

Wyoming Memories

will write of it later.
July 29 The lake which we thought was Sylvan
lake we found to be Clear Lake. Sylvan Lake
is a mile or two farther on and is a
much larger body of water. The forests
came to the ~~back~~ shore on the left side, and
on the right side is the road. High hills, or
mountains ^{are} on both sides. ~~The~~ The road wound
around ~~farther~~ higher and higher over the hills
until finally from the highest point we
could plainly see the Yellowstone Lake in
the distance. ^{It was about fifteen miles away according}
to the mile posts. Farther beyond is a smaller
lake. ^{The fir tree}
It is Great Salt Lake.

Traveling to the Park Diaries of the Yellowstone Experience

Uncounted millions of visitors have passed through Yellowstone National Park since its creation in 1872. Indeed, the trip to Yellowstone is one of those life experiences shared by the great majority of those who live in Wyoming and a significant portion of those who live elsewhere in the United States. The Yellowstone experience includes noteworthy touchstones of commonality — Old Faithful's regular eruptions, the upper and lower falls of the Yellowstone River, wildlife in the open meadows — that span economic status, age, and time itself. Yet cultural forces technology and time have produced constant changes in the Yellowstone experience. And those changes make it interesting to look back at the accounts of those who written about their visits to Yellowstone at another time.

Presented here are excerpts from the Yellowstone journals of two women who visited the park in the second decade of the 20th century.

Lovina Swaim Johnson traveled to Yellowstone in

the summer of 1913. Her husband, Henry, was in the sheep business and they traveled from Wyoming's Lost Cabin-Lysite area in the family sheepwagon with their 4-year-old son Henry. They drove through the Big Horn Basin to Cody where they were joined by Lovina's sister Minnie Swaim, before continuing on to the east entrance of the park. Significantly, Lovina's Yellowstone trip took place just prior to time when automobile travel was allowed in the park.¹

Margaret Patton Gehrke traveled to Yellowstone from her home at Lincoln, Nebraska in 1917 — shortly after the park had been opened to automobiles. With her husband Edward, Margaret traveled regularly by train and automobile to places such as

1. The original journal of Lovina Johnson is in the collection of the Riverton Museum and is used here with the permission of the museum and Lovina's son, Henry Jenson of Lysite. The illustration above is a facsimile of one of Lovina's journal entries

Niagara Falls, Grand Canyon and Yosemite, and her more cosmopolitan view of the wonders of Yellowstone provides an interesting contrast to the observations of Lovina Johnson.²

Only portions of the two journals are published here and entries from both are juxtaposed to aid comparisons of the reactions both women had to common experiences.

❧ Lovina ❧
June 13, 1913

This is Friday, the thirteenth — usually called unlucky — but Friday is my lucky day so I think that starting out today will make our trip successful.

At the end of our first day of traveling, we are on Bridger Creek, opposite Barney Bausman's ranch house. Henry tells me that Mr. Bausman is quite the laziest man that ever lived.

❧ Margaret ❧
July 9, 1917

One must do a hundred things today — We start our trip tomorrow!

[Evening] When to start on a trip is no longer "wonderful" — then I am ready to leave this good world. We have done the "hundred things", even to having John Rosborough over to see our new painting before he goes to Estes Park for the summer. And we are ready to be on our way — away! away! "Memento vivere"!!!!

❧ Lovina ❧
June 15, 1913

Last night we got to the "Dee ranch." Once we almost tipped the sheep wagon over. The roads have been so badly washed out on account of so much rain lately.

Today we crossed the divide and we are now camped on Kirby Creek. We almost had a turn-over with the wagon again today. We went down a very steep incline into a gulch. I had been asleep but waked up suddenly. Going up on the other side was steep and the road was washed into a gulch — was nothing but two cut-bank gulches running

side by side — so we had to go below it where it was very sideling as well as steep. "If the wagon doesn't tip over now, it never will," said Henry as he stopped the horses for a rest. He got out and I took my hat and followed. I knew there was no immediate danger so left son sleeping in the wagon. On the lower side of the wagon and at about the middle, Henry tied a rope. Then he threw the other end over to the higher side and asked me to stand on the brake and swing my body out, holding to the rope. Then he got inside and we started. The jiggling along almost spilled me off the perch but we got through alright.

I walked two or three miles today (and yesterday too) and helped unharness and harness the horses. I'm going to walk every day; it's great fun. Of course I sweat (or should I say "glow?") but I don't mind it and walking I see so many thing that I couldn't see if I were riding inside the wagon.

❧ Margaret ❧
July 10, 1917

Golden summer heat and again it is the "day of days." We leave on our trip to Yellowstone and Colorado this evening at 6:05. Happy hearts!

[Evening, En route] How good to be rolling away over the hot fields of Nebraska to new sights. Very warm but heavy clouds in the west and lightning promise a rain. We visited until late with a gentleman from California.

❧ Lovina ❧
July 8, 1913

Have just got to Cody. Cody is on Stinkingwater River; it does stink — of sulphur — there is a hot spring above the town — probably a sulphur spring.

❧ Lovina ❧
July 12, 1913

Minnie came day before yesterday. It was raining when I went to the depot to meet her, and I got a little wet.

We are camped across the river from town, on the same side that the depot is on, but farther up the river. The evening she came we went to a moving picture show.

❧ Margaret ❧
July 12, 1917

[En route] Sagebrush and the wide desert stretches of Wyoming! And dust, the sifting powdery dust! The only interesting feature of the morning was the

2. The Margaret Gehrke journal is in the collection of the Nebraska State Historical Society and is used with the permission of that organization. Biographical information about Mrs. Gehrke was provided by Jill Marie Koelling.

Wind River Cañon, a picturesque and rocky cañon, thru which the Big Horn river rushes in its confined bed. Then the desert again — places God forgot.

[Evening, at Cody, Wyo.] On the very edge of beautiful things. This semi-arid, treeless Cody gives little promise of the wonders of the Yellowstone lying so close at hand. Our coach has been side-tracked and we will occupy our berth tonight. A delightful dinner at the cafe, all ready now for the great ride tomorrow morning.

❧ Lovina ❧
July 18, 1913

Yesterday we left Cody. . . [and] followed the government road that leads from Cody to the Park.

About 8 miles from Cody is the government dam. It was constructed several years ago and is the highest dam in the world — being three hundred twenty five feet in height. It is built at a narrow place in the canyon in a quarter moon shape and is of solid concrete.

Once on the road in the canyon we met an automobile and were fortunate in finding near at hand a place wide enough to pass each other.

❧ Margaret ❧
July 13, 1917

. . . One can live much in a day; the morning was clear, bright, and cool — a day made for a wonderful ride. In our party were people from the middle west only — Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska., and our driver, Barney Oldfield the second (although he strongly objected to the christening).

From Cody we followed the Shoshone River valley into the Shoshone Canyon. For six miles we followed the Canyon, its walls rising above the river to tremendous heights, rocky, jagged, and almost barren of vegetation. We crept along the face of the mountain where the road has been blasted and chiseled in and thru the solid rock. Our first stop was at the Government dam — a wonderful feat of engineering. Here the view of the angry and imprisoned waters is wonderful, and lying all about us the mystery of the great rock walls and the deep gorge.

Then on again over smooth roads that beckon, the character of the country ever changing. Vegetation begins and disappears. We came to the firs, the evergreens, the aspens, and felt we were in the heart of things when a mother deer and her two babies dart-

ed across the road. We climb and at Sylvan Pass have reached an altitude of 8,650 ft., (a new altitude for automobiling so far as I am concerned) here snow lies at the road side, so that one can delight in snow-balling in July — tourist's privilege!

❧ Lovina ❧
July 19, 1913

We left last night's camp this morning at 9:30 a.m. After perhaps an hour of traveling we came to the U.S. forest reserve. The road led through another Shoshone River canyon, the formation of the rocks of which were, so Henry said, of porphyry of a brownish color, and in many places were worn away into curious shapes and forms. Among the most remarkable of them are The Goose, The Lady and The Cabin, The Sentinel, The Camel, and The Holy City. The last named indeed looks like pictures I have seen of the Holy City of Jerusalem. How I should like to see the real Jerusalem and all of those old country cities from which civilization sprang. I have always longed intensely to travel — to see, to learn. Will my longing ever be gratified? I'm afraid not. But I have the present and I'm going to enjoy it to the utmost.

We found that we were not allowed to take a dog thro the park. A man told us and then offered to take Jack. So we gave him away. We still have Rip, the cat, but I'm afraid the high atmosphere will get him. Cats can't live in extremely high places.³

Behind the wagon is a timbered ravine, leading upward to a very high mountain. These scenes are wonderful. I can never cease marveling at their grandeur and beauty. If Nature, on a grand scale, is conducive to great thoughts I surely ought to be endowed with at least a few, for I love Nature so deeply. God grant that it may be so. Perhaps if it is so, my posterity will be endowed with them, and then will help to make a better race of man. I want my offspring to be thoroughbreds in the highest sense of the word. Try to be worthy, my children, of the high hopes and thought your ancestress has had for her yet unborn children, as well as the beloved child that is. Of all the kingdoms of the earth, the most wonderful kingdom, after all, is within you.

3. A margin note written sometime later by Lovina says "Atmosphere did not hurt Rip a bit. He had the time of his life chasing those large chipmunks or ground squirrels."



Margaret Gehrke and her husband Edward recorded their traveler adventures in many photographs. Later, Margaret assembled them into attractive albums. Her inscription accompanying this photo reads "Leaving arid Cody for the beauty of Yellowstone." (Nebraska State Historical Society)

❧ Lovina ❧
July 21, 1913

Yesterday (the 20th) we came farther up the river and are still in the canyon. Everyone we have seen along the way is very cordial. It seems as if the whole world is going to the park. At least a half a dozen wagons pass us every day going parkward.

❧ Lovina ❧
July 23, 1913

It rained yesterday, so we did not go on. Today we came perhaps three miles. We could not go far on account of the roads being so muddy.

❧ Lovina ❧
July 28, 1913

Yesterday we left the place where we were at the last writing. We came perhaps six or seven miles. We passed Pahaska on the way, and tried to get some groceries there. They were almost out of everything on account of so much rain lately. We managed to get a little flour and had to pay ten cents a pound.

Then we came about two and a half miles farther and were to the "Eastern Entrance to the Yellowstone National Park"!!!! There is nothing there to mark the entrance except the small office building (perhaps three rooms) and a few tents of the United States militia. We came on for perhaps a mile and a half and there stopped for the night.

I forgot to say that at the entrance we — or rather Henry — registered and had the guns sealed. The seals are composed of a wire, wrapped about the gun in such a way as to prevent discharge without first breaking it, and the ends of this wire are embedded in a small piece of lead bearing some letters — U.S.A., I think.

Today we came on thro the Sylvan Pass and we are now camped near the Sylvan Lake.

For loveliness and beauty this country is absolutely unsurpassed!

We have come for miles without passing any kind of a dwelling . . . I wonder if these forests will ever be replaced by ranches?

❧ Lovina ❧
July 29, 1913

The road wound around higher and higher on the hills until finally from the highest point we could plainly see the Yellowstone Lake in the distance and far below, about fifteen miles away according to the mile posts.

The rain continued and we had a fire in the [sheep-wagon] stove while moving. It is so very cold that we certainly appreciated the warmth.

❧ Margaret ❧
July 13, 1917

[Continued] As we rode along the backward glance is always worthwhile — the enchanted way over which we have come — the green shapes of the mountains, the snow patches at the top, the blue haze in the valleys, the ribbon rivers far away, — the quiet mountain lakes lying placid and smiling in the sunshine.

We made our way on, until we came to the first glimpse of Yellowstone Lake, it lay big and blue, with dark mountains rising from its base. At the Lake we stopped for lunch at the camp and an hour's rest.

❧ Lovina ❧
August 1, 1913

On the night of July 29th — when last I wrote — about four inches of snow fell. It came down silently — for there was no wind — and in the morning everything was covered. The boughs of the trees, and even the telephone wires were laden with snow. It was beautiful — one of the most picturesque snow storms I ever saw.

On the 31st we arose rather early. Minnie was frozen out of the teepee and came into the wagon and started a fire about six o'clock. After breakfast we climbed the hill on the left side of the road and had a magnificent view of the lake. Then we came back and started. Minnie and I walked for about four miles.

Once, in passing thro a wood, we noticed two trees which stood perhaps eighteen inches apart, [and] joined together by a bough which had grown into both of them. It was impossible to tell which of them it had grown from at first. A signboard told us that these were called the "Wedded Trees."

Those signboards, what could we do without them? Because of them we cannot go wrong or forget regulations

— because of them we see practically all the things worth seeing.

Did I mention that all the attractions in the Park are in a circle? They are.

About three and a half miles from Lake Junction on a long stretch of very muddy road, we got stuck with the wagon. We took the lead team off and fastened them by a chain to the back part of the hind wheel. The horses pulled the wheel around until the chain was in front and then we put the chain behind again and pulled again. Thus, by degrees, we got out.

Where we crossed the Yellowstone river several men



Unfortunately, no photographs of Lovina Johnson's 1913 Yellowstone adventure are in existence. She is shown here at her Lysite home in 1935 with her son Henry, who was four years old at the time of the trip to Yellowstone National Park.

were on the bridge fishing and one or two boats were out in the river — everyone was fishing. They didn't seem to catch anything. We camped about half or quarter of a mile from the hotel on the shore of the lake. The first thing we did was to get out of the wagon and watch the sea gulls and pelicans. I had never before seen a pelican.

We had supper late, and just as we finished eating, the sightseers of the transportation company's camp built a big camp fire and had some music. Presumably some of the soldiers were over there for the bugle and cornet both were played, and it sounded beautiful on the night air. Then the clear, beautiful voice of a woman rang out — singing. I wonder who she was? Then some more instrumental music and we went to bed.

This morning we went to the general store and got a few provisions. As we were coming back we saw a black bear making itself comfortable in the shade of the trees.

Our intention is to go north, to the Grand Canyon and falls, then double back to Lake Junction and go around the other way until we get to the northern part of the circle. There we will take the road to Gardiner and out.

This morning Henry bought nine big fish — salmon trout — from a couple of boys for fifty cents. They were dear at the price, tho. Five of the nine were wormy and we had to throw them away.

❧ Lovina ❧
August 2, 1913

This morning we started about eleven o'clock. In a little while we came to the mud geyser. It boils up in a hole in the clay. That is why it is muddy, I suppose. The geyser is about ten or fifteen feet across and occasionally shoots to a height of perhaps fifteen feet. Ordinarily, tho, it shoots about five feet. The water (or mud) is hot.

There are dozens of other hot springs around there — some big, some little, some very muddy, some only slightly muddy, but none entirely clear, except one. I believe is called the grotto geyser. It gushes out from a tiny cave of rock and is very hot, as I found when I thoughtlessly put my hand in it.

The valley widened and became rolling hills covered by grass and flowers. The river flowed very smoothly and slowly. Once we saw four elk, two bulls, and two cows.

As we neared the falls the hills became higher on both sides of the river, and were timber covered. Perhaps a hundred feet or so above the fine concrete bridge which we crossed, the smooth and placid river suddenly became rapids. We are now camped on the side of the river opposite

from the [Canyon] Hotel. We have seen three or four deer, one of them was a faun. They are not at all afraid.

This evening Minnie, son and I went for a walk. We went to the bridge first and then went down the river. We went down close to the river and saw the falls. We didn't know whether they were the upper or lower falls but presumed they were the lower ones. The upper falls are 109 feet in height. The lower 308 ft.

❧ Margaret ❧
July 13, 1917

[Continued] At three o'clock we were on our way again for the last lap of the day's travel, a distance of 17 miles. The road follows the Yellowstone river and passes thru the Hayden Valley. A stop is made at Mud Volcano — it has a funnelshaped crater and bubbles forth a lead-colored mass of hot mud in violent agitation. In this vicinity there is no end of overflowing hot pools.

Arriving on our way into camp we were given a glimpse of the canyon, and that glimpse is pregnant with promise for tomorrow. (Can there be a tomorrow of wonderful things, too? Such is the privilege of those who love to wander in a world of mystery.)

We had dinner at a quaint log dining room, before a blazing fire, then straight to camp and to bed. The blessedness of sleep when one is so utterly weary. Such a day it has been. How it rejoices the heart to be in company with the big elemental things of God, and leave a world of men behind. Fair Friday the 13th.

❧ Lovina ❧
August 3, 1913



This morning I arose at 6:30 o'clock and by nine o'clock we were ready to start out sight-seeing. We crossed the concrete bridge and followed down the road until we came to the first or upper falls. They were the falls we had seen last night from the other side of the river. Then we climbed back up the steps and went farther down the river until we came to a steep path leading downward to the larger and lower falls. How can I describe them? They are magnificent — grand. As I said before, the water drops 308 feet sending sprays — indeed clouds — of water far outward and upward from the base. We stood for some time watching the wonderful green of the water hurl itself over the rocks, then Henry threw a rock into it. We thought surely the stone would strike on the other side of the



Prior to 1915 when automobiles were first allowed to travel Yellowstones roadways, most Wyoming people traveled to the park in their own horsedrawn conveyances. Shown here is a Riverton family pausing along the road from Jackson Hole to Togwotee Pass after completing a trip through the park in 1914. (Riverton Museum)

canyon — so near it seemed — but it barely reached the middle of the river below. After watching for some time longer we began the ascent again by way of long flights of steps. I think there must be at least four hundred of them. Needless to say, we were tired when we again reached the top. Then we walked around the Hotel. It is said to be one and one-tenth miles around the foundation, and contains five hundred rooms. It is a very cheap looking affair on the outside — has apparently been made from rough native lumber. After that we went back to camp and after eating lunch and resting for a while we prepared to go.

We are now camped where we were the night before last. Supper is on the stove cooking and I am hungry so I am going to quit.


Margaret

 July 14, 1917

Breakfast, some minutes before a hearth of great blazing logs, a half hour with the lovable bears, and we set out for a morning tramp, following the edge of the canyon as far as Artist's Point. An attempt to describe the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone is unworthy. At best we can only make comparisons, and comparisons are unfair: It is unlike the Grand Canyon of the [Colorado], and it is not Niagara. It is

both, and it is not. It is not so immense, but it is more intense. To me it is not grandeur but beauty. Unearthly beauty — one can only weep. Rudyard Kipling wrote: "All that I can say is that without warning or preparation I looked into a gulf 1700 feet deep, with eagles and fish-hawks circling far below. And the sides of that gulf were one wild melee of color — crimson, emerald, cobalt, ochre, amber, honey splashed with port wine, snow-white, vermilion, lemon, and silver-gray in wide washes. And so far below that no sound of its strife could reach us, the Yellowstone River ran, a finger-wide strip of jade green."

The Lower Fall of the Yellowstone is almost twice as high as Niagara, 308 feet, and while its volume of water is much less, its beauty is greater. The Upper Fall is 109 ft. A view of the latter fall is but a slip from our camp door and we are lulled to sleep with the sound of its waters.

After so strenuous a morning, I was glad to remain in camp a few hours this afternoon to write, while Edward went trout fishing.

[Evening] A fine time this evening. Went on a hike with some traveling friends while the man fished. We went down the steps to the foot of both the Upper

and Lower Falls. The latter is 498 steps to the base. It was a big climb and a long walk but fine. And our second day in Yellowstone National came to a close. It is a wonderland.

❧ Lovina ❧
August 3, 1913

Arose at 5:30 o'clock this morning. Left camp about 8:15. Before reaching the militia station, nothing unusual happened. There Henry registered and had the gun permit signed. Then we came on by Lake Hotel and stopped at the small store long enough to get a few things — groceries — and then came on. But before leaving there we saw two black bears. One was a cub, and was standing on its hind legs drinking milk from a bottle which someone was holding for it.

After we had passed Lake Junction we saw four deer — all bucks, with horns "in the velvet."

We decided to wash this afternoon and had everything ready when it began to rain, and we had to put off washing until a better time.

❧ Lovina ❧
August 6, 1913

Yesterday (5th) we came as far as Thumb Lunch Station. About half a mile — or so — before we got to the Thumb, we began passing hot springs. Some of them were of a beautiful greenish color and some were muddy.

After registering at the station we set camp and had supper. After supper we went to see the hot springs. While inspecting them a couple of soldiers came and, after talking for a while, took us to see the fish cone. It is a tiny island — cone-shaped — and perhaps four feet across, a little distance from the shore of the lake — Lake Yellowstone. In the center of this cone is a small basin [and in the basin] there is a hot spring.

"You can fish in the lake, and then throw your fish into the cone and cook them" the soldiers told us. Whether or not this is true, I don't know. I know that the water in the hot springs in Thermopolis is not hot enough to cook anything, but this water seemed to be much hotter than that at Thermopolis. Perhaps what the soldiers said is true.

Then they showed us where the Paint Pots were located. These were a pleasant surprise for us as we had not heard there were paint pots here. The "Paint Pots" cover, perhaps, two square rods of ground and are nothing more or less than mud boiling up — a thick pink mud! Pink mud, mind you. Later we found a tiny white paint pot.

This morning we saw three bear — two black bear and one that resembled a silver-tip, only that it was small. Much smaller than the bear from which our silver-tip bear rug was done.

We met dozens of tourist coaches on our way today as indeed we have every day. There is one good thing about these park roads, aside from their improved condition, automobiles are not allowed in here; so we are not in constant fear that, at some sharp turn in the road we will run into one.

❧ Lovina ❧
August 8, 1913

Yesterday (7th) we came to Old Faithful. On our way we passed the Isa Two Ocean Lake. I suppose it is fed by springs in or near it and its waters divide. Part going east and part west to the two oceans. It is not much of a sight — a mere pond — and it would certainly not be mentioned on the map were it not for the fact that its waters go to two oceans.

Soon we began passing hot springs; big and little, all kinds, in fact.

We camped very near to Old Faithful (on camp grounds, of course) and after eating supper we went out sight-seeing. We passed the Old Faithful geyser, which was not playing just then — and visited both sides of the river, where there are hundreds of hot springs and a dozen or so of geysers. One of the springs is called Chinaman, another, the Sponge — with very remarkable formation — another, the Butterfly and of the geysers the Beehive — which we peeped into, not knowing that it was a geyser. And we were fortunate enough to see the Castle geyser play, too. It plays for an hour or two at a time, and at intervals of about twenty-six hours. From a distance we saw Old Faithful play, and had a good view of it. It seems hardly necessary to describe it to any great length, but this diary would not be complete without telling the main points of interest about it. Its plays are from every sixty to eighty-two or -three minutes apart and it plays for perhaps two or three minutes at a time. Throws water about a hundred feet into the air. After dark we saw it play with the search light on it. The view was great. We also saw the Old Faithful Inn. Made entirely of logs and is supposed to be built without a nail in the whole structure. It is a real work of art. In the lobby there are big fireplaces, rough but comfortable chairs, and rugs on the floor. The steps leading upstairs are of half logs. In fact, the whole building — inside and out — is of logs; rough logs, with the bark on.

This morning (8th) we got a few provisions at the store

and then came on. Among the notable things we saw were the Emerald Pool (I was disappointed in it), Sunset Lake (it was far prettier than Emerald Pool because larger), Grotto Geyser, Riverside Geyser, Giant Geyser, the Fan, and the Morning Glory Pool — all of them interesting and beautiful.

We saw the Fountain Geyser from a distance, and then passed the Fountain Hotel. We are now camped about a mile and a half from the hotel on the Nez Perces creek.

I almost forgot to mention the Excelsior Geyser. It is an immense pool of boiling water in a cutbank hole at least a hundred and fifty feet across. It is remarkable, not only for its size, but also for its color, which is of wonderful blue. This geyser plays at very irregular intervals — sometimes years elapsing between each eruption. Its last eruption was in 1889. It has been so long quiet that possibly it is extinct now. It is said that when it breaks forth it tears the ground away for several feet around and sends water to an immense height.

Margaret
July 15, 1917

Spent our golden Sunday morning here at the Canyon. Enjoyed a beautiful view from Inspiration Point, Grand View, Lookout Point, and had a glimpse of the splendid Hotel Grand Canyon. I believe its lounging room is the largest and most pretentious I was ever in. We had luncheon and are now waiting to start on our way to Mammoth . . .

[Evening] The trip this afternoon was strenuous. We suffered from heat — a burning sun — and our progress was retarded by rutted roads and snow drifts. . . . Proceeding from the Canyon we traversed some thoroughly inspiring scenery, surely nothing could surpass the wide panorama of thickly wooded mountains and hazy valleys when one has reach the climb to Dunraven Pass, and gazes over into a far country of mingled earth and sky.

We were set down at five o'clock at Mammoth Hot Springs, about the hottest spot I ever struck — a regular Arizona. But after the sun disappeared behind the mountain and we had had a bit to eat we began to get our bearings in the utterly unfamiliar environment. . . .

The hot springs and terraces occupy several acres to the south of the plateau, and rise tier above tier on the slope of Terrace Maount. One can do little more than get a general notion of Liberty Cap, Pulpit, Jupiter, Angel and Cleopatra terraces . . ., and many

smaller vents and caves and steam fissures. Not the least interesting was the descent into the Devil's Kitchen, the crater of an extinct hot spring. It was all thoroughly novel. . . . We came back to camp with the quiet night sky over us, feeling the presence of a new world. And it is good to see a new world.

Margaret
July 16, 1917

[Enroute from Mammoth to Old Faithful] We motored 49 miles today and in this long ride perhaps saw a little more than one can put down in black and white. One cannot hope to remember all of the wonders of Norris Geyser Basin, Lower and Upper Geyser Basins, but one can and will remember his first impression of geysers in general. Viewed from a distance they resemble camp fires. One walks over great fields and upon every hand, thru small apertures in the earth's crust, steam hisses and sputters or rushes with tremendous force, high into the air with a roar that may be heard for miles. There are acres under which a roaring volcano seems to be struggling to liberate itself thru great cracks in the earth's surface. It is indeed the Devil's Half Acre. How the poet Dante would have enjoyed it! We spent the afternoon trying to get some comprehension of all these natural wonders about Old Faithful, the degree of our success may be judged by the fact that it is said that this basin holds more geysers, hot pools, and like features than all others combined. The whole region seems to bubble and hiss and steam. The one consolation to the hurried tourist is the fact that all geysers look much alike, and a general impression is all one asks. Best of all is Old Faithful itself, the reliable friend of the tourist, for eruptions occur every sixty-five minutes regularly, lasting three minutes, from 125 to 150 feet high. We spent a delightful evening at lovely Old Faithful Inn. So glad we changed from "camp" to "hotel."

Margaret
July 17, 1917

Spent a quiet beautiful morning enjoying quaint Old Faithful Inn, with its wonderful fire place, its monster clock, its great rafters, its rustic veranda. After luncheon we departed leaving Old Faithful and its companions behind. A pleasant shower made the afternoon ride to Lake Yellowstone delightful. We liked the soft air and clouded sky. And we saw deer,

too, along the way. We motored 34 miles thru pines and firs and came at evening to the shore of beautiful Yellowstone Lake, with its cloud-mirrored waters and dark mountains. After dinner at the Hotel, we spent the evening boating. A good day to have lived today.

❧ Lovina ❧
August 10, 1913

Yesterday (the 9th) we came on about nine and a half or ten miles farther. We passed some Firehole River cascades. They were interesting. Indeed all falls and cascades are interesting to me.

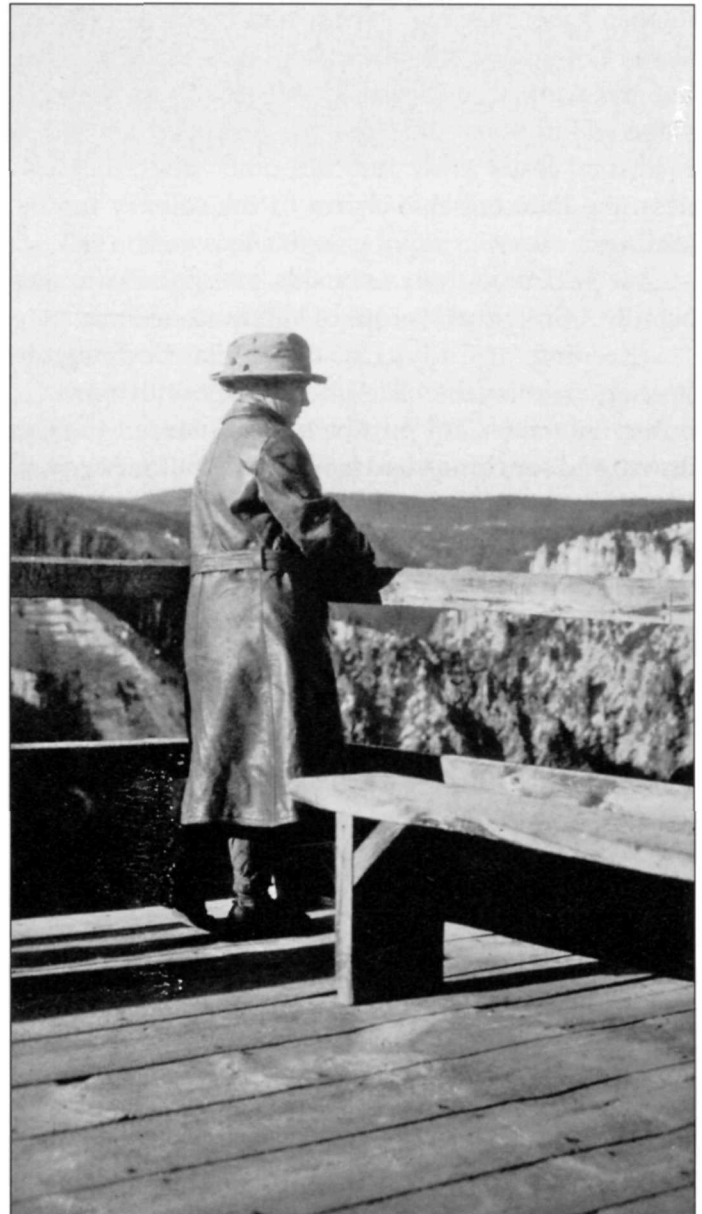
After a while we came to hot springs — literally dozens and dozens of them. And among these geysers — the Minute Man, which plays from every two to five minutes, and the duration of the eruption of which is from one to three minutes. The other geyser is called Monarch, and at times has long periods of inaction. However, it has been playing quite regularly lately and we were fortunate enough to see it in eruption. It shot up perhaps thirty or thirty-five feet into the air. The stream of water was almost as wide as it was high and was very muddy. Then we came farther on and passed a basin that was covered with springs and geysers. Minnie, son and I followed a board walk and went into the basin. The first thing we came to was a steam vent. The escape of the steam was accompanied by a terrible roar. It was called the Black Growler. Indeed, there were two of these, the second, unnamed, was really louder than the first.

In many places the sign boards were either down or the names worn off so often we did not know their names. One, a geyser we judged to be the Constant. (We have guide-books along to tell us what we are to see.) Also there was a beryl colored spring, and opal colored spring, and an emerald spring.

Then we passed the Norris Lunch Station and came to the Norris Militia Station where Henry registered. We came on about two miles and are now camped for the night near some hot springs called the Frying Pan.

I almost tire of telling of the hot springs for they are every where — hundreds, even thousands of them.

This evening we took some breakfast food and some beans and prepared them and then took them down to the hot springs and set them into some of the smaller springs to see if they would cook. Henry has just come back from there again and said that the breakfast food is done. I don't know whether the beans are done or not. We are going to leave them in over night.



Four years after their 1917 trip through Yellowstone National Park, Margaret and Edward Gehrke returned for another visit. Margaret is shown here in 1921 enjoying the view from an overlook at the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone (Nebraska State Historical Society)

A funny thing happened today. When we were in the Norris Geyser Basin I saw a sign board lying face downward and went over to see what name was on it. It read "Dangerous"! I got away from there.

❧ Margaret ❧
July 18, 1917

After breakfast we took a delightful morning hike to the outlet of Yellowstone Lake, where I left Edward

to spend the morning trout fishing while I returned alone. Coming back to the Hotel I was afraid of bears but the walk was lovely. The bright morning sunshine spilling thru the trees, the shadows across the road, that leads away into tall quiet trees, the stillness, the indescribable charm of the solitary mountain road.

We will be on our way this afternoon over the beautiful Cody road — out of Yellowstone Park

[Evening, at Cody] Hot desert-like Cody again. We had an enjoyable ride in company with some [?] bub-millionaires. We put the top up, we put the top down, and for climax had a puncture! But we arrived less than an hour late none the worse for our 84 mile ride and uncongenial folks. And we are at Cody — the town on-the-edge-of-things-beautiful.

❧ Lovina ❧
August 14, 1913

One the eleventh we passed the Obsidian Cliff, Appolinaris Spring (a spring with a soda taste, and containing iron), Beaver Lake, Roaring Mountain (a mountain from which steam was escaping with a roar). That night we camped on Obsidian Creek, near a Wylie camp, on a meadow called Willow park. On the twelfth we came on to Gardiner.

We passed the Golden Gate. The road is built around the side of a mountain, and the lower side is supported by an arcade of concrete. Then we went on farther and passed the Silver Gate. This was, to me, no less impressive than the other. Huge boulders of the hot spring formation were lying about everywhere — the stratas or layers of which could be plainly seen.

*After a while we came to some more formations and went over to see what it was. It was a terrace, beautifully colored with the water which ran down from it and was called Angel Terrace. Then, seeing several paths leading farther up the hill we followed one and came to the top. We noticed a sign board which read "Devil's Kitchen," but saw nothing that in any way resembled a kitchen. After a while we saw it. It was merely a small slit in the ground — so small that, as we followed the steps that led downward, my hat touched the sides of the cave. For it **was** a cave. It*

widened as we went downward, and after going for perhaps twenty five feet we came to the bottom. It was perhaps eight feet wide and as much as twenty feet in length (possibly more), tapering off at both ends and ending in blackness. It was very hot down there and we hastened to get back to light again.

At the Mammoth Hot Springs there was no place to camp where there was grass for the horses so we came on, and after five miles more of travel down hill we came to the northern entrance to the park, and Gardiner. But it was our exit. We came thro the arch upon which was inscribed "For the benefit and enjoyment of the people." [It] was dedicated by President Roosevelt in 1903.

In the morning (the 13th) Minnie boarded the train and left for Lost Cabin and her school.

❧ Margaret ❧
July 19, 1917

[En route to Denver] Never spent a more tiresome day of travel; hot, dirty, uncomfortable, and not feeling well besides. When it is hot and the wind blows this desert is awful. Travel is heavy, we did not succeed in getting a sleeper section until after we left Casper about 8:30, and then glad to get an "upper" or anywhere to lie down and rest.

❧ Lovina ❧
October 6, 1913

[After traveling as far as Butte, Montana, Henry and Lovina Johnson decided to return to Lost Cabin. As their journey came to end, Lovina summed up.]

We have had interesting experiences . . . But, for the most part our trip has been in one respect disagreeable — it has been lonely. More so for me than Henry, because I, being a woman, cannot talk to people as he can.

*I suppose that we will have but little left when we get back to Lost Cabin — that is, in the line of household goods. Most of them were given away [before leaving for Yellowstone] and I don't want them again. The sheep wagon will do us until we can afford to get more, and then I want **good** things.*

HEBARD COLLECTION ACQUISITIONS

Recent acquisitions in the Hebard Collection, University of Wyoming Libraries
Compiled by Tamsen L. Hert

The Grace Raymond Hebard Wyoming Collection is a branch of the University of Wyoming Libraries, housed in the Owen Wister Western Writers Reading Room in the American Heritage Center in Laramie. Primarily a research collection, the core of this collection is Miss Hebard's personal library which was donated to the university libraries. Further donations have been significant in the development of this collection. The Hebard Collection is considered to be the most comprehensive collection on Wyoming in the state.

To mark the 125th anniversary of the founding of Yellowstone National Park, acquisitions cited in this issue of *Annals of Wyoming* relate to the history and natural history of our nation's first national park.

If you have any questions about these materials or the Hebard Collection, you may contact Ms. Hert by phone at 307-766-6245; by email to <thert@uwyo.edu>; or you can access the Hebard homepage at <<http://www.uwyo.edu/lib/heb.htm>>.

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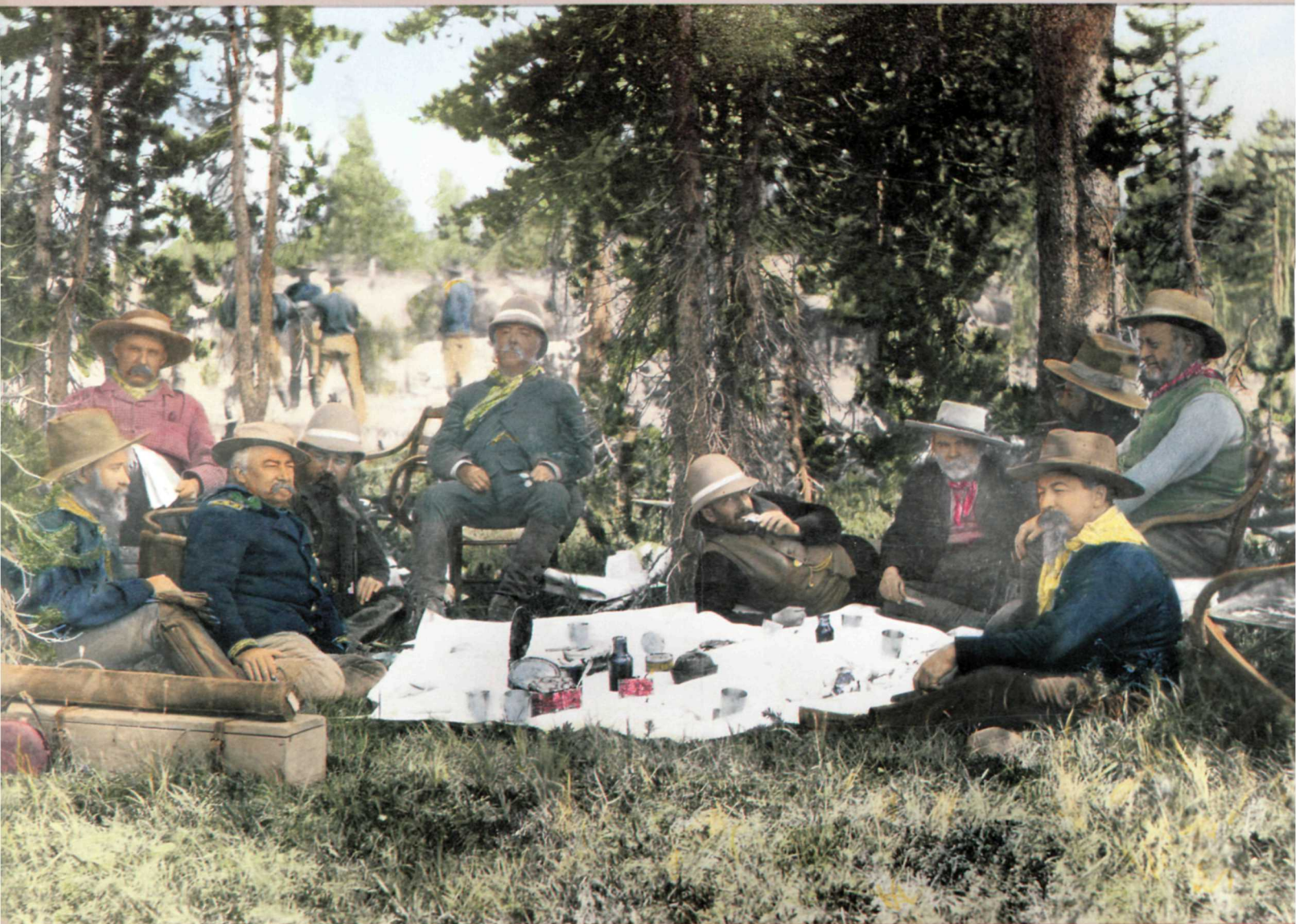
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Annals of WYOMING

The Wyoming History Journal

Fall 1997; Vol. 69, No. 4



SPECIAL ISSUE COMMEMORATING THE
125TH ANNIVERSARY OF YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

On the cover:

The summer of 1883 in Yellowstone was noteworthy for the opening of the Yellowstone Park Improvement Company's facilities, the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad's branch line to the park, and the first visit by a United States president. President Chester Arthur traveled to Wyoming on the Union Pacific Railroad, and then from Green River to Fort Washakie by wagon. From there he rode horseback, accompanied by a troop of cavalry soldiers and 150 pack mules (with the requisite wranglers and packers) to tote the tents, beds, furniture, linens, china, silver, crystal and gourmet provisions that were needed to make his expedition comfortable. His party included General Phil Sheridan, Secretary of War Robert T. Lincoln, Senator George Vest of Missouri, Governor John S. Crosby of Montana Territory, and other dignitaries. In the cover photograph the president and his fellow travelers are shown picnicking in a grove of pines. President Arthur is seated in the chair at the center. (Photograph from the collection of the Riverton Museum)

On the back cover is a photograph showing some of the first cars to enter Yellowstone National Park after the August 1, 1915 opening of the park to motorized vehicles. (Photograph from the collection of the Pioneer Museum in Lander)

Grateful acknowledgement is made of the assistance provided by Tamsen L. Hert in the preparation of this issue of *Annals of Wyoming*. Ms. Hert was instrumental in the solicitation of appropriate articles and the acquisition of illustrations.

The editor of *Annals of Wyoming: The Wyoming History Journal* welcomes manuscripts and photographs on every aspect of the history of Wyoming and the West. Appropriate for submission are unpublished, research-based articles which provide new information or which offer new interpretations of historical events. First-person accounts based on personal experience or recollections of events will be considered for use in the "Wyoming Memories" section. Articles are reviewed by members of the journal's Editorial Advisory Board and others. Decisions regarding publication are made by the editor. Manuscripts (along with suggestions for illustrations or photographs) should be submitted on computer diskettes in a format created by one of the widely-used word processing programs along with two printed copies. Submissions, queries, and requests for detailed authors' guidelines should be addressed to Editor, *Annals of Wyoming*, P.O. Box 4256 University Station, Laramie, WY 82071.

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The Wyoming State Historical Society

The Wyoming State Historical Society is a confederation of more than 20 local chapters located in every area of the state. Members enjoy the frequent gatherings of their local groups and participate in programs and activities that preserve and interpret their communities' history. Several times each year, members from all across Wyoming come together for major events where they celebrate common historical interests.

Membership in the society is open to everyone. Member benefits include a subscription to *Annals of Wyoming: The Wyoming History Journal*, a quarterly journal devoted to broader public understanding of all aspects of Wyoming history; and *Wyoming History News*, the society's newsletter, which is published ten times each year. Membership dues also provide support for a comprehensive awards program that recognizes people who are doing something to preserve and interpret local and state history; for Wyoming History Day, which allows thousands of Wyoming school children to participate in history projects and to compete at district, state and national history day events; for research grants that support the study and publication of Wyoming history; and for a variety of special projects which help preserve and interpret the state's rich history.

If you are already a member of the Wyoming State Historical Society we solicit your continued interest, involvement and support. If you are not a member, or if you know of other non-members who share an interest in Wyoming history, we urge you (and them) to join. Contact a member of your local historical society, or write to the Wyoming State Historical Society at 1740H184 Dell Range Blvd, Cheyenne, WY 82009.

Membership dues are: \$20 (single), \$30 (joint), \$15 (student, under 21 years of age), \$40 (institutions). For those who wish to support the society in a more substantial way, participation at one of the following levels is appreciated: contributing member (\$100-\$249), sustaining member (\$250-\$499), patron (\$500-\$999), donor (\$1,000 and over). In addition to all benefits of regular membership, participants at these levels are recognized in *Wyoming History News*.



The northwest corner of what is today the state of Wyoming attracted special attention from visitors long before it was set aside as the nation's first national park.

And while the natural features that make Yellowstone National Park so spectacular remain basically the same, the experience of a park visit has changed dramatically with new modes of transportation, improvements in accommodations, and the values of visitors. This special issue examines the history of some of those changes while acknowledging the 125th anniversary of the founding of Yellowstone — in 1872.

Particular attention is given to the years between 1910 and 1920, when the automobile came of age. That focus is significant because it was the automobile that brought an end to a Yellowstone era that had been dominated by a moneyed class of visitors who could afford to travel to the park via the railroads, pay for the luxurious accommodations offered in Yellowstone's hotels, and enjoy the scenery while being driven about in the park's stagecoaches.

The opening of the park to automobiles on August 1, 1915 not only made the park more accessible to a much larger group of visitors, it also changed the nature of park accommodations. Ultimately, that change led to the kind of Yellowstone experience that we know today.