

CEDAR PASS LODGE  
Badlands National Park  
20681 South Dakota Highway 240  
Interior  
Jackson County  
South Dakota

HABS SD-25  
*HABS SD-25*

PHOTOGRAPHS

COLOR TRANSPARENCIES

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

# HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

## CEDAR PASS LODGE

HABS No. SD-25

**Location:** Badlands National Park, 20681 South Dakota Highway 240,  
Interior, Jackson County, South Dakota

The coordinates for Cedar Pass Lodge are 43.747874 N, -101.945159 W, and they were obtained through Google Earth in October 2012 with, it is assumed, NAD 1983. There is no restriction on the release of the locational data to the public.

**Present Owner:** National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

**Present Occupant:** Forever Resorts

**Present Use:** Restaurant, retail, and lodging concession for park visitors

**Significance:** Cedar Pass Lodge is a roadside tourist facility established during the late 1920s in the Badlands of South Dakota. It was developed by local businessman Ben Millard and initially operated by his sister Clara Jennings. Cedar Pass Lodge began as a dance hall with a dining room and some lodging in 1928. A tourist cabin court was expanded at the rear of the property in 1930 to provide additional overnight accommodations. Two rows of small rustic wood cabins face each other around a U-shaped gravel drive. The valley setting offers views toward the rock formations of the Badlands, particularly the heights of Cedar Pass to the northeast. The lodge building faces the road at the head of the cabin loop and houses the restaurant, shops, and offices.

Cedar Pass Lodge is integral to the history of Badlands National Park, which began as Badlands National Monument. With the support of U.S. Senator Peter Norbeck, the National Monument was initially authorized in 1929, contingent on accumulating enough property and roads being built by South Dakota. Millard and Jennings promoted the Badlands as a tourist destination and received the first concession permits in the proposed National Monument. In 1934-36, Millard worked for the Department of the Interior acquiring land options from his neighbors. Badlands National Monument was officially established in 1939 and shortly thereafter the Cedar Pass area was chosen as its administrative headquarters, largely due to the presence of Cedar Pass Lodge. Cedar Pass Lodge served as a de facto visitor's center in this key section of the Badlands until construction of a NPS visitor's center in 1959.

Herbert Millard sold Cedar Pass Lodge to the National Park Service in 1963, after the death of both his parents. Badlands National Monument became Badlands National Park in November 1978. The lodge building was renovated and expanded several times over the years, most recently in 1986. The cabins were completely resheathed with stucco around 1949 and many of the original wood sash windows replaced by aluminum sash. Cedar Pass Lodge continues to be operated as a concession, providing one of the few options for food and lodging in a remote location. In 2012 the current concessioner, Forever Resorts, demolished or moved many of the extant cabins and replaced them with new modular units.

## PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1928 - 1930s
2. Architect: None/Unknown
3. Original and subsequent owners and uses: Cedar Pass Lodge was owned by the Millard/Jennings family from 1928 until 1963, when it was sold to the National Park Service to be operated as a concession. The use has remained essentially the same - providing lodging, meals, souvenirs and supplies to automobile travelers visiting the Badlands. The current concessioner is Forever Resorts.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Unknown. The original log faced boards used to construct the cabins were brought in from the Black Hills by Ben Millard.
5. Original plans and construction: Planning and construction of the Cedar Pass Lodge cabins seems to have been an ad hoc process supervised by the owners, Ben Millard and Clara Jennings.
6. Alterations and additions: The lodge and cabins have been heavily altered over the years. The cabins were frequently moved or altered to meet changing demands. In 1949 Millard began updating the cabins by removing the log faced boards and covering the wood frame structures in stucco. Many of the original wood sash windows were replaced by aluminum sash at this time and bathrooms upgraded. Simulated masonry accents were also added to the exteriors of Cabin 1-2 and 3 prior to 1965. Additional renovations took place during the 1980s.

### B. Historical Context:

Cedar Pass Lodge is located in a valley on the south edge of Badlands National Park's North Unit. Badlands NP contains nearly 244,000 acres in three non-contiguous parcels -- North Unit, South Unit, and Palmer Creek Unit (the latter two are contained within the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation). Badlands NP is located within the geological formation known as the White River Badlands, located in the southwestern portion of South Dakota and characterized by

deeply dissected, easily eroded geological formations that are difficult to traverse. According to a Historic Resource Study, "the Badlands represent a land of contrasts where rugged beauty and majestic landscapes are confronted by the harsh realities of climatic extremes and the struggle for life within a badlands environment."<sup>1</sup>

The Lakota Indians called the region *Mako sica* (land bad). By the late eighteenth century, nomadic equestrian groups of Lakota Sioux were living west of the Missouri River in what became South Dakota. In 1823 a group of fur traders led by Jedediah Smith became the first Euro-Americans to report on the White River Badlands. Many of the white visitors to the region starting in the mid-nineteenth century were fossil collectors hunting for specimens in the rich deposits of the White River Group. The region is considered the birthplace of American vertebrate paleontology, with its first fossil discoveries published in 1846. After decades of conflict with Native Americans, the U.S. Congress passed the Dawes Act in 1889, essentially forcing the Sioux to relinquish their land and move to reservations. With this move white settlement was fully opened and accelerated in the region. Many of the new settlers were cattlemen who grazed their herds on the rich tables of grassland found between badlands formations.<sup>2</sup>

While railroad service had come to the Black Hills and Rapid City from the south via Nebraska with the gold rush of the 1870s, rail service was not extended across the rest of western South Dakota until the early twentieth century. The coming of the railroad aided fossil hunting and transportation across the region. The Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad came through the town of Interior, just south of Cedar Pass. The Chicago & North Western Railway was built to the north through Wall, South Dakota. Both of these lines were completed to Rapid City by 1907. This development inspired a homesteading boom, with the area population increasing 222 percent between 1900 and 1910 (from 5,610 to 12,453). However many settlers found the conditions too harsh for successful agriculture, leading to widespread failures within the first years and culminating with a widespread drought and drop in commodities prices after World War I. The Badlands remained remote and sparsely populated.<sup>3</sup>

The coming of automobile tourism in the early twentieth century inspired a number of small scale tourist attractions along highway for travelers. Cedar Pass Lodge is a key remnant of this first generation of automobile tourism in the Badlands. Begun as a dance hall and rest stop, Cedar Pass Lodge predates the federal acquisition of the Badlands for a National Monument. Its owner, Ben Millard, was instrumental in promoting the Badlands to visitors and establishing the National Monument. After years of lobbying, Congress authorized the creation of Badlands National Monument in 1929, with the condition that first the state of South Dakota acquire land and build a road. Badlands National Monument was fully authorized in 1939 with 110,000 acres. In 1968 the U.S. Government added 134,000 acres of Oglala Sioux reservation and then in 1978 redesignated the monument as Badlands National Park.<sup>4</sup> Cedar Pass Lodge functioned

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<sup>1</sup> John Milner Associates, Inc. "Discovery and Re-Discovery in the White River Badlands: Historic Resource Study." (South Dakota: Badlands National Park, 2006), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 109, 117, 128.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 175, 181.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 5.

as a de facto visitor center for the first 30 years of the National Monument. In 1963 it was sold to the NPS and became an official concession. Today it continues to operate as a tourist facility for Badlands National Park.

### Developing the Badlands as a Tourist Attraction

Development of ranching and then homesteading in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries increased awareness of the unique scenic landscape of the Badlands. The arrival of the railroads also encouraged economic development based on travel to natural wonders. This trend drew on long standing appreciation for the sublime qualities of the Western landscape. The town of Interior benefitted from its railroad access and automobile proximity to the Badlands. By the 1920s Interior was home to two hotels, two cafes, five saloons, a bank, a Ford dealer, a livery stable, and a newspaper. Many of the visitors to Interior were from the surrounding area, attracted to local events such as Frontier Days, established in 1919. Rodeos and other events featuring skilled horsemen from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation were popular attractions. Calls to create a national park began among locals as early as 1909 and a 1919 U. S. Forest Service report endorsed the idea. However the transfer of most area land into private hands during the early twentieth century complicated the effort.<sup>5</sup>

The growth of middle class tourism by car opened many Western landscapes to visitors of modest means for the first time. The Federal Road Aid Act of 1916 was crucial to the development of modern paved roads. South Dakota was at the forefront of promoting good roads and automobile tourism in the 1920s. Between 1913 and 1919, the number of registered vehicles in South Dakota went from fewer than 15,000 to more than 100,000. U.S. Route 16 served as the principal east-west highway in South Dakota, originating in Milwaukee and becoming a popular route to the Badlands, the Black Hills, and Yellowstone. It was fully paved by the end of 1936. Known as the Black and Yellow Trail, it mirrored the route of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway. Wall Drug was one of the local tourist businesses started in the 1930s that later expanded and thrived due to roadside advertising and the clever gimmick of offering tourists free ice water. Later I-90 ran through Wall along the north edge of the Badlands, making this area a more prominent gateway to the Badlands than the earlier southern route along SD Route 40 (now 44) in Interior.<sup>6</sup>

With road improvements, businesses catering to the automobile trade sprang up along the highways. By 1939, there were 51 gas stations in Pennington County. Many gas stations included cafes, restaurants, or campgrounds.<sup>7</sup> Camping and cabin camps, the forerunner of the motel, were popular lodging options for the auto touring middle class. Camping was more affordable, but rustic, while simple rental cabins provided basic accommodations for modest fees. In his classic study *Americans on the Road*, historian Warren Belasco traces the evolution of informal autocamping into the early motel.<sup>8</sup> Cabin camps such as Cedar Pass Lodge were a

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 221, 182.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 222-223.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 224.

<sup>8</sup> Warren James Belasco, *Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910-1945*. (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1979), 129-132.

key part of this transition during the late 1920s. As travelers tired of setting up their own shelter, roadside entrepreneurs such as Millard and Jennings added cabins to their operations. In *Motel in America*, the cabin camp is viewed an important step in the development of a motel building typology.<sup>9</sup> At Cedar Pass Lodge, the cabins remained essential to the business well into the late twentieth century.

U.S. Senator Peter Norbeck first proposed legislation making the Badlands a national park in 1922, shortly after winning his first federal election and leaving the South Dakota statehouse. This bill floundered, and there were several other false starts, as Norbeck's attention was diverted to establishing Wind Cave National Park and Custer State Park. Roger Toll, Superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park, was asked to visit five proposed National Park Service acquisitions during 1928. He declared the South Dakota "Teton" (as Badlands was briefly called) park to be the best of the group.<sup>10</sup> The legislation authorizing a Badlands National Monument was signed into law by President Calvin Coolidge on March 4, 1929. The proposed boundaries incorporated as much federal land as possible, with some homesteads and property owned by the local schools.<sup>11</sup> Official creation of the new National Monument would not happen until sufficient privately owned land had been assembled and the state of South Dakota constructed approximately thirty miles of highway from the town of Interior to Sage Creek. The legislation specified "in advance of the fulfillment of the conditions franchises may be granted for hotel and lodge accommodations."<sup>12</sup> Clearly Norbeck included this provision with Ben Millard in mind.

The friendship between Senator Norbeck and local banker and businessman Ben Millard, original owner of Cedar Pass Lodge, would prove to be instrumental to the establishment of Badlands National Monument. Millard's nephew, Albert Jennings, married Norbeck's daughter Ruth in 1926. Clara Jennings, Albert's mother, was a key agent in the creation and early operation of Cedar Pass Lodge with her brother. The two families became very friendly and Millard became Norbeck's agent in the region. Millard had become familiar with the Badlands traveling through the region in the spring of 1927 while working for the South Dakota Department of Banking as a receiver for failing banks. This work brought him from his home in Philip to the Bank of Interior near Cedar Pass. In the fall of 1927 Millard and Norbeck toured the Badlands together to find a location to lease from the federal government. Millard and Jennings were interested in having a refreshment stand at the Pinnacles, a scenic area nine miles south of Wall, and a hotel and campground in the juniper grove at Cedar Pass, near the town of Interior. However, due to the 1922 Executive Order supported by Norbeck, federal land was not available for private lease in the Badlands. The widowed Jennings used insurance money to

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<sup>9</sup> John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America*. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 36-43.

<sup>10</sup> Letter Roger W. Toll to Stephen Mather, Director, National Park Service, (23 November 1928), Box 567, Entry P 10 Central Classified Files, 1907-1949, RG 79 Records of the National Park Service, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, MD [hereafter Entry P10, RG 79, NARA II]. Toll's report is filed in the same box. It praises the scenic and scientific interest of the area but noted that it did not rise to national park level.

<sup>11</sup> Jay Shuler, *A Revelation Called the Badlands: Building a National Park, 1909-1939*. (Interior, SD: Badlands Natural History Association, 1994 (reprint)), 18-19.

<sup>12</sup> Copy of bill authorizing Badlands (Teton) South Dakota National Monument, Folder 120, Legislation, 1928-31, Box 567, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

purchase a flat tract of private land at the base of Cedar Pass for what they intended to be a temporary location of their camp.<sup>13</sup>

Millard first built a large dance hall from bark-covered board slabs brought in from the Black Hills in 1928. Touring bands played there weekly and the dance hall included a kitchen, dining room, and sales counter for souvenirs. A few tourist cabins were built on the property as well and Millard called the enterprise Cedar Pass Hotel. Early in 1929, Jennings wrote to Norbeck asking for a special Act of Congress in order to lease property at Cedar Pass and build a tourist hotel, cabins, gas station, store and water system, noting that she already had "amusements" on nearby property and planned to add more during 1929.<sup>14</sup> A negative reply to this request was followed by Millard writing to the Secretary of the Interior on March 6th, two days after the proposed National Monument legislation was signed. Again NPS officials demurred, saying that they did not have any authority to lease land until the conditions of the enabling legislation were met and the National Monument officially established. In a letter to Millard on March 16th, NPS Director Arno Cammerer acknowledged his connection to Norbeck and assured him that his and Jennings' early interest would be taken into account.<sup>15</sup> Cammerer promised to have NPS Chief Landscape Architect Thomas Vint tour the proposed area that summer and make recommendations. Millard lobbied for a quicker visit, citing the desire to start constructing new buildings soon. Even though Acting Director Demaray urged Jennings and Millard to postpone even temporary construction on their adjacent land until Vint arrived, clearly they had been busy in the short time since opening Cedar Pass Hotel in 1928.<sup>16</sup>

When Vint arrived on July 19th, 1929, he met Millard in Rapid City and proceeded to travel through the proposed monument with him for the next few days. In his report he praised the clean cabins and good meals available at Cedar Pass, as well as Millard's knowledge of the area and nightly geology talks. He identified Cedar Pass as one of the two most important areas of the proposed monument, along with the Pinnacles and noted Millard's desire to provide tourist facilities in both locations. At Cedar Pass Vint found a variety of structures including the dance hall with dining room, kitchen, and souvenir counters (the precursor to the Lodge), eleven cabins for two or four guests, and camping sites with access to water (Figure 1). Vint praised the log-faced boards Millard brought in from the Black Hills to build the cabins, saying he found them simple and appropriate. In addition he felt that adding porches to the cabins would be an improvement.

Vint expressed some doubts about Millard's ideas for further, permanent construction. They discussed adobe or sod construction and the need to receive approval from Vint's office for any design once he became an official concessioner. It is interesting that at this stage, the Cedar Pass cabins were viewed as temporary. Vint noted that "it is advisable to use an inexpensive

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<sup>13</sup> See Shuler, 24-26; Ray H. Mattison and Robert A. Grom (with Joanne W. Stockert, ed.), "History of Badlands National Monument," (*Badlands Natural History Association Bulletin No. 1*, 1968): 37.

<sup>14</sup> Letter Jennings to Norbeck, (1 February 1929), Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>15</sup> A few letters went back and forth before Cammerer and other NPS officials understood the connection between Millard and Jennings and their mutual patronage by Senator Norbeck.

<sup>16</sup> Correspondence, Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

type of construction during the pioneer stages until the requirements are learned."<sup>17</sup> Millard was keen to rebuild to the north in Cedar Pass itself, his reasoning being that tourists stopped there for the view. Vint doubted that the steep ground around the pass could be developed in a way that avoided spoiling the landscape, and preferred the current valley location.

Although Vint's trip report was largely complimentary regarding Millard and the Cedar Pass operation, the location disagreement became a source of contention. Correspondence in fall 1929 and winter 1930 documents Millard's efforts to push back against Vint's recommendation that Cedar Pass Lodge stay at its present location instead of rebuilding in the pass itself. Senator Norbeck weighed in as well, writing to NPS Director Horace Albright, "Of course, I agree with [Vint] that the Cedar Pass area should be protected, the cedar trees should not be destroyed and the fossils should not be removed, but I do not know how to harmonize this recommendation with his other recommendation, that nothing shall be done to protect, except as can now be done by the Government, - and that is nothing."<sup>18</sup> Albright defended Vint's conclusions, particularly as to the location and design of the Millard/Jennings concession.<sup>19</sup> Frustration among the South Dakota contingent seemed to stem from the NPS position of asserting authority in areas of design and planning, but failing to fully fund and take control of the proposed monument, including issuing long-term concession permits. Norbeck and Millard clearly believed that the desired permits were allowed in the enabling legislation. Norbeck responded to Albright rather testily: "Whatever you do about this matter will be satisfactory to me, but my best judgment is that the concession should be granted to Millard and Jennings in Cedar Pass instead of their second choice. I think it would add to the beauty of the Pass instead of detract, and certainly, it would be the means of saving the cedar grove."<sup>20</sup> Millard sent maps of his proposed site, which Vint again opposed as too steep and inappropriate.<sup>21</sup>

In December Millard began lobbying for a small building in the Pass to serve as an information station and refreshment stand. Obviously he was determined to capture the business of travelers he saw stopping to admire the view and then driving past Cedar Pass Lodge. He also complained that the concession permit offered to Cedar Pass Lodge for the 1930 season was for one year instead of twenty and it did not specify the additional conditions he required such as exclusive catering rights for the entire monument, particularly an additional lodge to be built at the Pinnacles when the road was completed. Millard protested:

From the restricted limitation of the permit, we are led to believe that the National Park Board [sic.] had not grasped the fullness of our desires and the extensiveness of our plans. We have operated on privately owned ground for two years ...and we now desire to build more permanently and to equip the place with ... improvements.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Thomas C. Vint, Chief Landscape Architect, "Report on the Proposed Bad Lands National Monument Area," (25 July 1929), Box 567, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>18</sup> Letter Senator Peter Norbeck to Horace Albright, Director, (18 October 1929), Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>19</sup> Letter Albright to Norbeck, (24 October 1929), Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>20</sup> Letter Norbeck to Albright, (26 October 1929), Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>21</sup> Letter Vint to Albright, (21 November 1929), Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>22</sup> Letter Millard to Demaray, (10 December 1929), Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

The letter continues by describing the advertising and other promotion done by Jennings to the benefit of the entire Badlands National Monument. Finally in January 1930 Vint relented and allowed Millard to construct a building no larger than 14 by 36 at the pass, and gave him priority in establishing a Pinnacles concession.<sup>23</sup> Millard forged ahead with plans for a lodge at the pass, proposing either Pueblo or Spanish-style architecture and adding a gas station and bathrooms. He consulted an architect in Sioux Falls for plans and forwarded them to Vint in May. Copies of these plans do not seem to have survived, but Vint privately wrote to the Director that he would approve them in spite of having reservations. In any event, the new building was not completed that season, due to the late start.<sup>24</sup>

The interaction between Millard and Jennings and NPS officials during 1929-30 set the stage for the two main themes of the next ten years in the Badlands. This interim decade between the initial legislation and official creation of the National Monument in 1939 was characterized by a gradual increase in federal control over the proposed monument. However federal jurisdiction remained hazy and actual development quite limited. To fill this void, Cedar Pass Lodge effectively functioned as the park visitor center and headquarters all the while remaining a private enterprise on private property. Millard and Jennings were anxious to secure exclusive rights to any Badlands concession, which seems to have motivated them to try and work through official channels even as the bulk of their operation remained on private property. In the early years, they were the primary advertisers for Badlands National Monument, having tied their fortunes to the development of the new federal scenic area. A promotional brochure for this period touts the opportunity to visit the Bad Lands National Monument "Wonderland of South Dakota," especially the "Heart of Scenic Thrills" at Cedar Pass Tavern (Figure 2). The accommodations are described in detail:

For those who are not camping, cabins may be rented, furnished to suit all classes of travel. These cabins are electric lighted, window screened, well ventilated and cool. No expense has been spared in the selection of the beds with which the cabins have been furnished, believing that, after an all day's travel, an exceptionally good bed will be appreciated.<sup>25</sup>

The brochure included a map showing how to take the scenic detour through Cedar Pass between Routes 14 & 16 to the north and Route 40 (now 44) to the south. Probably the most picturesque "tourist cabin" is shown in the brochure, with a sign calling it "The House by the Side of the Road" (Figure 3). This small cabin with an asymmetrical front cross gable a form similar to the current Cabin 3.

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<sup>23</sup> Letter Albright to Millard, (30 January 1930), Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>24</sup> Letter Millard to Albright, (13 February 1930); Letter Millard to Vint, (9 April 1930); Letter Vint to Millard, (15 April 1930); Letter Millard to Vint, (12 May 1930); Letter Vint to Director, (16 May 1930); Letter Millard to Demaray, (19 July 1930), Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II. In December 1934, Jennings requested and received approval to move the refreshment stand in Cedar Pass down to the valley to serve as an additional sleeping cabin. See Letter, Millard to Arno Cammerer, (31 December 1934), and Letter Cammerer to Millard, (7 January 1935), Box 2036, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>25</sup> Brochure, "Scenic Wonders of the Bad Lands," c. 1929, Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

During the 1930 tourist season, Millard and Jennings added a number cabins to Cedar Pass Lodge, but experienced increased competition for roadside business. Millard complained to NPS Director Horace Albright that people selling drinks, hot dogs and other refreshments set up along the road near Cedar Pass. Millard also warned of upstart "guides" who let tourists collect fossils. His complaints were referred to the Government Land Office in Helena, but the delayed response proved unsatisfactory. Senator Norbeck endorsed giving Millard a token salary and authority as a "custodian" but Millard turned down the position, citing growing responsibilities with his state bank receivership duties.<sup>26</sup> Also Albright accompanied Senator Norbeck to Cedar Pass Lodge that season and began a friendly correspondence with both Millard and Jennings. Albright wrote to Jennings, praising the meal she served and her hospitality, as well as the Cedar Pass cabins: "Your cabins are very attractive and the furnishings looked to be entirely in keeping with the buildings themselves." He added, "...anything the National Park Service can do to assist you we shall gladly undertake provided of course it is consistent with what the law permits us to do."<sup>27</sup>

When it was time to renew the Cedar Pass concession permit for the 1931, Millard again pressed for a long-term lease, stating his sister's need to feel secure in making improvements to the property. From the NPS side, as Albright patiently explained in his return letter, nothing had changed. Until the National Monument was fully authorized, they were not in a position to offer any long term agreements. Millard's response was pointed, noting that he wanted to protect Jennings' interests against others seeking permits when the roads were completed, but "we have the utmost confidence in your fairness in this matter, in protecting Mrs. Jennings interest in this way, to your fullest powers."<sup>28</sup> It seem that he and Norbeck felt that the enabling legislation should allow them to have a long term lease, but NPS officials did not want to make that commitment.

As the state of South Dakota proceeded with road construction, Millard and Norbeck entered into the debate over a gentle, prairie route, favored by highway engineers, and more challenging rights of way that brought the driver to previously inaccessible scenic vistas. The scenic route prevailed and South Dakota slowly started road construction. Albright again visited Cedar Pass Lodge along with Norbeck in 1932. He wrote to Millard and Jennings:

I tremendously enjoyed my visit with you in the South Dakota Badlands and I won't soon forget the delicious luncheon that you served to us when we were at your very attractive little lodge. I was pleased to find that you are both still deeply interested in the Badlands region and that you have such superb confidence in its future as a tourist resort. The more I see of the region the more certain I am that it has a bright future as a lure for tourists en route to the Black Hills and beyond. I was glad to have an opportunity to cover the country again with Senator Norbeck, and to look over your own development and see the

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<sup>26</sup> Correspondence in Folder 0-35, Part 2, Box 567, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>27</sup> Letter Horace Albright, NPS Director to Clara Jennings, (13 November 1930), Box 567, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>28</sup> Letter, Ben Millard to Albright, (28 March 1931), Box 567, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II. See also additional correspondence between Millard and Albright on this matter found in the same box (26 February 1931; 10 March 1931).

improvements that you have made in two years. The place is very attractive, and as to the meals, nowhere in the National Park System this summer did I eat a better meal than the one you served to us. Please keep in touch with us and be assured that whenever we can be of any assistance to you we want you to ask us to help.<sup>29</sup>

Cedar Pass Lodge continued to grow in tandem with the road construction in the Badlands, but the long term lease Millard sought remained bureaucratically unfeasible. Improvements to his operation continued, but in an incremental fashion. Millard responded to Albright with news of planned additions over the next two years and optimism about the future of the Badlands:

I am now building some shower bathrooms in some of the cabins in which we will have water pressure and sewerage. These improvements will be ready for next season. ... I feel confident that we will see the time, not long distant, that the Bad Lands will be on the summer main street of America. ... when we have weathered roads through here again I cannot help but believe that we will have many travelers coming through the Bad Lands.<sup>30</sup>

For the 1933 season, the Cedar Pass cabins were moved a few hundred yards to the south and west to accommodate a new road alignment while the dance hall stayed in place.<sup>31</sup>

Land acquisition accelerated in 1934 with funding from New Deal programs and the Submarginal Land Office of the National Park Service. A land office inspector described Millard and Jennings as the NPS's "unofficial representatives" and their "camp" as "the only well organized place in or near the area offering good accommodations to tourists."<sup>32</sup> Millard became federal land acquisition agent for the project. Many local homesteaders owed more in back taxes than their property was worth due to drought and years of crop failures. However there was still some local opposition to removing land from the tax rolls. Millard continued to push for a long term lease and permission to build at the Pinnacles; the latter was finally granted in 1935. His influence appeared to be on the wane, in spite of Norbeck's continued support. When Millard heard of plans for place the Badlands under the administration of the Wind Cave Superintendent, he asked for the \$12 a year custodial position offered to him several years before. He was informed that a custodian position for Badlands now would be a full-time civil service job and the National Park Service intended to promote from within.<sup>33</sup> NPS Assistant Director Demaray also wrote to Edward Freeland, Superintendent of Wind Cave cautioning him that although Millard was authorized to built at Pinnacle under his current permit, "we are informed, however,

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<sup>29</sup> Letter, Horace Albright, NPS Director to Ben Millard and Clara Jennings, (30 Sept 1932), Box 567, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>30</sup> Letter, Ben Millard to Horace Albright, (25 November 1932), Box 567, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>31</sup> Shuler, 27.

<sup>32</sup> Kenneth F. Jones, Inspection Report - "The Proposed Extension of Boundaries of the Badlands National Monument, South Dakota," (June 1934), 1-2, Box 2038, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>33</sup> See Correspondence in Box 2036, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II, esp. Letter, Millard to Cammerer, (12 August 1935), and Letter, Hillary Tolson, Assistant Director to Millard, (19 August 1935).

that Mr. Vint has found it difficult on a previous occasion to get Mr. Millard to submit an attractive design, as he prefers the standard architecture of the Great American Roadside."<sup>34</sup>

By 1935, initial road construction was complete and Cedar Pass Lodge had become a mature hospitality business. In late 1934 Jennings asked for permission to move the small structure built at the Pass down to the valley to be converted into a sleeping cabin, which were in high demand.<sup>35</sup> Mary Allburn was a waitress at Cedar Pass during the 1935 season. Her scrapbook of postcards and photographs from that year provide excellent images of the staff and the appearance of the cabins and lodge. Mrs. Jennings appears in a number of pictures, as well as the waitresses, cook, maids, and a few guests (Figure 4). Also interesting is the presence of neighbors Dewey and Alice Beard, Sioux Indians who camped nearby wearing native dress and posing for pictures with tourists (Figure 5). Later Mary Aggergaard (nee Allburn) recalled that Ben Millard had recruited her from her parent's farm in Interior because she had some experience. The other waitress, Doris Hansen, was from Sioux Falls. Aggergaard shared a cabin with three other female employees and used a shower room across the yard. She worked seven days a week, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner in the Lodge.<sup>36</sup> A list of rates submitted to the National Park Service for the 1935 season noted that a furnished tourist cabin with one double bed cost \$1.00 per night and a two double beds cost \$2.00. Linens and towels cost an additional 50 cents. A "Deluxe" room with "Modern Bathroom" and linens cost \$2.00 for one person up to \$5.00 for four people. Meals ranged in price from breakfast and lunch starting at 15 cents and dinner starting at 50 cents.<sup>37</sup>

The complex included the lodge, sheathed with log-faced boards and facing the road. A large stone porch with rocking chairs stretched across its front (Figure 6). A gas station sheathed with tar paper was located on the other side of the road. This frame structure had the asymmetrical cross gable cottage form also used for some of the cabins. The picturesque "House by the Side of the Road" cabin, with white picket railings around a low wood porch, was positioned facing the road north of the lodge. The cabins behind were not yet fully arranged around a U-shaped drive, but several appear to have the same forms as the existing ones. A large cabin labeled in a postcard matches the form of Cabin 1-2, the current duplex, although the exterior sheathing, windows, doors and all other details have been changed (Figure 7). Most of the eight or so additional cabins seemed to have almost square footprints and one or two openings on each façade (Figure 8). A number of similar cabins were still in use in 2011, such as Cabins 7, 8, 9 and Cabins 21, 22, 23.<sup>38</sup> Looking through the images in this scrapbook also illustrates the ad hoc quality of the Cedar Pass Lodge buildings. While the lodge and a few cabins were embellished with rustic boards and stone porches, the images also reveal buildings sheathed with typical clapboards, tar paper, and a variety of window sash types.

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<sup>34</sup> Letter, Demaray to Edward Freeland, (15 November 1935), Box 2036, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>35</sup> Letter, Millard to Arno Cammerer, (31 December 1934), Box 2036, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II. Thomas Vint noted that the proposed structure for the pass "appears like a residence structure more than a place to dispense soft drinks." See Letter to Director (16 May 1930), Box 2035, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>36</sup> Shuler, 42.

<sup>37</sup> "Badlands National Monument, Cedar Pass Camp, Schedule of Rates for the Season of 1935," Box 2036, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>38</sup> Mary Aggergaard (nee Allburn) Cedar Pass Lodge scrapbook, (1935), BADL Archives.

By 1936, there was talk of acquiring Millard's property through the ongoing Recreational Demonstration Project land purchase effort. Officials described leaving this key property in private hand as potentially embarrassing for the National Monument. A contractor was hired to appraise Cedar Pass Lodge in preparation for purchase by the NPS, but instead the development remained in private ownership even though it sat within the boundary of the National Monument.<sup>39</sup> Millard continued to work on the land acquisition for the National Monument through 1936, but as more NPS officials became involved his role in shaping the future of the Badlands was greatly reduced.<sup>40</sup> Senator Norbeck's influence also was waning because of years of illness; he died in December 1936. Millard bought his sister's share of Cedar Pass Lodge and took over primary management in 1937, resuming his nightly geology lectures.<sup>41</sup> His wife, Stella, and son, Herbert, also assisted with the business, which had expanded in 1934 to include a small refreshment stand and three cabins at Pinnacles.

### Badlands National Monument, 1939-1963

It took several more years for all of the land issues to be sorted out and finally on January 25, 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the bill officially creating Badlands National Monument. By the end of the 1930s, most of the land in the vicinity was either federally owned, or had returned to ranching. A few small railroad towns hung on and tried to refocus their commercial base on the growing Badlands tourist trade. A Civilian Conservation Corps camp was established for Badlands in 1939; the enrollees worked until March 1942, mainly on continued road improvements and installing water and sewer pipes.<sup>42</sup> Plans slowly started to form to create a more robust NPS presence.

During 1939 a discussion ensued about whether to establish the park headquarters at Wall, Pinnacles, or Cedar Pass. For a time, it seemed as though the Pinnacles area would be made the administrative center for the National Monument. By September, Cedar Pass was receiving serious consideration. Four proposed layouts were prepared illustrating a range of options in the vicinity of Cedar Pass.<sup>43</sup> Scheme A was dependent on the NPS acquiring all of Millard's property and building an entirely new complex of headquarters buildings, lodge, and cabins. Scheme B also called for all new facilities, but this time on public land on the other side of the roadway. Scheme C retained the existing Cedar Pass Lodge and built the NPS headquarters across the road. Scheme D located the NPS headquarters at a distance north of Cedar Pass. A number of factors pointed to the foot of Cedar Pass as the better choice for NPS development. One report indicated that it would be least expensive to secure an adequate water

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<sup>39</sup> Letter, George Gibbs, NPS State Park Division Regional Officer to M. C. Huppuch, RDA, (30 January 1936); and Letter, Cal Ward, RDA Regional Director to Rexford G. Tugwell, RDA Director, (14 March 1936) in *Copies of Selected Documents Pertaining to Badlands NM, 1929-49*, BADL Library.

<sup>40</sup> Victor Cahalane, Assistant Chief of the NPS Wildlife Division, wrote a scathing memo to the Director after a visit with Millard, saying that "as a contact between the public and the NPS I feel he does the latter very little benefit and quite possibly some harm." Letter, (18 December 1935), Box 2036, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>41</sup> A copy of the bill of sale between Millard and Jennings dated May 6, 1937 is in the BADL Archives (BADL 2893).

<sup>42</sup> See "Summary of Activities at Badlands National Monument for FY 1940," Box 2037, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>43</sup> "Headquarters Area Development Plans - Cedar Pass, Badlands National Monument," (September 1939), Box 2039, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

supply here.<sup>44</sup> Cedar Pass also enjoyed the advantages of relative proximity to the popular eastern entrance to Badlands NM.

The potential liability of Cedar Pass Lodge being a private enterprise already controlling this location gradually began to be seen as an asset. The existing facilities would be enhanced by NPS investment in infrastructure and Millard's cooperation could provide much needed support to NPS staff. As argued by the Wind Cave Superintendent, Cedar Pass had good scenery, proximity to services in Interior, and a less expensive water supply. Most importantly:

Seventy-five percent of the visitors to the monument enter near this site.... the place where most visitors will spend a large portion of their time on the monument is certain to be at Cedar Pass, where overnight accommodations are to be had at present, and where it would seem to be most desirable to have the park service represented by more than a museum in connection with the operator's lodge.<sup>45</sup>

Congressman Francis Case pointed out in late 1939 that the issue of Millard's private land needed to be sorted out before extensive work was done on a water system at Cedar Pass. He was promoting a split approach of Pinnacles or Wall as NPS headquarters and Cedar Pass as the primary overnight tourist location. NPS officials concurred that a formal agreement should be reached with Millard regarding use of his land and access to the water system.<sup>46</sup>

In spite of some political urging that Wall be reconsidered, agreement was reached and plans were being formulated to turn Cedar Pass into the NPS headquarters for the Badlands.<sup>47</sup> In November 1939, Regional Director Thomas Allen visited with Millard to discuss the possibility of his donating the Cedar Pass Lodge property in exchange for a twenty year operating contract. In a memorandum to NPS Director Demaray, Allen described Millard's reaction to the proposal. Apparently even though Allen found him to be cordial and cooperative, Millard was shocked that the NPS was suggesting he donate his land and retain responsibility for all the buildings in exchange for the long term contract he had long sought. He had been led to believe that the NPS would eventually purchase the entire property, or that any deal would at least transfer building maintenance duties. Allen was sympathetic, but given the task of delivering the news that no funds would be available to buy Cedar Pass Lodge outright.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Report, L. E. Kennedy, Associate Geologist, "Water Supply - Proposed Badlands National Monument," (c. 1938), Box 2036, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>45</sup> Memorandum, Superintendent, Wind Cave to Regional Director, (28 September 1939), Box 2039, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II. Additional correspondence on this topic is located in this box, including a report by Regional Landscape Architect Howard W. Baker, "Summary of Discussions and Points Considered in Regard to the Proposed Headquarters Development at Badlands National Monument," (19 September 1939).

<sup>46</sup> Memorandum, Assoc. Dir. A. E. Demaray to Regional Director, (4 November 1939), in *Copies of Selected Documents Pertaining to Badlands NM, 1929-49*, BADL Library.

<sup>47</sup> See Memoranda, Regional Director Allen to Director, (18 October 1939), Box 2039, and (17 November 1939), Box 2040, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>48</sup> Memorandum, Regional Director Allen to Director Cammerer, (17 November 1939), Box 2038, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

Acting Director Demaray followed up with a carefully worded letter to Millard in March 1940, assuring him of their mutual interests while pointing out the decision to make the Cedar Pass area NPS headquarters was at stake. He also suggested a more palatable alternative of Millard donating a 1,000 feet wide tract of land along the east boundary of the Cedar Pass Lodge property.<sup>49</sup> This buffer would allow the NPS to proceed with locating their buildings on the same side of the road as Cedar Pass Lodge and connect Millard to the proposed water system. In his reply, Millard noted:

I feel that my efforts, in conjunction with the late Senator Peter Norbeck, had a great deal to do with bringing the Badlands into the National Park Service. ... We want you always to depend upon our willing desire to cooperate with the National Park Service.<sup>50</sup>

When accepting the proposal Millard enclosed a sketch plan showing the land to be donated, in addition to a site plan of Cedar Pass Lodge (Figure 9). In this plan the cabins are arranged around the current U-shaped drive behind the lodge, which was rebuilt in 1938-39.<sup>51</sup>

NPS plans included an administration building, custodian's residence, employees' duplex residences, museum, and utility buildings.<sup>52</sup> The actual private land transfer took several years due to title complications, and Millard's reluctance to spend a large sum on deed transfer fees in order to make the donation. In addition, the parcel was reduced slightly when it was brought to Millard's attention that the main NPS building would not be located right next to Cedar Pass Lodge. He was planning to donate the parking area indicated on the sketch map for that purpose.<sup>53</sup>

Millard was also developing his operation at Pinnacles during this time. Here the arrangement was more straightforward than Cedar Pass. Millard's family (his son Herbert and daughter-in-law Dorothy) ran the small lunch counter and lodging operation as a concession on National Monument property. The Park Service was discussing building new structures, since the existing collection of dining car and cabins was considered "ramshackle" at best. Business was growing in September 1941 and it seemed as though Millard's vision of a robust tourist economy in the Badlands was finally coming to fruition. In fall 1941, Millard prepared for the

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<sup>49</sup> Letter, Acting Director Demaray to Millard, (14 March 1940), Box 2038, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II. It seems to have been Thomas Vint's idea to group the buildings at Cedar Pass south of the road with a partial donation of Millard's property. See Memorandum, Thomas Vint, Chief of Planning to Director Arno Cammerer, (29 February 1940), Box 2038, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>50</sup> Letter, Millard to Demaray, (10 April 1940), Box 2038, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>51</sup> Letter, Millard to Regional Director Allen, (20 November 1940), Box 2041, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II. This letter includes a comparison of sales figures at the lodge for 1938 (old building), 1939 (partially completed building), and 1940 (new building).

<sup>52</sup> "Summary of Activities at Badlands National Monument for FY 1940," Box 2037, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II. A utility site plan from c. 1940 shows the NPS administration building and housing in roughly its current location east of Cedar Pass Lodge. See "Cedar Pass Area, Utilities Layout, Part of Master Plan for Badlands," (1 January 194x), Series 001, File Unit 0017, BADL 59685, Badlands Facility Management Map and Blueprint Collection.

<sup>53</sup> Memorandum, Acting Director Hillory Tolson to Secretary of the Interior, (11 March 1946), Box 2039, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II; Memorandum, Regional Director Thomas Allen to Director Arno Cammerer, (10 June 1940), Box 2038, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

new water system by ordering pipe and constructing public toilets in the gas station basement at Cedar Pass. He also built a new 36 by 70 foot bathhouse to provide facilities to the cabin camp. He anticipated being on the new NPS water/sewer system by the 1942 season, eliminating the numerous past complaints about the old pit toilets for the cabin camp.<sup>54</sup>

These plans were interrupted by the United States' entry into World War II. By May 1942, the outlook was much more pessimistic. Business was already down 25 percent from the year before. Reportedly Millard had "spent considerable time and money during the winter, refinishing cabins, ...and installing plumbing in his cabins."<sup>55</sup> The new water system was plagued by water line breaks all summer and Herbert Millard went on active military duty in September 1942. At the end of the season, it seemed likely that Pinnacles would not reopen for 1943 and the future of Cedar Pass Lodge was doubtful. The Millards reduced their preseason orders by one third and plans for the NPS to construct new buildings at Pinnacles were indefinitely postponed.<sup>56</sup>

Leisure travel restrictions drastically reduced automobile tourism in South Dakota. The Badlands Superintendent reported in March 1943 that travel was down 87 percent, with the few travelers coming through on their way to defense jobs. Cedar Pass Lodge was able to stay open due to those travelers, and providing room and board to workmen for the White River Bridge. Delays in construction of NPS employee housing also provided an opportunity for Millard. Badlands National Monument Custodian Howard Stricklin received permission to move his family from the checking station at Pinnacles into a Cedar Pass Lodge cabin. Apparently Millard offered to add a kitchen and sewer connection to a six-room cabin for Stricklin's use.<sup>57</sup> Business picked up again after the war during the 1946 season, but it was still not at pre-war levels. One estimate indicated that 1946 travel was 1300 percent higher than 1945, but still lower than 1941. Cedar Pass Lodge continued to provide meals and lodging, but Millard had trouble getting qualified employees and experienced ongoing water line break issues.<sup>58</sup>

After the war, road development continued while railroad service began to decline. South Dakota Route 40 was paved from Interior to Rapid City. The major Interstate 90 corridor also was established to the north of the Badlands, eventually replacing Route 14 as the main artery in this part of the state (I-90 was completed in 1975). Millard continued to improve the Cedar Pass Lodge cabins. In April 1949, Millard was removing the timber slab siding from

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<sup>54</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (November 1941), Box 2037, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>55</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (May 1942), Box 2037, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>56</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (August, September, and December 1942), Box 2037, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II. Pinnacles concession reopened briefly after the war, then closed permanently and in 1950 the buildings were removed and not replaced. No evidence was found indicating that the Pinnacles cabins were moved to Cedar Pass, but a photograph from April 1940 shows that they bear a close resemblance to several Cedar Pass cabins. See Folder 207-02.3 Monthly Superintendents Reports, Box 2037, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>57</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (March and September 1943); and Memorandum, Howard B. Stricklin, Acting Custodian, Badlands to Coordinating Superintendent, Wind Cave, (5 February 1943), Box 2037, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>58</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (August and June 1946), Box 2037, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

some of the cabins and replacing it with stucco.<sup>59</sup> Eventually all of the cabins were stuccoed. Another piece of specific information about upgrading the cabins in this period notes that three "existing cabins were modernized with showers and toilet facilities" in preparation for the 1952 season.<sup>60</sup> By this time, the NPS had some housing and a temporary administration building at Cedar Pass. An addition was being constructed onto the lodge for the 1956 season. Millard died in March 1956 while this project was still ongoing. His death prompted the Badlands Superintendent to write: "Mr. Millard was a staunch supporter of the National Park Service and his presence and support will be missed."<sup>61</sup> In 1957, a prominent section of Badlands just east of Cedar Pass was named Millard Ridge in his honor.<sup>62</sup> His wife, Stella, and son, Herbert, continued to operate Cedar Pass Lodge.

During the mid-1950s, the NPS sponsored a number of important projects at Badlands National Monument, mainly through the Mission 66 capital improvement program. Mission 66 began in 1956 as an effort to upgrade park facilities in time for the 50th anniversary of the NPS in 1966. In addition to road repairs, wayside signage, and other exhibits, a campground and amphitheater was built to the southwest of Cedar Pass Lodge in 1956-57. The land for the campground was donated by Millard in 1955. A new NPS visitor's center with museum exhibits opened northeast of Cedar Pass Lodge in 1959. The promised development of this area as the NPS headquarters had finally come to fruition and flanked Cedar Pass Lodge along the road. The Mission 66 prospectus for Badlands noted the long range plan to acquire Cedar Pass Lodge and operate it through a contract.<sup>63</sup>

### Transition to NPS Concession

In spite of a stroke in 1958, Stella Millard took an active role in the business until her death in December 1961. Herbert Millard continued to operate Cedar Pass Lodge in the short term while urging the National Park Service to purchase the property. In summer 1962, it was reported that the cabins were filled almost every night and the lodge restaurant was doing a good business. In August 1963 the National Park Service signed an option to purchase Cedar Pass Lodge from Millard.<sup>64</sup> The final purchase price was \$275,000 plus \$1 for the trade name Cedar Pass Lodge.<sup>65</sup>

Concessioner proposals for Cedar Pass Lodge were reviewed during the winter of 1963-64. E. N. Nelson of Rapid City was chosen and signed a contract in April 1964. Nelson had worked at Cedar Pass Lodge in 1930 and spent the next thirty years managing hotels and cafés in

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<sup>59</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (April 1949), Box 2038, Entry P 10, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>60</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (April 1952), Box 124, Entry P 11 Administrative Files, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>61</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (March 1956), Box 125, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>62</sup> Mattison and Grom, 37.

<sup>63</sup> "Mission 66 Prospectus - Badlands National Monument," (30 January 1956), BADL Library; Ray H. Mattison and Robert A. Grom (with Joanne W. Stockert, ed.), "History of Badlands National Monument," (*Badlands Natural History Association Bulletin No. 1*, 1968): 59.

<sup>64</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (May 1958, December 1961, June-July 1962, August 1963), Box 125, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>65</sup> See paperwork in Box 830 - Concessions, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

Rapid City. The contract stipulated that he pay a franchise fee of \$11,500 a year, plus 12.1 percent of gross receipts. Because it was now NPS property, Badlands NM staff assumed responsibility for all repairs and maintenance to the buildings. The site was cleaned up, and repairs made to the cabins, lodge, and utilities. By the end of June 1964, most of the cabins were repaired and available to visitors. Rates for the 1964 season were \$10.50 to \$18.00 per night for an air conditioned cabin with a private shower (for up to four people in two double beds). Larger cabins of two rooms with a connecting bath ranged from \$18.00 for three people in three double beds to \$24.00 for eight people in four double beds. Repairs resumed in spring 1965 including painting lodge trim, correcting drainage around all the buildings, installing a new floor in one cabin, roof repairs, and burying water lines.<sup>66</sup>

At the end of the 1965 season, the National Park Service began examining the future viability of Cedar Pass Lodge. Francis Roberson of the Midwest Regional Office was dispatched to conduct a "detailed appraisal of the physical condition of the Lodge and cabins in an effort to determine the required amount of rehabilitation needed to bring these facilities up to standard."<sup>67</sup> In addition, E. N. Nelson and the Badlands staff prepared a separate report on what would be needed to adequately serve the public.<sup>68</sup> The consensus was that major upgrades were necessary because increased visitation required better lodging. Superintendent Frank Hjort estimated that by 1975 Badlands would have two million visitors. In spite of the general agreement that the cabins were in poor condition, they were still fully occupied during the summer months. Elbert W. Smith, Regional Chief of Concessions Management, felt that new cabins would have to be paid for through NPS appropriations, because new construction would not be economically feasible for a concessioner. The in-house report filed by Badlands Superintendent Hjort noted the problems with the existing cabins:

Besides what is obvious in lack of foundation, poor design, inferior materials, and improper layout, there are many problems such as, lack of facilities for draining the water pipes, improperly installed water lines, inadequate wiring, poor drainage, etc., to mention only a few.

However it was agreed that overnight accommodations should continue to be offered in this location, given the popularity of staying in the Badlands themselves.<sup>69</sup>

The appraisals and inspections done by the National Park Service during this process provide a very thorough picture of Cedar Pass Lodge in 1965. As the concessioner, E. N. Nelson oversaw thirty-one buildings including the lodge (dining room, kitchen, gift shop and offices), gas station, two residences (formerly for Ben and Stella Millard, and Herbert Millard), three "help's" dormitories, a small laundry, a small shop in the former generator house, and twenty-one cabins. The twenty-one cabins included one used for storage (Cabin 7) and 30 sleeping rooms.

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<sup>66</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (December 1963, February-May 1964, March-April 1965), Box 125-126; and Box 830 - Concessions, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>67</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (October 1965), Box 126, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>68</sup> Superintendent's Report - Badlands National Monument, (November 1965), Box 126, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>69</sup> The various memoranda about this issue are compiled in "Recommendations and Estimates on Cedar Pass Concessions Facilities, Badlands National Monument, (December 1965), Box 830, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

The Badlands report from November 1965 noted that Cabin 1-2 and Cabin 3 had been remodeled and modernized. Six other cabins needed painting of wood sash or new aluminum sash. Nine of the sleeping rooms were without heat and twelve without air conditioning.<sup>70</sup>

Photographs from November 1965 show that the exterior appearance of the cabins matches what was still extant in 2011, including stucco, simulated masonry, and bathroom additions (Figures 10 and 11). A site plan also shows the current layout, although a few of the larger cabins have been removed (Figure 12). The Ben Millard residence is shown close to the road, next to the lodge, with the smaller Herbert Millard residence behind. Another large cabin designated 37, 38, 39 was located next to Herbert Millard's house. Both the Ben Millard house and Cabin 37-39 have been removed, and Herbert Millard's house is now the Cottage or Cabin 50. Another current gap along the east side of the cabin loop used to contain Cabin 29-32, another L-shaped structure with a small rear ell. The rest of the site plan largely appears the same as 2011, with some renumbering of cabins, namely Cabin 36 (now Cabin 33) and Cabin 14-17 (now Cabin 14-16, with Unit 16 containing two rooms).<sup>71</sup>

In early 1966, it was decided that the concession should be discontinued by 1968, given the fact that \$16,000 had already been spent on repairs and the cost of full upgrades was considered unjustified. George Bagglely, Associate Regional Director, complained that the buildings were run down because Millard did not practice the best maintenance.<sup>72</sup> However, estimates for a new concession with a thirty-unit motel, new lodge, and staff dormitories were over \$830,000.<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile, the Nelsons, known as Curley and Flo, continued to operate Cedar Pass Lodge with the help of seasonal employees. The crews from 1966 and 1967 each put together commemorative booklets of their time at Cedar Pass Lodge working as waitresses, gas station attendants, and clerks (Figure 13). While many of the young employees were from South Dakota, some came from as far as California, Texas, or New Jersey, before returning to school. A few images of the cabin exteriors appear, usually with the older local women who worked as maids (Figure 14).<sup>74</sup>

Correspondence in 1968 shows NPS officials still struggling to make a decision about the future of Cedar Pass Lodge. A visit from Concessions Analyst Howard Solomon in August 1968 reiterated the belief that private facilities outside the monument would meet the public need. Nelson asked to close the gas station, citing its poor revenue. He also complained about the age of the cabins and lack of adequate staff facilities. Overall, Nelson objected to the large franchise fee which hindered his ability to run the business profitably. Solomon agreed that Nelson should close the gas station and receive a reduced franchise fee, particularly since only a short term

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<sup>70</sup> "Recommendations and Estimates on Cedar Pass Concessions Facilities, Badlands National Monument," (December 1965), Box 830, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>71</sup> "Concessions Buildings, Badlands," (19 November 1965), Box 830, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>72</sup> Memorandum, George Bagglely, Associate Regional Director to Regional Director, (4 February 1966), Box 830, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>73</sup> "Recommendations and Estimates on Cedar Pass Concessions Facilities, Badlands National Monument," (December 1965), Box 830, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>74</sup> "Cedar Pass '66," (BADL 49570) and "Journey Through Summer '67" (BADL 49569) booklets in BADL Archives.

contract renewal was planned and it would be advantageous to have Nelson continue. About the cabins, Solomon noted:

The cabins we inspected looked good on the surface, however Mr. Nelson pointed out numerous defects which are not apparent at first glance. One of the cabins can no longer be rented because it is in bad condition, and there are others which will require extensive maintenance if they are to be used for another three years.<sup>75</sup>

Apparently the cabins in the worst condition were the larger ones noted above that were subsequently removed from the east side of the cabin loop. Staff was housed in these structures in 1968. Badlands Superintendent John Earnst urged the Regional Office to accept Nelson's conditions, including a fee reduction to 4 1/2 percent of gross receipts with no franchise fee. Earnst also strongly asserted that the contract should only be for three years with the understanding that Cedar Pass Lodge would close at that time.<sup>76</sup> However, the final offer given to Nelson by the National Park Service included the flat fees in addition to 5 percent of gross receipts. Nelson rejected this offer in January 1969 and made plans to leave Cedar Pass Lodge.<sup>77</sup>

A prospectus was prepared in order to advertise bids for the Cedar Pass Lodge concession. This document described Cedar Pass Lodge as a "mixture of old and new." The lodge façade and dining room had been recently rebuilt. The prospectus put a positive spin on the age of the cabins:

Twenty cabins providing overnight accommodations are located around a rectangular mall. While of early vintage, these cabins have been modernized with bath facilities. Some are electrically heated, and are air-conditioned by window units. Cabins are furnished in good taste, and excellently lighted with built-in fixtures. ... Utilization of overnight facilities provides visitors the opportunity of seeing the most unusual shades and shadows of the Badlands during the early morning and late afternoon periods.<sup>78</sup>

In the end, Superintendent Earnst and the Regional Office staff met with Nelson and convinced him to stay on through 1973. The terms of the contract stipulated an \$8,365 franchise fee and five percent of gross receipts, with the franchise fee to be reconsidered at the end of the first and third years of the contract.<sup>79</sup> In 1970, the promised review was done and the fee reduced to \$6,625.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Memorandum, Howard Solomon to Chief of Concessions Management, (8 August 1968), Box 830, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II. See also Letter, E. N. Nelson to NPS Headquarters, (13 August 1968).

<sup>76</sup> Memorandum, John Earnst to Regional Director, Midwest Region, (3 September 1968), Box 830, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>77</sup> Letter, E. N. Nelson to John Earnst, Badlands Superintendent, (14 January 1969); and Memorandum, John Earnst to Regional Director, Midwest Region, (16 January 1969), Box 830, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>78</sup> "Draft Prospectus Cedar Pass Lodge Concession, Badlands National Monument, SD," (January 1969), (National Park Service Concessions Management), 6. Box 817, Entry P11, RG 79, NARA II.

<sup>79</sup> Contract #14-10-9-900-209 (1-1-1969 through 12-31-1969), E. N. Nelson, Cedar Pass Lodge Badlands National Monument, Box 830, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II. The contract was signed by Nelson on June 27, 1969 and executed on October 2, 1969.

<sup>80</sup> See Folder BADL Cedar Pass 1/1/1970 - , Box 2681, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II.

The imminent completion of Interstate 90 to the north would impact travel patterns, further adding to the dominance of Wall as a tourist stop in this region and the demise of the railroad towns along Route 44/40 such as Interior and Scenic. Cedar Pass Lodge still provided the only lodging within the Badlands and so continued to be in demand from those wanting scenic accommodations off the beaten path. In 1971, Nelson signed the remainder of his contract over to the Ogala Sioux tribe. Nelson would be employed by the Ogala Sioux Cedar Pass Concession Enterprise to assist with training for the first season.<sup>81</sup>

Badlands National Monument became Badlands National Park in November 1978. In 1982, the Cedar Pass Lodge concession still was operated by the Ogala Sioux tribe. The utilities for the cabins and lodge again needed a major overhaul.<sup>82</sup> A review in 1984 revisited discontinuing the Cedar Pass Lodge concession. Utility plans from 1984 show the current cabins, indicating that the large staff cabins still present in 1969 had been removed by this time.<sup>83</sup> The park master plan promoted replacing the lodge and discontinuing on-site lodge after demolishing the cabins. However visitation was declining and the concessions review suggested new construction was unlikely. Instead the park and concessioner were directed to bring the existing facilities up to NPS standards.<sup>84</sup> The review found that many of the cabins had upgraded bathrooms, walls, and ceilings, and the concessioner planned to continue these efforts in all the units. The lodge building was extensively renovated and expanded in 1986-87.<sup>85</sup> Cedar Pass Lodge continues to be operated as a concession, providing one of the few options for food and lodging in a remote location. In 2012 the current concessioner, Forever Resorts, demolished or moved many of the extant cabins and replaced them with new modular units.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Cedar Pass Lodge cabins are simple one-story wood frame structures with stucco exterior walls. They face inward around a U-shaped gravel drive behind the heavily modified lodge building. The scale of the cabins and site layout is typical of a pre-World War II tourist cabin court. There are three unique multi-room structures - the Cabin 1-2 duplex, the Cabin 14-16 triplex, and Cabin 50 (the "Cottage" or "Little House" formerly occupied by Herbert Millard). The rest of the cabins are side

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<sup>81</sup> Memorandum, R. Moore, Chief Office of Concessions Management, to Director, (21 April 1971), Box 2681, Entry P 11, RG 79, NARA II. The tribe had a \$100,000 loan from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to support this endeavor. See, in the same location as above, Memorandum, BADL Superintendent Cecil D. Lewis Jr. to Director, (15 April 1971).

<sup>82</sup> BADL 137.D36, "Environmental Assessment for Replacement of Water and Power Lines at Cedar Pass Lodge, Badlands National Park," (March 1982), Technical Information Center, Denver Service Center, National Park Service [hereafter TIC, DSC].

<sup>83</sup> Cedar Pass Lodge Utility Plan, (June 1984), BADL 59685, Badlands Facility Management Map and Blueprint Collection. Additional schematic plans showing individual cabin hook ups are dated 1987.

<sup>84</sup> Concessions Branch, "Concessions Facility and Operational Review - Badlands Cedar Pass Lodge," (March 1984), (BADL 137.D2191, TIC, DSC), 2.

<sup>85</sup> See Drawings BADL 137.41021B, "Cedar Pass Lodge Rehabilitation," (19 May 1986), TIC, DSC.

gable one room buildings with private bathrooms added in the mid-twentieth century. There are several types of one-room form, with minor variations in finish. Cabins 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9 have small bathroom ells at the rear corner. Cabin 7 has been used for storage and is the same type without a bathroom ell. Cabins 10, 11, and 12 have a cross gable bathroom addition at the rear. Cabins 18, 19, and 20 have a flat roof side bathroom addition that steps in slightly. Cabins 21, 22, and 23 are nearly square in plan, with bathrooms incorporated into the main form. Cabins 3 and 33 are each unique with front cross gables.

2. Condition of fabric: Fair/Poor. Many cabins were in need of structural repair and preventative maintenance.

See individual HABS reports on representative Cedar Pass cabins for detailed architectural information:

HABS No. SD-25-A: CEDAR PASS LODGE, CABIN 1-2

HABS No. SD-25-H: CEDAR PASS LODGE, CABIN 9

HABS No. SD-25-L: CEDAR PASS LODGE, CABIN 14-16

HABS No. SD-25-Q: CEDAR PASS LODGE, CABIN 22

### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings: There are no architectural drawings for the Cedar Pass Lodge cabins, given the ad hoc nature of their construction and alteration. Site plans from c. 1940 cited above indicate that the U-shaped drive was in place at this time.

B. Early Views: The earliest photographs of Cedar Pass Lodge are from c. 1929, showing the original dance hall and wood timber sheathing of the cabins. Other photographs from the 1930s show the original appearance of the cabins and illustrate the fact that Millard often altered and moved cabins. Specific images are noted in the citations or are reproduced below.

C. Selected Bibliography:

**Archival Collections:**

RG 79, Records of the National Park Service, National Archives and Records Administration II, College Park, MD.

Badlands National Park (BADL) Library and Archives, Ben Riefel Visitor Center, Interior, SD.

Facility Management Map and Blueprint Collection, Badlands National Park (BADL), Interior, SD.

**Publications/Reports:**

- Badlands National Park. "Environmental Assessment: Cedar Pass Developed Area Cultural Landscape." National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, November 2004.
- Belasco, Warren James. *Americans on the Road: From Autocamp to Motel, 1910-1945*. Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1979.
- Jakle, John A., Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers. *The Motel in America*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- John Milner Associates, Inc. "Cedar Pass Developed Area Badlands National Park Cultural Landscape Report." Midwest Regional Office and Badlands National Park, June 2005.
- John Milner Associates, Inc. "Discovery and Re-Discovery in the White River Badlands: Historic Resource Study." South Dakota: Badlands National Park, 2006.
- Mattison, Ray and Robert A. Grom. *History of Badlands National Monument*. Interior, SD: Badlands Natural History Association, 1968.
- O'Bright, Al. "Condition Survey Report: Cedar Pass Cabins, Badlands National Park." (10 July 2009), Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service.
- Shuler, Jay. *A Revelation Called the Badlands: Building a National Park, 1909-1939*. Interior, SD: Badlands Natural History Association, 1994 (reprint).
- WPA Guide to South Dakota*. South Dakota Guide Commission, 1938, reprinted St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2006.

#### PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation of the Cedar Pass Lodge cabins at Badlands National Park (BADL) was undertaken in 2011-2012 by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Heritage Documentation Programs division of the National Park Service (Richard O'Connor, Chief). The project was sponsored by the NPS Midwest Regional Office (MWR) and Badlands National Park. Project planning was coordinated by Catherine Lavoie, Chief, HABS; Robert Arzola, HABS Architect; and by Eric Brunnemann, Superintendent, BADL. The field work was undertaken and the measured drawings were produced by HABS Architects Paul Davidson, Daniel De Sousa, and Jason W. McNatt. The historical reports were written by HABS Historian Lisa P. Davidson. The large-format photography was done by HABS Photographer Renee Bieretz. Crucial assistance was provided by BADL staff Steve Thede (Deputy Superintendent), Megan Cherry (Museum Technician), and Pam Livermont (Administrative Assistant), and the staff of Forever Resorts.

PART V. ILLUSTRATIONS

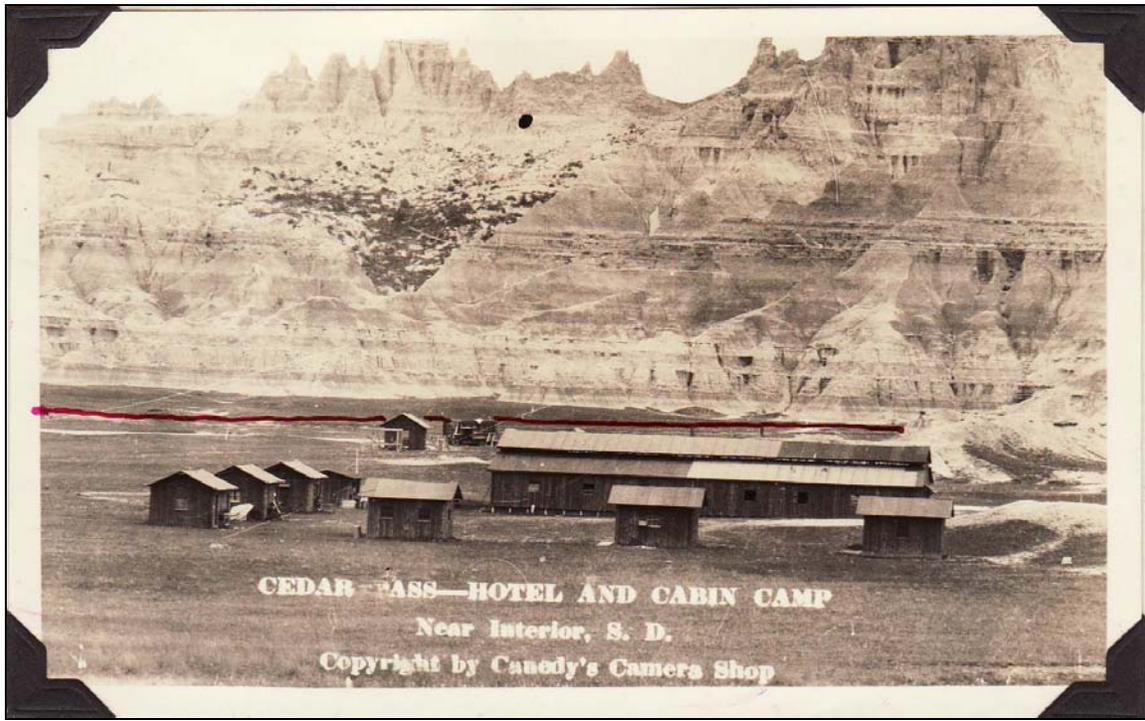


Figure 1: Cedar Pass Hotel and Cabin Camp, c. 1929. Note dance hall at center.  
This photo postcard was included in Vint's 1929 report.  
Source: Record Group 79, National Archives & Records Administration II.

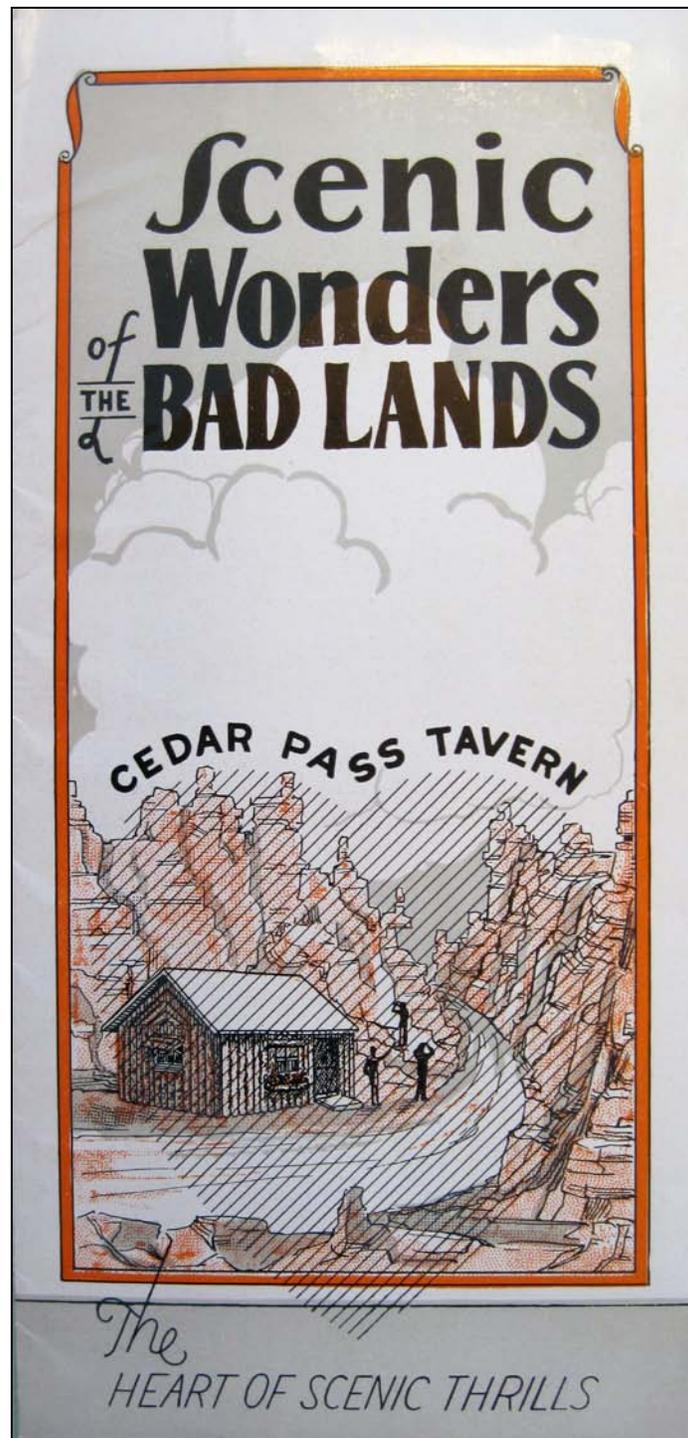


Figure 2: Cedar Pass Tavern brochure, c. 1929.  
Source: Record Group 79, National Archives & Records Administration II.



Figure 3: Cedar Pass Camp "Tourist Cabin," c. 1929.  
This photograph was also used in the above brochure.  
Source: Record Group 79, National Archives & Records Administration II.



Figure 4: Mrs. Jennings on Lodge Porch, Summer 1935.  
Source: Mary (nee Allburn) Aggergaard Scrapbook, BADL Archives.



Figure 5: Alice Beard, Mary Allburn, Doris Hansen, Dewey Beard, Summer 1935.  
Source: Mary (nee Allburn) Aggergaard Scrapbook, BADL Archives.



Figure 6: Original Lodge, Cedar Pass Camp, c. 1935.  
Source: Mary (nee Allburn) Aggergaard Scrapbook, BADL Archives.



Figure 7: Cabin, Cedar Pass Camp, c. 1935.  
Source: Mary (nee Allburn) Aggergaard Scrapbook, BADL Archives.



Figure 8: View of Cabins from West, Cedar Pass Camp, c. 1935.  
Source: Mary (nee Allburn) Aggergaard Scrapbook, BADL Archives.

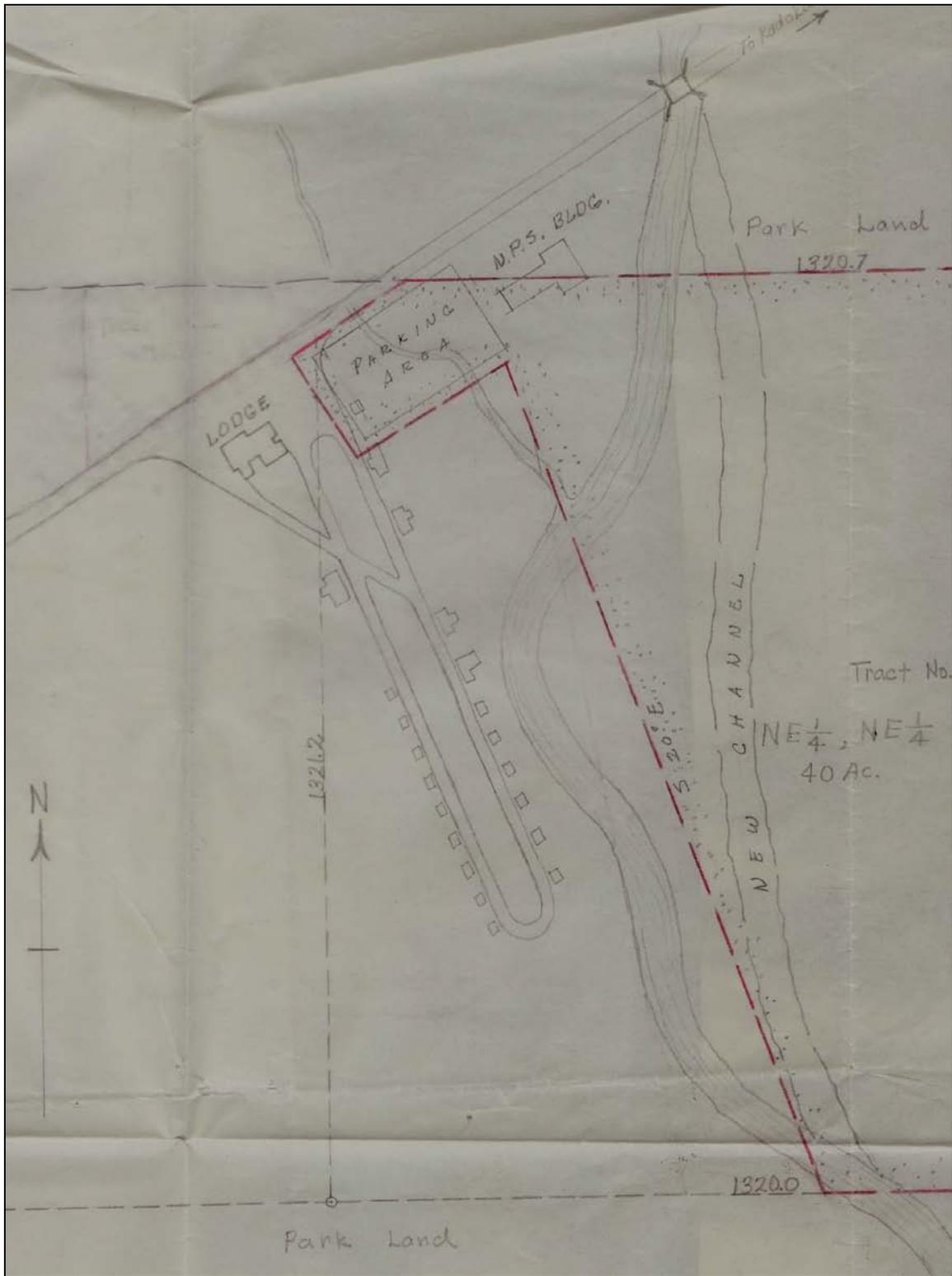


Figure 9: Cedar Pass Lodge, Sketch Site Plan, April 1940.  
Source: Record Group 79, National Archives & Records Administration II.



Figure 10: Cabin 1-2 (November 1965). Note Cabin 3 at left.  
Source: Record Group 79, National Archives & Records Administration II.



Figure 11: Cabin 36 (November 1965).  
Source: Record Group 79, National Archives & Records Administration II.

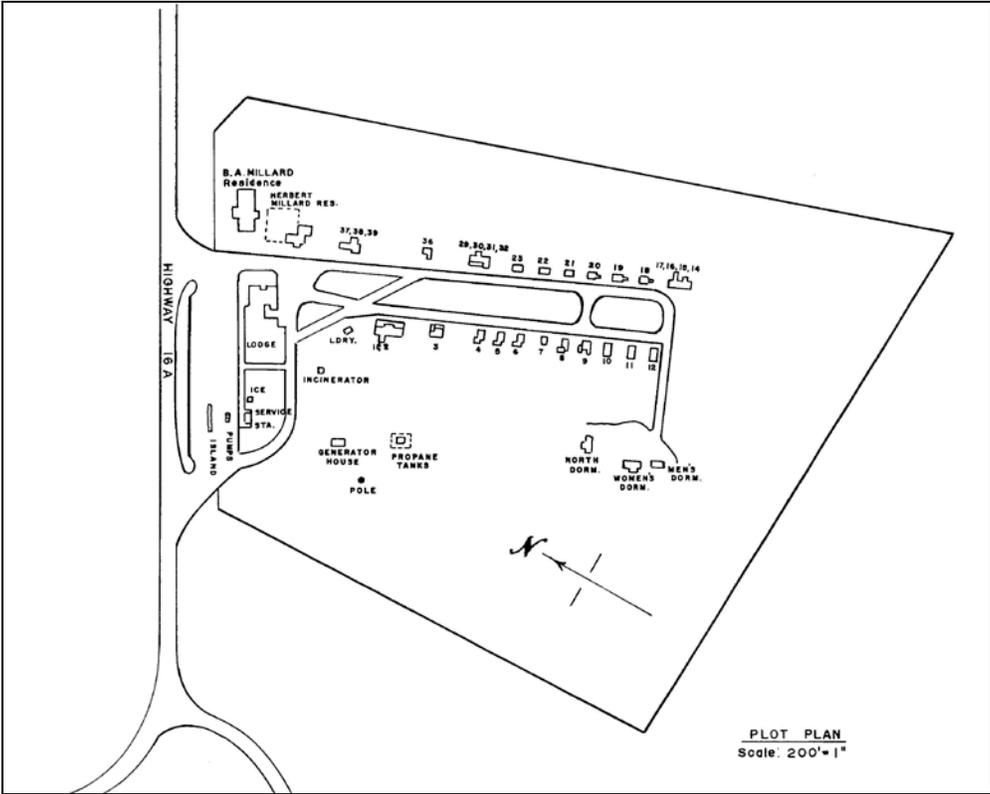


Figure 12: Cedar Pass Lodge Site Plan (November 1965).  
Source: Record Group 79, National Archives & Records Administration II.

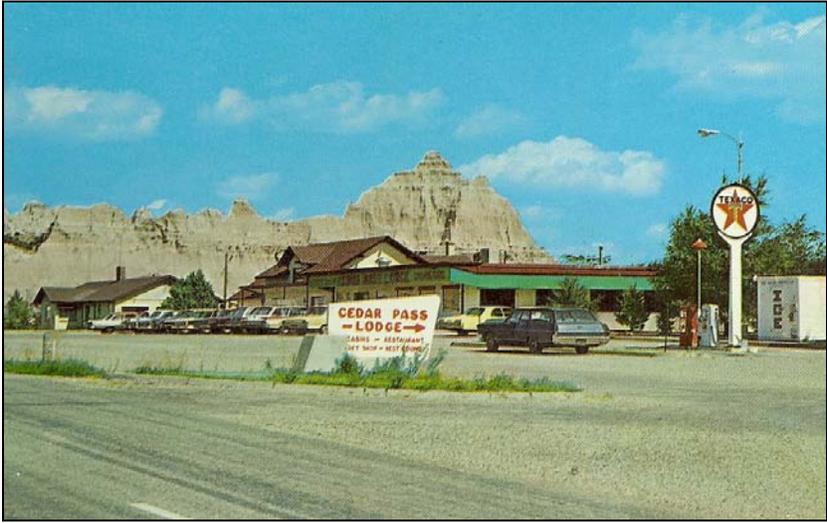


Figure 13: Cedar Pass Lodge, Summer 1966.  
Source: "Cedar Pass '66," (BADL 49570) BADL Archives.



Figure 14: "Z" and Theresa, Summer 1966.  
Source: "Cedar Pass '66," (BADL 49570) BADL Archives.