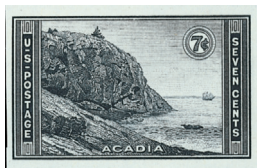


This Day in History... July 8, 1916

Acadia National Park

On July 8, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson created Sieur de Monts National Monument, which later became Acadia National Park. The park is located on Maine's Mount Desert Island, Isle Au Haut, on the Schoodic Peninsula. The Wabanaki people were some of the first known residents of present-day Acadia, arriving as much as 5,000 years ago. They called Mount Desert Island *Pemetic*, which means "range of mountains" or "the sloping land." With entire families in each canoe, they traveled there seasonally to hunt, fish, and collect the bountiful natural harvest.



1935 Farley's Follies Special Printing issued imperf and unground

Soon, American homesteaders arrived at the island. By 1820, farming, lumbering, fishing, and shipbuilding were the area's major occupations. Hundreds of acres of trees were cut down for commercial use. By the mid-1800s, artists of the Hudson River School, including Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, popularized the island to outsiders. Over the next few decades, there were 30 hotels on the island and tourism was among the island's main industries. As the 19th century came to a close, the island became a popular retreat for wealthy families, many of whom built lavish houses with breathtaking views.



Sixth stamp in the Scenic American Landscapes Series

The "Father of Acadia National Park," George B. Dorr, first visited the area in 1868 while on vacation with his parents. During that stay, he decided to make Mount Desert Island his home. Early on he knew this land was special and worked tirelessly to collect land for protection. He convinced others to give land or money to buy land and gave much of his own. In 1901, along with Charles W. Eliot, he created the Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations to continue to raise money and set aside land. By 1913, however, he realized that the land needed federal protection to be truly safe and that became his primary concern. Dorr immediately began meeting with influential friends in Washington armed with maps, deeds, and titles – anything necessary to convince them how important this was.

After more than two years of aggressive lobbying, Dorr had success. On July 8, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson established the Sieur de Monts National Monument. Dorr and the trustees had wanted to make it a national park, but he didn't want to wait the extra time for Congress to deliberate on the issue. Dorr was appointed the first superintendent of trustees to the lands and immediately began work on a springhouse. Beginning in 1915, wealthy philanthropist John D. Rockefeller Jr. paid for, designed, and oversaw the construction of 57 miles of carriage trails through the park. An expert road builder, Rockefeller's trails featured sweeping vistas and remarkable close-up views of the natural sights.

Over time, more land was added and in 1919, it achieved a new status as Lafayette National Park – the first National Park east of the Mississippi River. During his years overseeing the park, Dorr demanded everything be of the highest quality, and nothing be done that might harm the park's unsurpassed beauty or uniqueness. Ten years after achieving National Park status, it was renamed Acadia – in honor of the French who originally called the area Arcadia – meaning refuge or idyllic place.

The arrival of the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1933 saw the creation of more trails throughout the park and two camps, one of which serves as the park headquarters today. Since that time, the island's residents have kept their predecessor's traditions alive, continuing to donate lands and establishing rules on their own property to keep the landscape safe.



Stamp pictures the park's rock formation, Great Head.



Eliot lobbied every resident to treat the whole island like a park.

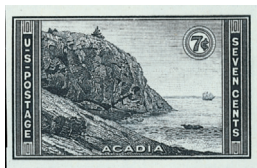


From the National Parks Centennial issue

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