of neglect, the uranium boom of the 1950's and the early years of development. The period of uranium mining in the Monument and the eventual development of the area will be treated in the Chapters IV and V of this thesis. It is difficult to examine the events that took place at the Monument from 1937 to 1950, because it was a period of neglect. However, these years are important to the story of Capitol Reef. It was during this period that the relationship between the residents of the region and the Park Service started to undergo a dramatic shift. As Chapter II demonstrated, the creation of the Monument in 1937 was the culmination of a fifteen year effort led by local community leaders. While it ultimately took the support of the National Park Service, the establishment of the Monument was largely the result of the regional promotional efforts. In the decades that followed, the positive image enjoyed by the Park Service in the 1930's changed to one of hostility and contempt. While the new attitude took several years to develop fully, the origins of the shift emerged during the Kelly Era. This chapter will deal briefly with the personality of Kelly and the impact it had on the relationship between the residents of the county and the Park Service.

Charles Kelly was born in a logging camp at Cedar Springs, Michigan on February 3, 1889. His early years, under the heavy influence of his father, played a major role in the development
of his personality and on the views of the world he held in later life. His father was a traveling Baptist preacher who changed his beliefs to start a new religious movement shortly after Kelly's birth. To promote his new cult, Kelly’s father set up a small print shop to publish the literature he passed out during the religious meetings he held in tents around the Midwest. As a child, Kelly learned the printing trade that he pursued later in life. Kelly grew up having little respect for his father, who was "unstable, quick to fury, and heavy handed." Kelly claimed that he "beat us all once a week for the good of our souls." The heavy-handedness of his father caused Kelly to turn against him and the religion that was being forced upon him. At the time of this father's death in 1936, Kelly welcomed the event and wrote in his diary "the old man is dead. I've waited for a good many years to write that good news and at last it has come." Kelly's feelings about his father and his contempt for religion are best stated by Hoffman Birney, a friend and a coauthor of one of Kelly's books, in a letter written shortly after the death of his father.

I presume that congratulations are in order as to the blessed event on August 1 in Worcester, Mass. I'm not razzing. Only too clearly do I recall one night on a sandbar somewhere along the Colorado and you telling us the full tale of your late and unlamented sire. To me it explained you better than years of study might have done—your savage atheism (no God is infinitely superior to the one you were clubbed into serving during your boyhood), your hatred for shams and fakes and charlatans. . . ."
Kelly's unyielding view on religion stayed with him throughout his life and he seldom wasted an opportunity to let people know how he felt about organized religion. This had been particularly true when he arrived among the Mormons of Utah. It may seem odd that Kelly settled among an ultra-conservative and devoutly religious people like the Mormons, but Kelly seemed to thrive on the constant conflict with the people around him. While he seldom was without words for the Mormons he lived with, he did not reserve his hostility for them alone. As a young man he wrote,

I wonder again why it is that everybody of whatever nationality or religion wants to kill a Jew on sight. I know why I want to kill them, but I wonder if they have the same effect on everyone else. I hear the Jews are God's chosen people, I hope God never chooses me.

Kelly's general feelings about religion and the people who were active members of a religious organization stayed with him until his death. Shortly before he passed away in 1971, Kelly wrote down his philosophy on life and left it as an undated addition to his diary. It shows us very clearly that Kelly's "barbed wire" personality had not dulled with age and that he was as opinionated as ever.

Having been raised in a fanatical religious atmosphere I soon began to suspect that it was all a bunch of hogwash. At the age of 13, while in Chicago, I declared myself an atheist, but it took a long time to rid myself completely of all the old superstition. I now realize that all religions are man made and there is no such thing as true religion. It has been developed over the centuries by ignorant men trying to explain things
they do not understand. There is no such thing as heaven and hell and no immortality.

Kelly spent his years as a youth moving around the Midwest with his father, mother and five brothers, going wherever his father could set up a tent and preach. At the turn of the century they were living in Chicago, but by 1905 had moved on to Tennessee. In 1910, at the age of twenty-one, Kelly set out on his own, traveling around the country supporting himself by working as a printer. Following a short enlistment in the army during the First World War, Kelly married Harriette Greener and settled down in Salt Lake City. Kelly had come to Salt Lake City hoping to find work as a musician, a skill he had learned from his mother, but when jobs were difficult to find, he turned back to the trade he had learned from his father. In 1919 he went to work as a printer in Salt Lake City and eventually came to own a small share in the Western Printing Company. While Kelly was busy pursuing the important activities he is remembered for today, he remained close to the printing industry in Salt Lake City until his "retirement" to Fruita, Utah in 1940.

In the late 1920's, during a chance trip into the Salt Desert west of Grantsville, Kelly became interested in the history of the wagon trails through the region. During this 1928 trip into the desert with his brother, he found the visible remains of the route taken by the ill-fated Donner Party in 1846. He was so intrigued by what he had found in the desert that he returned many times to photograph and trace the different paths
followed by the groups trying to cross the Salt Desert in 1846. His interest in the trails continued to grow and he ultimately wrote his first book, *Salt Desert Trails*, after he could find no magazine that would publish his findings about the Donner Party and their ill-fated trip across the Salt Desert. Published in 1930 by the Western Printing Company, the same firm in which Kelly held a 10% ownership, *Salt Desert Trails* was the beginning of a new career for Kelly. It is for his work as a researcher and a writer in the field of Western History that Kelly is remembered today, not as a printer or the superintendent of Capitol Reef National Monument.

Kelly's initial casual interest in the trails across the Salt Desert grew into a life-long love for Western history. While he had little formal education, Kelly taught himself everything he could about history and writing. In the nine years following the publication of *Salt Desert Trails*, he continued to publish books dealing with Utah history. Together with journalist Hoffman Birney he published *Holy Murder*, the story of Porter Rockwell, in 1934; *Old Greenwood*, the biography of Caleb Greenwood, an early trapper and mountain man in the West, in 1936; *Miles Goodyear*, Utah's first Anglo-American settler, in 1937; and *Outlaw Trail*, the story about Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch of Hole-in-the-Wall and Robbers' Roost fame, in 1938. During his lifetime, Kelly published several articles in the *Utah Historical Quarterly* and had at least fifty-three pieces published by *Desert*
Magazine, as well as editing several other books. While he was not always well liked, because of his rough personality, he did, over time, earn the grudging admiration of his peers. His early works were very rough, but he became an able writer and made major contributions to the study of Western history. In 1969 the National Association of State and Local History presented Kelly with their Award of Merit for his lifelong accomplishments. The Utah State Historical Society also honored him during his lifetime, by making him an honorary member of the Society for his contributions to Utah History.  

In the spring of 1940, at the age of fifty-one, Kelly decided that he had had enough of city life and that it was time to escape to the desert and canyon country of southern Utah. In the years following his new-found interest in history, Kelly had explored every corner of Utah looking for evidence and doing historical research. In the process, he fell in love with the rugged canyons and deserts of southern Utah. In 1940 he sold his interest in the Western Printing Company and started looking for a new home in desert. He was initially interested in obtaining the superintendent’s job at the planned Escalante National Monument, but when the Monument was not established the job opportunity was lost. As Kelly became more and more involved in Western History during the 1930’s, he traveled the state exploring many of the rugged areas of southern Utah. Among his many interests was the study of petroglyphs, the engravings left
by the early Indian inhabitants of the region. During several of his trips into southern Utah he visited Fruita to view the nearby petroglyphs and to examine the collection of Indian artifacts gathered by E. P. Pectol. As a result of these visits to Wayne Wonderland, he was familiar with the area and had met Doc Inglesby, a retired-dentist-turned-rockhound from Salt Lake City, who had gone to Fruita to retire. On the urging of Inglesby, Kelly sold his house in Salt Lake City in October 1941 and headed for Capitol Reef to make his new home.11

When Kelly arrived in Fruita in 1941, his intentions were to buy a small fruit orchard, survive by selling the fruit, live off his savings, and spend his free time writing, painting and exploring the area. However, just weeks later his plans were disrupted by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The United States' entrance into the War created a demand for all foods, including fresh fruit. As a result, the price of land in Fruita went up almost overnight and prevented Kelly from buying an orchard. When Kelly was unable to purchase any land, he accepted an offer from Inglesby to live in a cabin he had on his property.12 The Kellys remained with Inglesby for the next eighteen months, surviving off their savings and the meager income gained by the sale of Kelly's articles to the Desert Magazine. During his first months in Fruita he had the opportunity to meet with and to become friends with Paul Franke, the superintendent at Zion National Park. In the spring of 1943
his friendship with Franke gave Kelly the opportunity to work for the National Park Service.13

When Capitol Reef National Monument was established in 1937 it had been placed under the administrative jurisdiction of Zion National Park until it could be activated. In the early 1940's the National Park Service bought the so-called Chesnut property in Fruita to gain the water rights they needed for later development of the Monument. In March 1943, Franke offered Kelly the position as Monument custodian in exchange for the use of the house and the orchards that came with the Chesnut property. The position was without pay, but with the house, orchards and the income from Kelly's writing, he and his wife could survive until they were able to buy their own property. However, the end of the War did not bring the land prices down and Kelly ended up remaining in his voluntary position for the rest of the decade. He continued to look for a way out of Fruita, but "inflated prices [made] it impossible to buy land or property anywhere," so he was "stuck" there a dour and often surly man.14 By 1949 Kelly had decided that with no development there was no future for the area as a National Monument and that it was time for him to move on to other things. In the next few months, however, events took place that resulted in Kelly remaining at Capitol Reef National Monument.15

In August 1949, Kelly took the Civil Service examination to qualify for the soon-to-be created position of superintendent at
Capitol Reef. He passed the exam and, after being initially turned down because of his age, was given the position of full-time Ranger when the Monument finally went on active status on May 1, 1950.  

In 1953, his position was upgraded to superintendent and he was given a small raise in pay. Kelly remained as the superintendent of Capitol Reef National Monument until February 1959, when his failing health and eyesight forced him to retire shortly after his seventieth birthday. The Kelly years were marked by conflict over uranium mining, which will be discussed in further detail in Chapter V, and the development of the Monument, which is dealt with in Chapter IV, but in addition to these important events, Kelly left behind his legacy at Capitol Reef when he retired to Salt Lake City in 1959.

While Charles Kelly truly loved Capitol Reef, in many ways it is unfortunate that he became the representative of the Park Service in Wayne County in 1943. When Kelly arrived he found a county that was overwhelmingly dominated by the Mormon Church. While the figures to determine the exact number of Mormons in the county are not available, it is safe to say of the 2,400 people listed on the 1940 Census, that more than of 95% of them were members of the Mormon Church. The communities near the Monument were very small. Most of the county's residents were still living in much the same manner that their ancestors who settled the region had done and they shared many negative attitudes toward non-Mormons and outsiders. The Park Service, by installing a man
like Charles Kelly as its sole representative in the area for almost sixteen years, showed a total lack of understanding for the residents of the area. It is not difficult to imagine how a man who hated most things associated with religion and who had made a practice of baiting Mormons since his 1919 arrival in Utah, was received by the residents of the area. It also takes very little imagination to get a sense of how Kelly responded to the people of the region.

Kelly fought a running battle with the Mormons of Wayne County for the sixteen years he represented the Park Service at Capitol Reef. At one point, he claimed "the Mormons of Wayne County tried to replace me with a Mormon, but I told them off and pulled a fast one...so they won't try that again." The details of this particular incident were not recorded by Kelly, but his attitude toward the people involved is very apparent. Kelly neither liked nor trusted the Mormons living around him. In terse terms filled with innuendo, he reported to his superiors in July 1955 that

the banker at Loa, who is also in the cattle business, left a dead calf near the campground. He was asked to remove it. . . . The bishop of Torrey dumped a large quantity of beer cans on the side of the road. He was asked to remove them. . . . The banker at Loa and the bishop at Torrey are no longer friends of the superintendent.

It is difficult to imagine that Kelly was ever very friendly with the banker and the bishop, but this incident seems to have ended what cooperation had existed between them. Kelly also had
continuing trouble with local youths coming on to the Monument and using it as a place for their parties. At one point he "had to get tough with two groups of young Mormon hoodlums during the summer" of 1954, and he decided, as result of this incident, that he would "no longer attempt to be friendly with the local people."²² Kelly also had trouble during the 1950's with the people still living in Fruita allowing their cattle to graze freely on the Monument lands. Each time this happened, Kelly made the owners remove their cattle and occasionally pay for damage they had caused to the Monument.²³ This action made Kelly the focus of the growing hostility against the grazing ban that had come with the creation of the Monument, but that had never been enforced until Kelly's arrival.

While it is very likely that the relationship between the Park Service and the residents of the county would have deteriorated over time, there is no question that the Kelly Era at the Monument hastened this process. During the period when the relationship between the two parties was still in the developmental stages, Charles Kelly built upon the existing tension, further alienating the people of Wayne County and setting the trend for the years to follow. During the Kelly Era and in the years after, the Park Service continued to make serious mistakes in their public relations with the residents of the region. Each one of these problem areas; uranium mining, grazing, development, expansion and the failure of the Monument
to really improve the economy contributed to the complete breakdown in the working relationship between the two parties. However, the early roots of these problems can be traced back to the lack of communication between the two interests during the Kelly Era at Capitol Reef National Monument.
END NOTES

4. Kelly Diary, August 20, 1936, The Papers of Charles Kelly, Manuscript Collection (MS 100), University of Utah Library.
5. Hoffman Birney to Charles Kelly, October 12, 1936, The Papers of Charles Kelly (B-114), Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah.
6. Kelly Diary, January 6, 1918.
7. Kelly Diary, undated entry at the back of the diary.
10. Kelly Diary, February 3, 1941.
11. Kelly Diary, January 19, 1944.
As has already been demonstrated, the motivating factor for the ACCSU in promoting the inclusion of Capitol Reef in the National Park System was the prospective economic improvement of the region. Some dreamed that Capitol Reef would become the next Yellowstone or Zion national park and draw thousands of visitors into the region each month. These tourists would bring with them the money and business that were desperately needed to revive the struggling economy of the region. However, the anticipated development of the area by the Park Service was very slow in coming and it was more than two decades before the visitation numbers to the Monument showed any dramatic increase. Indeed, in the years following the creation of the Monument, the only action taken by the Park Service at Capitol Reef was the placement of Charles Kelly as their sole representative in Wayne County, which, in the eyes of the locals, was more of a drawback than an asset.

There were many reasons why tourism was slow in coming to Wayne County following the establishment of the Monument. The key to increasing tourism throughout the region lay in developing the area and making it readily accessible to the traveling public. Because of the Second World War, however, the money for development was not available and road construction was long
postponed. The rough dirt roads running through the Monument until 1962 were often washed away in the flash floods common to the region during the late summer and early fall of the year. There can be no question that primitive roads were a formidable barrier to tourists and a prime factor in the failure of the Monument to play the economic role early promoters had envisioned. Once paved highways were constructed through the region and the facilities within the Monument upgraded in the 1950's and 1960's, Capitol Reef and Wayne County enjoyed a dramatic increase in visitation.

The problems associated with travel through the Waterpocket Fold were not new to the residents of the region. The name Capitol Reef was, in part, derived from the geographic barrier that the Waterpocket Fold presented to travel. The Fold is over one hundred miles in length and along its whole distance presents no more than four or five possible crossing points. The first wagon road through Capitol Reef used by the early settlers of the region followed the same general route that State Highway 24 follows today along the banks of the Fremont River. However, this was before the days of modern road and bridge construction, so the old wagon road had to cross the Fremont River over fifty times and "cut through innumerable sand bogs." The road along the Fremont River was a dangerous and time-consuming route because of all the water crossings. At the first opportunity it was abandoned in favor of a new road.
In 1884, Elijah Cutler Behunin, one of the first settlers to the area, negotiated a new wagon road through Capitol Reef via the narrows of Capitol Gorge. His first trip through was slow going indeed, taking eight days to travel the three and one-half miles through Capitol Gorge, as he had to remove the hundreds of boulders that had been deposited and exposed there over the years by flash floods. Once opened, however, Behunin's new route quickly became the primary path through the Fold and was eventually incorporated into the state road system during the twentieth century. Even then, flash floods swept through the Gorge following the thunderstorms and cloudbursts of late summer. Floods presented a particular hazard to travel through the narrows, for there were very few places to get to higher ground away from the danger of the flood waters. Floods also made it very difficult and expensive to maintain the narrow road. In places, the towering cliffs loom so close together that two cars could not pass each other. Nonetheless, this narrow and dangerous section of road remained the major east-west route through the Waterpocket Fold region of southern Utah until 1962.

Along with the lack of highways into the region, the failure of the Park Service to develop the area also kept potential visitors away. During the 1940's Capitol Reef existed by law, but with no money for development the Monument was not put on active status. Charles Kelly guided some visitors through the Monument, but he was only one man and there was little he could do without
more help from the Park Service. The dirt road leading to Fruita made getting there very difficult and with the region possessing few facilities for visitors it was a trip that few people were willing to take. The lack of development at the Monument remained a problem well into the 1960's, but the initial step in ending governmental neglect of the area was taken in 1950 by the Park Service.

On May 1, 1950, the Monument was activated by the Park Service and Charles Kelly became the first paid Ranger at the Monument. As Kelly put it, "after thirteen years of neglect, Capitol Reef National Monument was officially opened," It appeared that the long wait was over and that the promised development was finally coming to the area. While things still moved slowly, 1950 was the major turning point in the development of the Monument. Until then, the Monument had only existed on paper and in the minds of a few Park Service officials. While it was small (five thousand dollars) the Monument finally received its first appropriation from Congress in 1950. The few dollars that had been spent on the Monument before this had come from the pockets of Charles Kelly or were the meager leftovers sent to Kelly from the operating budget of Zion National Park. The first step, and the most important one to economic growth, was the development of a road system that would allow easy access for automobile travel. The 1950's saw the re-emergence of the automobile in America. The car became a part of nearly every
household and the major means of transportation in America. In the struggle to attract tourist dollars, good roads often determined where the money was spent.

By the time Capitol Reef went on active status in 1950, State Route 24, connecting Sigurd in the Great Basin to Green River on the Colorado Plateau, had been paved as far east as Torrey. The remaining one hundred and twenty miles from Torrey to Green River, including the section through Capitol Gorge, was a dirt road that was often impassable in bad weather. The first step in getting visitors into the Monument was to pave the eleven mile section of road from Torrey east to the Monument Headquarters in Fruita. The initial reference to this project came on August 29, 1953, when the State Road Commissioner promised the ACCSU that a paved road from Torrey into the Monument would be built soon. Wayne County not only favored the road because of the increased tourism it would bring with it, but, as will be seen in Chapter V, by 1953 southern Utah was in the middle of a Uranium boom and a new road into the Waterpocket Fold would also make travel easier for prospective miners.

It took longer then the ACCSU had anticipated, but a new road from Torrey to Fruita was surveyed in the fall of 1953, bids were received on the project in 1954, and the actual construction of the highway began on March 15, 1955. The State Road Commission contracted to build the new highway in two sections. The first piece, with work starting in 1955, extended from Torrey
to Twin Rocks, a distance of about six miles. Construction of this section proceeded rapidly and on October 8, 1955, the completed stretch was dedicated at Twin Rocks with a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by one hundred and fifty people. Those in attendance were very pleased with the new piece of road, but talk had already turned to plans for a paved highway that would open to year round travel the entire region from Sigurd, seventy-three miles west of Capitol Reef, to Green River, one hundred miles to the east. In the summer of 1956 construction started on the five mile section of road from Twin Rocks to Fruita. This second portion was held up because of bad weather during the winter of 1956-57. By June of 1957, however, Capitol Reef finally had a paved road allowing easy all-weather access into the heart of its scenic region. It had taken twenty years to start the construction of the highway that the ACCSU had been campaigning for since the 1930's, but the results, once achieved, were dramatic.

While it had taken years to happen and it allowed easy access from the west only, the construction of a paved highway into the Monument had immediate affects upon visitation numbers. In 1956, prior to the opening of the new road, the Monument recorded 7,499 visitors at the entrance station. When the paved road to Fruita was completed a year later, the same point recorded 62,484 visitors. By 1960 the road brought over 100,000 visitors to the Monument for the first time. As a result of the
overall increase in automobile travel during the 1950's, some of the visitation growth would have occurred without the newly paved road, but a great deal of the increase has to be attributed to the easier access into the region. The building of paved highways in Wayne County continued over the next decade and eventually allowed better access to the area from both the east and west, but access from the north and south remains difficult to this day and for environmental reasons should perhaps always remain difficult.

While the state of Utah was building the paved highway into the heart of Capitol Reef, in July 1956 the Park Service, with strong Congressional and Presidential support, initiated Mission 66; a plan to spend millions of dollars on developing the National Park System. The goal of Mission 66 was to make up for the neglect of the war years and to prepare the park system for the projected eighty million visitors to the system by 1966. Capitol Reef had not been the only area ignored during the Second World War and in the years immediately after. Shortages in manpower and funds curtailed both development and maintenance of parks and monuments throughout America and some sites "became Government-operated blight areas." The problem of neglect was compounded when increasing millions of people visited areas in the National Park System in the years following the end of the war. This put an additional strain upon the road systems, campgrounds, visitor centers, trail systems and other area
facilities. Mission 66 was a ten year plan to build the modern roads, well-planned trails, campgrounds, interpretation centers, utilities and facilities needed to meet the requirements of the rapid increase in visitors.\textsuperscript{15}

Arguably a "government-operated blight area" itself, Capitol Reef National Monument was one of the sites targeted by the Park Service for improvements and developments as part of the Mission 66 program. Specifically, Mission 66 spelled out:

The justification for the development and operation of Capitol Reef National Monument is to help the visitor to use, understand, and enjoy Capitol Reef to the fullest degree and absorb the meanings, values and significance of the area.\textsuperscript{16}

Poor roads in the Monument and a shortage of trails and other interpretive facilities within the area for use by the visitors were recognized as the most pressing problems at Capitol Reef. Mission 66 plans called for the construction of a new highway through the Monument that would follow the route of the Fremont River and allow ready access to the "gorges, scenic views, geologic phenomena, pictographs" and other important features found within the Monument.\textsuperscript{17} Upon the completion of the new highway along the Fremont River, the old route through Capitol Gorge would become a self-guided interpretive road for visitors to use in seeing and understanding the Monument.

The Mission 66 plans for Capitol Reef also called for a new visitors center to be constructed at the intersection of the
future highway along the Fremont River and the existing road through the Monument. The new visitors center would house exhibits designed "to give the visitor the background information so necessary for his understanding, proper use and enjoyment of the area." The exhibits would include displays using some of the artifacts recovered by E. P. Pectol during the 1920's and 1930's. The Park Service had worked for several years to recover these items taken in violation of the Antiquities Act of 1906, but after gaining ownership to them, had no place to display them. The master plan also called for the construction of new trails to Hickman Natural Bridge, Cassidy Arch, Golden Throne and to other areas presenting scenic views of the Reef. A new campground, picnic area, water system and a housing area for personal were also included.

In 1956 the estimated costs for the planned improvements at the Monument were $2,351,300, with road construction costs comprising about two-thirds of the planned budget. The projects for Capitol Reef would take years to complete, because of the amount of money needed and the amount of construction planned, but it was anticipated that by 1966 the project would be completed. It was the hope of the Park Service that when the visitor of 1966 comes to Capitol Reef he will travel over good paved highways . . . he will find a physical plant adequate to meet his needs. He will arrive at the Visitor Center, where he will get information about the facilities of the Monument easily and immediately. . . . He will be assured of adequate information and interpretation concerning the story of
the area. He will be able to trace the geologic eras exhibited and the development and culture of the ancient people, and compare it with that of other peoples of the Southwest. ... He will be assured a safe, pleasant, and satisfying trip.21

The first step undertaken to achieve the goals set forth in the Mission 66 plans was the construction of a highway through the Monument connecting with the existing highway system near Green River. This is the same road that the residents had spoken enthusiastically about during the dedication ceremony for the section of pavement constructed between Torrey and Twin Rocks in 1955. The effort to build the next section of highway through the Monument actually came before the Mission 66 plans were announced in July 1956. On March 29, 1956, the Park Service, the State Highway Commission and the residents of Wayne County attended a meeting in Loa. The discussion focused on the need for a highway in the region and on the possible routes that such a road could take through Wayne County (see map on page 90). While no decision was reached on the route to be taken, it was here that the Park Service first expressed their desire to build the Monument section of highway along the banks of the Fremont River. The residents of the area felt that such a route would be unwise, because of flash floods that had been known to raise the level of the River several feet without warning. The State favored running the road through Pleasant Creek, a route which went farther south than the existing road through Capitol Gorge.22 However, since the Park Service was paying for the section through the Monument and federal highway funds would build a large percentage of the
remaining distance to Green River, the real decision was made by the federal government. During 1956 and into 1957, the Bureau of Public Roads, representing the Park Service, conducted a series of surveys along the Fremont River route. Based upon their findings, it was decided that the Fremont River route would be the best path for the new highway. However, as with any project of this scale and involving so many interests, it was many more months before actual construction started.

On April 26, 1958, an inspection tour of the proposed route was conducted on horseback by representatives of the Wayne County Commission, National Park Service, Utah State Road Commission and the ACCSU. They covered about sixteen miles during the day and according to the Richfield Reaper, it appeared that after years of effort a paved road from Fruita, through the Monument, and on east and north to the county line, was finally near a start. It was to be the first surfaced all-weather road through the Waterpocket Fold and on to points east. It would connect U-89 at Sigurd with U.S. Highway 6-50 near Green River. The new route would cut ten miles off the road through Capitol Gorge and would join the old road west of Cainsville. From Cainsville, it was to follow the Fremont River and the general path of the old road into Hanksville. Eventually, the road would be paved all the way to Highway 6-50. The total distance of the road from Fruita to Hanksville would be thirty-six miles. The six miles of road built through the Monument would be paid for by the Park Service. The
remaining distance was to be constructed at the expense of the
Bureau of Federal Highways, Utah State Road Commission and Wayne
County. At the time of the survey in late April, the Bureau of
Federal Highways and the Utah State Highway Commission had set
aside $300,000 for the construction of a six mile section of new
highway running from Hanksville in a westerly direction toward
the Monument. In January 1959, the state let a contract and
construction began on the section of State Route 24 running from
Highway 6-50 near Green River to a point six miles west of
Hanksville.

The movement toward the construction of the next two
segments of State Route 24 began in the fall of 1960. These two
sections ran from Fruita in an easterly direction to join the old
road after it emerged from Capitol Gorge east of the Monument.
The total distance of the work was about fifteen miles, but the
work was to be completed under two different contracts. A six
mile section ran from the end of the pavement in Fruita to the
eastern boundary of the Monument and would be overseen by the
Bureau of Federal Highways. The remaining nine miles from the
Monument’s eastern boundary to the junction with the old road
west of Cainsville was to be overseen by the State Road
Commission.

The bidding on the nine mile section of highway from the
eastern boundary of the Monument to the old road was opened on
October 7, 1960. To celebrate the renewal of work on the highway,
the Park Service, Wayne County Lions Club, Wayne County Commission and the ACCSU hosted a barbecue at the entrance station to the Monument.\textsuperscript{27} Despite the rain and snow that fell on the 8th of October in Wayne County, the celebration was attended by over a thousand people who gathered to eat the four hundred pounds of beef provided and to listen to dignitaries speak enthusiastically about the new highway. William S. Krueger, the new superintendent at the Monument, having replaced Charles Kelly in February 1959, estimated that the new road would bring in 750,000 visitors a year upon its completion. This estimate proved to be overly optimistic, but it demonstrates the excitement generated by the construction of the new highway. It was as if the longstanding economic woes suffered by the region were going to be solved overnight by a new piece of pavement.\textsuperscript{28}

On November 7, 1960, the bids on the nine mile section of U-24 to the east of the Monument were opened in Salt Lake City. The low bidder on the project was a firm from Springville, Utah, Whiting and Haymond Construction Company, with a bid of $751,758.50 for the Fremont River route. They also had the low bid of $803,955.40 on the alternate route along the Fremont River.\textsuperscript{29} This second route had developed out of the possible desire by the Utah Power and Water Board to protect a potential dam site along the Fremont River. Because the final decision by the Power and Water Board had not been reached in fall of 1960 when the bidding was opened, the State Road Commission had each
company submit a bid for both routes. In early December, the Power and Water Board decided that they would keep the dam site along the Fremont River and agreed to pay the $64,389 in additional construction and administrative costs. This ended the controversy over which route was going to be taken by U-24 and the contract on the nine mile section was officially given to the Whiting and Haymond Construction Company for $803,955.40.\textsuperscript{30}

Construction on the nine mile section got underway almost immediately and proceeded very quickly. An early setback occurred at the end of August 1961, when a two hundred foot section of the new road was damaged by a flash flood that roared down the length of the Fremont River.\textsuperscript{31} The destroyed section was replaced at an additional cost to the state, but it appeared that the concerns about flood damage that local residents had anticipated at a meeting in 1956 were fully justified. The best efforts of engineers and construction companies notwithstanding, the new Fremont River road was still subject to the devastating whims of nature. While the setback in 1961 was repaired at a cost of $20,000, the battle with the Fremont River has continued and over the years several sections of U-24 have been damaged. As recently as the summer of 1985, a flash flood ripped through Capitol Reef taking with it several pieces of the highway, a bridge and some of the campground.

While the construction of the nine mile section was proceeding more-or-less as planned, the six mile piece of highway...
within the Monument was held up. When Capitol Reef was set aside as a national monument, there were several private landowners in Fruita that retained possession of their property. This was part of the compromise worked out between the local residents, the ACCSU and the Park Service. The Park Service planned to slowly acquire the rights to the land over a period of years. In the late 1950's, under Mission 66 plans, the Park Service began buying options on some properties and started condemnation proceedings on others to gain control of the sites needed for development. In some cases they paid for the land and then allowed the landowners to remain on their property until the land was needed or until their deaths. Although Fruita was small, there were never more than eight or ten families involved, it did take time to gain all of the landholdings.\textsuperscript{32} Indeed, as late as 1978, the Park Service started condemnation hearings on five hundred and seventy-three acres of privately owned land within the boundaries of the Park.\textsuperscript{33} The Park Service attempted to gain the private holdings as they needed them to complete their plans for the development of the Monument. When word of the projected route for the new highway reached the residents of Fruita, however, the potential value of land rose dramatically in the minds of the landowners. This complicated acquisition of rights-of-way for highway construction to begin. In most cases, the Park Service had to go through the long process of condemnation and court action.\textsuperscript{34}
As a result of the delay, bidding and construction were stalled on the Monument section of U-24 while the court took time to weigh the evidence submitted by both sides and determine the appropriate price for the properties in question. Thus, it was not until June of 1961 that the Park Service was awarded the ownership of the eight pieces of property in question. On June 30th the contract for the six mile section of highway within the Monument was awarded to the Whiting and Haymond Construction Company of Springville, Utah, the same firm working on the nine mile section of road to the east of the monument. Their winning bid of $570,388 was about $10,000 less than the State Road Commission had estimated the construction costs would be. The work on the section started on the 5th of July and it was estimated that the project would take about one year to complete.

The work on the Monument section proceeded as planned and in early July 1962 it was reported to the Regional Office of the National Park Service that the project was 99% complete and that the final cost of the project was going to be $745,342.08. The increase of almost $275,000 over the bid price was due primarily to the improved specifications of the project following the flash flood of August 1961. The increased material costs and the slight adjustment in the path of the road to decrease the danger from flooding comprised the majority of the cost overrun. The only work remaining on the Monument section was the placement of the
road signs and the painting of the center lines. This work was completed by the Utah Highway Department at the same time they did similar work on the nine mile section of highway east of the Monument boundary.\(^{38}\)

On July 10, 1962, the new fifteen mile section of paved highway running from Fruita to a point nine miles east of the Monument was officially opened to automobile traffic. At the same time, the old section of U-24 running through Capitol Gorge was turned over to the Park Service for its use and responsibility. The Utah Highway Department was put in charge of the maintenance and upkeep of the new highway running through the Monument. The residents of the region welcomed the completion of the fifteen mile section and continued to look forward to the completion of the paved highway all the way to Green River.\(^{39}\) With the completion of this portion of U-24, at a cost of almost two million dollars, there remained a little over fifteen miles of dirt road to reach the end of the pavement six miles west of Hanksville. When this last fifteen mile piece of dirt road was finally paved it would complete the connection between U. S. 89 in the west and U. S. Highway 6-50 near Green River. The new all-weather highway would become the major east-west road across southern Utah and would become the primary route of travel between Denver and southern California. It was hoped that the increase in travel through the county would solve the economic problems of the region.\(^{40}\)
State Representative Royal T. Hayward (R-Loa) expressed the hopes of his constituents when he said, "we feel that when the entire highway is completed, Wayne and Sevier counties will see a tourist boom unequalled before." There was a great deal of excitement surrounding the completion of the new highway, because it opened up a new route through the Waterpocket Fold and allowed easier access from one end of Wayne County to the other. This of course, was generated by the prospects of increased travel into the region by tourists. However, the enthusiasm for the new road and the Park Service suffered a blow just a few weeks later, when the administrators took the next step in their development plans for Capitol Reef National Monument.

On August 7, 1962, bulldozers moved a line of large boulders across the entrance to both ends of Capitol Gorge. This action closed the narrows section of the old road through the Gorge to all through vehicle traffic. The Park Service had gained control of the fourteen miles of the old road running through the Monument that had been bypassed by the new highway. As part of their Mission 66 plans, they changed the old road, the "Blue Dugway," from a through road into a scenic-drive running from the junction of the roads in Fruita to the mouth of Capitol Gorge. The ten mile scenic-drive ended just prior to reaching the narrows section of the Gorge. The Park Service decided that the dangers presented by flash floods rushing through the Gorge with little warning justified its closure. Not only did the road
present a danger to the visitors, but it was very expensive to repair the road each time it was damaged by the flooding.42

What had been a traditional thoroughfare through the narrows was now turned into a hiking trail.43 The Gorge was not only very impressive to walk through, surrounded by the towering walls on each side, but it also contained some excellent petroglyphs, an early pioneer register and examples of the waterpockets formed in the soft sandstone that gave the Fold its name. These features would be missed by people driving through the Gorge, which, in most places, is barely wide enough to allow two cars to pass and has few places where traffic can pull over and stop. It made perfect sense for the Park Service to turn the narrows into a hiking trail. It was cheaper and safer to maintain, and it gave visitors a better chance to examine and understand its geology and history. The new Fremont River route was about five miles shorter, was much safer, and was a better route between Cainsville and Fruita. The good reasons for closing the road notwithstanding, the Park Service had upset a longstanding tradition of the local residents and the people of the region were outraged at the action taken with no forewarning. The reaction to the closure was swift and furious, with the chief regional newspaper becoming the center of the opposition.

On August 16, 1962, a week after the closure of the road in the narrows, the front page headline of the Richfield Reaper read, "Idiotic Action Blocks Capitol Reef Gorge."44 The
arguments against the closure were focused on two issues. The first involved the need for all the tourist dollars the region could attract. The second was a reaction to the Park Service's action closing the road without holding public hearings. It was felt that the blockage of the road would somehow keep tourists out of the area, because they would have to get out of their cars and walk if they wanted to see the narrows region of the Gorge. In its response to the closing, the Richfield Reaper was very outspoken on the need for tourism and on its feelings about the Park Service action.

Last week, one of the most disgusting and unreasonable acts against the tourist business of southern Utah took place in the narrows of Capitol Reef National Monument. . . . We may all face the two inevitables of death and taxes, but it's going to be a cold day in Hades when dollar spending tourists are going to be told that they can only go so far into Capitol Reef Gorge.45

By now the neglect of twenty-five years and the lack of any public relations program between the Park Service and the local residents had taken its toll. It was noted that the action by the Park Service was not "the first time, and will probably not be the last, that thoughtless government blundering has been exercised" in the region.46

By the time of the narrows closing in 1962, relations had deteriorated between the two parties to a point where there was little understanding between them. The Park Service went ahead with their Mission 66 plans without consulting the residents on what they were doing or how the changes would affect the people
in the region. This insensitive course further alienated many of the local people who had to deal with the Park Service on a day-to-day basis. While the actions of the Park Service included nothing improper, the Monument officials could have better served themselves and the residents of the area by using a public relations campaign to educate the people as to the purposes and goals of the Park Service in Wayne County. On the other hand, some people in the region obviously felt the Monument existed solely for the economic gain of Wayne County and the people living there. Since they had received few economic benefits and had suffered socially and economically, many residents had lost their patience with the Park Service. The closing of the narrows was another link in the series of events and misunderstandings that destroyed the relationship between the two parties and turned the dreams of Joseph Hickman and E. P. Pectol into a nightmare for the generation that followed them in Wayne Wonderland.

The completion of Highway 24 in the summer of 1962 to a point nine miles east of the Monument left just fifteen miles of dirt road remaining between Sigurd and Green River. In the fall of 1962, a contract for $571,244 was let for another six miles of highway running easterly toward Hanksville. This would complete the paved connection between Cainsville and the Monument. The following spring, at a cost of $685,699, the construction of the last piece of pavement to complete the highway was begun. By
early 1964, the two projects were complete and the first all-weather paved highway across Wayne County was finally a reality.

It is difficult to weigh the full impact the new highway had on the economic system of the region. The number of visitors traveling through the Monument did increase in the years following the completion of the road, but the 1960's and 1970's saw the visitation numbers to all the national parks grow dramatically. In 1967, Capitol Reef recorded 146,598 visitors. This is three times the number that passed through the Monument ten years earlier, but far less than the 750,000 that had been predicted by the superintendent of the Monument in 1961. Clearly, the paved highway running through Wayne County contributed in a positive way to the economy of the region. Yet, it has not had the impact that many people expected. In 1963, the residents of Hanksville were anticipating the completion of Highway 24 and looking forward to the "economic boom" which would turn their "town into a thriving center." It is not difficult to see in 1986 that the boom did not come. A great many people had been banking on the new highway to cure the region's economic problems, but, just as the Monument had been unable to do, the new pavement was unable to provide an overnight solution to the longstanding economic woes suffered in Wayne County.

While the construction of the modern highway was underway, the Park Service moved ahead with the Mission 66 plans for
development within the Monument. In January 1963, two homes were constructed to house new employees who were being added to the Monument. In November 1964, four more units were added, along with four apartments for seasonal workers. During 1963, the new fifty-three site campground was constructed along the banks of the Fremont River and opened to the public. A new water and sewage treatment plant was also put into use to handle the increased visitation. In August 1964, the work in Capitol Gorge was completed with the construction of interpretation shelters at the entrance to the Gorge and in the parking area at the terminus of the Scenic-Drive. The new visitors' center, located at the junction of the Scenic-Drive and Highway 24, was opened in August 1965, complete with displays, educational tools and a slide show for the public. 51 By 1966, Capitol Reef had the modern roads and the facilities needed to attract and provide for the thousands of tourists who would visit the park in the years to come. The development of Capitol Reef National Monument was finally complete.
ROAD SYSTEM: CAPITOL REEF NATIONAL PARK

CAPITOL GORGE ROUTE

PREMONT RIVER ROUTE
END NOTES


3. Olson and Olson, Capitol Reef, 22-23.

4. Richfield Reaper, June 8, 1950.


11. Narrative Reports, September, November and December 1956 and June 1957.


22. Narrative Reports, April 1956.
27. Richfield Reaper, October 13, 1960; Narrative Reports, September 1950.
32. See Narrative Reports from 1959 to 1967. They contain the details of the continuing struggle between the National Park Service and those local residents trying to hold on to their property.
38. Narrative Reports, June 1962.
42. *Narrative Reports*, August 1962.
CHAPTER V

URANIUM MINING: 1901 TO 1968

While the early construction of highways into Wayne County and the Mission 66 development of the Monument were progressing during the 1950's, another crisis between the Park Service and the local residents was growing out of the uranium boom in the years following the Second World War. The region around Capitol Reef is not rich in natural resources. It does not contain any of the valuable metals that are found in other areas around the West. However, this barren land of rock and sand does contain trace elements of uranium. After World War II, the United States was thrust into the Atomic Age and the era of the Cold War. Uranium, a heavy radioactive metal used today in atomic weapons and as fuel for nuclear power plants, became a vital component in the development of our nuclear arsenal. The paranoia of the Cold War led the United States into an arms rush and pushed it to build bigger and more destructive weapons, creating a new market for uranium and causing something of a uranium craze to sweep the nation. People from all over the United States headed West with high hopes of making an overnight fortune and returning home to enjoy their new found wealth. While proportionally the number of people involved was certainly smaller, the attitudes, ambitions and fate of the new prospectors can be closely compared to those who headed for California during the 1849 gold rush. As happens
during any mining boom, a small number became wealthy. However, the overwhelming majority suffered great hardships and finally quit the land with little to show for their efforts.

A great deal of the uranium speculation was focused on the Four Corners region where Arizona, Utah, New Mexico and Colorado share a common border. Prospectors fanned out across southern Utah as far north as the area around Capitol Reef National Monument. However, because of its monument status, no prospecting was allowed within its boundaries. The blockage not only angered prospective miners, but also upset residents of the county who hoped the uranium boom would revive their struggling economy. The local residents were certainly frustrated that they themselves could not prospect within the Monument, but the loss of the possible income derived from servicing and supplying the miners was also an issue. As has already been demonstrated, the anticipated tourist trade to the Monument had not yet developed in the early 1950’s and it was beginning to appear that it might never grow. At a time when the county’s population was declining and its economic future bleak, it was difficult to understand why the resources of the Monument could not be exploited. The resulting fight over mining rights in Capitol Reef became another major point of contention between Wayne County and the Park Service. Indeed, the 1950’s turned into a running battle between Charles Kelly and the various groups attempting to prospect and mine inside the Monument.
While Kelly's fight was ultimately against several broad forces, including the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and the Park Service itself, there was one claim within the Monument that caused him more trouble than any other. This was the so-called Oyler Tunnel case which dragged on for several years and came to involve a number of local people. By the time it was finally settled, it had further fueled the fires of controversy between the Park Service and Wayne County. In order to understand the Oyler Tunnel crisis during the uranium boom, it is necessary to briefly trace the history of the mine.

On November 30, 1901, Thomas M. Pritchett and H. J. McClellan staked a mining claim at the mouth of Grand Wash, approximately two miles south-east of Fruita. The "Nightingale" mine became the first claim filed on the site, but it was far from the last. Indeed, during the thirty-three years following the Nightingale claim, the site was filed on over seventy-five times. A second claim was filed on the site in 1902, when Willard Pace, James and Allen Russell took advantage of Pritchett and McClellan's failure to do assessment work on the mine and claimed the site. However, this second group of claimants also failed to perform the required work and they lost the site in 1904. It was with the next claimants, Thomas E. Nixon and J. C. Sumner, that the story of the Oyler Tunnel really began. In January 1904, Nixon and Sumner filed a claim on the site at the mouth of Grand Wash. They worked the claim enough for the next...
nine years to maintain possession, but it is not known if the mine ever showed a profit. At a time when the only known use for uranium was in questionable medical practices, it is highly doubtful that the mine produced any real income. However, during the years that Nixon and Sumner held the claim, two tunnels, with a total length of one hundred feet, were dug into the sandstone cliffs. It is these two tunnels, named after the next man to claim the site, M. V. Oyler, that caused all the interest in the area during the uranium boom of the 1950's. The mining done on the site by Nixon, Sumner, Oyler and the dozens that followed during the next twenty years, proved one thing beyond any doubt. There was absolutely nothing at the site of value in quantities worth mining. All it seemed to contain was uranium, and what was that worth? The last of these early claims was filed on May 26, 1937, by Willard Christensen, J. R. Hoffman, H. O. Barney and O. V. Oyler.

The Christensen claim was filed just weeks before the area was set aside as a national monument by Franklin Roosevelt's proclamation of August 2, 1937. At the time of the proclamation there were several inactive claims within the boundaries of the Monument, including Christensen's. The Park Service and the General Land Office moved to gain title to these sites by outright purchase, through the use of condemnation, or by declaring them null and void if they were determined to be of no value. After investigations by the Park Service and the Land
Office, it was concluded that none of the claims contained any minerals of value and that they should all be ruled null and void. On November 25, 1941, Fred W. Johnson, commissioner of the General Land Office, declared all the claims canceled. In early December his office sent notice of this action to all the claimants and give them thirty days to file written protests against the action. None did. If any had done so, the fair market value of the site would have been determined by the courts and paid the claimants by the government. After allowing an additional ten months, Johnson declared all the claims null and void in October 1942, as was within the power of his office. The government had done all that was legally required, and, it appeared, the question of mining in the Monument was a dead issue.

However, the problem was far from settled. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the increased value of uranium caused renewed interest in the possibility of mining in the Monument. It occurred to the former claimants of the Oyler Tunnel, that the worthless land they had given their rights up to in 1942, might contain a "gold mine" after all.

In June 1949, Christensen, Barney, Hoffman and Oyler filed a formal protest against the actions taken by the Land Office in 1942, declaring their claim null and void. They had finally filed their written protest, but it had come seven years after the date spelled out by law. By this time, the Bureau of Land Management
had been established by Congress to carry out the former duties of the General Land Office and Grazing Service of earlier times. The Bureau reviewed the case, but ruled that the claimants had given up their rights by not filing a protest within the thirty day period allowed. On the basis of this very simple requirement, the appeal was turned down. After getting no satisfaction from the Bureau of Land Management, Christensen took his case directly to the Secretary of Interior in hopes of gaining a hearing, but here, too, he was turned away.  

On May 31, 1950, Christensen, Barney and Hoffman filed a suit in the United States District Court for Utah. In the suit they claimed that they had tried to orally protest the November 1941 Land Office decision against their claim, but that they had been turned away at the time; as well as in the spring of 1943, the summer of 1945, and in both the spring and fall of 1948. Their suit was dismissed on August 24, 1950, by Judge Willis W. Ritter, on the grounds that their appeals to the Land Office had not been in the required written form. With this action, attempts at regaining their mining rights to the Oyler Tunnel were, at least temporarily, abandoned by the three surviving claimants. However, by this time, other events were developing that influenced the future of mining in Capitol Reef National Monument.

In the name of national defense, the United States Government started stockpiling uranium aggressively in the early
1950's. This new market prompted a uranium rush that sent hundreds of prospectors into southern Utah. Indeed, the AEC set high prices, financed mills and otherwise encouraged production of uranium. In February 1951, the AEC wrote the Department of Interior expressing the belief that the area around the Oyler Tunnel might contain large enough deposits to justify working the site. Under normal conditions the reply from the Park Service would have been no; however, the advent of the Cold War and the rush to build a nuclear force made people very responsive to the will of the AEC. Throughout the decade, few effective challenges were raised to the AEC's policy and it got virtually anything it needed. After several months of negotiations, the AEC was granted a seven year limited use permit by the Park Service, for the prospecting and the removal of uranium from Capitol Reef National Monument.9

Charles Kelly, the superintendent of Capitol Reef during the 1950's, had a little different view of how the Monument came to be opened to mining. It was his opinion that the AEC became interested in the area around Capitol Reef after Christensen, whom Kelly called a "lunatic," wrote a letter to his congresswomen complaining about his mining claim at the mouth of Grand Wash being blocked by the Department of Interior and the courts.10 Kelly claimed that Christensen set down and wrote a letter to Rhea Beck Bosone [Utah Congresswoman] in Washington and told her there was millions of dollars worth of uranium tied up in the
monument and the Park Service wouldn’t let him dig it out. The nation was just starved to death for uranium and was liable to be blown to hell by Russia if we did not get that uranium out of the monument. Now Christensen is an ignoramus that doesn’t know how to spell and he doesn’t know any grammar and it was a hard job to try and figure out what he had to say in that letter, written on cheap paper with a pencil. So she read it and started to cry her eyes out because this poor old prospector had been denied the right to dig out the uranium, and she took it up with the Park Service, and on account of all the excitement of the uranium prospecting around the country, the senators and the representatives back there got all worked up about all the millions of dollars of uranium that was tied up in Capitol Reef National Monument. So without any examination of any kind they arbitrarily opened it up to mining under these special permits that they issued.

Because of all the trouble Kelly had experienced keeping Christensen and others like him from mining in the Monument, he probably overstated what had happened when Christensen wrote Washington, but regardless of how it happened, the result was the same. The Oyler Tunnel, probably with help from Christensen and other local miners, attracted the attention of the right people in the nation’s capital. On February 19, 1952, an agreement was reached that opened one of America’s national monuments to prospecting and to the eventual mining of uranium.

By the time the Monument was actually opened to mining in 1952, the area around the boundaries had already been checked and rechecked by prospectors, and thousands of claims filed. None, however, proved to be a commercial success. Despite the lack of findings beyond the Monument perimeter, hundreds of people still applied for permits for uranium prospecting within it.
majority of the interest was focused in the neighborhood of the Oyler Tunnel, but because of all the applications for the same area and the renewed efforts by Christensen's group to regain the claim, the AEC closed an eighty acre area at the mouth of Grand Wash to all prospecting until the issue could be settled. By mid-February, thirty-five permits had been sent out by the AEC, but those who put their permits to use found very little evidence that any significant deposits existed outside of the Oyler Tunnel tract. One group of miners went so far as to rent an airplane and spend two days flying over the area with a geiger counter. Even this failed to show evidence of commercial uranium deposits within the Monument.

Despite the failure to discover evidence of uranium deposits to justify the issuance of a mining permit by the AEC, prospectors continued to arrive at Capitol Reef in the opening months of 1953. The speculative spirit ran high and many believed that the uranium was lying on the ground waiting for someone to come along and pick it up. Indicative of this was a letter from a man in Ogden, written shortly after the Monument was opened to prospecting in 1952, asking Kelly to stake a claim out for him. "He said, 'Since you [Kelly] have been down there for several years, you know where all the rich uranium is.'" He proposed further to give Kelly half of the profits for staking a claim for him. Kelly wrote back declining the offer and informing the Ogden correspondent that since, "there ain't anything in here anyway,
just a trace" it would be a waste of time to come searching for uranium at Capitol Reef.\textsuperscript{17} Despite hundreds of prospectors combing the Monument, only five claims had actually been registered and no mining permits had been issued within the Monument by February of 1953. In a moment of optimism in February, Kelly declared that the uranium boom was over, but he was proven to be badly mistaken in the next few months.\textsuperscript{18}

In March five new sites were filed on, but of the ten claims within the Monument, only three were being worked in hopes of striking a rich vein and gaining a mining permit from the AEC. During March, the AEC made an inspection tour through the Monument, but found no claims worth a mining permit. Kelly was outraged that prospecting continued within the Monument, but happy that no permits were issued. While "a few small holes have been dug here and there," he felt no major damage had been done to the Monument.\textsuperscript{19} However, much to Kelly's dismay, this was to change in the next few weeks. By the end of May, the AEC had granted mining contracts to Lurton J. Knee, the Kuhn Brothers, Robert Dunsmore and the La Florecita Mining Company to remove uranium ore from the Monument.\textsuperscript{20} With this action, the mining of uranium started in earnest and with it came the disruption of the landscape, as Kelly had feared.

Distressed because of all the mining activity, Kelly fired a letter off to the AEC in May protesting the mining contracts. He was angry because the fragile landscape of the Monument was being
destroyed by roads, tunnels, dumps and other trash. Kelly felt because no ore was being shipped, that the contracts had been issued without the AEC having properly checked out the claim sites. In his letter, he complained "if the practice is continued the Monument will be pockmarked with abandoned tunnels and dumps, with no ore recovered." Kelly's letter reached the right people within the AEC. In July they sent Ray Lindbloom to investigate Kelly's complaints. The crusty old superintendent took Lindbloom on a tour of the Monument, showing him all the damage that had been done. Lindbloom was convinced, agreeing that under the conditions no mining contracts should have been issued. After studying the entire matter carefully, Lindbloom concluded that contracts would not be issued in the future without specific investigation of the sites. However, he allowed those already issued to remain in affect.

Activities at Capitol Reef continued in much the same manner for the remainder of the year. A few prospectors continued to work within the Monument, but, as was promised by the AEC, no new contracts were granted without onsite examinations. Since there were apparently no commercial deposits of uranium in the Monument, outside of the Oyler Tunnel, which was still off limits to mining, no further contracts were granted in 1953. The four groups that had been given contracts in May continued to work sporadically on their sites in hopes of showing an income, but they shipped no ore during the remainder of the year.
As winter turned to spring at Capitol Reef in 1954, the area braced itself for yet another influx of people looking for an instant fortune from uranium. Beginning in February the rush focused on the region south of the Monument in Garfield County. Kelly wrote in his monthly report for February that the rush had drawn almost everybody out of Wayne County and that people had closed up their shops and dropped everything to head for the new El Dorado. Indeed, the rush drew so many people out of the county, that some Mormon bishops even packed up and headed south to join their congregations.\textsuperscript{23} The uranium fever lasted for three months, ending only after several thousand new claims were filed by eager prospectors. At its highest pitch the rush of 1954 reached such a frenzy that prospectors were jumping other claims in search of the one that would make them wealthy. Kelly wrote that prospectors' jeeps passing through the Monument have been averaging 40 a day. \ldots They all drive with the throttle wide open in order to beat the other fellow to those million dollar claims. Dust in the checking station is an inch deep every night. The gold rush of '49 was never like this.\textsuperscript{24}

Despite all the activity, no major strike was made in the area south of Capitol Reef. In Notom, just a few miles east of the Monument, a major mining operation opened in May. But by September, having spent over a thousand dollars a day for four months, the owners shut down the Notom mine without shipping any ore.\textsuperscript{25}
During the course of the 1954 surge in prospecting, there was once again renewed interest in searching Capitol Reef for uranium. While a few more permits were granted for prospecting, the AEC showed no interest in issuing new contracts for mining. Their lack of interest was largely the result of poor showings at the sites previously issued contracts within the Monument. Kelly's constant reminders to the AEC that the area contained no deposits were based upon fact and AEC was slowly recognizing that. 26

On October 13th Kelly wrote to the regional director of the Park Service in Santa Fe recommending that the agreement between the Park Service and the AEC be canceled. He felt in view of the fact that the prospecting of the previous eighteen months had turned up nothing of worth, that the Monument should be returned to its intended condition. Kelly suggested that the special permits for prospecting not be issued after February 20, 1955. 27

At the time, in a short paper outlining the history of the uranium mining in the Monument, Kelly wrote that hundreds of prospectors have searched every inch of ground and spent thousands of dollars blasting out tunnels and prospect holes. Every foot of ground has been staked and restaked. And yet not one pound of uranium has been extracted and sold, for the simple reason that it does not exist except in one very limited locality, and even that is not extensive enough to be worth mining. 28

In April 1955, in the middle of yet another springtime resurgence of prospecting, the AEC dispatched an investigator to
check on Kelly's request to suspend further issuing of permits. In early May, "after lengthy and sometimes heated correspondence," the AEC agreed to stop issuing permits for prospecting in the Monument on May 17, 1955.29 The contracts that had been previously issued for mining in the Monument would be valid until May 1956. Unless one of the active mining sites hit a major uranium vein, all mining in the Monument would be suspended no later than May 1956. Indeed, with the exception of the contract granted to the Milford claim, which was given a three month extension, the era of uranium prospecting in Capitol Reef National Monument came to an end in May 1956.30

Kelly was pleased that the violation of Capitol Reef was coming to an end, but he continued to be upset that it had ever been allowed to occur. Kelly was never one to keep his opinions to himself, even if he was criticizing the people he represented, and this case was no exception. He blamed the whole mess on the AEC and the Park Service. Kelly lamented again the fact that they had taken "the word of an illiterate prospector, as relayed by a politician who had never been off the pavements of Salt Lake City" instead of sending in a team of competent geologists to determine if the area held any deposits of uranium.31

In the meantime, the conflict had continued over the Oyler Tunnel and the problems with its four claimants, led by Christensen. When it had appeared that the Monument was to be opened to uranium mining in 1951, Christensen and his colleagues
once again became interested in regaining the Oyler Tunnel and other sites they held earlier claims to at the mouth of Grand Wash. In an attempt to get a jump on other prospectors, Christensen and Hoffman set up camp near the mouth of Grand Wash on May 10, 1951, and announced that they were starting mining operations on the claim they "legally" held to the Oyler Tunnel. This, of course, was the same claim that had been declared null and void in 1942 by the General Land Office and the validity of which had been rejected by the courts. Kelly's response was immediate and predictable. He ejected Christensen's party for attempting to mine within the boundaries of a national monument. Not surprisingly, Christensen argued that the claim was still valid because, court decisions notwithstanding, it contained valuable minerals. Christensen left under protest, but returned several days later with a geiger counter. Kelly removed Christensen's party from the site once again and laid the groundwork for initiating trespass charges against them if they returned. They wisely chose not to. It was during one of these discussions that Christensen, according to Kelly, attempted to intimidate Kelly with a pistol. As quick with his actions as he was with his tongue, Kelly quickly turned the tables with the threat of actually using his pistol on Christensen.

It is an interesting story, but one which we probably will never know the whole truth about. It is difficult to believe that Kelly would have actually used his weapon on Christensen, but it
is not that hard to picture Kelly using such a threat and backing it up with his potent personality. While probably more fact than fiction, this story does tell us something about the intensity of both men when dealing with the issue of mining in the Monument. Events such as this did little to help the relationship between the local public and the Park Service. Even though Kelly was simply performing his job as superintendent of Capitol Reef by removing Christensen’s group from the Monument, the incident was also another example of how Kelly dealt with the people he disagreed with. A different person, possessing a little more tact, might have handled the situation in a manner that would have been less destructive to the image of the Park Service.

When the Monument was opened to mining in 1952, it took the problem of the Oyler Tunnel out of the hands of the Park Service and gave it the AEC. Encouraged, Christensen and his colleagues scrambled to reclaim the Oyler Tunnel, but they were not alone. Within a month of the opening of the Monument to mining, the AEC had received thirty-seven applications for mining permits for the mouth of Grand Wash. Because of all the conflict surrounding the site, the AEC closed the eighty-acre tract at the mouth of Grand Wash to prospecting until the issue could be settled. On January 25, 1954, Christensen’s group filed another suit in the federal courts to regain their former rights to the group of old claims at the mouth of Grand Wash. Their suit was again thrown out of court by Judge Ritter in September 1954, but this did not deter
them from trying again. In January 1955, they filed a third suit in District Court. Once again the case was dismissed by Judge Ritter. This time they appealed the decision to the Court of Appeals in Denver, where they had no better success than they had had in Salt Lake City. 34

After failing in the courts for the fourth time, Christensen's group tried a different tack to regain their claims. Following the January 1955 rejection by Judge Ritter, Christensen's group turned their focus to two other claims they had held near the Oyler Tunnel. Hiring O. H. Matthews, a lawyer from Salt Lake City, they now undertook to force the Park Service to grant them mining rights to the "Yellow Canary" and the "Yellow Joe," two claims that paralleled each other in Grand Wash and lay very close to the Oyler Tunnel. Upon investigation, it was found that the two mines had been overlooked in 1941-42 and that they had not been invalidated by the General Land Office. The Bureau of Land Management moved to gain title to the claims, but it was too late. This time Christensen finally had the law on his side. In June 1955, after years of effort, Christensen, Hoffman and Matthews moved into the mouth of Grand Wash and started work on the two mines. 35

Mining in the Yellow Joe and Yellow Canary continued throughout the summer and into the fall of 1955. In November, Matthews, who was now a one-third owner of the two mines and operating them for the other owners, finally found a way to
remove uranium ore from the Oyler Tunnel. He had the Yellow Joe resurveyed and claimed that its actual lines extended two hundred and forty feet into the Oyler Tunnel. This was probably not the truth, but in the face of this strategy Kelly was unable to get an injunction to stop the mining in the Oyler Tunnel. Shortly after Matthews started removing ore from the Oyler Tunnel, he suspended mining activities in the Yellow Joe and the Yellow Canary, because of the low quality of the ore there. In the meantime, several tons of ore were taken from the Oyler Tunnel where Kelly was still unable to interfere. Finally, in January 1956, Kelly was able to close the Oyler Tunnel. He convinced the AEC to withhold payment on the first shipments of ore delivered from the Oyler Tunnel. This proved to be effective. Without the government's uranium market, Matthews had no place to sell his ore. With this action, the mining at the mouth of Grand Wash came to an end. 36

While there would still be a few months of uranium mining within the Monument, by the end of 1956 the bulk of the mining had ended. In March 1956, the BLM was ready to act on Christensen's Yellow Joe and the Yellow Canary claims. They ruled the claim on the Yellow Joe was null and void, but decided that Christensen's group held a valid claim on the Yellow Canary. 37 However, the Yellow Canary contained no high quality uranium ore, so it saw little renewed mining activity. Christensen continued to fight the decision against the Yellow Joe, which now included
the Oyler Tunnel, but his appeals to the Department of Interior and in the courts were turned down in 1956 and 1957. The Park Service continued to fight the decision on the Yellow Canary, but it was not settled until 1968, when the claim was finally declared null and void.

The peak of the mining activity at Capitol Reef lasted from 1952 to 1956. During that period, uranium yielded very little to the federal government, which Kelly alleged was paid only about thirteen dollars on its share of the uranium produced within the Monument. When it is considered that the government received 10 percent of the income in royalties, it is clear that the area did not contain vast amounts of uranium. During the four year period of mining activity, Kelly fought a running battle to keep the Monument from the ravages of mining. To a large degree he was successful, damage to the land was relatively minor and it healed within a few years. However, the damage to the relationship between the Park Service and the miners, many of whom were from the area, was very slow in healing. The abuses, real or imagined, felt by the local residents left a lasting impression in their minds. These negative feelings became a contributing factor in the breakdown of the relationship between the Park Service and the people of Wayne County.

The lack of understanding exhibited by both interests during the uranium boom of the 1950's would be repeated again during the 1960s and 1970's when the Monument was expanded. The people of
the county did not really understand the purpose of Capitol Reef National Monument. Its broad implications were not understood. In their minds, the Monument existed for their economic benefit, not for the protection of a unique scenic and geological area. They wanted to reap the benefits that the Monument was expected to bring to the county in tourism, but not live with the disadvantages that a national monument brought with it. The campaign led by the ACCSU during the 1930’s was motivated primarily out of economic need. When the expected tourist boom did not materialize during the early 1950’s, local interests wanted to exploit the land in other ways for economic gain. It was a natural reaction, given the economic condition of the region, but it demonstrated the misconception about the Monument that many people in the region held. The lack of understanding, however, was not a one-sided problem. The Park Service never attempted to understand the people who had lived there long before the area became a monument. Instead of trying to develop a relationship that would benefit both interests, the Park Service, represented by Kelly, ignored the needs of the Wayne County residents. The problems that grew out of the Kelly Era and flared up over uranium mining in the 1950’s, were the beginning of a much larger problem that continued to haunt the relationship between the Park Service and Wayne County.
END NOTES


33. Charles Kelly, interview by Lenard E. Brown, 8.
34. Brown, Capitol Reef, 26-29.
40. Charles Kelly, interview by Lenard E. Brown, 10.
In 1937 when E. P. Pectol and the Associated Civic Clubs of Southern Utah finally succeeded in their long battle to attract national attention for Capitol Reef, the result had been the creation of a small national monument in Wayne County. The original boundaries of the Monument incorporated just under 38,000 acres into the national park system. Today the Park has grown to include 241,671 acres of land and has spread its boundaries into four Utah counties. The six hundred percent increase in the size of the Monument did not come easily or without the renewed involvement of the residents surrounding the region. However, when expansion finally came in 1969, the majority of the people within the region were not fighting, as they had been in 1937, for the further involvement of the National Park Service in their county. Indeed, while facing a bleak economic future and after years of conflict with the Park Service over land use, the overwhelming majority of the people from Wayne and Garfield counties vehemently opposed further expansion of Capitol Reef National Monument. It had become a struggle between an isolated local clientele and broad national interests.

On Monday morning, January 20, 1969, just ninety minutes before Richard Nixon was sworn in as the new president of the
United States, President Lyndon Johnson signed Presidential
Proclamation 3888. At the same time, he signed three other
proclamations adding almost 400,000 acres to the National Park
System. Johnson’s actions created Marble Canyon National Monument
in Arizona and added 94,500 acres to Katmai National Monument in
Alaska, but the largest impact was felt in Utah. Johnson’s
signature increased the size of Arches National Monument by
49,000 acres and added over 215,000 acres to Capitol Reef
National Monument. This, along with 3,040 acres added by
President Dwight Eisenhower in 1958, made Capitol Reef the
largest site managed by the Park Service in Utah (see map on page
145). These last minute additions made to the Park System by
Johnson were just a small percentage of the 7.5 million acres
recommended by the outgoing Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall.
The President had not approved Udall’s other proposals because
"he thought establishing them by proclamation . . . would be
straining his legal authority." It is well within the right of a
president to establish national monuments or add to existing
ones, but Johnson was concerned with the extent of the additions
in the closing moments of his administration. Indeed, one of the
complaints voiced by the opponents to the expansion of Capitol
Reef was that the Antiquities Act, under which Johnson made the
expansion, called for the smallest areas possible for proper
management to be set aside by proclamation.
The addition of the 215,000 acres to Capitol Reef came as a surprise to everyone. Utah's Congressional delegation was informed of the impending proclamation on the Friday before the announcement was made, but they had never been consulted on the possible results of such an action. Indeed, on January 17th, the same day that they were informed, Senator Wallace Bennett (R-Utah) had reintroduced his legislation to upgrade Capitol Reef and Arches to national park status, at their current size.\(^4\) Even the park officials at Capitol Reef were caught unaware. Shortly after the proclamation became public, people started calling the Monument demanding to know what areas were going to be involved and what kind of an impact it would have on the grazing and mineral rights within the expanded acreage. The superintendent of the Monument, Robert Heyder, was embarrassed at his lack of information and was unable to provide any answers to the public.\(^5\) The lack of forewarning or consultation by the Johnson administration became a major point of contention in the months to follow. The public outcry from the areas affected by the proclamations started within hours of the announcement and continued unabated for several months.

It would be unfair to say that the majority of the people in Utah were upset by Johnson's "landgrab." However, this is because, as in many cases, those not directly influenced ignored the plight of their neighbors. However, those who had their economic future as stockmen and miners thrown into doubt by the
expansion were very quick to respond. The reaction to the proclamation varied from outrage to dismay. The president of the Farm Bureau, Elmo W. Hamilton, called the "president's action unconscionable." Others called it "precipitous" and "vindictive."6 When people were unsure as to how the expansion would affect them, the Richfield Reaper, in an editorial, said, that

what the public should expect ... is another 215,000 acres of land to be locked up into a "recreation area," eliminating most of the grazing, mining, oil production and hunting now enjoyed in this region.7

A spokesman for the Utah Cattlemen's Association said, "It's not conservation, but preservation," and expressed the opinion that "Utah certainly has a role other then being a playground for easterners."8 The view that the land was being "locked up" for the use of rich easterners and environmentalists would continue in the months to follow. While much of the concern rested on economic considerations, there were those who could foresee social consequences stemming from the probable economic loss from the expansion. Marcellus Palmer, from the Utah Woolgrower's Association, declared, "This act is going to cause further economic reductions and further depletions of towns. People are going to have to find other places to live and other things to do."9 People in the town of Boulder, to the west of the expanded area, were concerned that they might become a ghost town after the expansion took away winter grazing rights which they were dependent upon for survival as stockmen. On January 21, the day
following the proclamation, the townboard of Boulder passed a resolution suggesting that the town rename itself "Johnson's Folly," so that people would not forget what had caused the "inevitable" ghost town and the community of ghost ranchers that lived there. As no further action was taken on this resolution, the name Boulder can still be found on maps, but this action by a small town in Garfield County exemplified the anger directed toward President Johnson and the "landgrab" of January 20, 1969.10 The Salt Lake Tribune addressed the problem in a different light. In an editorial of March 2, they wrote,

Whether or not it was proper to expand the monument is not the question here. The issue is a moral one and it is larger than the two counties combined. It is an issue that has been raised but never settled to anyone's satisfaction in almost everyplace a freeway has been built, or a big reclamation dam constructed, or a city neighborhood cleared for redevelopment.

How much do changing times and ways of life owe people hurt in the process? The shopkeeper wiped out by the freeway, the farmer flooded out by the dam's artificial lake, the landlord whose rental units are bulldozed-- all suffer hardship which seldom is made easier by the compensation at market value for property lost.

The frustration exhibited toward Johnson's proclamations were not restricted to the stockmen and miners living in the state. In the nation's capital, Senator Bennett, who had been introducing legislation since 1961 to upgrade Capitol Reef and Arches to national park status, also spoke out against the action of the former Johnson administration. In a speech on the floor of the Senate, Bennett called on Congress to investigate the
"strange and inexplicable events" that had occurred in his home state and labeled the proclamations "a parting slap at my state of Utah." Bennett was angered at Johnson's "last gasp attempt to involve a lot more land in the West" under government management and called for the Senate to pass his bills to create national parks, at their pre-proclamation size, out of the two sites enlarged in Utah. In the House of Representatives, Utah's delegation was also active. Laurence J. Burton (R-Utah) spoke on the floor of the Congress, saying,

By using executive order the president-- by the sweep of a pen-- took away lands in Utah, Arizona and Alaska and put them under jurisdiction of the National Park Service. This means that no further use of the lands can be made by the farmers, ranchers or anyone wanting to merely use the water facilities on the land. In effect, it cuts off mining rights, grazing lands and the use of communication services. Not once did Mr. Johnson consider the rights of Utahans.

Congressman Burton also called for public hearings to be held in Utah, so that the people of the region could express their opinions on the increased size of the areas.

During the second week of February 1969, Senator Bennett and Congressman Burton traveled back to their home state and toured the sites affected by the expansion. After talking with the people of the region, both men confirmed that in their opinion Johnson had added far too much acreage to the size of the existing national monuments. During the course of their tour through Capitol Reef, the two men held an unofficial public meeting in Escalante to allow the public to express their views.
on the expansion. The stockmen of Wayne and Garfield counties took the opportunity presented them venting their anger and frustration with the federal government. One major question raised, was what was going to become of the communities once their economic and historic base in the livestock industry was destroyed with the phaseout of grazing on the expanded lands?

Ivan Lyman, a Wayne County rancher, conveyed this strong message to the delegation during the meeting in Escalante:

> These are men, not statistics, heads of families, stalwarts in their community, taxpayers, efficient cattle ranch operators. They can not survive, no rancher can, without his winter range. Can Wayne County afford to lose these peoples, these families? Can it afford this weakening of its tax base? People must come to realize that this craze of extreme conservation has gone too far.

As Chapter I of this thesis showed, Wayne County was settled as a result of the livestock industry spreading into the winter range found along the lowlying areas of the Waterpocket Fold. The descendants of these early settlers were not only angry that the federal government was trying to take away their economic livelihood, but, that in doing so, they would be denying them their cultural heritage. Once the expanded areas were transferred into the Park System, it would bring to an end the major portion of the winter grazing in the region. Without federal lands to graze cattle on during cold winter months, it would be difficult or impossible for the stockmen to continue their business in Wayne and Garfield counties. Bennett assured them that if the expansion remained Congress would phase grazing out over a period
of years and that private property would be purchased at a fair market value by the Park Service. However, it was feared that this would just delay the problem and still force the population to leave the county in search of other employment. While tourism was playing a part in the local economy, it was not as important as had been hoped, nor was it a year-round industry. Tourism was simply too unpredictable and unprofitable a base for the entire economy of the region. Senator Bennett and Congressman Burton heard the cries of their constituents and returned to Washington D. C. to try to find a legislative solution to the problem.

When Bennett introduced his bill in the Senate to upgrade Capitol Reef and Arches to national parks a few days before Johnson signed the proclamation, it was a procedure he had repeated on a regular basis since 1961. Now, in the wake of his fact finding trip to Utah, Bennett doubled his effort to create national parks out of the old monument areas. By so doing, he hoped not only to achieve the national park status he had been seeking so long, but also to frustrate Johnson's proclamation and return the areas to their former boundaries. At the same time Congressman Burton submitted legislation in the House calling for the creation of the areas as national parks at their pre-proclamation size.16

Although Bennett had been working on gaining park status for Capitol Reef and Arches for several years, it was the junior senator from Utah who ultimately played the key role in the
creation of Capitol Reef National Park. Senator Frank Moss (D-Utah) introduced legislation in late January calling for the creation of Capitol Reef National Park and Arches National Park, but not as parks at their former monument size, as Bennett and Burton were calling for. It was Moss’s hope to create two new parks out of the expanded areas or at least at a much larger size than they had been prior to Johnson’s proclamations. To mollify his Utah constituents, Moss admitted that he "deplored the clumsy way the boundaries were increased," However, he also pointed out that Bryce Canyon and Zion national parks had been created without public hearings and that it was well within the power of the presidential office for Johnson to do what he had done. Moss felt that under these conditions, it was likely that the new boundaries would remain and that it would be best for the state if the areas received the national park status they deserved.17

In the public mind, a national park was more impressive to visit and would offer more facilities to tourists. Even the simple change in names from monument to national park created a new image for an area. Moss felt it would be an advantage for his home state in the fight for tourist dollars to have two additional national parks and not just two larger national monuments. A national park would draw more tourists and would have a larger economic impact upon the state. The Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation opted to support Moss’s proposal over Bennett’s and it was announced on April 24 that
public hearings would be held in Salt Lake City, Richfield and Moab, Utah, on May 15, 16, and 17. The purpose being to "give the people the most directly involved an opportunity to tell an official body of Congress what their feelings" were. The House of Representatives followed suit, announcing that its Subcommittee on Public Lands and Parks and Recreation would be holding official hearings in Escalante on May 30 and 31. It had been four months since the proclamation, but the people of the affected areas were finally going to get the opportunity to express their opinions to an official body of the government. Many held the hope that the government had not forgotten them and that once Congress saw what was happening to them they would be helped.

The first hearings on S. 531 were held at the State Capitol in Salt Lake City on May 15, 1969. Senators Moss and Alan Bible (D-Nevada), the head of the Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, conducted the day-long meeting that was attended by over three hundred people. Senator Moss opened the hearings by giving a short discussion on what his bill called for and what it would mean to the people affected. Moss said,

I am hopeful that we will be able to find a compromise-- a way to realize the most out of the spectacular scenery and the unusual scientific phenomenon which these two areas afford, and at the same time protect the rights of those who have a different economic stake in the regions.
Moss believed, as his bill reflected, that the boundaries of the area could be adjusted in a way to exclude a great deal of the grazing lands, as well as areas that might contain recoverable minerals. To achieve the adjustment, Moss proposed to eliminate 56,000 of the acres added by Johnson and to add 29,000 acres that were not being used for grazing in the area. This would decrease the total size of the park by 17,000 acres, but more importantly, it would free up 56,000 acres for grazing and mining. It would also still leave a national park of over 242,000 acres. In a sense, Moss was offering some of the acreage back in exchange for getting cooperation in his attempts to pass his Utah park bills. Moss felt that the acreage his bills would release would "enable ranchers to keep enough winter grazing in the area to continue operations," while still protecting enough of the environment and scenery to justify park status for the Monument and to promote tourism. Moss, who came from an old ranching family, realized that the livestock business was needed in southern Utah and that the state could hardly depend entirely upon the tourist trade for its income.21 The Moss bill was to also protect the existing grazing permittees and their heirs for at least a twenty-five year period.22

The hearing quickly turned into a battle between supporters of conservation and commerce. It also became apparent that the people from around Capitol Reef representing commerce were divided as on what they felt was best for the region. The hearing
was attended by various conservationist groups who, predictably, supported the expansion and Moss's proposal to upgrade the area to national park status. The conservationists contended that the increased tourist trade triggered by upgrading the monument would more than outweigh other commercial interests. Though the ranchers held a majority among those speaking at the meeting, it became evident that a split existed in the goals of southern Utahans. Ranchers and miners opposed the expansion of the monument but people operating a business geared toward tourism supported the creation of a park, for it would increase the number of visitors to the region. Most ranchers agreed that tourism was important, but they felt that when the deeply depressed counties were losing population, it would be unhealthy to base the economy of the region on the single factor of tourism. Don Pace, chairman of the Wayne County Commission and the Six County Commission, felt there was "no 'common sense' reason why summer tourism and winter grazing couldn't be allowed in the same federal recreation area" and that the region "cannot afford to put all [its] . . . eggs in one basket, to the exclusion of other benefits and resources."²³ Paul Steed, a rancher from Escalante, pointed out that phasing grazing rights out over a twenty-five year period did not really solve the problem, it just put it off. The value of a ranching operation, useless without the winter grazing found along the Waterpocket Fold, would decrease and the owners would be unable to sell their property.²⁴ To protest the expansion and the proposal for park
status, the Rocky Mountain Oil and Gas Association, Utah Petroleum Council, Utah Cattlemen’s Association, Utah Mining Association, Utah Public Lands Council and the Utah Farm Federation all appeared and submitted statements opposing both expansion and park status for Capitol Reef National Monument.  

While the argument now focused on what to do about the expansion, since it appeared to be a fact of life, the anger at Johnson and his "landgrab" was still a factor. This was very apparent in a statement submitted during the hearing in Salt Lake City. The identity of the author has been lost over the years, but the rage expressed by the individual has not diminished with time.

The methods used in enlarging the Arches and Capitol Reef National Monument boundaries were strictly despotic in nature and should have no place in our nation, founded as it is upon democratic principles and established originally as a republic.

The Presidential Executive Order enlarging ... is a type of act we have been led to believe only occurs under dictatorial governments wherein the legislation begins with the leaders and is brought down to the people.

The first day of hearings came to an end with the majority of the people speaking out against the Johnson expansion, even if that was not the real point of the Senate Hearings being held in Utah. The hearings were to continue the following morning in Richfield, but before closing the Salt Lake hearing, Bible assured the people that "the boundaries will be at least cut back as far as Sen. Moss’s bill goes and maybe even further than"
The issue had now become a different one than that troubling the ranchers and miners. Senator Moss had turned the issue into which 242,000 acres would become a national park and which several thousand acres would go back to the Bureau of Land Management to be reopened for grazing. The issue, at least as far as the Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation was concerned, was no longer how to roll back the expansion made by presidential proclamation four months earlier, but how to turn the existing area into a national park.

The hearings continued the following morning in Richfield in much the same atmosphere and tone they had closed on the previous afternoon in Salt Lake City. An overwhelming number of the people speaking were ranchers or miners who opposed the expansion and the bill to turn the area into a national park. The major arguments continued to focus on the economic problems the expansion would cause and on the plight of the families and small towns affected by the economic changes. However, at this hearing there were more local businessmen in attendance and they made their views a little clearer. G. G. Sanderson, a businessmen from Sanpete County, said, "agriculture has failed in its chance to meet economic needs and it is time to turn to something else." Lurt Knee, the operator of Sleeping Rainbow Ranch located within the expanded area, felt that little towns were poor towns and that it was time for additional economic support for the region, even if it meant sacrificing some of the cattle industry in the
process. He also felt that ranching was not solving the county’s economic problems and that it was time to try another avenue. Other supporters of the bill expressed the feeling that the people were just afraid of change in their lives and "urged people to face change" and turn to new economic livelihoods. Despite the arguments by businessmen supporting park status for the Monument, the general tone of the meeting was against the expansion and in favor of park status, but only on a much smaller scale than Moss was proposing. Even the ranchers recognized the potential for increased tourism if the area became a national park. Besides, if the original Monument was upgraded to national park status it could not hurt them anymore, as that area was already off-limits to them and they had grown accustomed to that fact. 28

After two days of public hearings in Salt Lake City and Richfield the Senate Subcommittee headed east to Moab to receive public statements on Moss’s proposal there. During the two days of testimony that ensued, they heard from dozens of people and accepted written statements from several others. While the ranchers dominated the hearings, there were also statements from miners, people with oil, gas and coal interests, farmers, environmentalists, politicians, motel operators and assorted other concerned citizens. The environmentalists, not surprisingly, supported the proposals, as did several businessmen who saw better economic possibilities from an enlarged park.
However, in general, the overwhelming sentiment was for a return to the boundaries of the pre-proclamation Monument, although park status would be acceptable for this 40,000 acre area. The statements received were primarily aimed at decreasing the size of the boundaries and were not so concerned with the status of the area. Upon his return to Washington D.C., Moss would take only half the advice of the people he had heard from. He rededicated himself to achieving park status for Capitol Reef and Arches national monuments, but at their increased size. Throughout the summer and fall of 1969, Moss tried to push his Utah park bills through the committee process, but was unsuccessful and the bills died in committee at the end of the first session of the ninety-first Congress.

While Moss was holding public hearings and promoting national park status for the two enlarged areas, Congressman Burton had not been idle in the House. His strategy was to roll the boundaries back to their former size and achieve park status for the areas at the same time. As noted earlier, Burton had visited southern Utah in early February with Bennett and had seen firsthand the outrage of the local residents. At the time, he promised to call for an investigation of the expansion and for public hearings to be held so that the residents could voice their complaints. Burton was true to his promise, and in the middle of May, simultaneous to the Moss hearings, the House announced that the Subcommittee on Public Lands would hold
meetings on May 31 in Escalante. The purpose of hearing, unlike those held by Moss, was to hear testimony specifically on the withdrawals of public land by Johnson for the expansion of Capitol Reef National Monument. The hearing was called to order at 1:15 p.m. in the Escalante High School auditorium, with Congressman Walter S. Baring (D-Nevada) presiding. The hearing attracted thirty-four speakers and over two hundred people attended. It is not necessary to go into detail on what was said at the hearing; by now the public sentiment was firmly against the actions that Johnson had taken in January. Many of the arguments heard by the House Subcommittee had already been voiced to Burton and Bennett in February and to the Senate Subcommittee just a few days earlier. Burton returned to Washington convinced that something had to be done to protect the grazing and mineral rights of the area, but no action was taken during the remainder of the session. With the House taking no immediate action and with Moss’s bills in the Senate tied up in committee, the year 1969 closed. For the moment, at least, Johnson’s proclamation remained in effect.

After a winter of inaction, the legislative process started rolling again in April 1970. On the 23rd, Burton introduced H.R. 17152 for the purpose of establishing Capitol Reef National Park and Capitol Reef National Recreational Area. The combined total of the two areas would be over 218,000 acres, which is very close to the area that Moss was proposing. However, 48,000 acres in the
southern portion of the proposed area would be turned into a national recreational area. Burton saw this as a compromise, as well a way to best serve the dual interests of multiple-use management and preservation in southern Utah. The area included in the national park would be under single-use management and would exclude grazing, mining and other activities that would disrupt the natural state of the land. A recreational area, while also under Park Service management, applies a policy of multiple-use management. In a recreational area, some grazing, mining, oil prospecting and other activities normally not associated with a national park are thus allowed to exist under a permit system and the watchful eye of the Park Service. By putting the long narrow southern half of the Waterpocket Fold into a recreational area, it would leave open some of grazing areas in use and allow for prospecting in an area that had showed some evidence of tar sands containing oil. Burton saw his proposal as a compromise between Senator Bennett's plan to cut the area back to its original size and Senator Moss's bill to establish an area of slightly over 240,000 acres as a national park.

On September 11, the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks and Recreation held a hearing in Washington D. C. on H. R. 17152. The hearing was sparsely attended with only one person testifying from southern Utah. He was Calvin Black, a San Juan County commissioner. Black appeared as the representative
for the Six County Commission and testified in favor of the Burton bill. He said he represented the feelings of the majority of people who would be affected by the outcome on the proposal to upgrade the status of Capitol Reef. The official position of the county governments involved was to support the Burton bill to create a national park and a national recreational area out of the Waterpocket Fold. Local politicians had come to realize that this was probably the best deal they were going to get and that they should show their support for the bill. While they would still be giving up 185,000 acres, much of which was unusable for grazing, the recreational area would allow them the use of some historic winter grazing sites and protect the use of livestock trails passing through the Monument. 34

The remainder of the statements on the Burton bill were in favor of the proposal to create a national park, but some objected to a portion of the region becoming a national recreational area. The Park Service, represented by George B Hertzog, Jr., the director of the Park Service, was among these. He favored taking the whole area set aside by Johnson, with some modifications to follow natural boundary lines, and setting it aside as a national park. In all he wanted 254,368 acres, an increase of 127 acres over the expanded Monument. The Park Service proposal also allowed for a ten year phaseout period on grazing, as opposed to a minimum twenty-five year phaseout suggested by Burton and Moss in their earlier proposals. 35
In general, the hearing was favorable to Burton's proposal to establish a national park, but exhibited some reservations on the prospect of creating a national recreational area out of the southern section of the Waterpocket Fold. What was important about this hearing, was that, for the first time, the residents of the area, represented by Black, gave ground and agreed to support a 185,000 acre area as a national park. It appeared to Burton and to southern Utahans that a compromise had been reached to everyone's satisfaction and that official action was finally going to take place. Even those that showed some reservation about the idea of a recreational area agreed to go along with the plan if it would speed up the process of establishing the remaining area as a national park.

Meantime, Moss continued his attempt to upgrade the enlarged monuments to national park status. On May 20, 1970, he announced that new hearings would be held by the Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation to hear testimony on S. 531, a bill to establish Capitol Reef National Park. The hearing was held in Washington D. C. on May 28. It drew little attention and was attended by very few people. Nobody from southern Utah attended the hearing and the only statement opposing the Moss legislation came from Senator Bennett who was supporting Burton's proposal in the House. Senator Moss continued to claim that his bills would adjust the boundaries within the proposed parks in a way which will exclude most of the
In a sense, Moss was playing both sides of the street. He was gaining the national parks which he desired for Utah and that would increase tourism, but he was also protecting some of the grazing rights of the ranchers. The ranchers, however, did not see Moss's proposal as being any help. The bill that Moss introduced in the spring of 1970 (S. 531), was the same basic proposal that had died in committee during the previous session of Congress. It called for the creation of a national park that would encompass 230,827 acres, a net decrease of 23,414 acres from the Johnson expansion. This was even a slightly larger concession to local interests than he had proposed in the previous session. The Moss bill also allowed for a twenty-five year phaseout period on grazing and the protection, for perpetuity, of the ranchers' rights to use the historic cattle trails through the Waterpocket Fold. The Moss proposal also contained a clause allowing easements for public utilities to cross the park. There had been some concern expressed that the long narrow boundaries of the proposed park would cut that area of the state in half and inhibit the construction of power and telephone lines across the region. The smooth progress of Moss's Washington hearings enabled his bills to pass through the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs with little trouble. On June 24, the bills were reported to the Senate and on the second day of July, both the Capitol Reef and Arches national park bills
were approved by the Senate. Moss called it "a great day for the recreational development of Utah. . . . When finally approved . . . these two bills will give Utah five national parks. . . . This will certainly help our tourist industry."40

While things looked very good for congressional action on the proposed bills, they once again suffered a setback. After the Senate passed its version of the bill in July, it was up to the House to act on the issue. As we have already seen, in the spring Burton had submitted a bill to create a recreational area and a national park out of the Waterpocket Fold. In September the House held a hearing on Burton's proposal and it was generally well received. After the hearing it was widely believed that the problems had been worked out and that action would occur in the House. However, because of very non-political reasons, Burton's bill never made it through the committee process and onto the House floor. It was reported on the 14th of November, that the chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Wayne Aspinall (D-Colorado), had left on an around-the-world honeymoon cruise and that he would not be back until the end of the year. Prior to his leaving, he had announced that no meetings of the committee would be held in his absence, so, despite the attempts by Burton to get it out of committee before the end of the session, the Burton bills once again died in the committee process with the end of the session.41 This time, however, death was final. In November Burton lost in an attempt
to unseat Senator Moss, so the end of the session brought an end to Burton's congressional career as well as his park bills. The struggle in the House toward park status for the area would be continued in 1971 by Congressman K. Gunn McKay (D-Utah), who won the November election to fill Burton's seat in the Congress.

In the spring on 1971, Moss once again submitted his park bills to the Senate for action. By this time his two Utah park proposals had grown to include two other bills relating to the national park system in Utah. Besides the bills to create Capitol Reef and Arches national parks, Moss also introduced legislation to revise the boundaries of Canyonlands National Park and to establish Glen Canyon National Recreational Area in Utah. In early June, another round of hearings were held in Washington by the Senate Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, but no new views were expressed on the proposal to create Capitol Reef National Park. On June 22, 1971, the Senate passed, in less than a minute each, the four Utah park bills introduced by Moss. On June 10, McKay submitted H. R. 9053, a bill to create the same four national park and recreational areas that passed the Senate in Moss's bills. With Burton gone from Washington, the new House bill on the area around the Waterpocket Fold looked very much like the Moss bill in the Senate. The McKay bill called for a national park of 241,600 acres and made no mention of a national recreational area.
The House Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation held a committee hearing on June 15th to take more testimony on the Utah park bills. There were very few protests to the proposed action on Capitol Reef. Even Calvin Black, who had represented southern Utahans at all of the earlier hearings, seemed to realize that he was "one voice crying in the wilderness" and that there was little he was able to do to stop the action. It took a few weeks to work the legislation through the committee process, but in early October, the House, thirty months after Burton first introduced his bill on the issue, passed legislation creating Capitol Reef National Park. On the 19th on November, the House Senate Conference Committee met and in forty-five minutes worked out the minor differences between the two versions of the legislation. In early December the two houses passed the Conference Committee version and sent the bill to the President for his signature. On December 22, 1971, President Richard M. Nixon signed Public Law 92-207 and with the stroke of his pen established Capitol Reef National Park, at 242,671 acres. The new national park in Wayne County was about 10,000 acres smaller then the area set aside by Johnson almost three years earlier. Despite all their arguments against the expansion, the residents of the county had been able to draw back only 10,000 acres to public domain. When Nixon signed the legislation establishing Capitol Reef as a park, Senator Moss called it "a new era for the tourist industry in Utah," but it also meant a new period of unrest for the ranchers of Wayne and Garfield counties.
The controversy over the enlargement and subsequent creation of Capitol Reef National Park had hardly died down when the issue of grazing on Park lands became a new focal point of contention in 1974. In regard to the issue of grazing, the public law creating Capitol Reef National Park reads:

Where any Federal lands included within the park are legally occupied or utilized on the date of approval of this Act for grazing purposes pursuant to a lease, permit, or license for a fixed term of years issued or authorized by any department . . . the Secretary of the Interior shall permit the persons holding such grazing privileges or their heirs to continue in the exercise thereof during the term of the lease, permit, or license, and one period of renewal thereafter. 49

At the time of the Act in December 1971, there were sixty-two permittees grazing cattle within the affected area. Of that number, thirty-seven held one year permits and the remaining ranchers held leases running from two years to ten years. 50 In light of the wording in the bill creating the Park, the longest permit could run until 1992. However, most of the leases were for a period of one to two years, so many of the ranchers would be losing their grazing rights much sooner than this. In the months following the creation of the Park, Senator Moss worked to diminish the impact of the phaseout on the ranchers. In June 1972, Moss was successful in getting the Interior Department to promise that all permits would be renewable to 1982, despite the wording of his own legislation. Moss claimed that "it was the intent of Congress to allow grazing to be gradually phased out," so that the impact on the ranchers would be a little easier to
This agreement allowed the ranchers to breathe a little easier, for they would have another ten years before facing the loss of many of their winter grazing areas. The Department of Interior attempted to break its agreement with Moss in the fall of 1974, but under the intense public pressure applied by Utah's Congressional delegation they agreed to allow grazing until 1982.

In May 1981, as the date for the grazing phaseout drew closer, the Wayne and Garfield county commissions met with representatives of Senator Jake Garn (R-Utah), Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), the Park Service and the BLM. The county commissioners proposed a plan for Capitol Reef that was very similar to the legislation that Burton had submitted in 1970. Their proposal was to turn a large portion of Capitol Reef into a national recreational area. It would still be under the management of the Park Service, but it would become a multiple use area. This would protect the grazing rights of the ranchers in the counties. It was an interesting plan and, if passed in 1971 when the park bill was approved, it might have been the best management plan for the Waterpocket Fold. However, after being a National Park for ten years it would be very difficult to change the status of the area. While this plan was not implemented, an effort was started the following spring by Senators Garn and Hatch to protect the grazing rights of their constituents.
On April 15, 1982, Garn and Hatch submitted a co-sponsored bill in the Senate which called for the grazing in Capitol Reef to be extended to 1996 or for the lifetime of any heirs born before the area became a national park. Garn claimed that grazing posed no threat to the Park and since it took place in the more remote regions of the area it would effect very few visitors. He felt there was "simply no reason to deny existing permit holders and their families access to the source of their life blood." The question being addressed by Garn was the same problem that the residents of the area had been raising for several decades. It was an issue of economics and priorities. Until the 1980's, the residents of the area always took second place to the tourist trade when an issue of development, expansion, or management had arisen. In each case, the needs of the handful of people living in the area were overlooked in the rush to develop the area and harvest the dollars from the tourist trade. In the 1980's, after decades of abuse, the government was finally ready to deal with some of the needs of the people in Wayne and Garfield Counties. The Garn-Hatch bill made it through the committee process with no problems and was approved by the full Senate on June 9, 1982. While Utah's Senators had been busy pushing their bill through the Senate, a similar bill was working its way through the House.

In June, James Hansen (R-Utah) submitted a bill with the same proposals that the Senate had just approved, extending grazing in the Park through 1992. However, during the committee
process the bill was amended to extend grazing only until December 31, 1987, while calling upon the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study on the impact of grazing on the Park. The chairman of the House Subcommittee on Parks, John Seiberling (D-Ohio), proposed the amendment, feeling that it was the only "equitable approach" to protect both the ranchers and the public's interests. On the 10th of September the House passed the amended version of Hansen's bill and it was sent to a Joint Conference Committee to work out the differences between the House and Senate versions. In late September, Senator Garn and Representative Seiberling worked out a compromise, which extended grazing to December 31, 1994, but did not guarantee the heirs a lifetime permit, as the original Senate version had done. It also called upon the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study on grazing in the Park until January 1, 1992. This would give Congress two years to examine the results of the study and decide what action they would take on grazing in the Park.

This is where the issue of grazing in Capitol Reef National Park stands today. In 1984, cattle were still grazed in the Park by eighteen individuals, with about 60 percent of the Park opened to winter grazing between October and May. The majority of the grazing is in the southern district of the Park, away from the heavy use areas. While there are still people who complain to the Park Rangers about occasionally seeing cattle while backcountry hiking, by and large, very few visitors are even aware of the
grazing within the Park. The results of the study on grazing by the National Academy of Sciences are still six years away and it will be interesting to see what they find. There can be little doubt that the two to three thousand head of cattle that are spending their winters at Capitol Reef are causing some damage to the "natural state" of the Park; however, when compared to the hardship suffered by some ranchers in the area, the damage is relatively small. The cattle industry in Wayne County is dying a slow death and it cannot be blamed completely upon the Park Service. Each year more ranchers give up their permits to graze on park lands and find new work or move out of the county. While the cultural ties with the past will always keep a few cattle in the region, the livestock industry is no longer a major force in Wayne County. As time goes by, the impact of grazing on the Park will become increasingly less important and eventually will cease to be a factor.
15. Richfield Reaper, February 27, 1969.


32. Salt Lake Tribune, April 24, 1970.


42. Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Hearings on S. 29 to Establish Capitol Reef National Park, 92nd Cong., 1st sess., 3 June 1971*.


52. Salt Lake Tribune, November 7, 1974.
57. Salt Lake Tribune, October 18, 1982.
CHAPTER VII

THE ECONOMIC ROLE OF CAPITOL REEF

NATIONAL PARK

The establishment of Capitol Reef National Monument in 1937 was largely the result of the promotional efforts made by the Associated Civic Clubs of Southern Utah. Their campaign to create a national park in Wayne County was motivated by the economic needs of the region during the 1920's and was part of larger regionalized efforts to attract tourists to southern Utah. At the dedication ceremony of Wayne Wonderland State Park on July 19, 1925, Governor George H. Dern spoke of the bright economic future the area held because of its scenery and the growth of tourism throughout the West. With economic prosperity the goal, prospects during the 1930's seemed very bright for the future of Wayne County in the development of a tourist industry in southern Utah. However, as this work has demonstrated, the anticipated economic salvation of the county did not occur. Indeed, Wayne County ended up fighting for its economic survival and suffered a dramatic decrease in population over the next thirty-five years. The question that remains to be answered is why? What was the actual impact of the Monument on the county and, as Capitol Reef National Park approaches its fiftieth birthday, what does the future hold for Wayne County?
During the period from 1940 to 1970, Wayne County underwent a dramatic change, but not in the direction that promoters of the 1930's had anticipated. In 1940 the county had the largest population it has had since its settlement late in the nineteenth century, 2,394 people. By 1970 the population had decreased to 1,483 and Wayne County was the second poorest county in the State of Utah. Since 1970 a slow growth has occurred in the county's population, but with 22.3 percent of its families living in poverty and with an average family income of $11,047, Wayne County is the poorest region in Utah today. This work does not attempt an in-depth statistical study of the region. However, the above figures taken from government census reports make it exceedingly clear that the economic boom anticipated from the creation of the Monument did not develop. It is apparent to even the casual visitor traveling through the area today, that the region has not prospered because of the Park, but, rather, is suffering serious economic problems.

Torrey, the little community located to the west of the Park, has changed from a thriving town of over three hundred people in 1950, to a struggling village with a population of less than one hundred today. It does not take an elaborate statistical study to see that the area has not prospered because of Capitol Reef National Park. The empty houses and realtor signs along Highway 24 tell the story of Torrey's decline. The western end of the county, where Loa and Bicknell are located, has fared
a little better, but not because of the Park Service. The people in the western end are not as dependent upon tourism for survival and have turned to irrigation to support a growing agricultural economy. Torrey, however, after losing many of its ranchers, was forced to turn to tourism for economic survival. Unlike what Springdale became to Zion National Park, Panguitch to Bryce Canyon National Park, and Moab to Arches and Canyonlands national parks, Torrey has not developed into the gateway to Capitol Reef National Park. There is no single cause that can be designated as being the source of Torrey’s difficulties, but, rather, there have been a number of events and problems that have worked together against the growth of tourism in Wayne County.

The struggle that Wayne County has experienced in developing a viable tourist industry is part of a larger problem that the entire state of Utah faces. In 1971, the year Capitol Reef became a national park, the state of Utah had over five million visitors. However, 30 percent of these people never spent a night in Utah and another 51 percent stayed just one night in the State. The five million people who passed through Utah during 1971 spent sixty-five million dollars, while staying an average of just 1.3 nights. The State of Colorado also had five million visitors in 1971. The visitors to Colorado, however, stayed an average of 5.5 nights in the State and spent three hundred and twenty million dollars. Despite a vigorous campaign during the 1970’s by the Utah Travel Council, the average overnight stay in
Utah had only increased to 1.8 nights and only 62 percent of the people passing through the State visited any of Utah's attractions during the summer of 1980. In a state with such an abundance of scenery and unique areas for the tourist to visit, it is difficult to imagine why southern Utah has had such difficulty in developing a stronger tourist industry. John D. Hunt, of the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism, has suggested several possible causes for the problem. Among these are problems with local attitudes, the perceptions of Utah held by nonresidents, poor access and a lack of facilities in some areas. In addition, the region suffers from a shortage of private capital for development, the seasonality of the region, and the know-how to develop a stronger tourist industry.

Southern Utah's greatest enemy to developing a stronger tourist industry is the attitudes of its own people. Despite the fact that tourism development presents the rural areas of Utah with their best opportunities for the future, a negative attitude toward the nonresident is still exhibited in many of the areas tourists are visiting. Tourists are viewed as outsiders and are often treated as suspect or as threats to the communities. When the key to increasing income from tourism lies in extending the length of the tourist visit, "an air of indifference and a lack of warm welcome will not encourage the visitor to spend an extra day." When people travel through Wayne County they get a sense of this mistrust. It is not an open hostility, but, rather, is an
underlying suspicion or animosity perceived by the outsider. Such feelings are in fact not uncommon. Distrust is found in tourist regions throughout the United States and is a natural reaction to being overwhelmed by the thousands of outsiders who arrive during the peak tourist season. In time, however, most areas learn to deal with the outsider and develop a very efficient system for reaping the tourist dollar. Wayne County, possibly because the historic problems Mormons have had with outsiders, has resisted the tourist and has not wholeheartedly dedicated itself to exploiting the visitor for economic gain. The negative instate attitude toward the tourist industry is such in some areas, that the business and industry needed to support tourism is lacking. This is particularly true in the case of Wayne County.

In 1984 Capitol Reef had 334,000 tourists visit; yet, in the communities nearest the Park, there exist fewer than a half dozen motels to lodge visitors for the night. The lack of facilities adjacent to the Park extends to restaurants, campgrounds, retail stores and entertainment. These things may seem unimportant to enjoying an outdoor experience in southern Utah, but the overwhelming majority of visitors traveling to Utah are not coming to the region to rough it in the wild. At a time when 63 percent of the tourist dollars spent in Utah are going to food, lodging and retail services, Wayne County is doing itself serious damage by not providing better services for tourists. As one approaches Zion or Bryce national parks, each little town becomes
more of a tourist trap with its motels, lodges, souvenir shops and roadside stands. While from the standpoint of enjoying the scenery these things are unnecessary, they are the key to profiting from the tourist trade. It is at the facilities around the parks and monuments in southern Utah that the tourists spend their money, not in the parks themselves. When people visit Wayne County they get a sense of the hostility felt toward the outsider and for the park they are going to visit. If Wayne County is to ever capitalize upon the thousands of visitors who pass through each summer, the residents of the county need to develop a new attitude about tourism and be more aggressive in their pursuit of the tourist dollar. At this point they are still allowing their rural provincialism, mistrust of outsiders and their long-standing hostility toward the Park Service to interfere with their potential tourist industry.

There are other factors that have hurt visitation to Capitol Reef besides the attitudes of the residents in the region. Road surveys have shown that 42 percent of the tourists passing through the State are Californians and that the majority of them are headed for or returning from a vacation in Colorado or other points east. Utah is less often the vacation spot the Californians are headed for, than it is an area that is passed through on the way to a final destination. The visitors traveling through Utah to other points spend a day or two in the State and visit some of the parks in southern Utah. If they could be
encouraged to stay longer in the State they would have a much larger impact upon the economy.

Part of the reason for vacationers bypassing Utah is the image that many people have of the State. In a study conducted by the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism on the image of Utah, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana; Utah was generally thought to be a desert state, hot in the summer, with significantly less snow than the other states in the winter, occupied by conservative residents who were less receptive to vacation visitors and generally looked and dressed like Amish Mennonites or Hutterites. While this image is not entirely true, it still plays a dominant role in the decision making process of potential tourists. The Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism sent 4000 questionnaires to people living in New York, Ohio, Iowa, Arizona and California. The results showed that Utah was not only thought of as being hot and dry, but also as having the worst receptiveness to outsiders. It was also viewed as the poorest place to camp, sightsee, ski, hunt and fish. As a result of these images, Utah was picked by only 9% of the people responding as their first choice for a vacation. The Utah Travel Council, through print, television and radio, has done a great deal in changing Utah's false image, but it is an image that still hinders Utah in the contest to attract tourist dollars.

Despite all the problems that Utah has experienced in trying to develop a tourist industry, the state as a whole has most
certainly profited from the millions of tourists who visit the national parks and monuments of southern Utah. By contrast, as we have seen, Wayne County has not gained from having a national park in its midst. Thus it would seem problems with local attitudes and image have hurt Wayne County more than some other areas in Utah. Wayne County is still a relatively underdeveloped area to handle the tourists who do travel to southern Utah. As a result, when many of visitors traveling through Utah are spending just a couple of days, Capitol Reef is bypassed in favor of an easier and quicker visit to the better known Zion, Bryce and Arches national parks. Many of the people who have visited Capitol Reef since 1971, have done so because they opted to travel the extra eighty miles from Moab to Cedar City by going through Wayne County. These visitors, however, generally spent just an hour or two at Capitol Reef before continuing to other parks in the region. In a sense, while the creation of Capitol Reef National Park in 1971 helped Utah's image by giving it a fifth national park, it did little to bring more multi-day visitors to Wayne County. Until November 1970, Wayne County held the advantage of being the route of the major east-west highway through the region. The region received an overwhelming majority of its tourists simply because State Highway 24, connecting eastern Utah with Highway 89, ran the length of the county. On November 5, 1970, however, this advantage was lost when Interstate 70 was opened to travel.
When State Highway 24 was completed it was heralded as being the first paved highway between Denver and southern California. However, while the construction of Highway 24 was finishing in the mid-1960's, the route for Interstate 70 was already being planned across southern Utah. The path for the new interstate went almost due west from Green River, cutting through the rugged, and previously unpeneented, terrain of the San Rafael Swell north of Wayne County. When Interstate 70 was opened to traffic on November 5, 1970, it had an immediate impact upon the level of expenditures by tourists in Wayne County. The new interstate made the trip through Wayne County unnecessary. A visitor could now travel from Colorado to Highway 89 and I-15 on the new Interstate and save almost one hundred miles in the process. This meant that tourists could travel between the eastern Utah parks and those in the southwest corner of Utah without going through Wayne County.

It may safely be said the construction of I-70 did more damage to Wayne County than any other single event in its history. The results were dramatic and were felt immediately. Tourists visiting Wayne County during the summer of 1970 contributed $80,500 to the local economy. The following summer, after the completion of I-70, tourist expenditures in the county dropped to $15,000. This was a decrease of over 81 percent in a one year period. During the same two summers, Capitol Reef went from being visited by 6.4 percent of the nonresident tourists
traveling to Utah, to less than .4 percent. In 1970 the Park had been sixth on the list of sites most often visited during the summer. The following year Capitol Reef disappeared completely from the list of the top fifty sites visited by nonresident tourists. The number of tourists visiting the Park each year continued to grow during the 1970’s, ultimately reaching a peak of 469,619 visitors during the hype of the American Bicentennial. However, this increase from 225,928 visitors in 1970, is the reflection of a general increase in visitation to the whole National Park System. It is not an indication that Capitol Reef was increasing its share in the tourist market. It is equally clear this new influx of visitors rarely paused to spend money.

As has been demonstrated above, there are several reasons why Capitol Reef failed to become what the promoters of 1930’s had anticipated. The attitude of rural southern Utahans and the image of Utah held by potential tourists has had an inhibiting effect on the tourist industry throughout southern Utah. In the contest to attract its share of the tourists who do travel to Utah, Wayne County has suffered further under the handicap of its location and its own underdevelopment. Many of the people who are traveling through southern Utah are not able to spend the time necessary to visit all of the parks and monuments in the region. The southern third of Utah now contains five national parks, four national monuments and one national recreational area. Utah has more sites in the National Park System than any state except
California. While having this many national parks has improved Utah’s image as a vacation spot, it is possible that the region is oversaturated with sites and simply has too many places for tourists to visit. This is not to say that the status of some areas should be changed. Each of the sites is very deserving of its membership in the National Park System and this should never be changed. In economic terms, however, not every national park in southern Utah shares an equal role in the tourist industry. Some of the parks are more attractive to tourists because of their location, development and local support systems. As a result, while Capitol Reef is as sensational to visit as Zion, Bryce, Arches or Canyonlands national parks, it has come to be the forgotten park in southern Utah.

While Capitol Reef is the poor sister of the Utah national parks, it is also the park that could see the biggest changes in the future. During the summer of 1985, the last few miles of pavement were laid completing the road over Boulder Mountain. This new highway connects Capitol Reef with Bryce Canyon and once again makes Highway 24 the shortest route between the parks in eastern Utah, Arches and Canyonlands, and Zion and Bryce national parks in the southwest corner of the State. Capitol Reef, sitting between the two areas, should see an increase in travel over the next few years. The potential for economic improvement in Wayne County from this travel is apparent, but if this is to happen, the residents of the county will need to welcome the tourists and
find ways to encourage them to extend their stay. Highway 12, the new highway over Boulder Mountain, connects with Highway 24 in Torrey. The new piece of pavement has given Torrey a second chance at capturing a larger share of the tourist market, but it is going to take capital and careful planning to profit from this new chance. Capitol Reef may never receive the number of visitors that Bryce and Zion national parks do, but it receives enough tourists today to support a tourist industry in the region. While the tourist business will always be seasonal, as it is throughout southern Utah, there is no reason why Torrey can not become the future gateway to Capitol Reef National Park. Thus, the Park still symbolizes both hope and challenge as it has in the past. In the long run, development seems likely to finally reach it. In the meantime, the Waterpocket Fold and the domes of Capitol Reef still offer a rare opportunity, if not to Wayne County's hardy residents, than for the tourist who really wants to escape.


10. Lawrence Royer and Michael J. Dalton, "Land Use in the Utah Canyon Country: Tourism, Interstate 70 and the San Rafael Swell" (Prepared for the Four Corners Regional Commission by the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism, Utah State
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