

## Play Areas *(Continued)*

civilization might eventually overwhelm even their wild mountains.

Those campers resolved to forestall the blight of hot-dog stands and pizza palaces, whose predecessors were already spreading across the prairies. With their combined influence and resources, they caused Congress to reserve those acres for public use, to be held for the benefit of future generations. The land they saved is now the Yellowstone National Park.

It was the first of its kind.

From that beginning, your system of parks expanded until a department called the National Park Service was established in 1916 under the Secretary of the Interior. The law called those parks "pleasuring places," and so they are and will remain as long as we who visit them

remember what those natives of the South Pacific understood so well—that no generation owns its natural resources but merely uses them for a little while.

As fellow trustees of these vast resources, all Americans share various burdens. It is timely, I believe, to name some of them.

The matter of litter is one. Litter is a nuisance. Attendants at most park entrances offer visitors a litter bag. If it is available, please use it. Do your share to tidy up.

**S**OUVENIR hunters abound, particularly in the Petrified Forest of Arizona. Where huge tree trunks from a prehistoric age exhibit the miracle of wood turned to stone, petrified chunks lie invitingly on the ground. Park rangers and signs request visitors not to disturb them. Inspect their odd beauty, ponder their enigma, but leave them in their resting place to delight those who follow you.

In Yosemite National Park, an ancient Jeffrey pine leans away from the wind at the summit of Sentinel Dome, 8,000 feet above the sea. It has fought for its life against gale and blizzard until it is bent like a humpbacked crone. No other tree in the world is like it. Each line of root and branch proclaims such tenacity that the human spirit is lifted. Again, Park Service signs ask the public to protect it. Yet some vandal has cut a step into the trunk the better to climb it. Another drove an iron spike into its heart for motives unknown, and the scar is still visible. Thoughtless children abrade its bark with their heels, and this is done in full view of their parents.

Other desecrations mar our trusteeship. I know of giant Sequoias that are sick from the carving of linked initials in their bark. I know of a lady called Miss Liberty whose



Visitors to a Montana cavern pause by a whipped-creamlike wonder of nature.

torch lights up New York harbor but whose skirt is smeared with lip-sticked names and phrases.

Another affront is the thoughtless person who would introduce amusement establishments into primeval settings. In every mail, Park Service permission is sought for setting up bowling alleys, miniature golf courses, and soft-drink machines.

We who are today's trustees must stand foursquare against these destructive invasions.

Summer is around the corner, and the open highway leads to the world's greatest outdoor school, our park system. Why not enroll and rediscover your heritage.

Visit Mesa Verde and view the Cliff Palace from whose 200 living rooms an Indian race vanished without a trace.

Or take a long stride into our history and visit Jamestown, Va., where our park commemorates the first permanent English colony in America, established 13 years before Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock.

Or visit Coronado National Memorial in Arizona and the Cabrillo Monument in California, named for intrepid Spaniards who, a half century ahead of the English, had already explored much of our Southwest and Far West.

See Independence Hall and the jewel of a park around it that has emerged from the rubble of old Philadelphia. Through events that took place there, this free nation was born, and the fetters of tyranny were shaken around the world.

**J**OIN THE BANDS of Civil War buffs who wander over memorable battlefields: Chickamauga, Fort Sumter, Gettysburg, Manassas, Shiloh, Vicksburg. Each name echoes with heroism and glorious sacrifice. Each park is a link in our chain of history.

From such visits come fragile stirrings of the human spirit that are called knowledge, refreshment, and esthetic enjoyment. These are profound experiences essential to mortal welfare.

Your help will protect these values for those to whom we leave them; your neglect will diminish them. Already, the elk are gone from Rocky Mountain and Glacier Parks, the Bighorn sheep have vanished from Big Bend and Mesa Verde, and the rare bird life of the Florida Everglades is not what it was.

With your aid, your Government can conserve and restore. As John Milton once said, "Accuse not nature; she hath done her part. Do thou but thine."