

FEDERAL HERITAGE BUILDINGS REVIEW OFFICE

BUILDING REPORT: 87-132, 87-026

TITLE: Old Log Cabin (87-132) and Whymper Cabin (87-026)
Marble Canyon Warden Station
Kootenay National Park, British Columbia
Parks Canada Agency, WNC Service Centre

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Western Canada Service Centre, Parks Canada Agency, has submitted two cabins (Figure 1) at Marble Canyon, Haffner Creek in Kootenay National Park to the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO) for re-evaluation (Figures 2, 3, 4). “Old Log Cabin” and “Whymper Cabin” were initially reviewed in 1987 (FHBRO Building Reports 87-132 and 87-026 respectively) and found to be “not heritage.” New information concerning the construction dates of these cabins has prompted their re-evaluation (see Background).

Kootenay National Park was created in 1920 through an agreement between the Dominion and British Columbia governments whereby land was ceded for park purposes in exchange for highway construction financing. It is located on the west slope of the Continental Divide in southeastern British Columbia. The park, stretching north and south for 104 kilometres, is bounded on the east by Banff and Mount Assiniboine Provincial Park and on the north by Yoho National Park.¹

Background

The original FHBRO report on these buildings suggested that they “were constructed privately between ca. 1935 and 1950, and were subsequently acquired by the park and relocated to new sites.”² Staff at Kootenay National Park now believe that both cabins date from the early 1920s. With regard to the Old Log Cabin, Park staff indicate that it was built in the 1920s (possibly by James T. Childe) to serve as a warden’s cabin. This information is based, in part, on the fact that the building has been owned by the Park since 1920 and because “it closely resembles similar structures such as the Little Pipe

¹ Maxwell W. Finkelstein, “Kootenay National Park,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia* website (<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com>).

² Ian Doull, “Whymper Cabin, Caretaker’s Cabin, Log Cabin Staff Accommodation (Marble Canyon), Kootenay National Park,” *Informal Building Reports 87-26, 87-131, 87-132*, p. 1.

Cabin near Lake Louise and other variations of 1918 designs for Wardens' cabins."³ It is believed to be on its original site.

According to information provided by the park, Whympers Cabin was built by the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) ca.1922 and was one of the original cabins of the now defunct Marble Canyon Bungalow Camp. The Preliminary Information Sheet submitted to the FHBRO indicates that the building was owned by the CPR until 1930 and then by the Crosby family (which operated the camp) until 1950. The Preliminary Information Sheet also suggests that the "cabin has been moved from its original location...[though] there is no documentation to prove this." The impetus behind re-submission is explained as follows:

Approaching demolition, a local Heritage Communicator (Larry Halverson) made it known that this cabin is one of the original cabins of the Marble Canyon Bungalow Camp that was developed at Marble Canyon in 1922. It is believed that this has some historical significance in that Kootenay National Park was created to provide a roadway that allowed auto tourism to flourish.⁴

Subsequent research has revealed several inaccuracies in the park submission. The history of the Old Log Cabin is far from certain, but it appears to have been part of an auto bungalow camp (Rocky Mountain Bungalow Camp) built between 1935 and 1942 in Kootenay National Park. After the closure of the bungalow camp, it was moved by the summer of 1957 either to the "Hawk Creek Camp," to one of several fire lookout stations, or directly to Marble Canyon Lot 1.⁵ It was not acquired by Parks Canada until 1957. Whympers Cabin appears to have been built ca. 1922 on Lot 8, Marble Canyon subdivision, by Mr. L.C. Orr⁶ and moved to its current location (Lot 1) ca. 1959, following the closure of the Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp.⁷ The CPR never operated the Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp, and the cabin was only acquired by Kootenay National Park in 1959.

Thematic

Both the Old Log and Whympers cabins were originally components of privately-built, small-business auto bungalow camps. They illustrate the theme of "automobile-based tourism in Kootenay National Park."⁸ During the first phase of tourism in the mountain parks, visitor accommodation consisted primarily of the CPR's mountain hotels, which catered to reasonably affluent railway travellers. The building of highways through the mountains, in this instance the Banff-Windermere Road, provided access to tourists of more modest means who travelled by automobile, often in family groups. The CPR again

³ After the wardens quit using the building it was used as a residence for park naturalists for a number of years; it is now unoccupied, and has been so for at least the last 5-10 years.

⁴ Denis Herman, CRM Specialist/Warden Service, WCSC, "Preliminary Information Sheet," n.p.

⁵ Memo from Assistant Chief, dated 12 August 1957. National Archives (NA), Record Group (RG) 84, A-2-a, Vol. 1637, File K16-112-1, part 1.

⁶ Doull, "Whympers Cabin, etc.," p. 5. Also, letter from Acting Superintendent Sibbald to J.P. Harkin, Commissioner of Parks, dated 11 May 1927, RG84, A-2-a, Vol. 1639, File K16-112-6, part 1.

⁷ Doull, "Whympers Cabin, etc.," p. 6.

⁸ Doull, "Whympers Cabin, etc.," p. 2.

led the way in developing a new type of accommodation, in the form of cabin developments called auto bungalow camps, which were geared to this new class of traveller (Figure 5).⁹

According to Ted Mills, author of “The Bungalow Trail: Rustic Railway Bungalow Camps in Canada’s National Parks,”

One of the many implications of automobile tourism was an increased demand for a less-formal and less-costly type of accommodation accessible by road. By 1920, in response to this demand, small roadside auto-bungalow courts were beginning to spring up in the United States. A demand for similar facilities would arise within the mountain parks in the early 1920s, as new highway circuits were completed. The CPR took steps to preserve its monopolistic status within the parks by moving into this market.¹⁰

Kootenay National Park was created in 1920 as a ten-mile wide strip of land stretching for 65 miles along the newly completed eastern-British Columbia section of the Banff-Windermere Road. Formally opened in 1922, the highway was a component of the first automobile route through the central Rocky Mountains, and one of the last links in the 6000-mile, so-called “Grand Circle Tour.” Motorists following this route could travel from the prairies through Calgary and the Rocky Mountains to Invermere, British Columbia, southward through Washington, Oregon, and California, thence back to Calgary via Utah – passing through 12 American and three Canadian national parks (Figure 6). When the project was proposed in 1911 the Alberta, British Columbia, and Dominion governments each agreed to build a section of the Banff-Windermere Road. In 1914 work on the British Columbia section was suspended, and a lack of funds precluded an early resumption of construction. The Dominion government in 1919 agreed to complete the project in exchange for the ceding by British Columbia of some 600 square miles of territory along the right-of-way to be set aside for a national park.¹¹ In 1922 the 160-acre Radium Hot Springs site, situated near the southwestern corner of the park and first developed in 1890, was expropriated and added to the park territory.¹²

The *Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 1922* outlined the earliest development at the new park which included the “layout of automobile camps on the Banff-Windermere road; layout of town site at Radium Hot Springs together with plans of buildings that may be required there, eg. swimming pool, etc.”¹³ The report further commented upon the popularity of bungalow camps, noting

⁹ Doull, “Whymper Cabin, etc.,” p. 2.

¹⁰ Edward Mills, “The Bungalow Trail: Rustic Railway Bungalow Camps in Canada’s National Parks,” *Bulletin: Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, v. 18, n. 3/4 (September – December 1993): p. 63.

¹¹ *Annual Report of the Department of the Interior, 1922-23*, pp. 71-72; *Kootenay National Park Provisional Master Plan* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1970), p. 13.

¹² Doull, “Whymper Cabin, etc.,” p. 3.

¹³ Dominion of Canada. “Part II Canadian National Parks,” *Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 1922* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1923), p. 104.

It is becoming increasingly evident that this class of accommodation meets the requirements of a large part of the travelling public, providing as it does, plain but comfortable sleeping quarters and an excellent table. This simple accommodation, in touch as it is with the actual out of doors, is preferred by many genuine nature lovers and people of refinement. It is expected in the near future similar accommodation will be provided at Jasper and Waterton Lakes parks.¹⁴

Increased automobile usage and the increasing accessibility of the Rocky Mountains spurred the development of bungalow camps within the parks. The 1922 *Annual Report* mentions the layout of automobile camps on the Banff-Windermere road, though not their exact location. The CPR constructed a bungalow camp at Radium Hot springs in 1924. Other bungalow camps in Kootenay NP included Blakeley's Bungalows (begun in 1931-32), Addison's Bungalows (1948), Mount Farnham Bungalows (1954), CPR installations at Storm Mountain and Vermilion Crossing, as well as the two camps currently under consideration, the Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp (1922) and the Rocky Mountain Bungalow Camp, also known as "Crook's Bungalows" (1935).¹⁵

To date, it does not appear that the FHBRO has evaluated any buildings (other than these, the first time around) which were associated with the theme of automobile based tourism or the auto bungalow camp. A list of the 39 cabins (in national parks) which have been reviewed shows more than half (23) were wardens' cabins. In his 1994 study, *Rustic Building Programs in Canada's National Parks, 1887-1950*, prepared for the National Historic Sites Directorate, Ted Mills identified a number of buildings, within the parks, which were originally associated with auto bungalow camps including: eleven cabins at Lake O'Hara Lodge, Yoho National Park, some dating back to the 1920s; twelve cabins at Storm Mountain Lodge along the Banff-Windermere Highway (six of which were originally located at the Vermillion River Bungalow Camp, Kootenay National Park); an unspecified number of cabins at the Vermillion River Bungalow Camp, dating back to the 1930s and 1940s; and twelve cabins, built between 1928 and 1931, at Jasper Park Lodge, Jasper National Park.¹⁶

Person/Event

No person or event of historical significance is known to be associated with either cabin.¹⁷

¹⁴ Dominion of Canada. "Part II Canadian National Parks," *Annual Report of the Department of the Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 1922*, p. 100.

¹⁵ Parks Canada. *Outlying Commercial Accommodation (Bungalow Camps): No. 22 A Background Paper for the Four Mountain Parks Planning Program* (1983), p. 17.

¹⁶ Edward Mills, *Rustic Building Programs in Canada's National Parks, 1887-1950* (National Historic Sites Directorate, Parks Canada, 1994), Section Ib, "Tourist Accommodation," pp. 114-143.

¹⁷ "The Whymper Cabin bears the name of British alpine pioneer Edward Whymper, although the building and each of its sites bear no direct associations with the individual. A member of the British Alpine Club, Whymper in 1865 made the first successful ascent of the Matterhorn; within a few years his name had gained pre-eminence in the international mountaineering community. In 1900 Whymper approached the Canadian Pacific Railway with a promotional scheme by which he would make a series of CPR-financed

Local Development

When Kootenay Park was created along the newly completed eastern British Columbia section of the Banff-Windermere Road, it “added a colourful and historic mountain region” to Canada’s system of national parks and “climaxed the efforts of individuals and governments to complete the first motor road across the central Canadian Rockies, linking the Bow River Valley with that of the upper Columbia River.”¹⁸ The completed road was officially opened in 1923 and the following tourist season, more than 4,500 automobiles travelled from the Columbia River to Banff.

Not only was new and increasing automobile travel a major impetus in the establishment of the park but it also affected the physical development of the park, notably through the creation of auto bungalow camps. According to *Outlying Commercial Accommodations (Bungalow Camps)*, a 1983 Parks Canada Background Paper for the Four Mountain Parks Planning Program, there were two periods when most of the auto bungalow camps were constructed in the Rocky Mountain Parks, the 1920s and the late 1940s.¹⁹ Whympers Cabin, constructed during the 1920s, is associated with the first major phase of auto bungalow camp construction. The Old Log Cabin, however, which dates from the mid-1930s, is associated with an early but not numerically significant phase of auto bungalow camp construction. The Whympers Cabin is also associated with the development of the Warden’s station at Marble Canyon, through its long history at the site(s) and its current role.

Whympers Cabin

The completion of the Banff-Windermere Road Agreement by representatives of Canada and the Province of British Columbia in March 1919 prompted inquiries from individuals and groups looking to develop and operate commercial enterprises along the new road. By December of 1920, the Commissioner of National Parks had received a number of requests for information on the availability of sites for the construction of visitor accommodation near Marble Canyon (including hotels, campgrounds, lodges and auto bungalow camps). Marble Canyon is located about five miles south of Vermilion Pass, which straddles the Alberta-British Columbia border. The area was surveyed in 1922 and a section suited to commercial development was identified. A subdivision of eight lots was laid out on a bench overlooking the Vermilion River, a few hundred yards above its confluence with Haffner Creek.

The first building at the site was the warden’s cabin, situated on Lot 1 (on or near the current warden’s station) and shown on a 1922 map. According to historian W.F.

climbs in the Canadian Rockies, then write of his experiences in British newspapers and journals. The CPR accepted, but soon regretted its decision. Whympers was by that year aging, alcoholic, and erratic of behaviour. His climbs in 1901, 1903 and 1904 were exceptionally trying for his sponsors. However, Whympers subsequently published some positive articles about his experiences, and coined the phrase ‘fifty Switzerlands in one’ which the CPR used extensively in its promotions.” Doull, “Whympers Cabin, etc.,” pp. 6-7.

¹⁸ W.F. Lothian, *A Brief History of Canada’s National Parks* (Environment Canada Parks, 1987), p. 59.

¹⁹ Though lots were offered for development in the 1930s and 1940s, there was little private interest in the early 1930s due to the depression. *Outlying Commercial Accommodations (Bungalow Camps)*, p. 1.

Lothian, “[d]uring the early development of Kootenay National Park, Marble Canyon was selected as the headquarters for one of three park warden districts created. Lot 1 in the Marble Canyon Subdivision was reserved as the site of the first warden station, which was erected in 1923.”²⁰ The Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp was developed on Lots Six, Seven, and Eight. In 1923, a combined tearoom and administrative unit for a cabin development (bungalow camp) was erected. There were two cabins on the site by 1924 (possibly as early as 1922), and by 1927 there were two more. A 1945 site plan shows a clearly recognizable drawing of Whymper cabin on the exact site of one of the first two cabins, strongly suggesting that it dates back to the origins of the camp. That suspicion is corroborated by archived plans for an auto bungalow ostensibly to be built on Lot 6 at Marble Canyon between 1924 and 1927 (but never erected) that correspond very closely to the Whymper Cabin design (Figures 7, 8, 9, 10, 11).

By 1954, the bungalow camp at Marble Canyon consisted of a log central building, six “cheaply built” cabins and a washhouse with showers and toilets. By 1958, it was clear that the impending reconstruction of the Banff-Windermere Road through the Banff and Kootenay parks would require a portion of the Marble Canyon bungalow camp leasehold to realign the highway and widen the right-of-way. Park authorities reasoned that acquiring the entire property – by then, considered one of the poorest camps in the park – would be in the public interest and reached an agreement with the owners in 1959. The site was cleared but for two cabins, one of which was Whymper Cabin. Whymper Cabin was moved to Lot 1, near the current Marble Canyon Warden Station²¹ to serve as a bunkhouse for crew.²² Whymper Cabin is one of the earliest (and sole surviving) buildings at the now defunct Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp, and is very likely the oldest extant auto bungalow in Kootenay National Park erected by a small-business entrepreneur.

Old Log Cabin

The Old Log Cabin was originally located on the Crook property (Rocky Mountain Bungalow Camp) which was a rare example of freehold tenure within the limits of national parks. Charles Crook obtained title to 160 acres 21 miles northwest of Radium, by homesteading the property beginning in 1912. The National Parks Service tried to purchase Crook’s homestead in 1926 for the sum of \$5,000, but he refused. In 1930, he tried to sell his property to the park in exchange for property and a building outside the park gates where he hoped to open a beer parlour; nothing came of that proposal. Early in the 1930s, Crook erected a service station on his property, and, with park permission, erected an auto bungalow camp in three building phases, 1935, 1940, and 1942, all according to the same building plans forwarded to him by the Branch on 2 February

²⁰ W.F. Lothian, *A History of Canada’s National Parks*, Vol. III (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1979), p. 85.

²¹ In 1955, the current Warden’s Residence (and office, FHBRO 05-094) at Marble Canyon was constructed to replace the first (1923) warden’s station. Lothian, *A History of Canada’s National Parks*, Vol. III, pp. 84-85.

²² “The buildings comprising this development have been inspected. With the exception of the storage building and Cabin 3 the rest are all at least 30 years old and for the most part in rather poor shape. One of the cabins is possibly worth moving and we would like to try to shift this to our Marble Canyon Wardens Station for use as a four-man bunkhouse for trail crew.” D.B. Coombs, Superintendent to Chief, National Parks Service, 5 June 1959.

1935. The improvement of the Banff-Windermere Road in the late 1950s would have placed most of the Crook buildings, if not on the highway, then in the ditch. Accordingly, the National Parks Service offered to purchase the camp and Crook's interest in the land. Ray Crook, presumably Charles' son, acknowledged in January 1957 that he had received a cheque for \$25,000 as full payment for his property. In a memo from a high-level Parks official, all but one of the buildings belonging to Crook's bungalow camp had been relocated by 12 August 1957; the last building would be relocated "in the near future."²³

ARCHITECTURE

Aesthetic Design

In their simplicity of design, choice of materials, building techniques and attention to setting, Old Log and Whymper cabins illustrate the rustic design that characterized national park architecture for the first half of the twentieth century. According to Mills, rustic architectural design, which "describes an aesthetic approach rather than a specific architectural style,"²⁴ emerged in the national parks between 1902 and 1930 "out of the efforts by railway and national parks agencies to develop a method of building that was uniquely evocative of the natural environment within the growing network of national parks in both the United States and Canada."²⁵ Eventually, rustic elements were prescribed for park architecture for aesthetic reason alone. In its "purest" form, rustic design is rooted in "an indigenous vernacular building tradition."²⁶

Backcountry cabins have been present in the National Parks since before their inception, having been introduced to the region by trappers, prospectors and settlers. More common in the western parks, they are typically constructed in backcountry locations using local logs. Most of the cabins have a simple rectangular plan with a single entrance usually located on one of the gable ends (Figure 12). Seldom are there interior partitions. As

²³ Ray Crook intended to re-open the service station nearby, and Parks officials appeared willing to accommodate him by foregoing the usual call for public tender; in exchange, they expected Crook to pay for the survey of the lease lot. In August, however, a Parks official noted that the Kootenay National Park Superintendent had not heard from Crook regarding the service station, and further observed that he did "not believe an installation of this nature here is necessary or desirable." NA, RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1637, file K16-112-1, pt. 1. "Memo: Re. Lot 11658 Kootenay District, 22 September 1930." J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, to The Superintendent Kootenay National Park, 4 January 1935. Acting Superintendent Kootenay National Park, to J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, 14 January 1935. J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, to The Superintendent Kootenay National Park, 25 January 1935. J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, to The Superintendent Kootenay National Park, 2 February 1935. E.N. Russell, Superintendent Yoho National Park, to F.H.H. Williamson, Controller of National Parks, 26 March 1940. G.F. Forsey, Acting Superintendent Yoho and Glacier National Parks, to The Controller, National Parks Bureau, 13 April 1942. "Plan Showing Highway Right of Way Through Lot 11658." T.W. Pierce, Superintendent Kootenay National Park, to Chief, National Parks Service, 25 January 1957. J.R.B. Coleman, Chief, to the Superintendent Kootenay National Park, 5 February 1957. "Memo: 12 August 1957."

²⁴ Edward Mills, "Rustic Building Programs in Canada's National Parks, 1887-1950, Part II," *Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada* (1992), p. xi.

²⁵ Mills, "Rustic Building Programs, Part I," p. 9.

²⁶ Mills, "Rustic Building Programs, Part I," pp. 9, 1.

Edward Mills observed, these cabins “embody rustic design in its purest sense: as a direct response to shelter requirements, utilizing local materials and local building practices.”²⁷

Wardens’ patrol cabins are the most numerous of the early rustic cabins in the western national parks (Figure 13). According to Mills, “Early park wardens were expected to build their own cabins and stables at specified points along their patrol circuits,” and in so doing, “they continued the vernacular log building traditions that had been introduced into the park regions ...” In 1915, the Banff park engineer began furnishing standardized plans for warden’s cabins, culminating in a set design in 1918 that “served as the basic reference for patrol cabins in some parks for the next 30 years or more, although wardens were given considerable leeway in its application” (Figure 14).

There are also “private variations” on the basic shelter cabins erected in the western national parks. Among the first private shelter cabins were those erected by the Canadian Pacific Railway in the Banff and Yoho national parks “to serve as temporary shelters for hiking, mountaineering and horseback tours that it indirectly sponsored.” Early examples of the private variations of basic shelter cabins include the Wiwaxy Lodge, the Elizabeth Parker Hut, the Abbott Pass Refuge Cabin, the Shadow Lake Rest House, and the Fay Hut, erected by the Alpine Club of Canada in 1927 (Figures 15, 16).²⁸

Private variations took a leap forward with the introduction of “auto bungalow camps” to the national parks beginning in the 1920s. The auto bungalow camps grew out of the Canadian Pacific Railway’s tourist tent camps in the national parks, such as those at Moraine Lake and in the Yoho Valley. After the First World War, the original tent camps were expanded into auto bungalow camps, and new locations were added, the first being Wapta Lake in 1921, and Lake O’Hara and Yoho Valley in 1922. Immediate success led to the expansion of the CPR’s Banff facilities and the addition of several new locations, including Storm Mountain, Vermilion River, and Radium Hot Springs, each of which were located within the Kootenay National Park.²⁹ As such, they were in direct competition, first, with the Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp, and later, with the Rocky Mountain Auto Bungalow Camp as well.

Both of the cabins currently under review belong to the early period of auto bungalow camps. The Old Log Cabin was built between 1935 and 1942 by Charles Crook, an original homesteader in the region (thus, a freeholder within the park), and proprietor of the “Rocky Mountain Auto Bungalow Camp” and a contiguous service station located at Mile 21 west of Radium on the Banff-Windermere Road. In 1956, KNP bought his property and structures in order to allow for improvements to the Banff-Windermere Road that would have negatively impacted his operations.³⁰ The Whympers Cabin appears

²⁷ Edward Mills, “Rustic Building Programs in Canada’s National Parks, 1887-1950, Part II,” *Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada*, 1992: I.a. Basic Shelter.

²⁸ Bob Hahn, *Kootenay National Park* (Calgary AB: Rocky Mountain Books, 2000), pp. 91-92.

²⁹ E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada: The Canadian Pacific Railway and the Beginning of Canadian Tourism* (Banff AB: Altitude Publishing Ltd., 1983), pp. 103-104.

³⁰ NA, RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1637, file K16-112-1, pt. 1. G.F. Forsey to The Controller, National Parks Bureau, 13 April 1942. E.N. Russell to F.H.H. Williamson, The Controller, National Parks Bureau, 26 March 1942. J.B. Harkin to The Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, 4 January 1935. Acting

to have been one of the two original auto bungalows erected by Mr. L.C. Orr in 1922 at the Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp.

Both the Old Log and Whymper cabins belong to the period of “firm centralization” of park architecture.³¹ Theoretically, plans for new private and park facilities had to be vetted by the Town Planning Division (known later as the Architectural Division) in Ottawa, headed by William David Cromarty. According to Edward Mills, Cromarty “introduced the major stylistic themes that were applied throughout the park system by the mid-1920s. His response to the competing needs for a distinctive rustic theme for public buildings and for enforceable design standards in the townsites was to introduce a set of architectural motifs that could be applied in varying degrees and in different ways as circumstances dictated.”³²

Interestingly enough, both camps to which the Old Log and Whymper cabins originally belonged also illustrated that even during the period of firm centralization, small, independent entrepreneurs, such as L.C. Orr and Charles Crook, did not always adhere to the letter of the pronouncements emanating from Ottawa.³³ Orr, for example, built his cabins on Lot 6 smaller than the approved designs sent to him from Ottawa.³⁴ Similarly, Crook began building his auto bungalows before receiving any approved plans, and when the late-arriving plans did not conform to his design, Ottawa sent out new ones that did.³⁵ Neither case of deception impressed the Branch. And yet, both cabins may be considered ‘pure’ applications of rustic design.

Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, 14 January 1935. J.B. Harkin to The Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, 25 January 1935. J.B. Harkin to The Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, 2 February 1935. In fact, the KNP tried unsuccessfully to purchase Crook’s 160-acre property in the 1920s when the installation consisted only of the original homestead cabin (probably erected in 1912), an outhouse, some fencing and 5.65 acres of cleared land. See, Memo, Re: Lot 11658 Kootenay District, 22 September 1930. See also, “Plan Showing Highway Right of Way Through Lot 11658,” n.d. [19 September 1956].

³¹ Mills, “Rustic Building Programs, Part I,” p. 31.

³² Mills, “Rustic Building Programs, Part I,” pp. 42, 50.

³³ Mills, “Rustic Building Programs, Part I,” p. 52. According to Mills, the Town Planning Division had varying degrees of success regulating architecture in the parks; its success tended to be “comprehensive” in places where the Branch was involved from the outset, such as at Radium Hot Springs.

³⁴ In fact, documents indicate that the original, official lessee of Lot 6 was Roy Turnbull. Turnbull, Orr’s brother-in-law, was the lessee in name only. When Orr’s request for a lease for Lot 6 was declined by the Branch, citing regulations and the limited space available for lease in Marble Canyon, Orr had Turnbull apply for the lease instead. Orr’s ruse was soon discovered, much to the Branch’s initial annoyance. LAC RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1639, file K16-112-6, pt. 1. H.E. Sibbald, Superintendent Kootenay National Park, to J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, National Parks of Canada, 30 July 1928. Roy F. Turnbull to H.E. Sibbald, Superintendent Kootenay National Park, 1 August 1928. H.E. Sibbald, Superintendent Kootenay National Park, to J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, National Parks of Canada, 25 August 1928. J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, National Parks of Canada, to H.E. Sibbald, Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, 25 September 1928. J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, National Parks of Canada, to The Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, 22 June 1932.

³⁵ NA, RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1637, file K16-112-1, pt. 1. J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, Canadian National Parks, to The Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, 4 January 1935. Acting Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, to J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, Canadian National Parks, 14 January 1935. J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, Canadian National Parks, to The Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, 25 January 1935. J.B. Harkin, Commissioner, Canadian National Parks, to The Superintendent, Kootenay National Park, 2 February 1935.

Old Log Cabin

The Old Log Cabin near the Marble Canyon Campground measures 13' 2" wide by 18' 6" deep (Figures 17, 18). The 8' walls are a horizontal log construction using sawn and peeled 8" to 9" logs that are joined by saddle-notch joints; additionally, the seams between the logs on both the interior and exterior of the cabin are concealed by contoured stick batten (Figure 19). The only entrance to the cabin is through an off-centre, plain wooden door on the south gable side, which is accompanied by a double sash, horizontal sliding window. Double sash, horizontal sliding windows also provide natural light through the east and west walls. The door and windows are framed with milled, painted lumber. The cabin is built on a squared timber foundation.

The medium pitch 5' 2" high gable roof is constructed from sawn boards resting on log rafters and covered with alternating rows of red and green tar shingles (Figures 20, 21). The gable ends are finished with wood shingles (Figure 22). A stovepipe is mounted through the west roof; its corresponding woodstove, however, is no longer inside the cabin. The roof lacks the typical 4' to 6' deep overhang that warden cabins and auto bungalows featured for the purpose of covering a perimeter open verandah. Old Log Cabin has only a very shallow platform porch.

The interior elevations repeat the log and stick batten treatment of the exterior, but they are painted solid white. Windows on the east, west and south elevations are painted contrasting green and yellow. The exposed gable ends and ceiling are 1" x 5" white painted boards. A cabinet is mounted adjacent to the window on the east elevation, and a makeshift shelf has been mounted on the west elevation (Figures 23, 24, 25, 26, 27).

The Old Log Cabin is comparable to any number of backcountry log cabins. However, the absence of a 4' to 6' overhang at the entrance gable end, designed to provide sheltered outdoor storage for warden's cabins or a sheltered verandah for tourist cabins, makes the Old Log Cabin somewhat unusual. In that respect, it compares most closely with the Clearwater Lakes No. 47 Warden Cabin (Figure 28) at Banff National Park, "recognized" by FHBRO in 1993; its scores: 5/0/4 9/5/4/2 10/8/5 = 52. Constructed in 1957, the McArthur Creek Warden Cabin (Figure 29) at Yoho National Park is a late-arriving but typical warden cabin. It was deemed "not heritage" by FHBRO in 1997; its scores: 5/0/0 9/0/0/2 6/11/5 = 38. Old Log Cabin's dimensions and saddle-notched construction technique mirror those employed at both Clearwater Lakes and McArthur Creek, which scored 9 ("good") for aesthetic design.

Whymper Cabin:

The Whymper Cabin is a rectangular cabin, 20'2" deep by 14'3" wide, including a 4' open verandah at the front of the building (Figures 30, 31). From foundation to rafters, the cabin walls are 8' high. The gables and medium pitch roof measure 4'3" high (Figures 32, 33). The exterior walls are combined horizontal clapboard above vertical board and batten. The caretakers believe that new siding was likely applied when the cabin was refurbished as a park naturalist residence; however, the siding is consistent with historic photographs dated from September 1958, prior to the cabin's decommission

as an auto bungalow and relocation to Lot 1. The log verandah detailing was replaced with 2" x 4" lumber salvaged from other dismantled bungalows at the camp, a clear example of recycling building materials in the national parks (Figure 34).

Two single sash windows on the front façade, and one each on the east and west elevations, provide natural light for the interior of the cabin. The windows of the front façade are symmetrically arranged on either side of the entrance (unlike the asymmetrical arrangement of the Old Log Cabin). The walls and floor are constructed of 1" x 5" boards, painted white on the walls and grey on the floor. The exposed rafters are painted white. The interior of the cabin reflects its use as staff quarters between 1960 and the early 1990s; there is a makeshift counter, a cabinet, a refrigerator and a bunk bed. A plain wooden coat hanger has been mounted on the north wall (Figures 35, 36, 37, 38).

The vast majority of backcountry cabins in the mountain national parks are of log construction; there are also several stone examples. While Whymper Cabin's dimensions, layout and features are comparable to many backcountry log cabins, the combined use of horizontal clapboard above vertical board and batten may have been unique to the Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp during the period; L.C. Orr appears to have constructed all of the original auto bungalows in that manner. One structure in the mountain national parks that closely resembles Orr's design preference is the Minnewanka Warden Cabin (FHBRO 96-25) in Banff. Although the layout of the structure is quite different than Whymper Cabin, the exterior elevations combine horizontal clapboard above cedar shingles (Figure 39). The Minnewanka Warden Cabin was deemed "not heritage" by FHBRO, its scores: 5/0/4 0/5/4/0 10/8/0 = 36. The Minnewanka Warden Cabin scored 0 ("fair or poor") for aesthetic design; unfortunately the report offers no information for that determination. Some of the contrasts between the Minnewanka and Whymper cabins, however, may be relevant for scoring aesthetic design. Whymper is much closer to the typical backcountry cabin in its dimensions, its single-room interior, its dark brown (rather than red) exterior colour, the location of the entrance on a gable end, and the deep 4' to 6' covered verandah.

Functional Design

Old Log Cabin and Whymper Cabin

Very little could go wrong, from a functional point of view, with backcountry rustic cabins. The single room provided basic shelter and sleeping quarters, a dining table, perhaps a counter for food preparation (at Whymper, the counter may have been added when the cabins were converted to summer staff sleeping quarters), and a wood stove for warmth. The single-room design created an adaptable, open space; the high ceilings and windows on three sides produced an airy, bright and comfortable environment. Whymper Cabin's continuous use for more than sixty years as a shelter and sleeping quarters (first for tourists, and later for summer park staff) suggests the design's usefulness for that function.

Craftmanship and Materials

Old Log Cabin

The 8” logs that form the four elevations appear to be in very good condition even after as many as seventy years of exposure. The saddle notching appears to have been very well executed; the stick batten served to protect the seams and chinking between the logs from the elements. There is evidence of a leaky roof in the interior. The platform porch appears to be in poor condition and its short steps have succumbed to rot. In view of its relocation, it may be assumed that the Old Log Cabin sits on a newer foundation; it is also probable that the tar shingles are not original.

Whymper Cabin

After more than eighty years of service, the Whymper Cabin is still in good condition. Park staff suggest that the Whymper Cabin’s siding may have been replaced when it was moved to Lot 1, but there is no documentary or photographic evidence to corroborate that belief. It is certain, however, that the original elaborate log detailing on the verandah was replicated with 2” x 4” lumber salvaged from other dismantled auto bungalows in late 1958 or 1959. In view of its relocation, it may be assumed that the Whymper Cabin sits on a newer foundation; it is also probable that the tar shingles are not original.

Designer

Old Log Cabin

Charles Crook built the Old Log Cabin between 1935 and 1942 roughly in accordance to plans approved by Parks Canada’s Architectural Division.

Whymper Cabin

L.C. Orr, the original owner of the Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp, built the Whymper Cabin probably in 1922. There are archived plans for a cabin matching Whymper’s description intended for the neighbouring Lot 6 in the mid-1920s.³⁶ Such a cabin was never erected on Lot 6; it is possible (indeed, probable) that the plans were originally used for the erection of the Whymper Cabin on Lot 8.

ENVIRONMENT

Site

The Old Log Cabin was originally part of the “Rocky Mountain Auto Bungalow Camp,” located 21 miles northwest of Radium on the Banff-Windermere Highway. The KNP purchased Charles Crook’s freehold rights in 1956 and moved some of the cabins offsite for use as shelters at several fire lookout stations or to the “Hawk Creek Camp.” The Old Log Cabin was moved to its current site.

Whymper Cabin was originally located in the Marble Canyon Bungalow Camp “situate in lots 6, 7 and 8 in Section 2, Township 26, Range 16, West of the 5th Meridion in the Province of British Columbia.” It was moved to Lot 1, its current location in close proximity to the Warden’s Residence, in 1959.

³⁶ LAC RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1639, file K16-112-6 pt. 1. “Proposed Bungalows for R.F. Turnbull, Esq., on Lot 6, Marble Canyon, Kootenay Park, BC.”

Today, the cabins are located about 15 meters from each other and approximately 75 meters from the Warden's Residence. All three buildings are close to the highway. Other site features include: an outhouse for the cabins, parking by the Warden's Residence, a service road to the cabins and parking across the highway at the Marble Canyon trailhead. The cabins can also be accessed by trail 50 meters from the campground. The surrounding vegetation is primarily Englem Spruce and sub-alpine fir.³⁷

Both cabins have been moved from their original sites. They were originally components of auto bungalow camps, which consisted of a number of cabins, a main lodge and related outbuildings.

Setting

Though both cabins have been moved from their original settings, the character of their former and current natural settings may not be all that dissimilar. For example, the Marble Canyon bungalow camp was "situated on the highway some 55 miles north of Radium Hot Springs" in "typically beautiful park country, following the course of the Vermilion River..." The site was "fairly well timbered and has not been cleared more than necessary of the natural growth of pine and bush etc..." Whymper Cabin was one of a group of rustic bungalows in a wooded setting, whose rustic architecture was chosen as best suited to its environment. Currently located just off the highway, in clearing, surrounded by dense, mature trees and next to another log cabin of similar vintage, size, design and function, both the Whymper and Old Log cabins' current setting recalls their original auto bungalow camp setting. The major interrelationship of cabins to main lodge has been lost and with it, much of the character of an auto bungalow camp.

Landmark

Both buildings have long histories within the park, associated first with the auto bungalow camps and later as housing for park staff. There is clearly some level of awareness of their historical associations as the threat of demolition prompted their resubmission.

According to Larry Halverson, whose interest in the properties led to their resubmission, the cabins are well-known to park staff because they were used as summer accommodation. Few visitors know of their historical significance though the Lake Windermere Historical Society did a display on the Banff-Windermere Highway and bungalow camps for the 1985 park centennial celebrations. Mr. Halverson believes that the cabins (currently not in use) provide an excellent opportunity to interpret the building of the first road across the Rockies and the establishment of Kootenay National Park. There is huge potential to reach visitors due to their close proximity to Marble Canyon and the campground. In 2002, 836,000 vehicles passed the site, along the highway.³⁸

³⁷ Larry Halverson, e-mail to Kate MacFarlane, dated 01/12/05.

³⁸ Larry Halverson in an e-mail to K. MacFarlane, dated 01/12/05.

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK

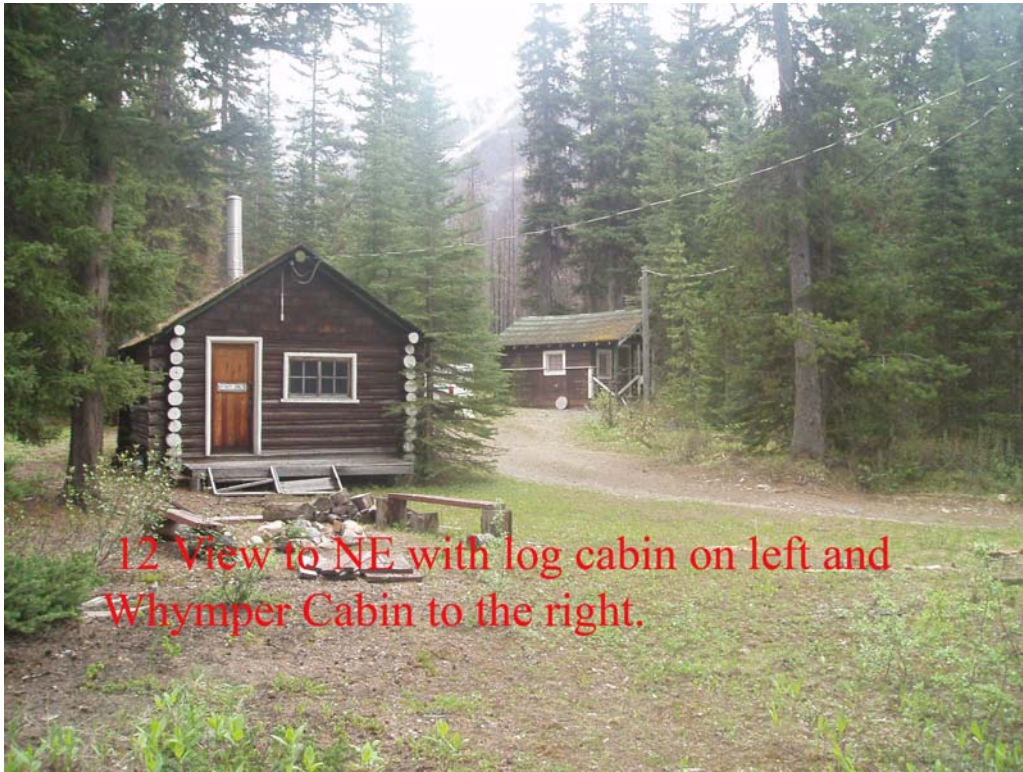


Figure 1. Looking northeast, Old Log Cabin on left and Whymper Cabin on right. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 2. Aerial view of site, showing location of Old Log Cabin, Whymper Cabin and new Warden's Residence. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK

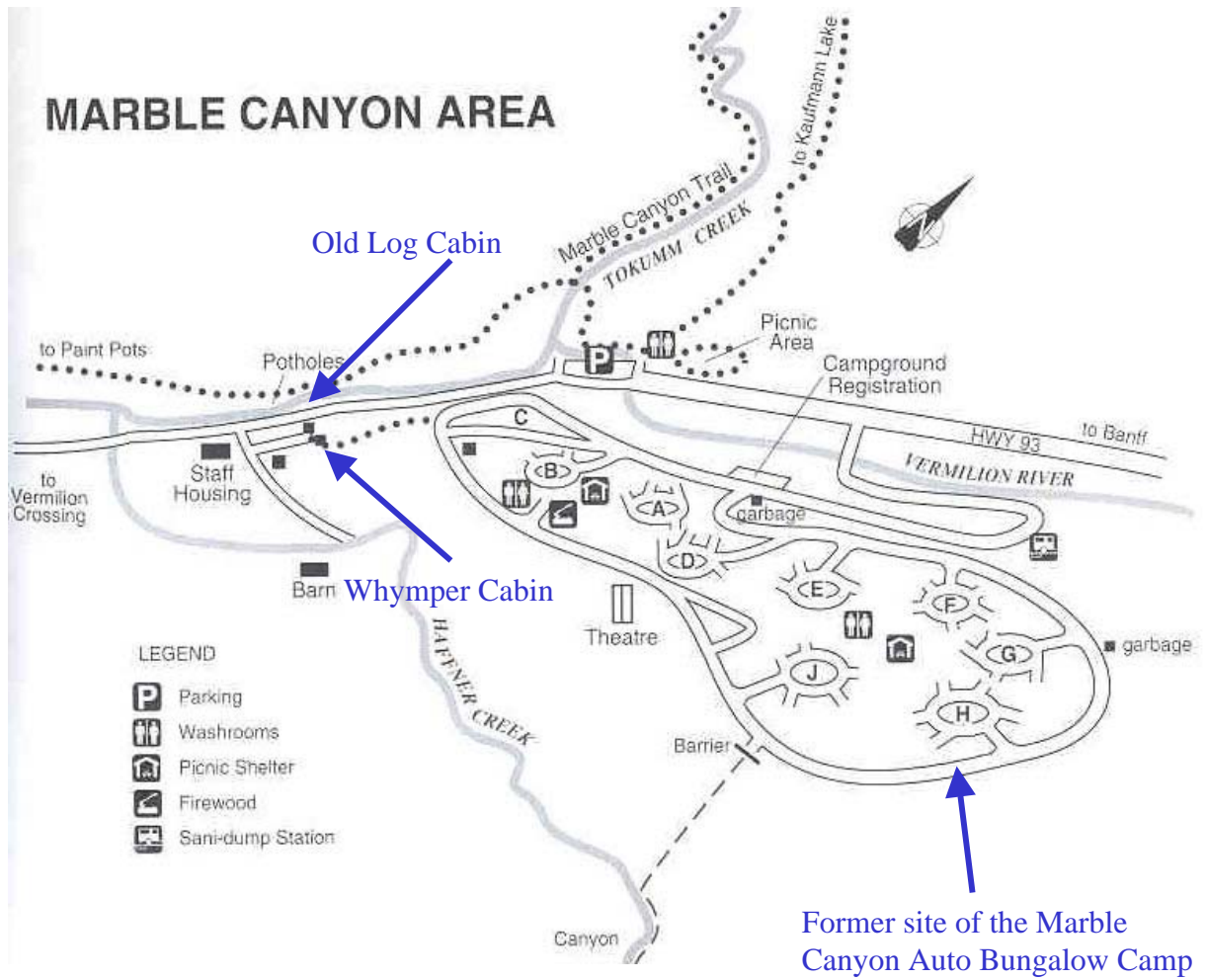


Figure 3. A recent site plan for Marble Canyon. (Bob Hahn, *Kootenay National Park* [Calgary AB: Rocky Mountain Books, 2000], p. 93.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK

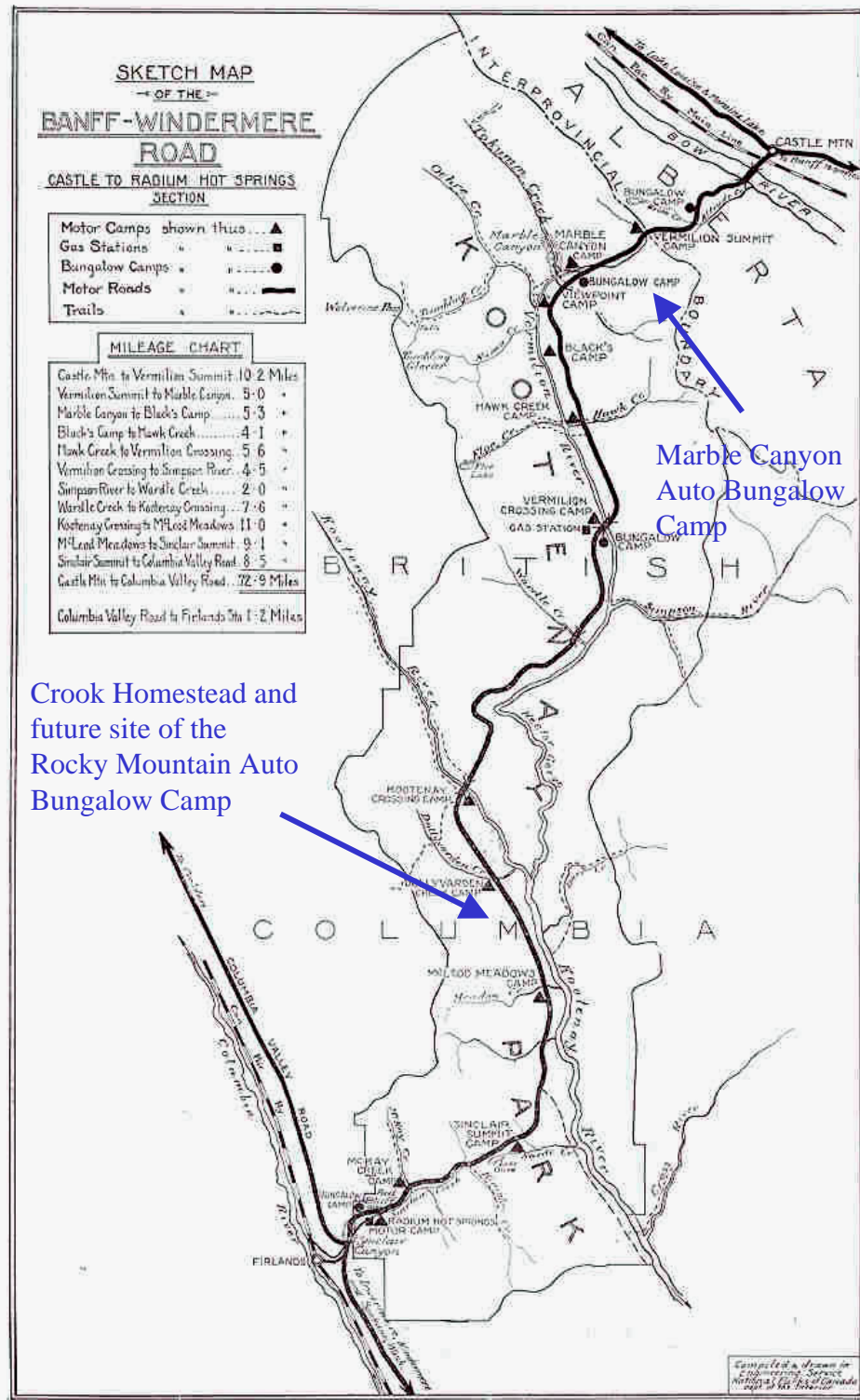


Figure 4. A map of the Kootenay National Park, circa 1928. (M.B. Williams, *Kootenay National Park & The Banff Windermere Highway* [Ottawa: King's Printer, 1928], p. 4.)

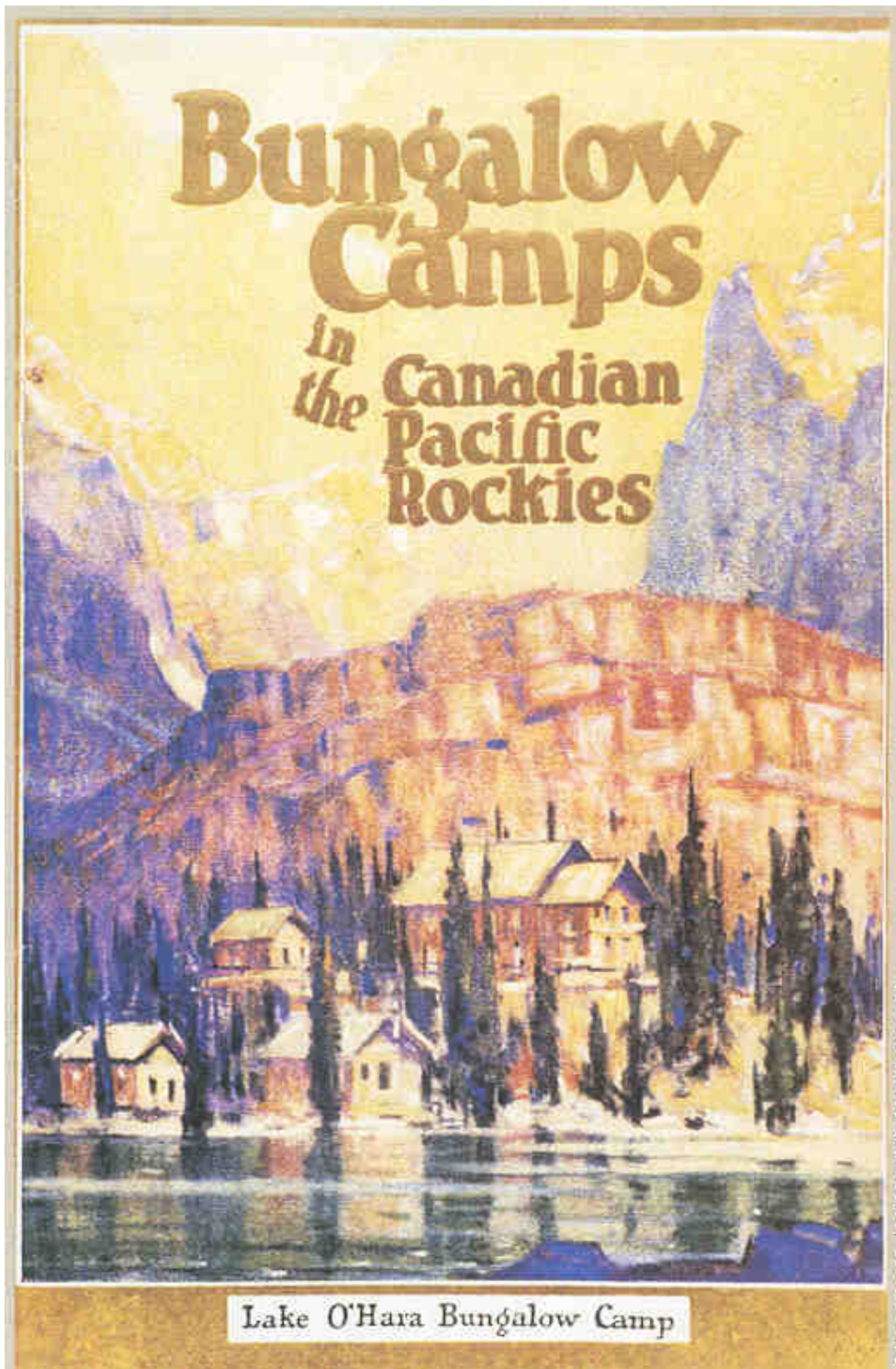


Figure 5. An early Canadian Pacific Railway brochure for auto bungalow camps in the western national parks. (Ted Mills, "The Bungalow Trail: Rustic Bungalow Camps in the Mountain Parks," *Heritage* v. 3, n. 3 [Summer 2000]: p. 14.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK



Figure 6. The Grand Circle Tour was completed with the construction of the Banff Windermere Highway in 1922. (Williams, *Kootenay National Park & The Banff Windermere Highway*, p. 4.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK

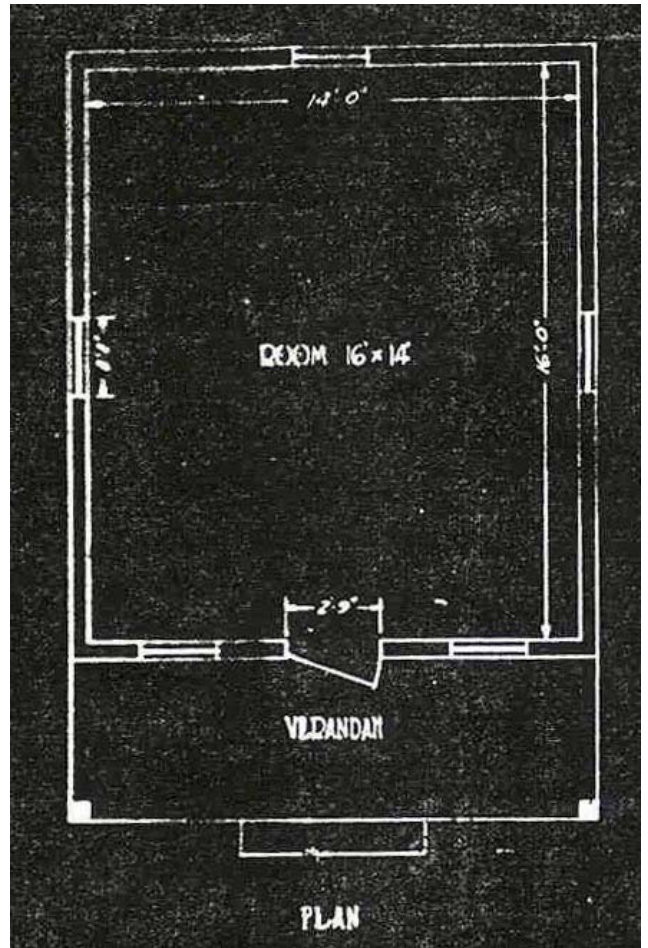
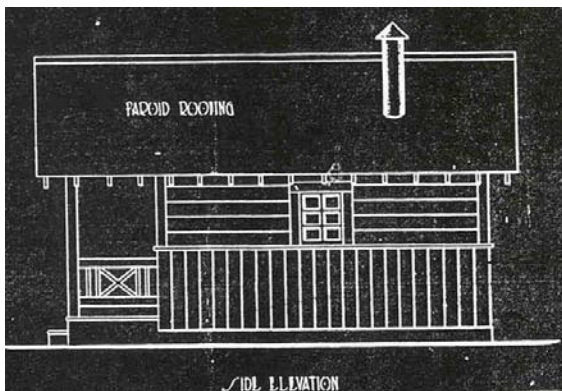
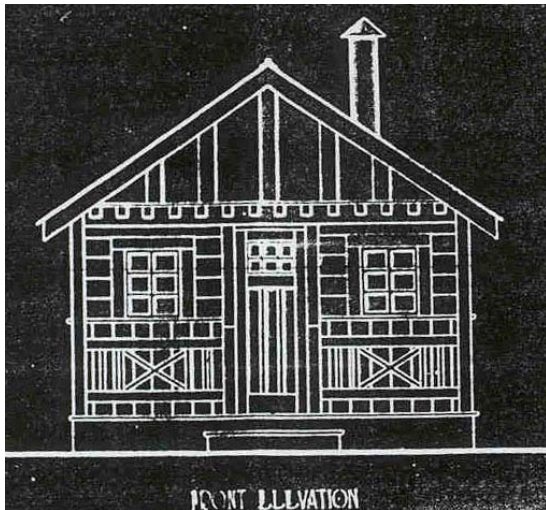


Figure 7. Plans for an auto bungalow ostensibly to be built on Lot 6, and which closely conform to the Whympers Cabin constructed on Lot 8. (LAC RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1639, file K16-112-6, pt. 1. "Proposed Bungalows for R.F. Turnbull, Esq., on Lot 6, Marble Canyon, Kootenay Park, BC.")

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK

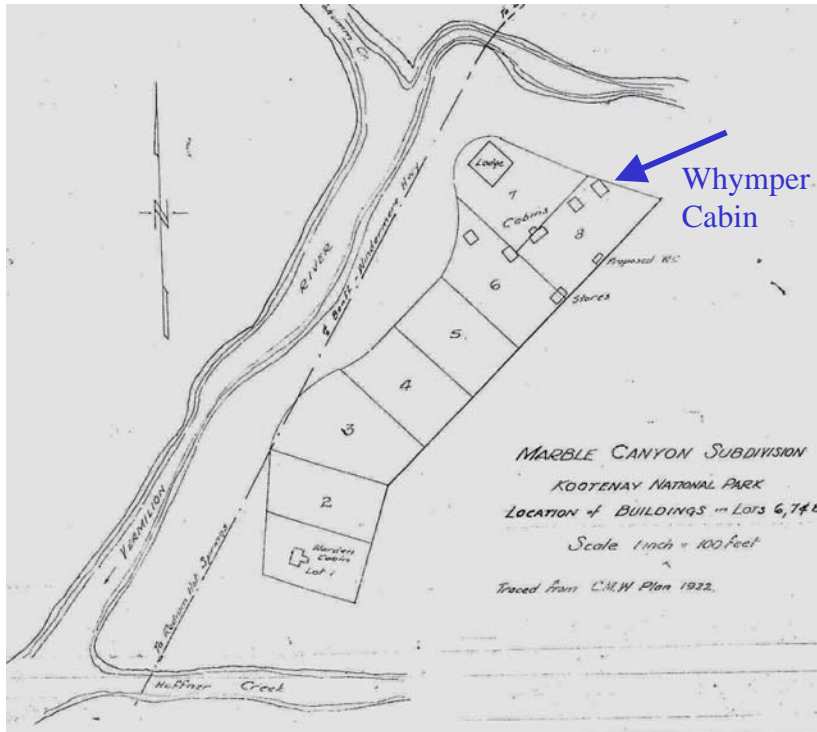


Figure 8. An undated site plan showing some of the original buildings at Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp. (LAC RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1640, file K21, pt. 1.)

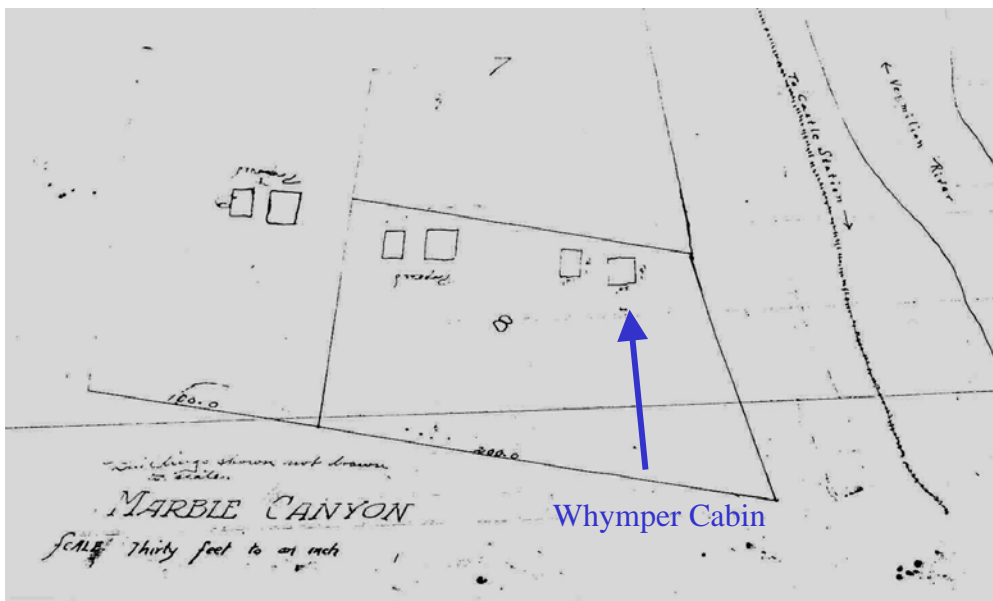


Figure 9. Proposed site plan from the early 1920s indicates that Whymper Cabin and one other were the two original cabins at the Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp. (LAC RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1639, file K16-112-6, pt. 1.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK

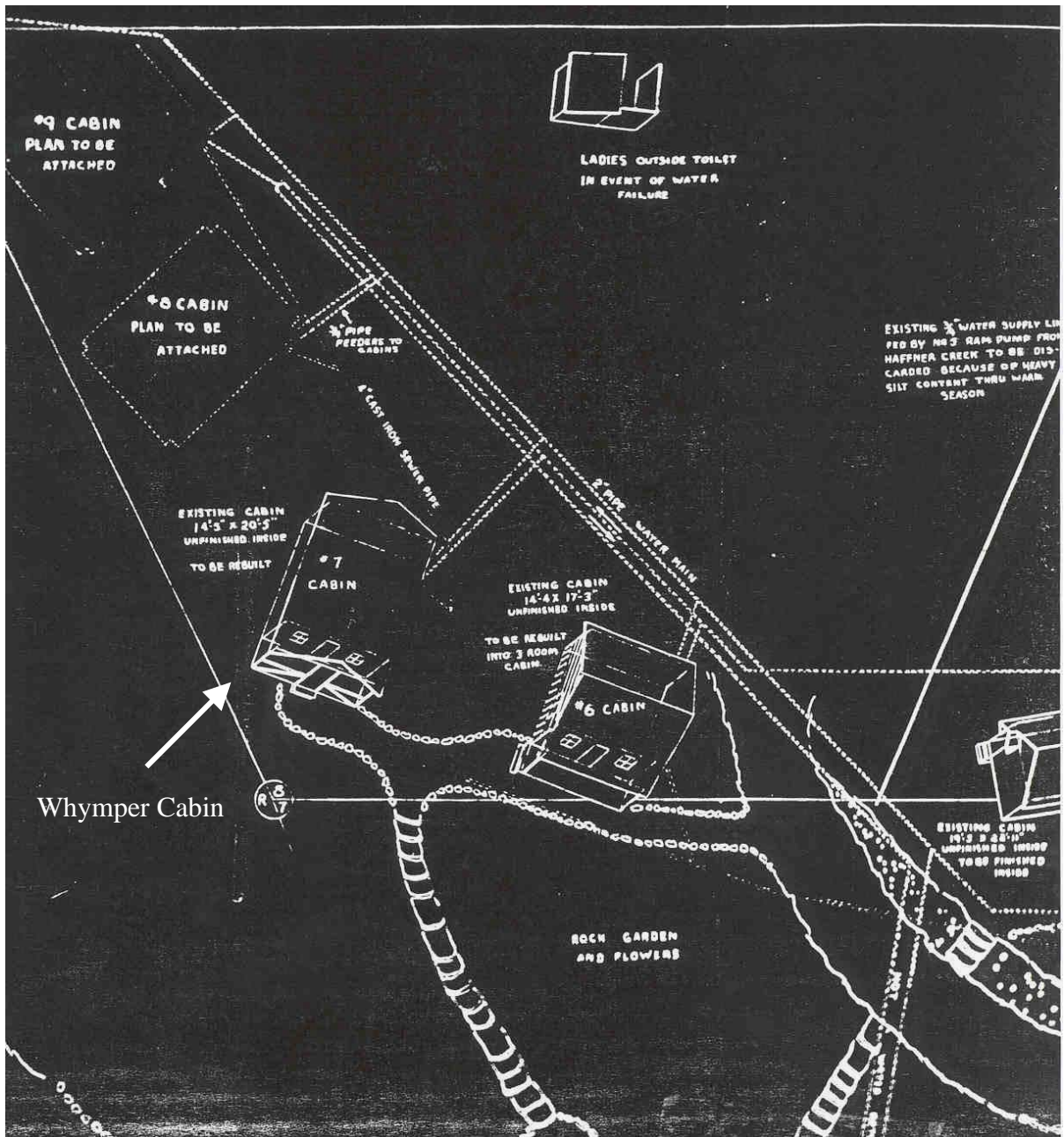


Figure 10. A 1945 site plan clearly places the Whymper Cabin in its original location. (LAC RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v.1639, file K16-112-6, pt. 1.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK

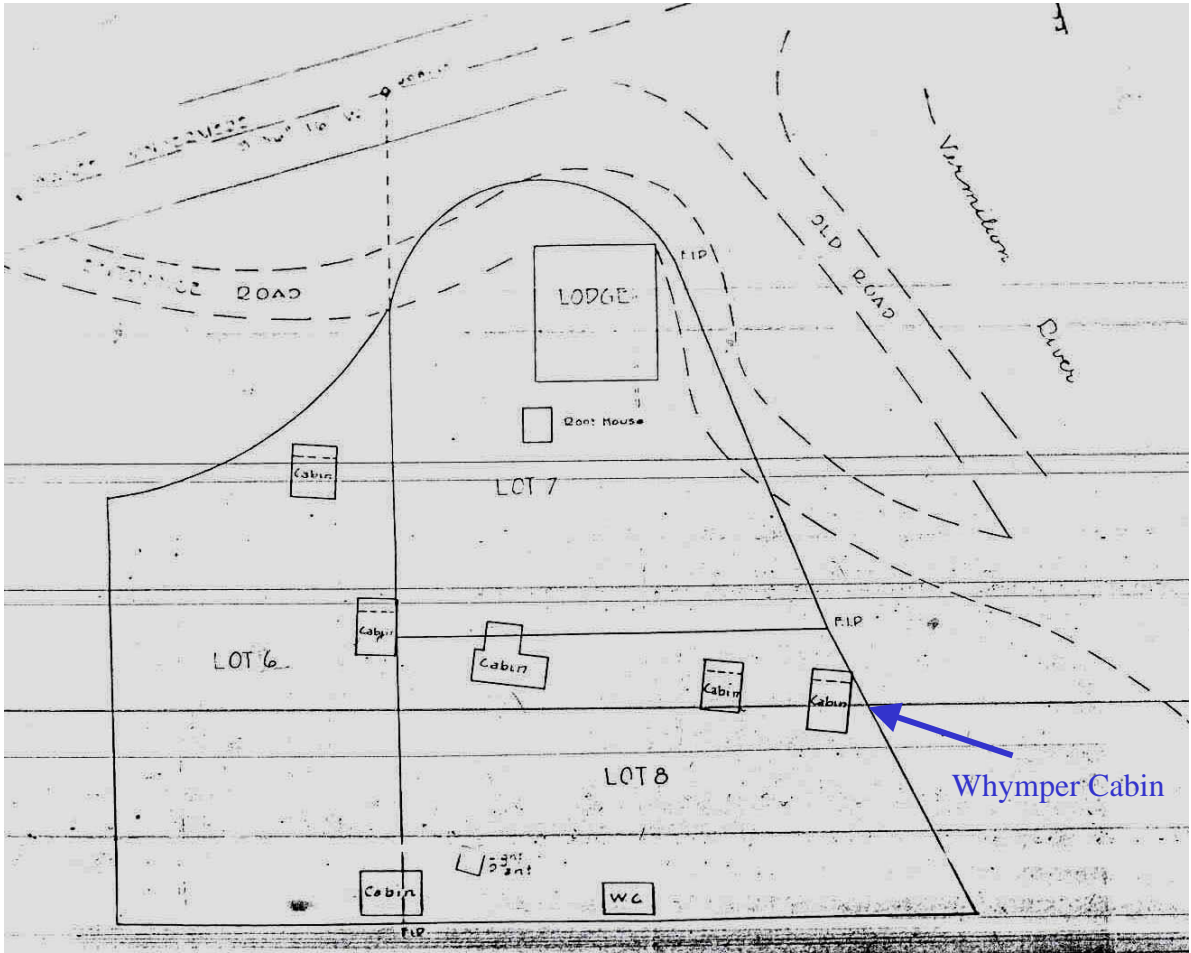


Figure 11. A 1954 site plan that was used as late as 1956 for water diversion planning and an inventory of the Marble Canyon Auto Bungalow Camp shows the Whympers Cabin in its original location. (LAC RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1639, file K16-112-6, pt. 2.)

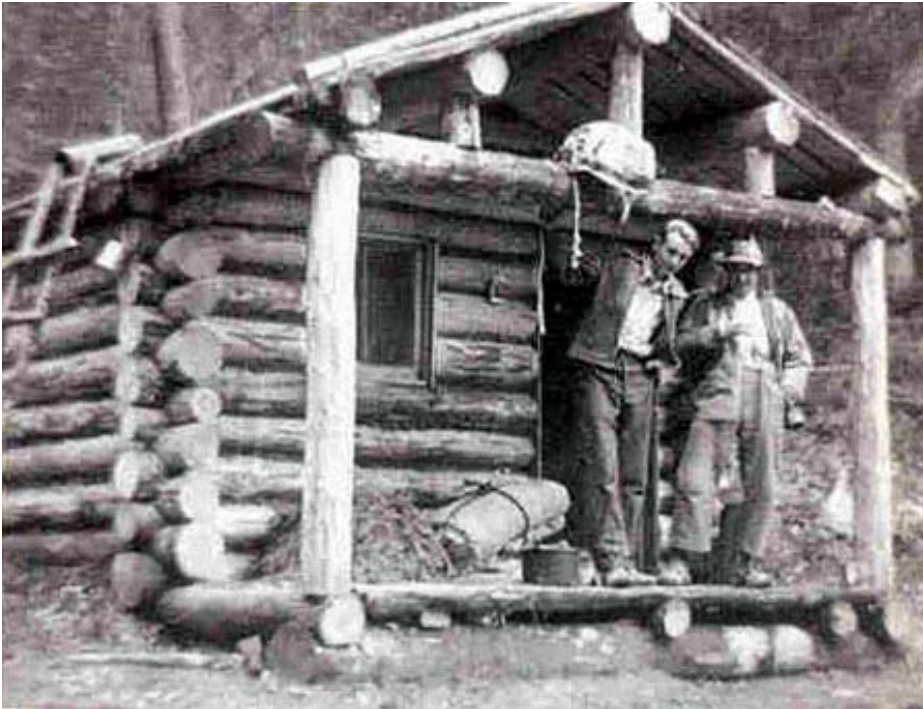


Figure 12. The Crook Homestead, built circa 1912, is a typical example of the “private variations” of rustic vernacular design in the western national parks. (Hahn, *Kootenay National Park* , p. 62.)

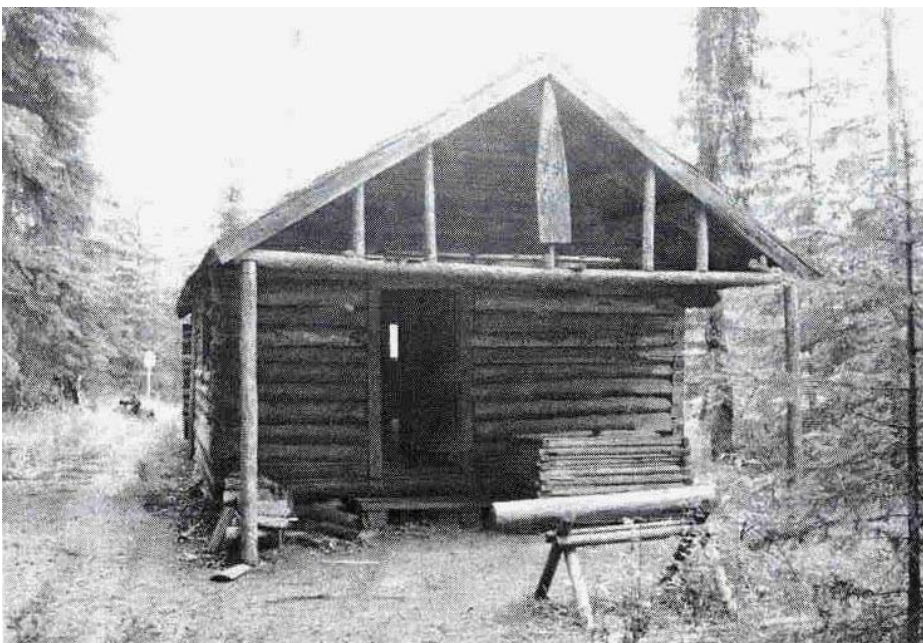


Figure 13. Deer Lodge Warden Cabin, Yoho National Park, built circa 1904, possibly the oldest extant warden’s cabin in the national parks. (Edward Mills, “Rustic Building Programs in Canada’s National Parks, Pt. 2,” *Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada*, 1992: 1.a.1.)

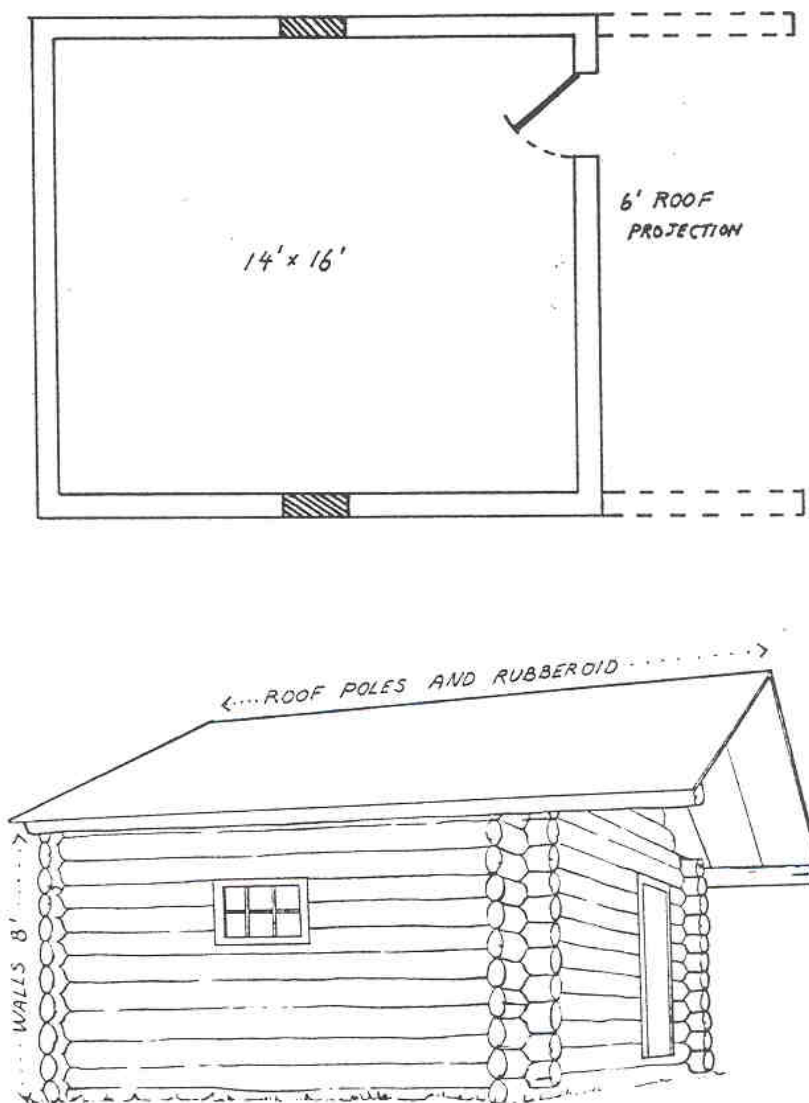


Figure 14: The standard plan for warden patrol cabins, developed by James T. Childe in 1918. (Mills, "Rustic Building Programs in Canada's National Parks, 1887-1950, Part 2," I.a.)



Figure 15. The Fay Hut, Kootenay National Park, erected by the Alpine Club of Canada in 1927. (Hahn, *Kootenay National Park* , p. 92.)



Figure 16. Known later as the Elizabeth Parker Hut (on left) and the Wiwaxy Lodge (on right), Yoho National Park, these are early backcountry refuge cabins constructed by the Canadian Pacific Railway for hikers' use. (Mills, "Rustic Building Programs in Canada's National Parks, 1887-1950, Part 2," I.a.3.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK



Figure 17. Old Log Cabin, south elevation. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 18. Old Log Cabin, north elevation. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 19. Old Log Cabin, detail of northwest corner showing saddle-notch log construction and stick batten treatment. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK

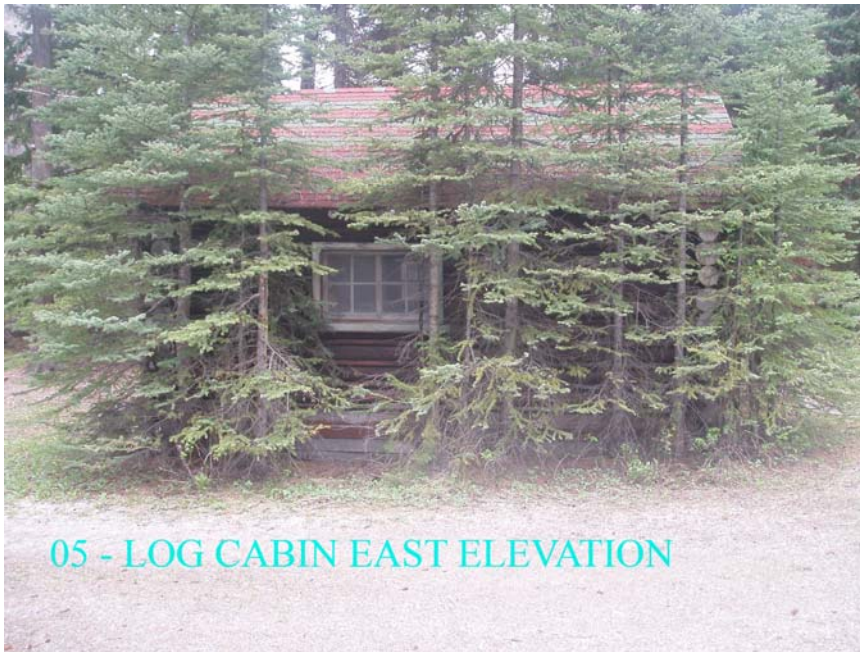


Figure 20. Old Log Cabin, east elevation showing roof shingle treatment. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 21. Old Log Cabin, west elevation showing roof shingle treatment. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 22. Old Log Cabin, detail of south gable showing cedar shingle treatment.
(Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 23. Old Log Cabin, inside south wall and door opening. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 24. Old Log Cabin, inside west wall. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK



Figure 25. Old Log Cabin, inside southeast corner. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 26. Old Log Cabin, north inside cabin wall, gable end and rafters. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



11 Log Cabin Inside NE Corner

Figure 27. Old Log Cabin, inside northeast corner. Plywood patchwork appears to have been introduced to counteract a leaky roof. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK

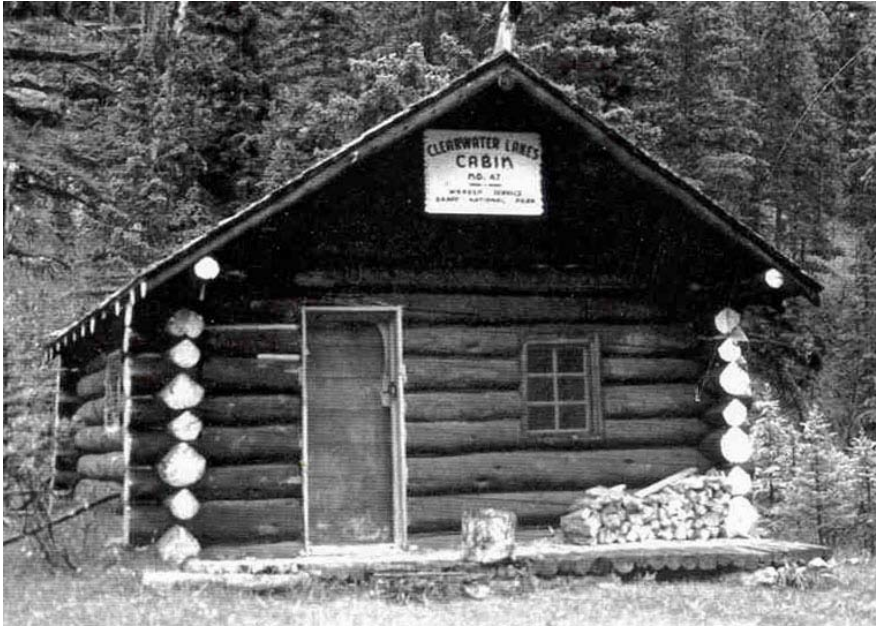


Figure 28. In so far as its overhang is shallower than the typical 4' to 6' for warden cabins, the Clearwater Lakes No. 47 Warden Cabin is closely comparable to the Old Log Cabin. (PearlAnn Reichwein, "Backcountry Warden Cabins of Banff National Park: Applications to the Federal Heritage Building Review Office," Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office, 1993: section 3.)



Figure 29. The McArthur Creek Patrol Cabin, Yoho National Park, built in 1957, is a late-arriving but typical example of a standard warden cabin in the mountain national parks. (Cornell Wynnobel, "Application to the Federal Heritage Building Review Office: McArthur Creek Warden Patrol Cabin [and] Helmet Creek Warden Patrol Cabin," Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office, 1997: n.p.)



Figure 30. Whympers Cabin, south elevation. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 31. Whympers Cabin, north elevation. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)

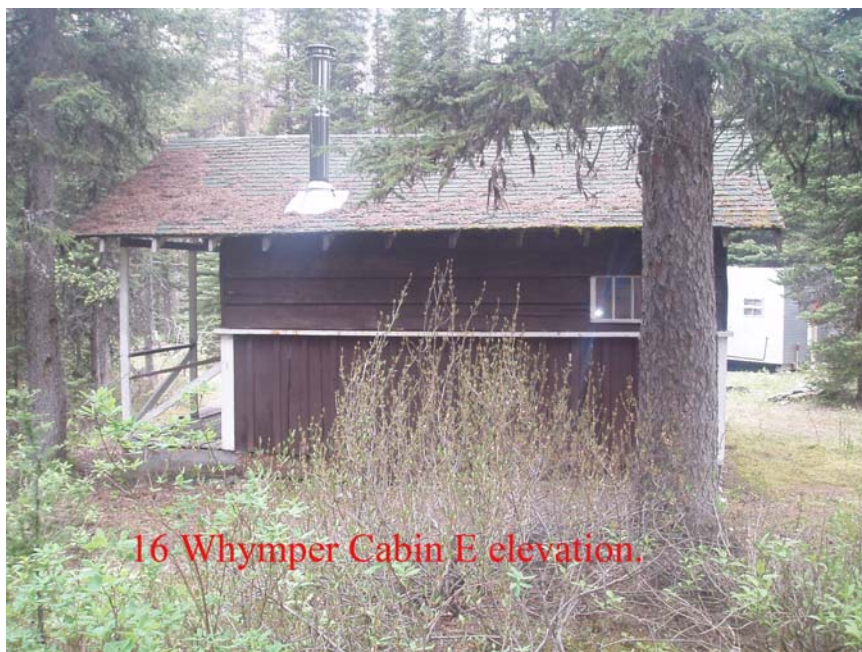


Figure 32. Whympers Cabin, east elevation. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)

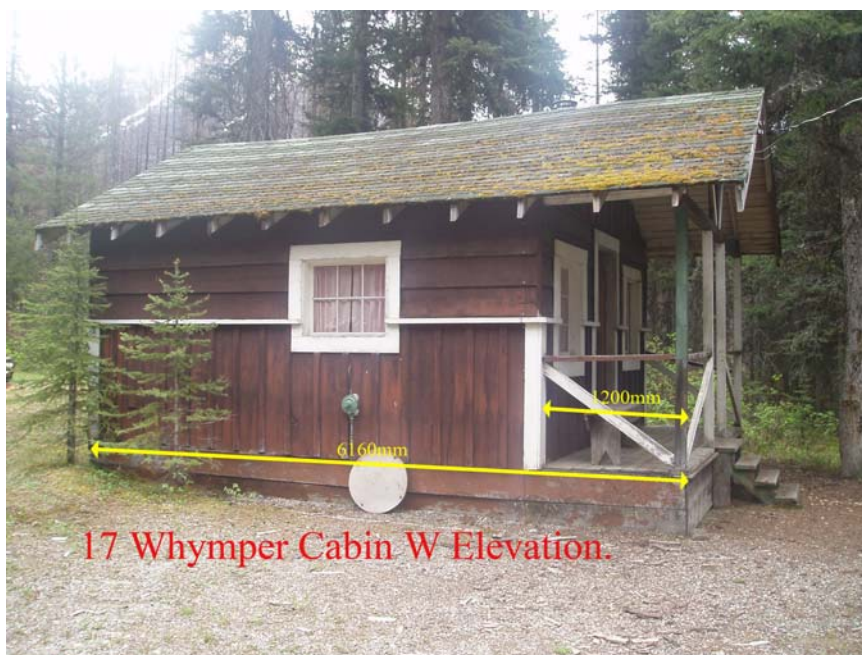


Figure 33. Whympers Cabin, west elevation. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)

OLD LOG & WHYMPER CABINS, MARBLE CANYON, KOOTENAY NATIONAL PARK



Figure 34. Although of poor quality, this September 1958 photograph shows the elaborate log verandah detailing that was reproduced with 2" x 4" lumber salvaged from dismantled Marble Canyon auto bungalows. The reproduced detailing is faithful to the original, with the exception that the steps are now located on the front rather than on the side of the verandah. (LAC RG 84, A-2-a. Parks Canada, v. 1639, file K16-112-6, pt. 3.)



Figure 35. Whympier Cabin, interior, south wall. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



17 Whympers Cabin Inside N Wall

Figure 36. Whympers Cabin, interior, north wall. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



20 Whympers Cabin Inside to SW

Figure 37. Whympers Cabin, interior, south and west walls. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)



Figure 38. Whympers Cabin, interior, detail of rafters. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)

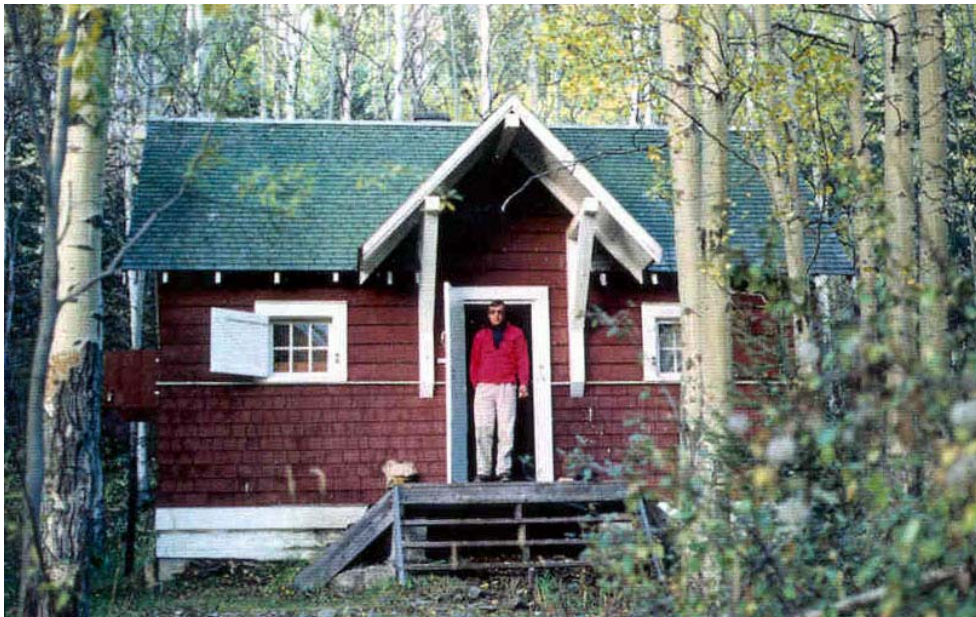


Figure 39. Despite some significant differences, the choice of materials and execution of the exterior elevations at Minnewanka Warden Cabin are closely comparable to the Whympers Cabin. (Shannon Angell and Don Mickle, "Back Country Warden Cabins of Banff National Park: Application to the Federal Heritage Building Review Office," Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office, 1996: n.p.)

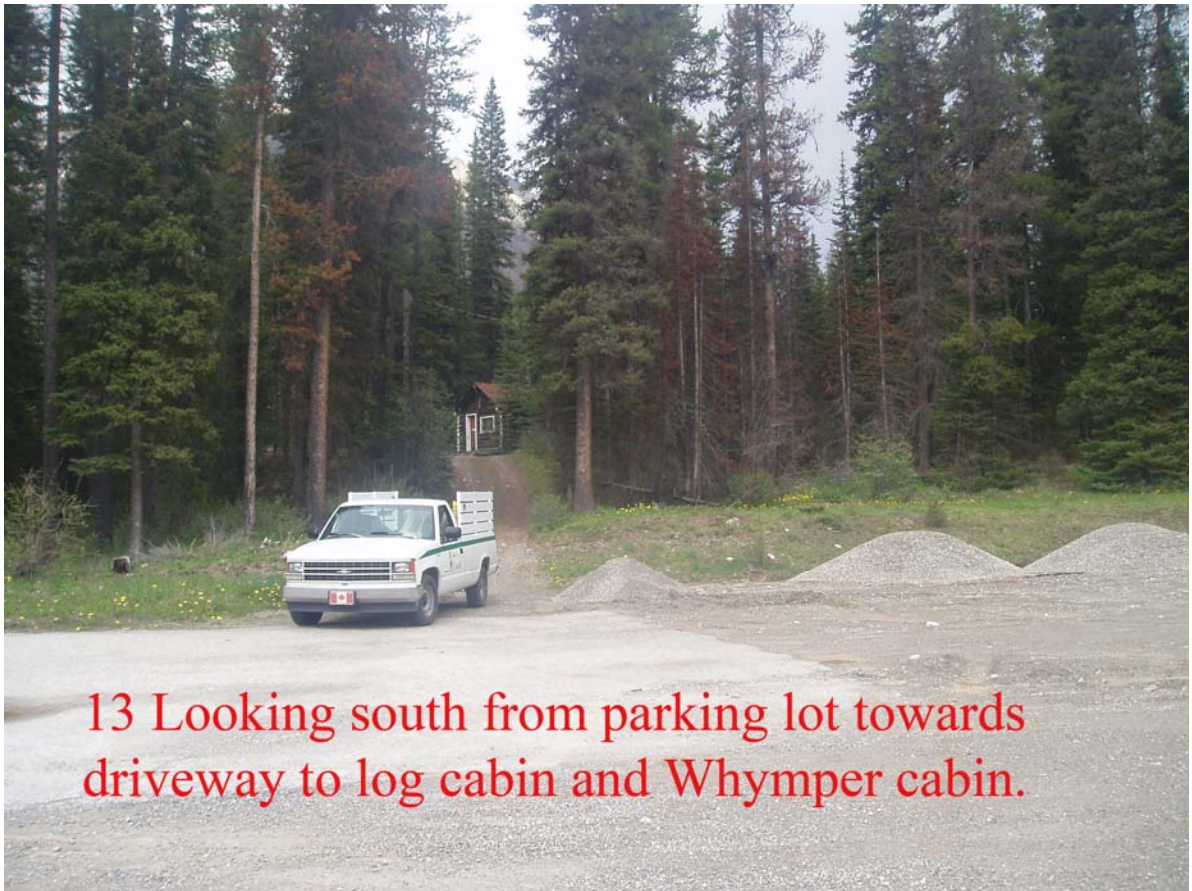


Figure 40. Looking south from parking lot towards driveway to log cabin and Whympers Cabin. (Dennis Herman, Banff National Park, 2005.)