San Fernando Valley State College

THE EFFECT OF THE AUTOMOBILE ON THE CULTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE OF YOSEMITE VALLEY

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in

GEOGRAPHY

by

Allan Kress Fitzsimmons

January, 1969
The thesis of Allan Kress Fitzsimmons is approved:

Committee Chairman 

San Fernando Valley State College
January, 1969
Dedication

To the bunny-rabbits, Erin and Kelly Kate.
Acknowledgement

The list of people who provided help, guidance and council during the preparation of this thesis is quite extensive, however, certain individuals deserve specific recognition. The members of the thesis committee, Dr. Francis, Dr. Lewthwaite and Dr. Durrenberger were of great assistance, especially Dr. Durrenberger who gave generously of his time, patience and experience. John Krisko II, Yosemite Valley District Naturalist, was most helpful and supplied both data and sources of information. Yosemite historians William A. and Mary V. Hood furnished much needed insight as well as access to their excellent collection of Yosemite photographs. Carole Roberts who typed the final manuscript and Kathy Faulkner who did the cartographic work performed very well from less-than-perfect rough drafts. To all these people and to many others gone unnamed I am indebted and grateful.

To my parents, who provided encouragement only a mother and father can give, I am deeply appreciative. To my wife, Jacque, who was always there when needed with understanding, soothing words and a typewriter I am most deeply grateful.
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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF THE AUTOMOBILE ON THE CULTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE OF YOSEMITE VALLEY

by

Allan Kress Fitzsimmons

Master of Arts in Geography

January, 1969

During the past several decades families in the United States have witnessed substantial increases in their disposable income, leisure time and mobility. One result of those increases has been marked growth in the utilization of protected scenic natural resources such as the Yosemite Valley of California.

The privately owned automobile has been the foundation for increased family mobility, and from an early date automobilists banded together to exert political influence in their own behalf. Under pressure from early automobile associations a decision to permit autos to enter Yosemite Valley was made in April, 1913. The effect of that decision, in terms of change in the cultural aspects of the landscape of Yosemite Valley, is the subject of this study.

The flood of tourists who entered Yosemite Park in the years following the admission of the automobile found road and settlement patterns already established. Change was inevitable. The auto required modifications to roads, parking areas, fuel and maintenance facilities. The auto-borne tourists required more and more lodgings, food and services of all types. Concessionaires, eager to profit, rushed to fulfill the needs of the ever-increasing tourist population. There was little effective planning or control in regard to human utilization of the valley; old, condemned structures continued to be
utilized, automobiles crowded the roads and parking areas and campers pushed into campgrounds already hopelessly overcrowded.

During the mid-fifties, with the advent of the Mission 66 Program, some measure of planning came into being and the Park Service and the concessionaires undertook an ambitious building program to update the quality of various structures and facilities. The success of that program is questionable.

The decision to admit the automobile into Yosemite Valley brought about change to accommodate both the auto and its passengers. Modifications to the landscape necessary to accommodate the automobile were not nearly as substantial as the changes related to the increased number of tourists.
INTRODUCTION

On April 30, 1913, in a "Memorandum to the Press", Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane proclaimed,

"I have decided to allow automobiles to enter the Yosemite Valley."¹

The results of that decision are evident in the changed cultural elements of the Yosemite Valley landscape, changes that require analysis if similar decisions are to be intelligently made in the future.

The constantly increasing utilization of non-urban recreational resources by auto-borne tourists has caused problems in the management and use of these resources. Where the principal attraction is scenery, the intrusion of visitors and facilities for visitor use often causes severe spoliation of the very attractions that initially lured the area's visitors. Detailed and informed planning is necessary if the scenic resources of this nation are to be managed in such a way that visits to those areas are to remain a worthwhile experience.

THE AUTOMOBILE AND RECREATIONAL TRAVEL

Vacation travel based upon private automobile transportation has become an established recreational activity.² The vacationing citizen

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is utilizing non-urban recreational resources in ever increasing numbers (see Tables 1 and 2). Visitor increase to the outdoor recreational areas has received impetus from many sources. There has been an increase in both leisure time and in emphasis upon leisure activities as our society has become more highly mechanized. More money has become available for private vacation travel. Our population has steadily increased. A most significant factor, however, in greater use of the recreational resources is the greater accessibility of the areas to the population as a whole. Such accessibility is made possible by privately owned automobiles and the highways upon which they travel. Each year more automobiles are registered throughout the nation. California alone had almost 9,000,000 autos registered in 1966 compared to 4,000,000 in 1950 and 120,000 in 1914. Moreover, the autos travel on a constantly improving system of multilane high-speed highways that greatly reduce time and effort in traveling from urban to scenic areas. The automobile is one of the most important factors which has brought about increased utilization of recreational lands.

THE AUTOMOBILE AND YOSEMITE VALLEY

The first automobile was driven to Yosemite in 1900, and for the following six years a few autos found their way into the Valley.  

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3From a statistical abstract received in a personal communication with the California Department of Motor Vehicles.


5Yosemite Valley and the Valley will be used interchangeably.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National Park Lands</th>
<th>National Forest Lands</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>4 million</td>
<td>10 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>8 million</td>
<td>20 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>12 million</td>
<td>40 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>16 million</td>
<td>60 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>20 million</td>
<td>80 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Federal Lands Since 1956 - M. Clawson

6 million visitors in 1943 increased to 30 million in 1948.
### Table 2

**Annual Increase in Park Visitation - Yosemite National Park**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual Increase Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
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However, in June, 1907, the Acting Superintendent prohibited autos from entering Yosemite Valley. During the six years which followed there was a great deal of lobbying for the opening of Yosemite Valley to auto traffic. The Automobile Club of Southern California, Automobile Club of California, San Francisco Motor Club, Audubon Society of California, California Promotions Committee, Pacific Coast Auto Jobbers Club and various chambers of commerce all worked for a directive to allow the auto into the Valley. The arguments for the admission of the automobile were based upon the rights of the drivers and passengers and, of course, "progress"! The auto, in the view of the admission proponents, represented a great achievement of man and surely no one could reasonably stand against its inherent greatness and the forward-moving genius of man.

Those against admission argued largely from the standpoint of human safety. The automobile of 1912 was simply not safe for hazardous mountain driving and the drivers were not capable of controlling their vehicles. Tragedy would certainly occur. A secondary argument concerned the noise and gasoline fumes emitted by automobiles. Neither the space requirements for roads, parking and service facilities, nor the effect of increased tourist accommodations upon the landscape formed a substantial part of the argument against admitting the automobile.

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Roads that had accommodated horsedrawn vehicles were largely inadequate for automobiles. Automobiles required more gradual turns and wider roadways for maneuvering. This was especially true during the early days of auto travel when drivers were unfamiliar with their machines and the roads. The existing road surfaces, too, were not suitable for auto travel. While the stagecoaches broke down the surface material, the autos were even more destructive.\(^7\)

Parking became a problem and the newly created parking areas became a very visible portion of the cultural aspect of the landscape. Finally, the service areas that maintained horses were clearly inappropriate for automobiles; hence, gasoline and oil stations were required along with repair and maintenance facilities.

Prior to the admission of the automobile, Yosemite Valley could only be reached by horseback or stage. The stage routes (via Wawona, Big Oak Flat, or up the Merced Canyon) were generally rough, dusty, and long. With the opening of the railroad to El Portal in 1907 a good deal of suffering was removed from a trip to Yosemite Park, although a twelve mile stage ride was still necessary to reach the Valley from El Portal. The Wawona and Big Oak Flat routes remained jarring and dust covered.

These methods of travel brought slightly less than eleven thousand visitors in 1912. Sixty-seven years had passed since the first tourists in 1855, sixty-seven years to reach a total of eleven

thousand visitors annually. In 1915, two years after the auto was 
admitted to the Valley, over 31,000 visited the park.\(^8\) Park visitation 
steadily increased so that by 1925 it had reached some 180,000 (see 
Table 3). On July 31, 1926, the all year highway up the Merced Canyon 
was dedicated. Two years later 340,000 people visited the park.\(^9\) From 
1927 onward the automobile has annually provided transportation for 
more than ninety percent of the park visitors.

The tourists required increasingly more facilities to match their 
increasing numbers. Needed were more accommodations, more restaurants 
and generally more services of all types. The expanded facilities 
required expanded employee numbers, more service and support areas and 
finally the employees needed housing and certain "community services".

CHANGE IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The period 1913 through 1966, the period of interest in this 
paper, has been a time of great change in the cultural landscape of the 
Yosemite Valley. Narrow, twisting, dust covered roads have been replac-
ed by wider, straighter and paved roadways. Parking lots have appeared. 
A hotel complex has been removed along with three hotel-camps. A new 
luxury hotel has been constructed and a new hotel-camp has been built 
which has become a major addition to tourist accommodations. Meadows, 
once plowed and grazed, have been returned to a condition where human 
interference is minimized. Previously uninhabited areas now are the 

\(^{8}\)From a statistical abstract provided by the National Park Service. 
\(^{9}\)Yosemite National Park Travel Survey of 1953, p. 12.
TABLE 3

TRAVEL TO YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Park Visitors (100,000 Persons)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: National Park Service Travel Summaries
sites of huge warehouses, maintenance facilities, and permanent housing for people employed year-round in the Valley. Virtually an entire village site has been abandoned, only three structures remain where scores once stood, and much of the area has returned to a "natural" state. During this same period a new village at a new site was erected. The site of a stable complex is now the site of a luxury hotel and golf course, and a previously unoccupied area now has a stable complex.

Examination of these and other elements of change in the landscape of Yosemite Valley provide the basis for evaluating the effects of the automobile and of increased tourist activity on a primitive and scenic recreational resource.

THE PROBLEM

In 1912 the British Ambassador to the United States, James Bryce said,

"If Adam had known what harm the serpent was going to work, he would have tried to prevent him from finding lodging in Eden; and if you realize what the result of the automobile will be in that wonderful, that incomparable valley, you will keep it out. The automobile means dust, it moves too fast and interferes with detailed esthetic enjoyment, it prevents contemplation, it destroys the whole feeling of the spontaneity and freshness of primitive nature". 10

The purpose and intent of this paper is to discover the effects the automobile has had upon the cultural elements of the landscape of

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Yosemite Valley. Perhaps, in shedding light on problems arising from the introduction of the automobile into an area such as the Yosemite Valley, this work may assist those individuals charged with making similar decisions at some future time.

The increasing numbers of tourists and the continuing modifications to the landscape have created problems in maintaining the Valley in any semblance of a "natural" state. During the peak tourist season - June, July and August - problems similar to any urban area are common. Traffic congestion, overcrowding of restaurants, shops and campgrounds, air pollution arising from auto exhaust and campfires, and crimes such as theft, narcotics, and prostitution occur in Yosemite Valley. All of these in an area that is supposedly being preserved unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations!

Although the Yosemite Valley is well defined by natural boundaries there remain boundaries that require definition to clearly delimit the areal scope of the Valley considered in this paper (see Map 1).

On the west, a line drawn between the north and south walls and through the Pohono bridge site serves as the arbitrary demarcation between the Yosemite and Merced Canyon. The northern limits of the area coincide with the base of the northern walls and extend from the "Pohono line" to a line drawn across Tenaya Canyon at the eastern end of Mirror Lake. The eastern boundary is the base of the massif that separates Tenaya Canyon from Little Yosemite Valley and extends from the "Mirror Lake line" to Happy Isles. The Happy Isles are considered the break between the Valley and the gorge leading to Little Yosemite Valley. The south boundary extends from Happy Isles to the "Pohono
line" following the base of the south walls of the Valley. These boundaries are, in the north and south at least, essentially coincident with the 4000 foot contour.

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The investigation of the problem involved library work, both in the Los Angeles area and at the research library in Yosemite Valley and field work in the Valley. The material available in the Los Angeles area generally provided background material and a starting point. The great bulk of the data that forms the basis for this paper was obtained in Yosemite Valley. The research library maintained by the National Park Service is an invaluable source of natural and human data concerning Yosemite National Park. Conversations and communications with Park officials, employees and Yosemite historians provided further background and insight not available in published works. Finally, field observations in the Valley yielded the personal experience necessary to complete this effort.
CHAPTER I - THE SETTING

"Oh Daddy, it's so beautiful it makes a smile come on my face," were the words of the writer's three year old daughter as she first saw Yosemite Valley (see Figure 1). What she saw was the product of time, tectonics, erosion, glaciation, and countless other forces, the most recent being man.

THE SIERRA NEVADA

The east-west oriented Yosemite Valley lies on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada of California (see Map 2). The Sierra Nevada is the longest and highest unbroken single range in the United States.¹ The range is oriented north-south and extends for more than four hundred miles. To the east of the Sierra Nevada lies the Great Basin of Nevada and Utah, and to the west, is the Great Valley of California. The Sierra Nevada is essentially a large massive block of the earth's crust tilted westward along a north-south axis. The eastern side of the block rises sharply above the Great Basin while the broad top surface slopes gently westward. The Sierra Nevada block has risen three times. The first, during the Eocene epoch, was a gradual uplifting of the then coastal lowland, leaving the region inclined westward.

¹For a detailed account of Yosemite Valley geology see The Incomparable Valley by Francois Matthes, University of California Press, 1956. This work is the principal source for geologic material presented in this chapter.
FIGURE 1  Yosemite Valley - looking eastward from near the western end of the Valley - photo courtesy National Park Service
MAP 2

Yosemite National Park, California

Yosemite
National
Park

California

To Modesto
To Merced
To El Portal
To Wawona
To Fresno
To Lee Vining
At the end of the Miocene epoch and the beginning of the Pliocene the region was again uplifted. This second uplifting was more pronounced than the first and established more clearly the gentle western slope and sharp eastern face. At the end of the Pliocene epoch the Sierra Nevada block received the last and most severe uplifting, raising the range to approximately the present height.

THE EVOLUTION OF YOSEMITE VALLEY

With the first uplifting of the Sierra Nevada block the Merced River wandered to the sea, and the area now known as the Yosemite Valley was a broad, level valley with gently rolling hills on the north and south. The second uplift steepened the westward slope of the Sierra Nevada and added to the cutting power of the Merced. The course of the Merced was less wandering and eventually the river cut a gorge in the older broad valley. In time, this gorge became a V-shaped valley, and was, in effect, a valley within a valley. The inner valley developed into a moderately rugged mountain-valley with a depth of some sixteen hundred feet. Tributary streams tumbled down the slopes to the Merced in cascades from hanging valleys with only Tenaya, Illilouette, and Indian creeks having cut their beds to the level of the Merced.

The third and latest uplifting was the most severe. The crest of the Sierra Nevada was raised an additional six thousand feet. The western slope was further steepened and winter snows greatly increased the volume of the Merced. The Merced cut anew and the result was a canyon within the second valley. The new canyon was some three thousand feet deep and somewhat narrower than the present day Yosemite.
Valley. The preglacial canyon was partially crossed by numerous spurs emanating from the canyon walls. More cascades were created as fewer streams than before were capable of entrenching as fast as the Merced. The walls were steep and the features of the canyon sharp and rugged.

Many of the features that are familiar to present day visitors to the Yosemite Valley would have been discernable during the canyon stage. El Capitan, Half Dome, and Glacier Point would have been recognizable, but the finely sculptured scenes modern visitors are accustomed to viewing had not yet developed. The final sculpting of the canyon was accomplished by glacial ice.

There were three stages of glaciation. The first was the most severe. Ice filled the canyon and flowed over the rims, the ice rose some seven hundred feet above Glacier Point. The second stage was less severe, nonetheless, ice filled the valley almost to the rim and reached down the canyon to El Portal. The third advance of glacial ice was the final and least severe of the three ice stages. The glacier reached only to the present area of Bridalveil Meadow and only filled about one-third of the Yosemite Valley.

When the ice had gone from the area, the canyon of pre-glacial times had been transformed into the spectacularly sculptured Yosemite Valley. The glaciers had quarried both the sides and bottom of the canyon. The spurs that had reached into the canyon were gone, the floor was lower and the walls had been cut back. The now broad Yosemite Valley was some seven miles long, U-shaped, with parallel, almost spurless sides averaging about three-fourths of a mile apart. The sides of the Yosemite Valley were nearly vertical and had been
carved into countless shapes. The cascades were transformed into waterfalls while the Valley floor was transformed into a lake in which the waters were held by moraines left from the glacial age.

In the time which has elapsed since the glacial era, Lake Yosemite has been filled with water-borne gravel and sand to form the flat floor visible today. Debris has accumulated at the base of the walls in many places as the Valley walls have undergone continuous weathering.

EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE VALLEY

When J.D. Savage led troops of the Mariposa Battalion into the Yosemite Valley in the spring of 1851, a new era in the development of cultural aspects of the landscape was begun. The Valley had been occupied intermittently by the Yosemite Indians and their use of the Valley had affected the landscape. Several village and ceremonial sites were located in Yosemite Valley, and Indian trails traversed the Valley floor. Their most profound effect upon the scene, however, derived from their practice of burning the vegetation. That activity contributed heavily to the Valley landscape first seen by early visitors.

Early photographs and accounts indicate a "park-like" landscape on the Valley floor. Trees were more widely separated than at present. Black Oaks were dominant. Although still present, they have been over-topped by various conifers and no longer dominate the landscape.

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3 Ibid, pp. 7-10.
Meadowland was more extensive, twice as much acreage being classified as meadow in 1868 as was classified as such in 1960. There was little forest undergrowth. Generally, there were rather extensive meadows adjacent to the Merced and open forest land along the sides of the Valley.

Selection of Building Sites

Prospectors came to the Yosemite Valley in the early 1850's seeking mineral deposits; however, they found nothing worth mining. The Valley was not suitable for substantial profitable agriculture, but the potential for establishing a tourist trade did not escape the notice of some of the early explorers.

Thus, many of the original buildings constructed in the Valley had been built with tourists in mind. Basic requirements of early builders - timber, pasture, and water - were available throughout the Valley, as was spectacular scenery. However, the upper portion of Yosemite Valley, because of its greater area, had more of all these elements, especially pasture. Moreover, the most important scenic attraction, Yosemite Falls, was located in the Upper Valley. Each of the early hotels was located so that a view of the Falls was readily available.

4 Gibbens and Heady, op. cit., pp. 24-25.
5 The Upper Valley is arbitrarily designated as the area east of Rock Point, the approximate longitudinal midpoint of the Valley, see Map 1.
Early buildings were placed in the better drained and drier areas near the base of the talus slopes as opposed to the wetter and more poorly drained mid-Valley locations.

The Lower Hotel, the first permanent building in the Valley, was erected in 1856 on a site beneath Sentinel Rock, south of the Merced River. Two years later the Upper Hotel was opened on a site one-half mile east of the Lower Hotel and also south of the Merced. The Upper Hotel was the first commercial building on the site of what was to become the Old Yosemite Village. These primitive hostelries were augmented by Leidig's, near the Lower Hotel, in 1869, and the Lower Hotel was replaced that same year by Black's. The construction of these and other major commercial buildings such as the Sentinel Hotel and the Cosmopolitan Bath House and Saloon established the area south of the Merced and centered about Sentinel Meadow at the central place of Yosemite Valley. Further construction such as the Stoneman House and Kennyville emphasized the Upper Valley building pattern so that by 1913 essentially all buildings in Yosemite Valley were confined to the eastern portion of the Valley floor.

**Getting to the Valley**

The first travelers to Yosemite Valley came on horseback using Indian trails wherever they could. In 1856 two horse trails were completed into the Valley. The trip from Mariposa required one or two

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days in the saddle – depending upon the eagerness and durability of the traveler. A few years later a third trail was completed. These routes, Mann Brother's Trail, Coulterville Free Trail, and the Big Oak Flat Trail served as the primary routes to Yosemite Valley for almost twenty years. They were rugged and often snow covered since they all approached the Valley over the surrounding high country.

Not until 1874 was a stage road completed from Coulterville to the Valley. Another stage road opened that year and a third, leading from Mariposa, was finished the following year.\(^7\) These roads, coupled with the continued extension of the Central Pacific Railroad closer to Yosemite Park, brought increased numbers of tourists. While the stages represented an improvement over previous travel arrangements, the journey from the Central Valley was still long and arduous. The roads were dusty, rough, and the descent into the Valley had a certain element of danger.

In 1907 the railroad was completed to El Portal, a scant twelve miles from Yosemite Valley. The railroad greatly reduced stage traffic although stage coaches were still needed to carry eager tourists from El Portal into Yosemite Valley.

### Evolution of the Road Network Within the Valley

A network of roads and trails evolved on the Valley floor without the aid of trained and experienced engineers. A number of factors

\(^7\)Russell, op. cit., p. 183.
contributed to the choices which men made in selecting the routes that became permanent features of the landscape.

Convenience and expediency, considered in the light of economy, were the primary criteria for the establishment of the trails and subsequently the roads. After the long and arduous journey up the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada the route that led most directly to food and lodgings was likely to be the most desirable. What is the quickest way? Where can the Merced be crossed? Where were the swampy areas which were to be avoided? Where could roads be built without cutting too many trees? Where can one obtain the best view of the falls and other scenic features? These were some of the questions that influenced the location of trails and subsequently the roads which were built to carry the stages. The pattern of primary Valley roads was established prior to the appearance of the automobile in Yosemite Valley.

Management of the Valley

Until 1864, when the Valley was ceded to the State of California to hold as a public trust, management of the Valley was essentially in the hands of the inhabitants. Buildings were constructed, fences erected, and meadows planted as the settler chose. When the State acquired managerial duties, a Board of Commissioners for Yosemite Valley was appointed. These Commissions were to provide for public utilization of the Valley, but were to restrict such activities as lumbering and extensive grazing which might damage the scenic values of the area. The Board of Commissioners was unsuccessful in its efforts. The landscape of the Valley deteriorated, and the seven
successive Guardians of Yosemite appointed by the Board seemed unable or unwilling to prevent the deterioration. In a letter to the U.S. Senate in 1892 the Secretary of the Interior stated that hundreds of acres of the Valley were fenced and cultivated; hay meadows, corrals, and hog pens were all too prevalent. Trees were being cut, camping was permitted in noncultivated areas, and the general management of the Yosemite forest was poor. The State Commissioners did, however, face serious problems. The Valley had numerous private claims, the legislature was less than enthusiastic about making appropriations for the Yosemite Grant, and the commissioners and the Guardians suffered from their own lack of knowledge on how to manage such a unique region as the Yosemite Valley.

Federal administration of Yosemite Valley began in 1905 when California ceded the Valley back to the government and the Valley became part of Yosemite National Park which had been created in 1890. The United States Army assumed managerial duties in the Valley as a logical extension of similar duties within the National Park. The military superintendents assumed a more active role in controlling human activities and remained in charge until the appointment of civilian park administrators in 1914.

The Park was under military jurisdiction when the decision to admit automobiles was reached on April 30, 1913, a decision with far-reaching effects on the quality of a recreational resource which had previously been visited by a limited number of people.

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8 John W. Noble, Letter from the Secretary of Interior, Dec. 29, 1892 Ex. Doc. 22.
CHAPTER II - CULTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE OF 1913

The cultural aspects of the Yosemite Valley landscape of 1913 had evolved over a period in excess of fifty years. During that interval a myriad of cultural features had appeared in the landscape. In describing that landscape no attempt is made here to include each cultural feature but rather the intent is to describe the scene in terms of three broad categories. These categories - roads, major structures, and open lands - provide a basis for describing not only the Valley in 1913 but subsequent change in the landscape as well.

THE ROADS

The roads in the Yosemite Valley in 1913 were poor, not only by current standards but also by the criteria of that time (see Figure 2). Where the wagon or stage traveled in 1913, mounted men had gone before. The network of roads had evolved over a long period of time, and the choices that man had made in selecting a trail over which to ride a horse or drive a wagon were not necessarily the best routes to follow in automobiles. The first report of the acting superintendent of the Valley, H.C. Benson, brought attention to the poorly designed road network.¹ It called for planning and establishing a road system with an eye for aesthetic values.

FIGURE 2  Pre-gravel roadway in Yosemite Valley - about 1908 - photo courtesy National Park Service
Benson was not the first to criticize the roads: similar comments appeared in *Century Magazine* in 1890. William Colby, writing about an 1894 visit to the Valley, regarded the roadways as random and excessive in terms of mileage. This criticism was as valid in 1913 as in 1894.

About nineteen miles of roadway, exclusive of temporary roads, existed from Pohono bridge eastward in 1913. An examination of the map (see Map 3) indicates that there was a great deal of unnecessary road mileage in the Upper Valley. No less than three routes from the Old Village to Kennyville, an absolute distance of about a mile, were available. To go from Camp Curry to the Indian Caves there were again three routes with only a quarter mile difference in length between the longest and shortest paths. Further examination shows that there was a fairly direct route between each of the sites of human occupancy in the Upper Valley.

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4U.S.G.S. maps of 1907 and 1918.
MAP 3

UPPER YOSEMITE VALLEY-1913

N

CAMP LOST ARROW

KENNYVILLE

STONEMAN BRIDGE

CAMP CURIY

INALIAN CAVES

TENAYA BR.

CLARKS BR.

POWER HOUSE BRIDGE

POWER HOUSE

ARMS STRUCTURES

SENTINE BR.

YOSEMITE VILLAGE

CAMP AHWANEE

PRIMARY ROAD

AUXILIARY ROAD

STREAMS

SCALE 1:24000

0 1/2 1 MILES
The 1913 road pattern was characterized from both aesthetic and landscape preservation viewpoints by a lack of planning. The result was a network of routes excessive in mileage, aesthetically unattractive and unnecessarily intrusive upon the "natural" landscape.

The roads were traveled by freight wagon, stage, horse, pedestrians, and an occasional bicycle. They were subject to snow and rain in winter, sun and traffic in summer. Initially, the surfaces were composed of whatever substances the route passed over. With the onset of the dry season and the accompanying period of heavy traffic, the roads annually turned to ribbons of dust. An observer in 1894 writes of roads composed of dust which also covered roadside vegetation, stage passengers and pedestrians.\(^5\) The first acting superintendent vigorously deplored these conditions and suggested that the dust be controlled through oiling or macadamizing.\(^6\) This suggestion was repeated in the 1908 report; indeed, calls for road improvements consistently appear in the annual reports. Macadamizing of roads in Yosemite Valley started in 1909 with a three mile section of the South Road from El Capitan bridge to the Sentinel Hotel.\(^7\) The process continued until some

\(^5\)Colby, op. cit., p. 23.

\(^6\)H.C. Benson, Report of the Acting Superintendent of the Yosemite National Park, 1907, p. 9. Note also that the macadam used was not bonded and the process of macadamizing essentially consisted of covering the road with gravel.

nineteen miles of road were covered with gravel by 1918. Although gravel was an improvement, it was quickly broken down under the weight of heavy traffic indicating that still further improvements in road surfaces were necessary.

In addition to inadequate surfaces, the roads of the Valley were narrow and contained abrupt turns. These conditions were such that in 1913, when autos were first admitted, only the North Road could be used by private automobiles and then only for ingress and egress. Roads were not suitable for private auto traffic, and all automobiles had to be parked for the duration of their visit to Yosemite Valley. Thus, when automobiles were admitted to the Valley in 1913, their owners found a poorly planned and overly-extended network of dusty, gravel-covered roads extending over narrow and twisting routes.

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MAJOR STRUCTURES

By 1913 the great majority of buildings in the Valley were concentrated at a few specific sites, settlement had become nucleated. The Old Village was the center of activity in the Valley. Curios, groceries, lodgings, information, entertainment and religious services were all available at the Village. The other sites were less significant. The hotel-camps provided lodgings and in one case entertainment. The military headquarters provided residence for the military superintendent and his troops, yet another site was the location of a stable complex. All of these sites were in the Upper Valley and all were located near the base of the Valley walls (see Maps 3 and 4). In general all the 1913 sites of human activity had been established prior to 1900.

Commercial, Residential and Service Facilities

The commercial, residential and service areas had developed and expanded as the numbers of tourists had increased. However, growth in these types of facilities reflected the expediency that prompted their development. These areas were primarily developed by individuals, each seeking his own share of the tourist dollar.

Considering the lack of planning, the lack of any real authority over construction and the various limitations of the individual builders, there is little surprise that the early Valley buildings were generally poorly designed and poorly constructed, and their location did not reflect attempts to preserve the scenic resources of the Valley.
The Old Village

In 1858, Beardsley and Hite selected a site for their new hotel. The area was ideal, pasture was plentiful, water and timber were at hand, and the location afforded a magnificent view of the Yosemite Falls. Beneath Union Point, south of the Merced on the South Road, the Upper Hotel was the first building in an area that became the focal point of Valley activity for decades. The Old Village grew from this rather shabby infant (the Upper Hotel) into a rather shabby maturity (the Village of 1913) in hesitant steps (see Figure 3). Two tourist cottages were added in 1870; 1873 brought the construction of the Cosmopolitan, a combination bar, bath house and billiard hall. The structure that firmly established the site as the principal settled area was the Sentinel Hotel, erected in 1876. This was to be a primary tourist hotel until its destruction in the late 1930's. A store was erected a year later and thus further added to the significance of the Old Village as the center of settlement.

The eighties saw John Degan's Bakery and Fiske's Studio added to the growing number of structures. The task of satisfying the tourists' desire for artistic works depicting the Valley grew to thriving


13 H.C. Benson in the Superintendents Report for 1908 compares the Old Village with "...temporary houses built for a county fair ..." (p. 14) The intent of the comparison was definitely not complementary.
FIGURE 3  Old Yosemite Village-1925 - photo courtesy National Park Service
proportions when two more artists' studios were established in the 1890's along with an additional pair of studios just after the turn of the century. A meat market and two tourist cottages were also built before 1913 along with an administration building, dance pavilion, Wells Fargo Office, residences and miscellaneous sheds and the like.

By 1913, then, the Old Village contained the following principal buildings: on the north side of South Road from west to east, general store and post office, Boyson's Studio, Foley's Studio, administration building, Best's Studio, dance and lecture pavilion (recessed from road) an office building, Ivy Cottage, Cosmopolitan (recessed from road), River Cottage and Sentinel Hotel. On the south side of South Road, from west to east, were the chapel (recessed from road), Pillsbury's Studio, Degnan's residence, Degnan's Bakery, Wells Fargo Office, butcher shop, (recessed from road), Fiske's Studio, Rock Cottage, Oak Cottage and Cedar Cottage. Behind the principal structures lay additional residences, tents and assorted structures including an old power house used for a jail. Jorgenson's Studio was across the river and a Masonic Lodge lay just west of the Village behind the chapel.\footnote{The picture of the Village is derived from information contained in a number of sources and synthesized therefrom. Chief among them are Ansel F. Hall, Guide to Yosemite, Homer Robinson, "History of Business Concessions in Yosemite National Park," Yosemite Nature Notes of June, 1948, Carl Russell, 100 Years in Yosemite, Jack Leidig, Notes on Early Day Buildings in Yosemite Valley, in the Yosemite Research Library, 1941, Upton, Old Movie Pavilion, a memorandum in Yosemite Research Library, 1963, and the Reports of the Acting Superintendents, 1907-1913.}

The Village was the central place of the Yosemite Valley in terms of services and administration. The general store, bakery and meat
market were the retail outlets for food and general merchandise. Their products were needed by campers, temporary employees and permanent residents alike. Moreover, the Village was the only local source of such supplies. The studios provided both photographs and original paintings of the Yosemite area in quantities that were unavailable elsewhere in the Valley. In addition the Village had the only church, a nondenominational chapel that attracted people from throughout Yosemite Valley. The dance pavilion provided an opportunity for evening entertainment that was rivaled only by the evening activities at Camp Curry; nonetheless, the government pavilion did furnish still another reason for a trip to the Village.

The central place function of the Old Village was attained even though the area lacked a high proportion of the Valley's population. The Sentinel Hotel and associated cottages held only about one hundred people, and the permanent residents included only business operators and a few employees.15 The hotel-camps had a total capacity well in excess of one thousand, and campers usually numbered into the thousands during the regular season.16 Though the Old Village was dominant in 1913,

15 Stephen T. Mather, Report of the Director of the National Park Service, 1920, p. 236, although the figure given is for 1920, the same facilities were in use in 1913.

16 The capacity of Camp Ahwahnee was probably a few hundred by a best guess, George James gives the size of Camp Curry as in excess of five hundred in California Romantic and Beautiful, (Boston: Page Co., 1914) p. 227, while Russell, op. cit., p. 112 credits Curry with one thousand accommodations in 1915. Ruth Wood in The Tourists California, (New York: Mead and Co., 1914) p. 200 claims Camp Lost Arrow had 250 tents, ergo 500 accommodations at the minimum. Mather in the 1920 Directors Report gives 4000 as camp capacity, p. 236.
changes were close at hand, changes that would eventually return the
site to meadow and expose new areas to the hand of man.

U.S. Army Headquarters

When the Valley was returned to the control of the federal govern-
ment in 1905, the decision was made to relocate the Army headquarters.
Prior to this time the Army had operated from a base at Clark's old
ranch at Wawona. The new camp was established one-quarter mile west of
the Yosemite Falls and below Columbia Rock, on the site now occupied
by the Yosemite Lodge. By 1913 there had been erected two barracks,
seven cottages, a small hospital, and miscellaneous sheds and mess
facilities.\(^{17}\) The nature of these structures was temporary, although
some were to be actively utilized for close to fifty years.\(^{18}\) The
temporary nature of the buildings was due largely to the function they
were intended to perform and to their seasonal occupancy, for the Army
usually departed in the fall to return the following spring.\(^{19}\) The
camp was a residential area for the troops and as such did not perform
any tourist functions from the standpoints of recreation or services.

\(^{17}\) W.W. Forsyth, Report of the Acting Superintendent of Yosemite
National Park, 1911, p. 12.

\(^{18}\) Six cottages remaining from the Army's administration were burned

\(^{19}\) Russell, op. cit., p. 157 and 161.
Kennyville

The source of power for wagon and stage was the horse, and Kennyville was devoted to the care and maintenance of that source of power. The Kennyville complex was located on the road connecting Camp Curry with the North Road. By 1913 Kennyville was rather extensive, extending several hundred feet on both sides of the road. There were stables, corrals, a livery, shops and residences. The entire complex was started in 1888 with original construction utilizing lumber obtained from Black's Hotel when that structure was razed. Colby held that Kennyville was a needless intrusion upon the landscape and it could have been placed in a less conspicuous location.20

The remaining structural sites in the Yosemite were of less significance than those already mentioned in terms of activity, size, and direct relationships with the most populous class in the Valley, the tourists. Adjacent to the military camp were four cottages for permanent government employees.21 The engineer, clerk and electricians occupied these cottages, located west of the camp. The school had been moved from near Le Conte Memorial to a site a few hundred yards south of Camp Lost Arrow in 1909. This area was to undergo substantial

20Colby, op. cit., p. 25.

modification and would ultimately become the principal residential area for permanent government employees. Other individual structures were also present. In addition to some barns and sheds of vague location, there was a power house west of the river at Happy Isles, Clark's old residence several hundred yards west of the Village on the South Road, a powder house opposite Bridalveil Meadow, Le Conte Memorial west of Camp Curry on the South Road and Lamon's residence east of Camp Curry. The impact of areas of this kind upon the landscape is minimal; further, information concerning single structures is often inadequate. Where practicable such sites will be mentioned, but no attempt has been made to include each structure on an individual basis nor to investigate every such building site.

Tourist Accommodations

Three hotel-camps were located in the Valley in 1913.22 The most popular, the oldest and the camp that was to remain as a fixture in the cultural landscape, was Camp Curry. The camp was located at the very base of Glacier Point, a mile east of the Old Village site. Camp Curry originated in 1899 with Mr. and Mrs. D.A. Curry.23 The Currys launched their camp with seven tents and a cook. By the end of the first season, the camp had expanded to twenty-nine tents and had accommodated three hundred guests, a successful beginning. The enterprise continued to expand so that by 1913 the camp had accommodations

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22Hotel-camps consisted primarily of separate cabins, usually canvas stitched over wooden frames (tent cabins) and a few main buildings.

23Russell, op. cit., p. 111.
for between five hundred and one thousand visitors. The principal type of lodging was the tent cabin. The concept of the hotel-camp as achieved by the Currys filled an important gap with respect to accommodations within the National Park framework. Providing accommodations between hotels and private camping in terms of comfort, price and capacity, the hotel-camp offered Valley lodging to a vast number of visitors for whom camping was unsuitable or hotel rooms too expensive or unavailable. Camp Curry provided more than lodging; food and recreational facilities made the camp an active site. A kitchen with an associated dining room provided food for guests. A swimming tank, dance pavilion and David Curry's campfire programs supplied entertainment. The most famous attraction undoubtedly was the Firefall, that evening ceremony which consisted of pushing glowing embers from Glacier Point into the Valley. The Camp Curry site had other structures, an office, steam laundry and ice plant along with miscellaneous sheds.

Two years after the Currys established their camp a similar camp was opened near the base of Yosemite Falls. This camp, ultimately known as Camp Lost Arrow, was just east of the Falls, beneath Yosemite Point and against the base of the cliffs. The camp had some 250 tents and a dining room. In 1908 a third hotel-camp was established. Camp George James, California Romantic and Beautiful, (Boston, Page Co., 1914), p. 227.

Curry did not originate the Firefall, but rather revived it. The ceremony was discontinued in 1968 as being incompatable with National Park policy.
Ahwahnee was at the foot of the Four Mile Glacier Point Trail, beneath Sentinel Rock. The site had been previously occupied by Leidig's Hotel; however, Leidig's had been destroyed some twenty years previously. The camp had a dining hall, a sitting room, an office building and also operated a dairy. Unlike Camp Curry, neither of the later camps had extensive recreational facilities - nothing to compare with swimming, dancing, Firefall and the personality of David Curry. The Lost Arrow and Ahwahnee provided bed and board and little else. In that respect they were ideally suited to the purpose of the National Park.

THE OPEN LANDS

Much of the Valley floor was utilized by man for purposes other than building sites: the open lands comprised most of the acreage that constituted the cultural landscape. They were used for camping, pasture, picnics, and various agricultural pursuits. When the auto was admitted in 1913 they had already been subject to vigorous human activity, activity that would substantially increase in the campgrounds but which would eventually decrease in the meadow areas.

Campgrounds

Camping was, of course, the earliest form of accommodation. Moreover, this form continued in popularity after the advent of hotels

26 From an advertising pamphlet of Camp Ahwahnee filed in the Yosemite Research Library.
and the hotel-camp. Initially camping was permitted at essentially any location that was not enclosed by fence. The individual selected a site with his own needs and moods the only governing factors. The more popular areas were along the river and tended to be in the eastern portion of the Valley. When the Army assumed administrative control in 1906, several of the camps - sites already established through traditional use - were in poor condition. Sanitary conditions were wholly inadequate and often the water supply was polluted.²⁷ Five camps were located to the west of the Old Village and all were withdrawn from public use. Camps at Bridalveil and El Capitan meadows and at Clark's residence were abandoned because of sanitary considerations and the sites at Leidig's meadow and east of Yosemite Creek Bridge were used by the Army.²⁸ The conditions prevailing at certain camping sites forced the Acting Superintendent to terminate the traditional practice of randomly setting up tents and proclaim that camping could be done only in designated areas.²⁹ With the withdrawal of the areas west of the Village and the confining of camper activities, tenterds were restricted to specific locations in the Upper Valley by 1913. Even in these


designated areas sanitation was poor and the superintendent assumed that the Merced would always be polluted.\textsuperscript{30}

There were thirteen campgrounds in the Valley with ten being available to the public. Camps 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20 were for general public usage. Camp 9 was for use by organized groups. The three other camps 6, 17, and 19 were used by employees of the government and concessionaires.

The public campgrounds were poorly developed in terms of facilities available to the campers. There was no "unitization\textsuperscript{31} and all those that desired to do so were permitted to use a particular camp. There were pit toilets, no showers, and no washrooms - in essence, none of the conveniences that today's campers have come to expect. On the other hand there was an abundance of garbage and mosquitoes. The public camps varied greatly in size. Camps 9 and 10 were quite small, Camp 9 having approximately eleven acres, while Camps 11 and 14 were extensive - being about thirty-three and twenty-five acres respectively.\textsuperscript{32} Taken collectively, the campgrounds utilized a significant amount


\textsuperscript{31}Unitizing is to designate individual campsites within a campground, thereby limiting the number of campers to a predetermined maximum.

\textsuperscript{32}The figures are from a personal communication with John Krisko II, Valley District Naturalist, dated Dec. 18, 1967. The size of Camps 9, 11, 14 have not varied appreciably since 1913.
of land, close to two hundred acres. Hence the camps, though simple and relatively unobtrusive, formed a significant human intrusion upon the land when examined from the standpoint of acreage utilized for a specific activity.

**Meadows**

There were other uses man had for the land of the Yosemite Valley in addition to roads, buildings and camps. To a people oriented toward the horse, as were the people of the Valley, the meadows provided excellent pasture. Native plants and abundant water made the meadows ideal for horse, mule, and cow. However, the native plants were not sufficiently hardy to withstand the pressure of constant grazing, and early in the human history of the Valley schemes to plant better grasses were put forth. A portion of El Capitan Meadow was plowed and sown to timothy in the 1870's.\(^{33}\) The Leidig, Ahwahnee and Stoneman Meadows were all planted, in part, for hay.\(^{34}\) By 1913 some 150 tons of hay were annually being cut from the meadows in addition to their continued use for grazing.\(^{35}\)

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\(^{34}\) *Loc. cit.*

Animal fodder was not the only use man found for meadow land. Orchards were planted in parts of the Lamon, Schoolhouse and Stoneman Meadows, while picnickers utilized the meadows as dining areas — none of these activities proved beneficial to the natural landscape.

SUMMARY

The cultural elements of the landscape of 1913 had evolved over a period of almost sixty years. In that short interval, an area under the protective care of both state and federal governments had been plowed, planted, grazed, cut, and built upon for individual profit. Three elements characterized this period of evolution — lack of planning, lack of funds, and lack of concern for the public interest. Neither the state nor the federal government adopted procedures or plans for the development of the Valley within a framework necessary for the preservation of natural beauty. Moreover, they did not provide adequate funds for park administration thereby making the task of those supervising Yosemite Valley extremely difficult. The concessionaires contributed to the deterioration of the landscape by overly emphasizing profit at the expense of the very scenery that attracted the tourists.

Evidence of man's ineptitude at developing facilities while maintaining the primitive landscape was clearly evident. Roads not only wandered destructively across the Valley floor, but were of poor

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36 See John Ise, National Park Policy for a discussion of the political and economic events of the early days of the Yosemite Grant and the Yosemite National Park.
quality and design. Dust covered everything near a roadway. Structures were of such poor construction that they needed constant repair just to remain upright. Hotels advertised for tourists, not all of whom could be possibly accommodated. Camps suffered from sanitation problems. Meadows, a prime element of the landscape, were planted or grazed.

In a more subtle and subjective vein the "mood" of the park also suffered. Concessionaires and government agencies alike contributed to the emphasis of the playground and entertainment atmosphere of the Park to the detriment of the aesthetic and inspirational values associated with a visit to a primitive area. The government dance pavilion and Curry's swimming pool, dance facility, and Firefall were not necessary to enjoy Half Dome, Yosemite Falls, or the wildlife. The cultural landscape of 1913 did not reflect man's finest hour.

37 The opening of the railroad of El Portal in 1907 caused extreme overcrowding of facilities due to a greatly increased influx of tourists.
CHAPTER III - CHANGES IN CULTURAL ELEMENTS
OF THE LANDSCAPE, 1913-1966

During each month of 1966 more people visited Yosemite National Park than during the entire year of 1913. In August, 1966, alone, thirty visitors came to the park for each 1913 tourist.\(^1\) Increased tourism of this magnitude made changes in the cultural landscape inevitable. However, elements of the cultural landscape varied in their extent of modification, and both rate and time of modification. As examples, the primary road network underwent very little modification, while the development of new residential and service areas has been extensive. This chapter describes change in the cultural landscape and does so under three broad headings; Roads and Parking Space, Major Structures, and Open Lands.

ROADS AND PARKING SPACE

The roads of the Valley underwent varying degrees of change in the years after regular automobile use began. The new vehicles increased in number, weight, and speed, and as they did so new pressures were applied to the road network - pressure that led to resurfacing, realigning and substantial new construction of roads. The road network is composed of two distinct elements; primary roads and auxiliary

\(^1\)From National Park Service Yosemite Travel Summary of 1966.
2 roads. Considering change in these elements separately reveals that modifications to the auxiliary roads was far more extensive than modifications to the primary roads.

Primary Roads

Prior to the 1920's work on the primary roads was heavily oriented toward repair, maintenance and minor improvements of existing routes. Each spring repairs were necessary to put the roads in passable condition. The road surfaces needed renovating, ruts needed to be filled and washed out portions required reconstruction. The spring repair rite was annually performed until the roads were paved in the late 1920's. During the tourist season constant maintenance work was required to preserve the roads in a passable condition. The gravel surface quickly broke down under the heavy summer usage. Road crews, with horse teams and hand tools, worked throughout the summer and into the fall spreading gravel, sprinkling the roads, and effecting general repairs. These tasks grew increasingly difficult as more and more vehicles appeared in the Valley. Those portions of the roads that were not yet macadamized posed particular problems under heavy usage.3

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2The primary roads represent the principal means of through travel in the Valley. They provide routes extending the length of the Valley and link the camps, hotels and various sites of occupation and interest. The auxiliary roads consist of camp roads, roads in concessionaire and residential areas, roads to service facilities and the like.

Repair and maintenance was not sufficient, definite improvement was both needed and forthcoming. The pre-1913 work of macadamizing was continued so that by 1918 essentially all the primary roads were covered with gravel. In addition, the long process of widening and straightening the routes began prior to 1920. This was a time of much activity in conjunction with the roads, but not so significant as developments in the succeeding ten years.

A flurry of activity took place in the 1920's and early 1930's; when it was over, roads had been widened, realigned and paved. Beginning with the new Mirror Lake Road in 1919, several of the roads were realigned. 4 The new Mirror Lake Road was located only a few yards from the old, but was both wider and straighter. The road through Camp 7 was constructed in 1921 and the road across Cook’s meadow in 1924. 5 Two roads connecting North and Middle Roads were built in 1925. 6 This period of activity also saw the completion of the Camp Curry bypass road, and the relocation of the El Capitan Bridge and accompanying approaches about one-half mile eastward. Taken together, these modifications constitute the most significant change in the primary road pattern that occurred during the 1913-1966 period (see Maps 3, 4, 5 and 6).

5 Ibid., Oct., 1921 and Dec. 1924.
MAP 6

LOWER YOSEMITE VALLEY-1966

NORTH ROAD
EL CAPITAN BRIDGE
SOUTH ROAD
POHONO BR.
WAWONA ROAD

PRIMARY ROAD
AUXILIARY ROAD

SCALE 1: 24000
0 1/2 1 MILES
While new roads were being constructed, the remainder of the system was also improved. The Construction Reports consistently refer to work done in continued widening, the spreading of more and more gravel, and the improvement of bridge approaches. The North Road across El Capitan meadow was raised in 1922 to prevent flooding, and the road from Camp Curry via Clark's bridge to Mirror Lake was widened in 1923. New drains were placed along the roads and old ones repaired. The effort expended upon the road system for work of this nature was substantial as always.

Despite the importance of the realignment of the roads and the widening and straightening, the foremost achievement of this time, indeed of the entire period of the study, was the paving of the Valley roads (see Figure 4). The actual paving was done by the Bureau of Public Roads starting in 1927 and continuing until the early 1930's. The advantages gained by this were numerous. In addition to convenience for the motorist the paved roads required less maintenance and repair. The annual preparation of the roads for tourist travel was no longer the monumental task that it was during the days of gravel and dirt. As the mileage of pavement increased, less and less gravel was hauled from the river bed, the need for sprinkling decreased, and vehicles no longer made ruts in the road surfaces. Moreover, the men and equipment formerly used for road repair were now available for other tasks - of which there were many.

*The widening of a particular road from say 12' to 20' was often done in increments over a period of years. i.e., first from 12' to 16' then later from 16' to 20' and so on.*
FIGURE 4  Modern Yosemite Valley road - photo courtesy A.W. and M.V. Hood
From the mid-thirties until 1966, the close of this study, the primary roads underwent little change; the pattern and mileage of the roads remained nearly constant. In the early fifties the road across the Valley floor at the Old Village was eliminated, and a realignment effected to provide a cross-Valley route just east of the old road. The final change to the primary road system was accomplished in 1956 and consisted of a bypass road north of Yosemite Lodge.8

Auxiliary Roads

With emphasis on the more heavily utilized primary roads, the auxiliary roads received minimal attention prior to 1920. In that year a new road was built behind the New Village past the government barns and storehouse.9 This was the beginning of new construction that would add some two and one-half miles to the total length of the auxiliary road system by 1929, a fifty percent increase over 1913. During 1920 a new roadway was built west of Yosemite Lodge and a year later an access road was provided for new employee cottages.10 The additions to the auxiliary network were usually in terms of hundreds of feet, hence, no attempt is made to record individually each new element of the system.11

8General Completion Reports, Report number 317.
10Ibid., Nov. 1920 and April, 1921.
11Loc. cit., the Nov., 1920 report refers to 750' while the April, 1921 report mentions 600' of new road.
The construction of the New Village in the mid 1920's was accompanied by road building activity in the immediate area. Auxiliary roads connecting government barns, shops, new residences, and the Village were constructed. In addition to the new routes by Yosemite Lodge and the New Village, roadways in the campgrounds were extended during the mid 1920's. Camps 9, 11, 14, 16 and 17 all received new roadways. On the other hand, some small portions of existing roads were removed, as in Camp 12.

The alternate route to the Old Village, the south branch of the South Road, changed in character from a primary to an auxiliary track with the decrease in emphasis on the Old Village. Other minor changes occurred about this time, such as modifications in the Camp Curry pattern and the construction of a route past the Old Camp Ahwahnee site from the South Road to the Merced.

The nine year interval from 1929 until 1938 was the most significant in terms of increasing the total mileage of auxiliary roads. Although some new routes were constructed in areas previously without them, most of the construction of the auxiliary roads took place about the existing network. The exceptions were located in the Lower Valley. Tracks north of the South Road near the Old Camp Ahwahnee site were expanded toward the river. A new route was built to the river from the North Road at the eastern end of El Capitan and a new track was laid into Bridalveil Meadow. An access road was also built to the new sewage plant opposite Bridalveil Falls. These paths constituted the final construction of auxiliary roads in the Lower Valley. The most
significant changes occurred in the public campgrounds. Camps 11, 12, and 14 received the bulk of the new roadways with a lesser amount of work being performed in Camps 7 and 15. Access roads about the New Village, Yosemite Lodge, and the Indian Village were extended, but these changes were slight in comparison with the modifications in the campgrounds. The alternate route to the Old Village site which had previously been deemphasized was now eliminated altogether except for a very small portion at the Village. These changes in the Upper Valley were all accomplished in areas where roads were already in existence. In the campgrounds the laying of the new paths was often accompanied by the removal of old ones. The additions to the secondary road network yielded a net gain of approximately five miles or a two-thirds increase over the mileage of 1929. The auxiliary road network now accounted for forty percent of the total mileage in the Valley.

The late thirties and the forties were periods when essentially no new construction took place on the auxiliary road system. Some additional work was done in Camp Curry, Yosemite Lodge and near the New Village; however, all these additions totaled less than a mile.

Beginning in the early 1950's the auxiliary road system again received rather extensive attention, although the effort was as much directed toward repair and reconstruction as toward actual building of new roads. Camp 15 was the first area to undergo such improvement in

12 The General Completion Reports Index indicates only one effort on the auxiliary roads during this interval and that was repair of Camp Tecoya roads in 1943, Report 225.
Most of the new routes were in the New Village and the residence area just north of the Village and in the vicinity of the Yosemite Lodge. The Village needed and received new access roads in conjunction with the construction of the New Village Store, restaurant, and the opening of Degnan's new facility. These improvements to the Village roadways were accomplished in 1956 with subsequent improvement in 1962. The activities at Yosemite Lodge were undertaken in 1957 in conjunction with the construction of the Lodge bypass route. A year later the roads in the residential areas were extended. All of this work, representing a significant increase in activity, was done at the beginning of and as a part of the Mission 66 program. The Mission 66 program was designed by the National Park Service as a ten year plan to modernize and improve park system facilities by 1966.

Prior to 1959 some slight changes were made to the tracks in Camps 15, 6 and 4. By 1960 the major effort on the auxiliary roads was complete. To be sure, repair and maintenance continued as always, but further extension of the auxiliary roads was negligible up to and including the year 1966. The total distance added to the system was about three miles, bringing the extent of the auxiliary network to just less than half the total road mileage for the entire Valley.

13 *General Completion Reports*, 244.

14 *General Completion Reports*, 319, 390.
Parking

The development of parking areas in the Valley may be characterized by two words: more and larger. Not until 1922 do Sovulewski's Reports specifically allude to the building of a parking area although parking existed at the Village (see Figure 5), Camp Curry and other sites of habitation and areas of particular scenic value. Since the early 1920's the parking facilities in the Valley have steadily been expanded. In 1923 the Happy Isles parking area was increased. The construction of the New Village in the 1920's was naturally accompanied by new parking facilities. As Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge increased their accommodations so did they increase their capacity for parking the vehicles of their guests. Additionally, more and more parking was needed for the ever increasing numbers of government and civilian employees. In 1929 parking facilities at Mirror Lake, Happy Isles, and later at Bridalveil (1935) and Yosemite Falls (1962) represented most of the effort directed toward parking facilities at the major scenic sites. The vast bulk of the parking lots are located near the areas of food and lodging. The parking area at the Village was improved in 1956 and expanded in 1959, while Yosemite Lodge parking lots were expanded in 1957, 1958, and 1960. By 1966, then, Yosemite Lodge had

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15 General Completion Reports, April, 1923.

16 General Completion Reports 9, 31, 32, and 43 respectively.

17 General Completion Reports 188.5 and 391 respectively.

18 General Completion Reports 319, 346, 318, 334, and 354 respectively.
FIGURE 5  Parking in Old Yosemite Village—about 1923—photo courtesy National Park Service
3.6 acres of visitor parking, Yosemite Village 5.2 acres (see Figures 7 and 8) and Camp Curry 6.7 acres. This 15.5 acres far exceeded the total visitor parking facilities at scenic areas such as Happy Isles (3.0 acres) (see Figure 6), Bridalveil Falls (1.1 acres), Yosemite Falls (1.2 acres), and the other smaller areas such as Mirror Lake and the Indian Caves. Some twenty-five acres of the Valley floor were used for visitor parking, exclusive of campgrounds. Employee parking tends to be integrated into the residential areas and its areal extent is difficult to define; however, the total is substantially less than visitor parking facilities and probably does not exceed a few acres.

The Principal Changes

An examination of the roads, both primary and auxiliary, over the span of this study reveals some interesting features. While these features vary in importance to this study, they remain noteworthy and deserve comment.

The pattern of the primary road network, viewed through time, has remained remarkably constant, especially when the vast increase in the number of visitors is considered.\(^{19}\) There are, to be sure, differences between the 1913 and 1966 patterns: the El Capitan bridge has been moved; some relocation of mid-Upper Valley roads has occurred; and two bypass roads are now evident. However, these changes represent only

\(^{19}\) Some 12,000 visitors in 1913 compared with 1,800,000 in 1966.
FIGURE 6  Parking at Happy Isles - photo courtesy National Park Service
minor modifications of the overall network. There are still three routes from the Old Village site to the Kennyville site and there remain three ways to go from Camp Curry to the Indian Caves just as there were in 1913.

The mileage of the primary system has remained essentially constant with some nineteen miles of road in 1913 and eighteen miles of road in 1966 (see Table 4). However, the roadways of 1966 are wider and straighter, are paved and have a much greater carrying capacity than did their 1913 predecessors.

While the pattern of the primary roads remained stable, the pattern of the auxiliary roads underwent great change. The few simple tracks north of what was to become the New Village developed into a complex road network. The same was true of the Yosemite Lodge site to a lesser degree. Camp Curry developed an auxiliary road system and the public Camps – 11, 12, 14, and 16 – vastly enlarged their road network. The auxiliary system increased from five to fifteen miles in length, some three hundred percent, while the primary system remained nearly static.

The road system of the Valley had changed character in the years since 1913. No longer were dusty, narrow, twisting roads the subject of writers' criticism; in 1966 regulations were the topics most frequently discussed. What had seemed to be an excessive number of roads now appeared inadequate. And, where deer had browsed and bear had ambled in 1913, parking lots were now packed with tourists and automobiles and trucks were delivering merchandise to the commercial centers of the Valley.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PRIMARY</th>
<th>AUXILIARY</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<th>LOWER VALLEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>23.0</td>
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</tr>
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<td>14.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>22.5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: U.S.G.S. YOSEMITE VALLEY MAPS FOR EACH YEAR INDICATED
MAJOR STRUCTURES

The most extensive changes in the cultural aspects of the landscape took place in those areas devoted to commercial, residential and service activities, those activities that fostered the building of the major structures in the Valley (see Maps 3 and 5). Most of the important commercial enterprises and service agencies were relocated in new structures on new sites; the structures at the Old Village were demolished and the Old Village reverted to a "natural" state.

Residential structures increased in size and number in order to house the larger permanent population of the Valley. The most extensive site of new residential construction occupied land previously unused by man for such purposes.

Thus, the introduction of the automobile had an indirect impact on the landscape in terms of the increased commercial and service needs of the large number of tourists now able to visit Yosemite National Park.

Commercial Centers

Since the automobile was formally admitted into Yosemite Valley, there have been but two truly commercial centers in the Valley, two central places. These are the Old Village and the New Village. The Old Village, inherited from the nineteenth century, was the first center of retail establishments, entertainment, administration and service facilities. It gradually yielded to the newer Village and eventually passed out of existence. The New Village, however, has
continued to grow since its inception in the 1920's, growth that will probably continue for a number of years.

The Old Village

In 1913, a major portion of the commercial and service activities of Yosemite Park were located in the Old Village area. The primitive nature of the surrounding landscape and the shortage of space tended to obscure the relatively poor condition of the structures housing these activities. Although Best's Studio, the meat market, an office building, and the Wells Fargo Office were all erected after the turn of the century, the majority of the structures dated from before 1885. The primary construction material, lumber, did not easily withstand the climate of the Valley. Combined with the generally poor quality of the original construction there is little wonder that the Acting Superintendent in 1908 was extremely critical of the general condition of the Village structures. 20

The buildings survived demolition until the 1930's with the exception of Galen Clark's old home west of the Village which was torn down in 1921. 21 In 1926 the structures that housed Boysen's, Best's, and Foley's businesses were all scheduled for destruction; yet, they lingered for several more years. 22 The destruction of the Old Village

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22 Ibid., p. 31.
began accidentally when the Pillsbury movie house burned in 1928. However, movies continued to be shown in the Old Village at the pavilion. Four years later fire removed another structure from the scene. On December 8, 1932, the Cosmopolitan House, originally built in 1873 and now containing only a barber shop, was destroyed. Planned removal of buildings began later in the thirties. From 1938 until 1941 Rock Cottage, River Cottage, Oak Cottage, Ivy Cottage, the venerable Cedar Cottage, and even the Sentinel Hotel were torn down. The removal of these facilities left the area with no visitor accommodations, subsequently lessening the importance of the Old Village.

The actual destruction of Old Village structures had been preceded by events which had reduced the significance of the Village to Valley activities. Yosemite Lodge began to offer tourist accommodations in 1915. The Lodge had continued to expand and had developed on-site facilities that made visitation to the Old Village less and less necessary. Similarly, Camp Curry continued to grow and find favor with park visitors. Camp Curry, with extensive facilities and active programs for maintaining tourist interest, served as an alternate focal point to the Old Village. In 1926 and 1929, most of the studio owners

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23 Upton, Memorandum to Files on the Old Movie Pavilion, Aug. 20, 1963.


moved their commercial endeavors to the New Village. The opening of
the Ahwahnee Hotel in 1927 further tended to de-emphasize the importance
of the Old Village. The Ahwahnee was a luxury hotel, and the Sentinel,
now over fifty years old, was poor competition for the newer tourist
accommodation. By 1940 the Old Village had already been abandoned as
a significant area of lodging. The destruction of the hotel structures
completed the process.

The Old Village lost another primary function in 1924 when the
New Village was dedicated. The New Village, at inception, became the
administrative center for the entire Park. However, as late as the
1950's the Old Village still retained a portion of its former function
as well as some of its structures. There remained a studio, the old
pavilion which had become a movie house, the chapel, and the village
store. All these facilities provided needed and useful services that
attracted tourist and resident alike. Moreover, some residences for
permanent employees were still located there.

The Mission 66 Program specifically alluded to the Old Village
in the Yosemite Valley. The plan called for the razing of the site and
a return to "natural" conditions. 26 In 1959 the Old Village store,
Degnan's old restaurant, and a warehouse were demolished. 27 The Wells
Fargo building and the old powder house (jail) were removed to Wawona

26 John C. Preston, Final Report (on work to be done under Mission
66) Nov. 8, 1955.

as part of an historical exhibit during this same year. At this time the remaining old studios and various other buildings were also eliminated. The last commercial building was the pavilion. Like the original movie house and the Cosmopolitan, the pavilion was destroyed by fire on May 31, 1963.28 By 1966 only the chapel, one residence, and the Masonic Lodge building remained at the site of the Old Village. The area was planted with grass and with the invasion of vegetation growing naturally in the area, the scars of one hundred years of habitation are rapidly fading.

The New Village

The New Village was located at a site across the Valley from the Old Village between Indian and Yosemite creeks. The location intruded less obviously upon the landscape than the older site and had far greater area for possible future expansion. Further, the new area was warmer and less susceptible to floods than the old site. The New Village was dedicated in 1924 and consisted of a government administration building, a museum, Pillsbury's new studio, and the post office.29 Across from the administration building was the two-story Ranger's clubhouse erected in 1920.30 In the year following the dedication of the New

28 Upton, op. cit.

29 National Park Service Press Release of May 9, 1959 quoting the Stockton Record, Nov. 24, 1924.

30 Russell, op. cit., p. 189.
Village three additional studios were erected. Best, Boysen, and Foley all constructed new facilities to house their commercial interests. 31

From the beginning the New Village was the administrative center and headquarters for National Park Service functions. Originally, the New Village lacked any substantial commercial activity. The site has never offered visitor accommodations and eating facilities have been available only since the fifties; hence, visitors came for information, and to visit the museum and to browse at the studios.

The Village retained the form and functions cited above with only minor alterations for another thirty years (see Figure 7). One change took place in 1951 when Foley's old studio east of the post office was demolished. However, it was not until 1958-59 that substantial modifications to the New Village occurred (see Figure 8). As a part of the Mission 66 Program, and in conjunction with the demolition of Old Village facilities, new structures were erected to house services forced to move from their previous locations. In 1958 Degnan's new store and restaurant opened in the New Village. 32 Located east of the post office on the curving auxiliary road that serves the New Village, the new two-story structure contained a small grocery store and coffee shop on the first floor and a restaurant on the second. In 1959 a new and enormous


32 Russell, op. cit., 195.
FIGURE 7  Old portion of New Village - almost all structures built before 1930
FIGURE 8  New portion of New Village - construction dates from 1958
structure, the largest in the New Village, was built for the Yosemite Park and Curry Co.\textsuperscript{33} The new building, south of Degnan's along the service road, contained several businesses. A complete grocery and drygoods department store occupied slightly more than half of the public area of the building. The remainder of the structure was devoted to a coffee shop, restaurant, beauty shop, barber shop, and laundry.

Although the new structures were only two in number, they contributed greatly to the central place function of the Village. The New Village now is the primary source of retail food and supplies for the many campers who stay in the Valley. Moreover, the four eating facilities provide the greatest concentration of such operations in the Park.

Construction of a new visitors' center housing an information area, museum exhibits, and two auditoriums marked the final stage in the development of the New Village area. Work on the new center located between the museum building and Best's Studio commenced in 1966.

\textbf{Residential and Service Areas}

Along with the increased economic activity associated with larger numbers of tourists came an increase in the number of individuals who provided the goods and services demanded by park visitors. The number of permanent residents in the Valley increased from less than one hundred in 1913 to over a thousand by 1966.

\textsuperscript{33} Russell, \textit{op. cit.}, 195.
In turn, the permanent residents created a demand for goods and services not needed by park visitors. To meet these needs additional structures were built on the periphery of the New Village.

North of the New Village

In 1913 the land lying between the New Village site and the north walls of the Valley and between Yosemite and Indian creeks was almost void of permanent structures. A few buildings at Camp Lost Arrow, the elementary school, and the cemetery were the primary evidences of man. In 1917 the area received the first of what was to be a seemingly endless series of buildings. North of the cemetery the government opened a new complex of service buildings. Sixteen structures were erected including two barns and buildings which housed shops or served as storage sheds. 34 A new school was built in 1917 replacing the old structure which had been erected in 1875. There followed a period of almost constant construction of sheds, cottages, and small buildings to serve a multitude of purposes; among which were two large sheds to house automobiles. 35

In 1929 a major addition was a new hospital. 36 Located less than one-fourth mile east of the post office, the Lewis Hospital originally

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35 Ibid., March, 1921.

had sixteen beds. It continued to be the medical center for Yosemite Valley. Construction continued at a brisk pace through the 1930's but slowed during the forties and early fifties. The Mission 66 Program brought new construction to the area in terms of houses for the governmental staff, a new school, and a new warehouse facility (see Figure 9). The construction was accompanied by demolition of some old residences, sheds, and the old school building.

Table 5 shows the marked increase in the number of structures in the area from twenty in 1918 to one hundred and forty in 1966. This area to the north of the New Village had become the principal residential area for governmental employees as well as the central governmental storage and maintenance facility.

East of the New Village

Camp Tecoya, alternately called Camp 17, is located south of the Lewis Hospital and east of the New Village store. This area is separated from both the New Village and the area previously discussed only by service roads. Camp Tecoya has long been used for residences of Yosemite Park and Curry Company employees. Additionally, a garage and service station were built in 1920 along with maintenance and repair shops. 37 In 1920 Tecoya had tent accommodations for four hundred people along with a kitchen and dining room. 38 The facilities were

FIGURE 9  Part of government warehouse facility - north of New Village
expanded during the twenties and thirties when more permanent accommodations in the form of cottages and dormitories were constructed (see Figure 10). Since 1940 the total number of buildings has remained rather stable (see Table 5). The Curry Company constructed an office building and added another housing unit and more residences in the early 1950's but this did not affect substantial change. Of the approximately sixty structures at Tecoya in 1966, ten were multi-story dormitory buildings, and some two dozen were single and double family dwellings. The remaining buildings were storage and maintenance structures (see Figure 11).

The New Village and the two adjacent areas to the north and east comprised a virtually complete community. The area had the prime elements needed; residential areas, employment, administration, schools, medical facilities and a shopping center, as well as public utilities and governmental services. The community had developed almost entirely since 1913.

Other Residential and Service Areas

Prior to 1932 there were a number of cabins north of the site of the New Village which were occupied by descendants of the original Indian population. In that year six new cabins were built by the government on a site about one-half mile west of Yosemite Lodge and north of North Road. The construction of these cabins made the elimination

FIGURE 10  Employee residential area (Tecoya) - east of New Village
FIGURE 11  Garage and maintenance facilities (Tecoya) - east of New Village
of the old cabins possible. By 1941 nine additional cabins had been built at the New Indian Village, providing additional housing for the Valley's Indian population.

The destruction of the Kennyville stable and barn structures necessitated the building of another such complex. The new stables were built in the center of the Valley east of the confluence of the Merced River and Tenaya Creek and north of Clark's bridge. The stables and associated buildings still occupied this site in 1966.

The power house at Happy Isles was supplanted in 1916 by a new power dam at the cascades below Pohono bridge. The site at Happy Isles was not abandoned, however. During the 1920's the California Fish and Game Commission built a fish hatchery at the Isles. The hatchery became a tourist attraction, but by 1957 was no longer needed. In that year the facilities were turned over to the National Park Service and a nature center was placed in the building. The nature center remained through 1966 and the site has continued to be visited by large numbers of tourists.

**Tourist Accommodations**

In 1913 hotels and hotel-camps occupied a substantial portion of the cultural landscape. These facilities, consisting originally of the Sentinel Hotel and cottages, the hotel-camps of Curry, Lost Arrow, and Ahwahnee, underwent a significant degree of change from 1913 until 1966. Some sites were abandoned entirely while others underwent modifications varying from complete reconstruction and change of function to simple remodeling and painting.
# TABLE 5

## APPROXIMATE STRUCTURE COUNT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>CAMP CURRY</th>
<th>YOSEMITE LODGE</th>
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<th>NEW VILLAGE</th>
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<td>130</td>
<td>520</td>
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**COMMENT** -

1. These figures are intended to show building trends and provide relative comparisons by site and year.
2. This is a simple count, the Ahwahnee Hotel and a campground restroom each count one.

**SOURCE:** U.S. G.S. YOSEMITE VALLEY MAPS FOR YEARS INDICATED
Hotels

The need for hotel accommodations had been recognized by the early military superintendents in the Valley, but in 1913 there were fewer hotel accommodations than were available in 1876. This was due in part to the destruction of two pioneer hotels in 1888 and the state-built Stoneman House in 1896 and to the fact that no new structures to house tourists were completed until 1926.

The Yosemite Valley has had but two hotels in the period covered by this study. Of these, only the Sentinel and its cottages were available during the first thirteen years of the period. The building was originally constructed in 1876 and, along with the cottages, was showing signs of age when the auto was permitted to come into the Valley. The Sentinel had a limited capacity; the hotel and cottages combined could accommodate only about one hundred guests, and that number could be accommodated only if children slept on cots and two adults occupied each bed. In spite of this, the old structures persisted, buoyed largely by visitor pressure that insisted upon hotel accommodations. Not until late in 1936 was the first of the Sentinel cottages razed. In 1938 Rock Cottage was destroyed. A year later River and Ivy


Cottages were eliminated along with the main hotel building. In 1941 the razing was completed when Oak and Cedar Cottages were torn down.\footnote{Homer Robinson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 86-87.}

Another hotel was finally built in the 1920's. In 1926 the Ahwahnee Hotel was constructed at the site of Kennyville and Camp 8. Ahwahnee Hotel was then the most luxurious hospice in Yosemite Valley; it remains so today. The decor was largely fashioned from the design and patterns of California Indians. Mosaics covered the floor in the lobby; the main lounge had a great beamed ceiling, stained glass windows and held Indian artifacts collected in the area. Ornaments were brought from all over the world to enhance the beauty of the Ahwahnee.\footnote{Russell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 115.}

The main building of the hotel originally had ninety rooms but some twenty-two guest cottages which have been built on the hotel grounds have given it added capacity. The Ahwahnee could provide accommodations for 254 guests, more than twice the capacity of the old Sentinel.\footnote{John Krisko II, from a personal communication dated Dec. 18, 1967.} Unlike the Sentinel, the Ahwahnee continued to serve Yosemite visitors through the end of our period and on to the present.

The grounds are rather extensive and comprise over twenty-five acres including a golf course and a swimming pool. This acreage represented the smallest site devoted to lodgings in the Valley after the destruction of the Sentinel and its cottages.
From a structural viewpoint the Ahwahnee site had undergone substantial change. The scene presented by the barns, stables and sheds that comprised Kennyville differed greatly from the view offered by the well planned and well executed Ahwahnee Hotel and its grounds.

Hotel-Camps

The form of accommodation pioneered by the Currys developed into the primary form of lodging for non-camping tourists. Five such camps have existed in the Valley, two remain while three have long ago vanished from the scene.

Camp Curry was a thriving enterprise in 1913 and has continued to provide for tourist needs. The camp was an early center of commercial and service activities, rivaling the Old Village in some aspects. The entertainment facilities of 1913 were expanded so that by 1920 dancing, dining, swimming, bowling, pool, and billiards were all available. Entertainment was also provided at the campfire programs and the Firefall was a major tourist attraction. The Curry Company continued to add more lodging facilities so that the camp had a visitor capacity of some eleven hundred people by 1920. Many of the visitor cabins date from before 1920 although more were constructed in 1922 and 1924.

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46 Loc. cit.

Construction at Camp Curry was not limited to cabins and recreational facilities; during 1920 a garage and auto repair shop were erected. The garage had the capacity to shelter two hundred cars and was the largest building in Yosemite Valley at the time it was built.\textsuperscript{48} Two years later a service building was added containing such facilities as a bakery, ice cream plant, cold storage area, and a cafeteria.\textsuperscript{49} In 1929 a new cafeteria and dining room building was constructed along with additional parking for some 250 automobiles.\textsuperscript{50} With the exception of a dance hall during the mid 1930's, Camp Curry remained virtually unchanged until 1951 when a multiple housing unit was erected adjacent to the office building. Further change at Camp Curry has involved remodeling and refurbishing rather than razing and reconstruction. In 1966 the central building complex housed two snack bars, a dress shop, gift shop, meeting room, and cafeteria. In addition, a separate lounge, barber shop, and swimming pool were located in the complex. However, the lodgings still consisted almost entirely of cabins and tent cabins many of which were at least thirty years old (see Figure 12). A visitor from 1930 would hardly be confused by the changes he could perceive. Some of the entertainment attractions that existed in the 1920's

\textsuperscript{48} John Williams, \textit{Yosemite and Its High Sierra}, (San Francisco: John Williams, 1921), p. 186.

\textsuperscript{49} Arno Cammerer, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 117.

\textsuperscript{50} Horace Albright, \textit{Report of the Director of the National Park Service}, 1929, p. 148 and 144.
FIGURE 12  Old cabins still in use at Camp Curry
were gone; pool, billiards, and bowling were no longer played. However, the evening program of entertainment, swimming, and the Firefall were all present in 1966. 51

Physically, Camp Curry has not undergone the degree of change witnessed at the New and Old Villages or at Yosemite Lodge. Comparison of the U.S.G.S. map of the Valley for 1924 and 1966 field observations show approximately ninety structures at the Camp Curry site for both years (see Table 5). The count reached slightly over one hundred on the 1938 sheet but this is not a significant fluctuation. By 1966 the camp occupied over forty acres, making Camp Curry the largest single site devoted to tourist accommodations, including campgrounds, in the Valley.

However, there had been a de-emphasis of Camp Curry as an attraction. The Village and Yosemite Lodge seemed brighter, more lively, and provided a greater variety of attractions for the tourist than did Camp Curry. The result is that in 1966 Camp Curry was no longer the rival to the Village as in earlier days and the trend was toward making it a lodging area rather than an entertainment center.

Yosemite Lodge began operation in 1915 at the site of the old Army post, Fort Yosemite. Indeed, the operators utilized the largest of the old Army structures as the center for the lodge operation while other Army buildings were utilized for various Lodge purposes. Yosemite

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51 Abolished in 1968 by park authorities.
Lodge was the fourth hotel-camp to be started in the Valley and the only survivor of the Camp Curry imitators. Unlike Camp Curry which commenced operations with limited financing, the Lodge had ample funds at inception. The Lodge commenced operation with a dining room, lounge, and accommodations for several hundred guests. A year later a laundry and swimming pool were added. In 1917 a gas and oil station was built at the Lodge to sell Red Crown gasoline. This station, along with those at Camp Curry and the New Village, were operated by the Standard Oil Company from 1926 until the present. In 1920 sixty-five new visitor cabins were erected along with a garage and warehouse. Yosemite Lodge could now accommodate some eight hundred guests, only three hundred less than Camp Curry.

Although a rival in terms of visitor accommodations, the Lodge did not have the entertainment facilities available at Camp Curry and, hence, was not a center for tourist activity. During the early 1920's more cabins and new garage buildings were constructed; however, the pace of construction then slowed perceptibly.

The Army buildings erected before 1910 and scheduled for destruction in 1925 remained in use until 1956. In 1951 two new motel-type

52 From photographs made available by the National Park Service.
structures containing sixty modern rooms were added to the Lodge. These facilities were the first of a series of new buildings that substantially altered conditions at the Lodge. During 1955 another lodging facility was built. These three structures, along with the 1951 unit at Camp Curry, represented the first real improvements in visitor accommodations in the Valley since 1926 when the Ahwahnee Hotel was opened.

However, 1956 was the most significant year in terms of improvements to Yosemite Lodge. New central buildings were completed to replace the old Army structures. The old buildings, with their sagging roofs, bucking walls and chimneys held in place by wires, were razed that same year (see Figure 13). The new complex would finally contain an office and reservation area, large coffee shop, cafeteria, restaurant and bar, souvenir shop, a separate lounge, and an outdoor amphitheater. The Lodge had now become an entertainment center. The restaurant offered gourmet meals, the bar was the only one of its kind in the Valley, and various types of entertainment were presented in the lounge and amphitheater. Further additions were made in 1964 when five two-story motel units were constructed adding some 125 modern accommodations to the Lodge (see Figure 14). Despite the construction, by 1966 more than half of the accommodations consisted of old cabins.

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FIGURE 13 Rear of Yosemite Lodge buildings-1947 - photo courtesy National Park Service
FIGURE 14  New visitor accommodations at Yosemite Lodge
and tent cabins. Nonetheless, the changes at the Lodge had been substantial and the Lodge was the primary center of hotel and motel-type tourist accommodations in the Valley.

The changes had led to an actual decrease in the number of structures at the Lodge, one large building often replacing several older and smaller structures. Some 130 structures occupied the site in 1929, this figure soared to 180 in 1938 and two hundred in 1947. But, by 1966 the building count was reduced to about ninety-five. The Lodge occupied over thirty-five acres, ranking second behind Camp Curry in the area devoted to lodging.

Three hotel-camps in addition to Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge have been part of the cultural landscape of the Valley.

Two hotel-camps, Lost Arrow and Ahwahnee, were part of the scene in 1913. A third, El Capitan Camp, was begun in 1917. Camp Lost Arrow was shortlived, being established in 1901 and abandoned as a visitor lodging in 1915. The buildings remained after the camp was discontinued and subsequent government construction has maintained the area as part of the cultural landscape.

Camp Ahwahnee was active for an interval of only seven years and like Camp Lost Arrow, the operation was terminated in 1915. The site


59 Russell, op. cit., p. 112.

60 Loc. cit.
of the camp has been "naturalized" since the termination of activities. 61

El Capitan Camp was operated at the west end of Leidig Meadow. The central buildings were erected in 1917 only to be destroyed by fire later the same year. 62 The area has been restored, however, and by 1966 traces of the camp were no longer visible.

THE OPEN LANDS

The changes in the open lands differ in a very important respect from the changes visible in roads and major structures. The open lands that form an element of the cultural landscape have actually decreased in acreage during the period of this study. There was less area devoted to campgrounds in 1966 than in 1913 but far more significant was the return of meadow areas to a "naturalized" state. This decrease in open land acreage has provided an areal balance for the expansion of building activity into previously primitive areas.

Campgrounds

Camping has remained the most popular form of accommodation for Valley visitors. 63 Though the popularity has increased and the number


63 In terms of visitor days, the 1965 Yosemite Travel Summary gives 1,249,584 camper days as opposed to 672,395 overnight stays in Yosemite Park and Curry Co. facilities. In terms of people accommodated, the difference is not as great since campers average about 3.8 nights per park visit compared to 2.4 nights per park visit by users of permanent lodging facilities according to the Travel Survey of 1954.
of campers has steadily risen throughout the period of this study, the actual area devoted to camping has decreased. Of the ten public campgrounds available in 1913 six were still available in 1966 and two new ones had been created so that by 1966 there were a total of eight active camping areas. Four of the 1913 camps were eliminated between 1919 and 1925. Camp 10 was abandoned in 1919 when the Mirror Lake Road was realigned, Camp 20 was occupied by the Church Bowl in 1920, Camp 18 was at the site of the Post Office in the New Village and was eliminated in 1923 and Camp 8 gave way to the Ahwahnee Hotel in 1925.\textsuperscript{64} Moreover, the extent of the camping areas had been more clearly defined so that by 1966 less than 140 acres were devoted to camping. This represents a decrease of some sixty acres in campground area since 1913.

Throughout the period of study there has been increased camper pressure upon the campgrounds. An attempt was made prior to 1966 to alleviate this pressure. In 1950 Camp 15 was unitized as was Camp 7 in 1964. Unitizing consists of establishing a specific number of campsites in a particular campground, each with table, fire pit, and parking space. This represents a departure from the previous practice of simply pitching a tent in any space large enough to accommodate lines and poles. The effect of unitizing was to drastically reduce the number of campsites per campground. Although by 1966 not all campgrounds were unitized, the process was planned for all Valley camping areas. The ultimate goal is to reduce the number of campsites by more than one

thousand thereby lessening crowded camp conditions, making camping a more pleasurable experience and reducing the number of overnight Valley visitors. 65

Prior to unitization, the camping areas were subject to changes that took the form of added camper conveniences. Rest rooms and running water were placed in all the camps. An amphitheater for ranger talks and presentations was constructed in Camp 14. Camp 16 was converted into a housekeeping camp and during 1950 a store was established there. Fifteen years later a laundromat and showers were installed at Camp 16. During 1958 an amphitheater was built in Camp 7. All of these features were designed to ease the difficulties faced by family campers and all served to make camping more attractive.

Meadowlands

At the beginning of the period of this study the meadows were extensively utilized and formed a definite part of the cultural landscape. The meadows were cultivated for hay, heavily grazed and extensively fenced. This type of activity combined with picnics and the parking of automobiles was seriously affecting the meadows as areas of scenic attraction (see Figure 15). During 1920 a pen was constructed in Cook's meadow for the purpose of grazing elk. 66 The area was soon heavily


FIGURE 15  Camping on Stoneman Meadow-1927 - photo courtesy National Park Service
over-grazed. In 1924 more acreage in El Capitan meadow was fenced for
stock and a herder was required to watch additional stock outside of the
newly fenced area. The old pasture area at El Capitan Meadow had become
almost barren. 67 However, during this period there was a growing
awareness of the need to preserve the meadows. In conjunction with that
awareness, limitations began being placed upon meadow utilization, and
the preservation of meadow area was undertaken. In 1919 portions of
meadow by Camps 6, 17, and 18 were cleared. Three years later, El
Capitan Meadow was cleared of small pines. In 1924 the fences at
Leidig and Bridalveil Meadows were removed. The fences continued to be
removed and grazing decreased so that by 1930 the dairy herds were gone
and work stock had been greatly reduced. In 1933 the elk pen was remov-
ed and most of the meadow areas were returning to a more "natural"
condition.

In addition to the removal of animals there was an obligation to
protect the meadows from direct human interference. This was accomplish-
ed by ditching and the placing of curb rocks about the meadows, beginn-
ing extensively in 1929. 68 The result was an end to cars, picnickers
and tents being randomly positioned about the meadowlands.

67 Gabriel Sovulewski, Construction Reports of Gabriel Sovulewski
1916-1927, June, 1924.

68 Horace Albright, Report of the Director of the National Park
Service, 1929, p. 144.
Thus, man protected the meadows from man, but there was a need to interfere with natural process if the meadows were to be preserved. The decision to act to maintain the meadows has reduced but not halted the encroachment of the forests. Clearing of trees has continued from 1919 through 1960, yet the amount of meadowland decreased steadily until the 1940's. In 1868 there were some 745 acres of meadowland, in 1922 meadow acreage was 480 acres, in 1937 about 327 acres. Even with management, the area in meadowlands was only remaining constant.

The period of 1913-1966 was a time of great change in the meadows. From an integral part of the cultural landscape at the beginning of the interval to vigorously defended areas of natural beauty represents the most drastic form of change possible in terms of cultural and natural elements of the landscape.

**YOSEMITE VALLEY - 1966**

The Yosemite Valley in 1966, like the Valley in 1913, was a tourist center. The commercial activities of the area were devoted to the tourist, and the elements of the cultural landscape were almost wholly attributable to tourism.

The largest single site in terms of area comprised the Village and the residential and warehousing areas directly north and east of the Village. The area comprised approximately one hundred acres. This

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location contained the administrative offices of Yosemite Park and was the largest center of commercial activity. However, the largest portion of the site was utilized for residences for employees of the federal government and the concessionaires. There were close to one thousand people in year-around residence with more than two thousand living in the area during the peak months of tourist travel.\textsuperscript{70} The residences, shops, warehouses, commercial buildings, and administrative structures on the site comprised the largest concentration of structures in the Valley; some two hundred are identifiable.

The hotel and hotel-camps were, in the most direct sense, the results of tourism. More specifically these areas, along with the campgrounds, were the result of attempts to provide overnight accommodations for the visitor. Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge were nearly the same size in 1966, with Camp Curry occupying slightly more than one-half of their combined eighty acres. Not only were the hotel-camps of comparable size in terms of acreage, but both Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge each have approximately ninety structures. The hotel-camps offered food, lodging, entertainment and miscellaneous services like automobile fuel and souvenirs. Of the two camps the Yosemite Lodge was the more active. Although of smaller capacity in terms of beds, the Lodge offered newer facilities, three types of eating establishments and a bar, and was located in a far warmer and more pleasant region.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{70} From a conversation with E. Bell of the Management Assistance Office of the Village.

\textsuperscript{71} John Krisko II, in a personal communication dated Dec. 18, 1967 credits Camp Cutty with 1567 beds and Yosemite Lodge with 1479 beds.
The Ahwahnee, the only true hotel in the Valley, occupied over twenty-five acres. However, there was a certain lack of efficiency connected with the Ahwahnee from the point of view of the number of people who could find accommodations there. The Ahwahnee can accommodate only 254 visitors or about nine visitors per acre. This does not compare favorably with the forty-one guests per acre at Camp Curry or the thirty-nine guests per acre at Yosemite Lodge.

The campgrounds occupied some 136 acres and constituted the greatest single land use type in terms of acreage. Although the camps offered comparatively few conveniences, they accommodated a greater number of tourists per unit area providing overnight shelter for about seventy-two campers per acre. The campground areas that were unitized, however, did not present any advantage over the hotel-camps on a people per acre basis. Camps 7 and 15, both unitized, accommodated forty visitors per acre, which was essentially the same density as Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge.

Visitor lodging facilities directly accounted for some 240 acres of land use in the Valley. Further, overnight accommodations of visitors accounted indirectly for a substantial number of acres for employee housing and service areas.

The sites of human activity in the Valley utilized some 375 acres. The seventeen miles of primary roadways occupied approximately fifty additional acres. The total of some 425 acres represents approximately eighteen percent of the 2400 acres that comprise the Valley floor. Moreover, in excess of five hundred structures of various description
could be found in the Valley in 1966. This constitutes a substantial intrusion upon a natural resource that was supposedly set aside by Congress as an area to be preserved unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.
CHAPTER IV - THE AUTOMOBILE AND CHANGE IN CULTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE

As indicated in the previous chapters great change in elements of the cultural landscape occurred since the automobile was admitted into Yosemite Valley. Part of that change may be directly attributed to a demand for better roads, more parking areas and expanded automobile service facilities, demands directly related to the auto.

However, the greater and more far-reaching changes were related to the opening of the Valley to great number of people. The automobile has largely been responsible for the ever increasing visitor travel to Yosemite National Park. The tourist increase led to greater commercial opportunities for Park concessionaires, opportunities that stemmed from growing tourist demands for food, shelter and entertainment. In addition, the increased utilization of the Park required more and better administrative effort and procedures along with more and more maintenance and service facilities.

CHANGES TO ACCOMMODATE THE AUTOMOBILE

To properly operate automobiles in the Valley certain modifications to existing elements of the cultural landscape were necessary, for there were distinct differences between the auto and its predecessor, the horse-drawn stage. The auto required gasoline instead of hay. The auto for the most part, was heavier and moved faster than the stage. The auto required a new kind of service facility. These and other characteristic differences led to modifications of cultural elements in
The Primary Roads

The primary road network underwent little change when compared with other elements of the cultural landscape. The length of the system did not increase, indeed, there was a slight decrease during the period of this study. However, the lack of increased length is more an indication of the small size of the area, the restricted ingress and egress points, and the extended nature of the network prior to the introduction of the automobile rather than an indication of the ineffectiveness of the auto as an agent of landscape change. In addition to the nearly static road length, the pattern of the primary system changed but little, further indication of the original density of the road network. Nevertheless, the principal roads of 1966 were different from the principal roads of 1913; some modifications had been made. Drivers of automobiles brought new emphasis on the already recognized need for road surface improvement and the widening and straightening of the routes. The initially stringent auto regulations forbidding the driving of private vehicles on Valley roads were based upon the superintendent's contention that the roads were too narrow and the turns too sharp to permit safe travel by motorists. The call for improvement of the road surfaces was made in the first report of the military superintendent in 1907. The poor road surfaces had been the subject of

numerous criticisms prior to the turn of the century, yet despite the official and unofficial pleadings little was done to improve the road surfaces prior to the automobile. With the increased road use improvements became not necessary but mandatory. Thus, by 1918 essentially all of the primary network had been macadamized.

The network was also improved through widening and straightening during the years immediately after the automobile was admitted. The principal example of this was the Mirror Lake road, improved in 1919. By the early 1920's essentially all of the primary system had been widened to twenty feet or more from the narrower twelve and fourteen foot roadways of pre-auto days.

Between 1925 and 1927 the number of automobiles entering the park more than doubled so that nearly 100,000 vehicles were using the park roads. This heavy utilization soon made the gravel surfaces wholly inadequate just as the first few years of auto traffic had shown the dirt surfaces to be totally unsatisfactory. Hence, beginning in the late 1920's the roads were paved. The paving resulted in more effective use of the auto by park visitors in terms of comfort and convenience and a decrease in maintenance operations.

The construction of bypass roads around Camp Curry and Yosemite Lodge, the realignment of roads, the paving and widening of roads were all designed to relieve congestion that resulted from too many vehicles and to expedite the movement of automobiles throughout the Valley.
Parking and Maintenance Facilities

The problem of what to do with the auto (once the driver and passengers arrived in Yosemite Park) quickly became apparent. The early regulations prohibited private automobiles from being driven about the Valley floor for any purpose other than ingress and egress. Specific areas were designated as places to leave automobiles and the concept of parking lots was introduced. In addition to open-air parking areas, the Valley contained, by 1920, large buildings whose express purpose was the parking of automobiles. Indeed the largest building of the time was the Camp Curry storage garage. Problems connected with auto parking increased through time as the number of vehicles increased. In 1914 some 735 autos entered the park; thirteen years later the figure was nearly 100,000. By 1946 this figure had increased to 190,000, in 1966 some 375,000 autos utilized park roads. As a result some twenty-five acres of Valley floor are being used for parking lots; this represents between one and two percent of the total land area of the study area.

In addition to parking areas the facilities needed to fuel, maintain and repair the vehicles were established. The gas and oil stations erected at Camp Curry, Yosemite Lodge, and the New Village fulfilled the need for fuel and minor repair. Larger maintenance and repair tasks were taken to the repair shop near the New Village.

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**Meadowlands**

With the coming of the automobile there was a decline in the use of horses. Along with the replacement of horses by autos among the tourists, the horse-drawn stages were replaced by buses in 1915. With the decline of the horse population in the Valley there came to be fewer demands for hay and pasture. Dairy herds remained until the mid-1920's, but these, too, were finally eliminated - although not directly as a result of the automobile's presence. With the decrease in need for hay and pasture, the meadows, long used for such purposes, began slowly to return to a more "natural" state. The net change in meadowlands from 1913 to 1966 was quite substantial. Although meadows have undergone varying degrees of cultivation and use as pasture at different times, about one hundred acres were utilized by man when the auto was admitted to Yosemite Valley. By 1966 essentially all of this acreage had been restored to a "natural" state and has been withdrawn from the cultural landscape. The automobile was a prime factor in the return of the meadows to a more "natural" condition.

**CHANGES RELATED TO INCREASED TOURISM**

Increased visitor pressure upon the park affected the scene in two ways. Firstly there were modifications of those elements of the landscape directly utilized by visitors, and secondly there were those changes necessary to man and maintain the visitor facilities.
Change as a Direct Response to Tourism

As the number of tourists increased, the facilities required to fulfill their needs were expanded, improved, and updated. More lodgings were required, more eating establishments were required, more groceries were sold, and there was an increasing desire on the part of many visitors for more modern comforts to closely simulate suburban conveniences. Facilities for worship were expanded, locations for ranger-naturalist presentations were created, and showers, laundromats, and beauty parlors were built. All these services were directly used by the tourist. To the visitor they were tangibles, facilities the visitor saw and dealt with each day.

Tourist Accommodations

In 1913 there were three types of lodgings available to the park visitor: hotel, hotel-camp, and campgrounds. The old Sentinel Hotel had already passed its zenith when the auto was admitted to the Valley. The rooms were not luxurious, the building was in poor condition; the capacity was quite limited; and the site had become less than ideal. Nevertheless, the Sentinel and its cottages represented the only hotel accommodations to be had. The hotel-camps had cabins and tent-cabins; neither of which provided anything more than shelter. Other services were offered in a central building complex. The third type of accommodation were the campgrounds. The campgrounds offered pit toilets and running water as their concessions to necessity.

Through the years more lodgings were built to accommodate the larger numbers of park visitors. A luxury hotel, the Ahwahnee, added
a distinct element to the Valley in terms of a new level of tourist accommodations and a new structural complex in the landscape. The Yosemite Lodge, at the site of Fort Yosemite, developed into a large lodging facility in response to the growing numbers of visitors. Although the Lodge and Camp Curry offered similar accommodations, for much of the period covered in this paper, the Lodge eventually bridged the gap between the simple cabins and the luxurious Ahwahnee. During the 1950's and 1960's two-story motel units were built at the Lodge. These accommodations provided a more complete and modern environment than the cabins, but lacked the overt attempt at luxury of the Ahwahnee.

Just as in 1913 cabins, tent-cabins and campgrounds were available for visitor use and these formed two other types of lodgings. The hotel-camps continued to offer food, entertainment, souvenir shopping and other tourist related services.

The capacities of the lodgings were expanded so that Camp Curry could provide for about 1550 visitors, Yosemite Lodge over 1450 and the Ahwahnee had accommodations for some 250 people. The campgrounds represented a different problem in terms of capacity. The population densities in the non-unitized campground could extend well beyond the realistic limits, so that although the recognized campground capacity was some 9700 people, including the house-keeping camp, a holiday weekend could have 16,000 campers in the Valley.

Despite the increased lodging facilities the actual area required by this portion of the cultural landscape was less in 1966 than in 1913. To be sure, Camp Curry had expanded to over forty acres. Two new areas,
Yosemite Lodge with over thirty-five acres and the Ahwahnee with more than twenty-five acres, were added. However, two camps, the Lost Arrow and Ahwahnee, that were present in 1913 had vanished by 1966. Further, the Sentinel Hotel and the associated cottages had been eliminated. The most significant change was the reduction in the number of acres devoted to campgrounds despite the increased camping pressure. Camps 8, 10, 18, and 20 were eliminated totally and the boundaries on the other campgrounds were clarified. The end result was the camper of 1966 was faced with a tremendously higher population density at his campground than the camper of 1913. This particular change in the scene came as no real comfort to the visitor who preferred camping to hotel accommodations.

The importance of the lodging facilities to the cultural landscape may be observed by considering the area devoted to this activity. The hotel and hotel-camps accounted for about 105 acres while the public campgrounds utilized 136 acres of the Valley floor. The total, over 240 acres, is almost half of the total land of the Yosemite that constitutes the cultural aspect of the landscape.

Other Tourist Facilities

There were elements of the landscape that directly served the tourist that were not connected with the lodging facilities. Although they occupied substantially less area, at least one, the New Village, was an active center for tourists. The New Village had succeeded the Old Village in gradual steps until the Old Village had essentially vanished from the scene. The destruction of the Old Village area was in part
due to the increased tourism. The Old Village site simply did not have sufficient additional acreage available for the necessary increase in the Village size needed to fulfill the requirements of more and more Yosemite visitors. The new site had such acreage. The New Village utilized more area than its predecessor yet it did not have all the functional capabilities of the Old Village. The Village of 1966 did not have any lodging facilities and the lecture-movie building had not yet been completed by 1966 so the Village also lacked an entertainment capability.

Nonetheless the New Village had responded to increased tourist needs, with a modern grocery store only slightly smaller than a typical suburban California chain grocery, a variety store selling clothes, stationery, jewelry and the like, a beauty shop, two restaurants, two coffee shops, post office, bakery, and government information center; this list is not all inclusive. With the exception of one government administrative building, part of the Old Museum building and some of the services at the post office, the entire New Village is devoted to the satisfaction of tourist needs.

Other areas of the Valley were directly concerned with the tourist; however, they did not occupy large areas nor greatly effect the overall cultural aspect of the landscape. The Happy Isles Nature Center existed solely for the benefit of visitors. The church bowl, too, served tourists primarily. The stable complex was principally involved with the rental of horses to park visitors who chose to utilize the bridle trails and see a different aspect of the Valley than is possible by auto touring.
Change as an Indirect Response to Tourism

The second kind of landscape changes introduced by the increase in visitor numbers were less obvious. These changes were made at locations away from areas seen by most visitors, and since they just seemed to evolve, they were accepted as part of the Yosemite scene, like trees. However, a large portion of the change in the Valley landscape belongs to this realm. Huge warehouses, administration buildings, residential housing, schools, equipment sheds, and office buildings all belong to this class of landscape modification. There were changes made necessary by increased tourism yet not directly involved with the individual tourist.

Employee Residential Areas

By 1913 specific areas of the Valley had been established for non-tourist use. The residential areas formed the largest part of this element of the cultural landscape in 1913 as well as 1966. The increase in visitors between those years, had brought about significant change in the utilization of scenic Valley acreage for residential use by individuals working in the Valley. The development north of the New Village represents by far the most substantial area of landscape change directly involved with employee housing. Essentially open land in 1913, the area developed into a residential region after the admission of the automobile. By 1966 scores of houses had been built complete with garages and lawns, and over thirty acres had been removed from the natural element of the landscape.
Another area to undergo modification was Tecoya (Camp 17) east of the New Village. The Tecoya area had been used for employee housing during 1913 and had continued to be so used throughout the interval covered in this study. Tecoya of 1966 was substantially different from Tecoya of 1913 insofar as the canvas structures had been replaced by more permanent buildings. Tecoya had been modified so that some ten multi-story dormitory like dwellings and almost two dozen double and single family units were at the site in 1966.

The Army had erected housing units west of Yosemite Lodge. After 1913 additional homes were built farther west of this area to house descendants of the Indian population. Although not extensively developed, the addition of the Indian housing, in particular, removed more land from the natural scene.

Employee housing also was built at the hotel-camps, primarily the Yosemite Lodge, but these structures are inherently part of the area considered in the discussion of the hotel-camps. Camp 6 and 19 have been employee camps from 1913 until the present time.

In close relation with the park residents were facilities either exclusively for resident use or shared to varying degrees with Valley visitors. The school, for example, was a feature of the cultural landscape devoted to the residents; the Ranger's Club House is another such structure. The post office, although shared with visitors, was certainly expanded to care for the needs of the residents. Visitors did not expect to receive mail, nor use post office boxes in the normal course of their vacations. The hospital was a shared facility, but dental service was provided principally for the permanent residents.
Auxiliary Roads and Service Facilities

Modification of the auxiliary road network was accomplished by expansion into areas previously lacking such roads and by intensification of the existing pattern. The most notable change occurred in the area north of the New Village. That change represented an expansion into an untracked area and was made to provide access to the growing service and residential complex located there. All the facilities constructed in the Valley to provide warehousing, maintenance and support for the tourist centers required access routes; routes that were largely untraveled by the tourist. The auxiliary road patterns at Yosemite Lodge and Camp Curry were intensified, and, while some of those paths were common to visitor and concessionaire or government vehicles, others were for the exclusive use of "official" vehicles. The road network in the campgrounds was also intensified but their use was primarily by the camping public.

With the exception of the campground roads the modifications in the auxiliary road network were necessary to provide movement to and from facilities that were required to support the tourist-oriented centers.

The growing tourist centers required more and more service facilities. Warehousing, equipment repair and maintenance shops were needed. The government complex north of the New Village fulfilled much of this need from its beginning in 1917 through to the present. The substantial expansion program accomplished here during Mission 66 was a direct result of the attempt to adequately support the tourist facili-
ties. Other such service facilities are located in Yosemite Valley.

East of the New Village at Tecoya the Yosemite Park and Curry Company has a large repair area. At the Village, Yosemite Lodge and Camp Curry there are located expanded warehousing areas all designed to provide support for tourist needs.
CHAPTER V - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

When the Yosemite Valley was added to Yosemite National Park in 1905 an extensive cultural element was already part of the Valley landscape. One acre in every six was utilized for some type of human activity. With the admission of the automobile and the resulting increase in tourism, new demands were made upon the park administration for more visitor-oriented facilities and services. The response to those needs took the form of intensifying the inherited cultural landscape with little change in pattern.

Hence, the changes brought about by the decision to admit the automobile into the Yosemite Valley have, in the broad sense, been those changes primarily related to increased densities and intensified land use. For the automobile brought ever-increasing numbers of tourists; tourists that required more and more facilities to fulfill their needs, facilities that required more and more personnel, personnel that required more and more community services.

The 12,000 visitors in 1913 had swollen to 1,800,000 by 1966. Commercial operations expanded to provide for tourist needs. Two-story motel units, several restaurants, grocery outlets, laundromats, shops, and studios all competed for tourist attention. Support and service areas grew apace, with warehouses and maintenance facilities occupying more of the Valley acreage. One thousand people resided year-around in Yosemite Valley and more than double that number called the Valley home
during peak tourist months.

Under the tourist onslaught the number of buildings increased from over one hundred in 1913 to over five hundred in 1966, the number of miles of auxiliary roads tripled. Despite new construction and increased activities in the Valley the areal extent of the cultural landscape of 1966 was virtually the same as the areal extent of the 1913 human scene. The return of meadowland and the Old Village site to "natural" conditions was responsible for offsetting expansion into former "natural" areas. The intensity of human activity has indeed increased since the auto was admitted to Yosemite Valley.

The effect of intensified land use increased human densities and led to the deterioration of elements of the cultural landscape throughout most of the period of this study. Campers crowded into the campgrounds in such numbers that smoke from their fires obliterated the night sky. During normal meal hours the restaurants had lines of prospective diners waiting outside so that they could gain entrance only to wait again for service. Traffic congestion was common.

Old buildings lingered for years after the dates they were scheduled to be razed. Tourists required services housed in those old structures and concessionaires were not about to decrease profits just to improve the appearance of their facilities. Not until the early 1950's and during Mission 66 did concessionaires finally improve facilities at some of their sites. However, examples of the deterioration of elements of the cultural landscape may still be seen in some of the cabins at Camp Curry and at Tecoya, an area reminiscent of a tract destined for urban renewal.
There are redeeming aspects of the decision to admit the automobile. The auto opened Yosemite Park to millions of visitors who would have otherwise not been able to journey to the area. Those millions were able to obtain the experience of Yosemite even though the quality of that experience is suspect. The tourist numbers forced the Park Service to conceive and adopt a plan for use of the Valley's limited acreage, an element of administration that seems to have been lacking for a number of years. Finally, the replacement of the horse by the auto permitted the return of large tracts of meadowland to a "natural" condition thereby returning the element of nature's work to a more proper place.

CONCLUSION

In view of the overall change in the cultural landscape of Yosemite Valley it is the opinion of this writer that the decision to admit the automobile into the Valley was, in the main, unwise. However, that decision has been made and the results are evident, clearly visible in the present cultural landscape. What of the future?

The future of Yosemite Valley is precarious. The Valley is small, its 2400 acres is barely three-fourths the size of Los Angeles International Airport. The boundaries are permanently fixed; there can be

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1The dedication and purpose of the administrators of the Valley since the advent of the National Park Service is not the point of criticism. Unfortunately the Service has had to contend with limited budgets, lobbies and political considerations that have undoubtedly interfered with proper management and administration.
no pushing back of the granite cliffs; no enlargement is possible.

To this writer there is nothing to suggest that visits to Yosemite Park will not continue to increase in the next several years. Such an increase in the number of tourists will surely result in more demands for visitor facilities. These requirements must be met, but not in Yosemite Valley. For there is a limit to the number of acres that may be devoted to human activities and still have the visitor receive a Park experience of adequate quality. Further, there is a limit to the intensity to which the human areas may be developed without substantially harming the Valley scene. In the view of this writer those limits have already been exceeded. Not only should future expansion of tourist facilities be made outside the Valley, but efforts should be extended to remove structures and activities currently found in the Valley.

There are three ways of improving the Valley scene and the quality of the Park experience. As early as 1945 consideration was given to the removal of certain activities from the Valley. With the advent of the Mission 66 program such removal became a reality. The creation of the government center at El Portal, outside Park boundaries, is an important step in returning the Valley to a more nearly pristine condition. Unfortunately, Mission 66 also called for the building of new residences and warehousing structures in the Valley. El Portal, or a similar site, should be the administration headquarters for both governmental and concessionaire activities as well as employee residential sites, for there is little reason for employees to reside in the Valley. As a first step, then, in improving the cultural landscape
of the Valley, administrative, residential, support and maintenance activities should be withdrawn from the Valley and, if possible, the Park.

A second (but more difficult) approach for the improvement of the Valley scene involves the limitation or elimination of various services directly related to the tourist, principally overnight accommodations. The concept of lodgings in the Valley with their associated shops and recreational activities was inherited from the 19th century. During these early days when travel to and from the Valley was long and arduous, lodgings in the Valley were necessary. However, with present-day accessibility from outside the Park and from the surrounding High Sierra regions the necessity of Valley accommodations is at least questionable in the light of maintaining the natural beauty of Yosemite Valley. At the minimum, overnight accommodations should be limited, and indeed, as this paper is being written such limits are in force. The total number of overnight visitors in the concessionaire operated accommodations is limited to four thousand. Additionally, the unitizing of the campgrounds is an effective move toward totally limiting overnight Park visitors. Other tourist-oriented land uses such as the golf course and tennis courts are artificial to the real values of the Yosemite Valley and do not properly belong within its confines.

A more drastic method of improving the Valley would call for the total elimination of overnight accommodations. If this were done many other commercial operations such as studios, stores, and restaurants would be affected and could be expected to decrease the scope of their
activities for economic reasons. This approach is admittedly extreme in view of traditional activities in the Valley; however, it merits consideration.

Finally, the movement of visitors within Yosemite Valley requires much improvement. Traffic problems in the Valley are serious and harmful to both the Park and the Park experience of the visitors. There are many possible ways of alleviating transportation problems within Yosemite Valley. Converting some of the roads to one-way routes is a realistic possibility and indeed such an experiment is underway as this paper is being written. Restricting the entrance of automobiles, with local transportation handled by tram or shuttle bus is another reasonably practical solution. A more costly solution would involve the reconstruction of the primary road pattern to optimize the movement of people and at the same time lessen the impact of the roads upon the natural scene. The ultimate solution to auto congestion would be to prohibit automobiles entirely and provide other means of access; however, such a solution, like the elimination of overnight accommodations would be subject to political forces. There are many possibilities for handling the movement of Valley visitors including combinations of monorails, trams, shuttle buses, electric trains, moving sidewalks, and other types of mass transportation systems. Such transport techniques must be considered for the sake of both tomorrows' visitor and the Valley he intends to visit.

The Yosemite Valley provides an example for decision makers who must permit or deny access to automobiles in scenic recreational areas.
The case of the Yosemite Valley illustrates many of the problems involved in granting the automobile access to primitive areas. Policy makers should profit from this example.
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