Yosemite Park and Curry Company Collection

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http://www.nps.gov/yose/historyculture/collections.htm
2016
Descriptive Summary
Title: Yosemite Park and Curry Company Collection
Dates: 1889-2003
Collection Number: YCN: 2001
Creator/Collector:
Extent: 480 LF
Online items available: https://voro.cdlib.org/user-pdf-dav/yosnpa/YPCC%20Finding%20Aid%20for%20PDF.pdf
Repository: Yosemite National Park Archives
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Abstract: The Yosemite Park and Curry Company Collection contains the business records of one of the largest and longest
operating concessioners in the national park system. The Yosemite Park and Curry Company (YP&C C) was organized in
1925 when Yosemite National Park's two largest concessionaires, the Yosemite National Park Co. (previously the D.J.
Desmond Co.) which operated the Yosemite Lodge and other smaller enterprises at Yosemite, and the Curry Camping Co.
which operated Camp Curry, merged. Creation of the new company was the culmination of a decade-long effort by NPS
Director Stephen Mather to consolidate services at Yosemite to better serve the visiting public and more efficiently develop
visitor services in the park. YP&C C eventually acquired rights to the Wawona Hotel concession (1923) as well as the Degnan
Family's Valley concession (1974). YP&C C remained a Curry Family controlled corporation until the death of Mary Curry
Tressider in 1970. After several ownership changes, MCA, Inc. took control of YP&C C in 1973, operating the concession until
the NPS awarded a new contract to Delaware North Company in 1993. During its sixty-eight years of operation, YP&C C
interactions with the NPS set many precedents for concessionaire operations in the national park system, and played an
influential role in the development of tourism in California. Among the Company's most significant activities was the
development of a strong winter sports infrastructure and tradition at Yosemite including construction and operation of
Badger Pass, California's first down-hill ski area; establishment of the Yosemite Winter Club; and creation of the
Bracebridge Dinner. Among other accomplishments, the company also expanded the High Sierra Camps and created the
Yosemite Mountaineering School . MCA donated the YP&C C archives to the National Park Service in 1990, and accretions to
the collection have continued. The collection includes company papers of the Desmond, Yosemite National Park Co., Kings
River Camping Co., Curry Camping Co., and YP&C C, consisting of a large assemblage of documents, photographs,
ephemera, architectural drawings, motion picture film, and audio cassettes. Subjects: Operations, facilities, services, and
promotion of the YP&C C (and preceding concessionaires) at Yosemite, including such activities as: transportation of visitors,
construction and maintenance of structures, personnel activities, staff at work (including such notable employees as Ansel
Adams and Dana Morgenson), and special events.
Language of Material: English
Access
No restrictions.
Preferred Citation
Yosemite Park and Curry Company Collection. Yosemite National Park Archives
Acquisition Information
Transferred to the park with deed of gift in 1993 after YP&CC lost their concession contract to operate in the park.
Biography/Administrative History
Yosemite Park and Curry Company Corporate History The Yosemite Park and Curry Company (YP&C C) was the primary park
concessioner at Yosemite National Park for nearly 70 years (1925-1993), making it one of the longest operating
concessions in any National Park Service (NPS) area. The operation of YP&C C and the issues confronted and decisions made
by the NPS at Yosemite had a great impact on the development of concession policy for the entire park system. Prior to the
creation of the YPCC in 1925, numerous small businesses had operated within the boundaries of what would become
Yosemite National Park, beginning as early as 1856. By the time the National Park Service took over Chronology 1899 David
and Jenny Curry est. Camp Curry in Yosemite Valley 1911 Curry Camping Co. incorporated – all stock owned by the Curry
Family 1915 D.J. Desmond Co. reorganized as Yosemite National Park Co. 1932 Washburn Family sold their interests assets at Wawona to the NPS; YP&C C leased Wawona Hotel from NPS as part of concessions contract. 1935 YP&C C completed construction of Badger Pass Ski Lodge 1941 Ostrander Lake Ski Hut built by NPS CCC Crews; operated by YP&C C? 1976 YP&C C purchased Degnan's Deli and Bakery 1993 Delaware North Company of Rochester, NY, granted 15-year concession contract by the National Park
Service; YP&CC owned by DNC, but now called Yosemite Concession Services. Scope and Content The collection contains not only the corporate records of YPCC, but business records of several other concession operations which predated the creation of YPCC in 1925. Records of Camp Ahwahnee, the Kings River Park Company, the Desmond Hotel Company, the Washburn Family, operators of the Wawona Hotel until 1932, are all found in the collection and date as early as 1887. However, the bulk of the material is from the two companies – the Curry Camping Company and the Yosemite National Park Company – which merged to form YPCC in 1925. The collection consists of records pertaining to all aspects of company operation, including administrative, financial, facilities maintenance, and marketing and advertisement; photographs; motion picture film. Within the administrative materials are the business papers of Mary Curry Tressider – president from 1977 until her death in 1970. Materials in the collection The majority of the materials came to the Yosemite Archives in 1997, following a donation by the other materials trickled in after being stored for a number of years in corners of the park, such as the Gore House in Wawona. In 1980, the YPCC obtained an appraisal of its records as part of the negotiations to donate the materials to the NPS, but the final donation did not occur until 1993.

Scope and Content of Collection