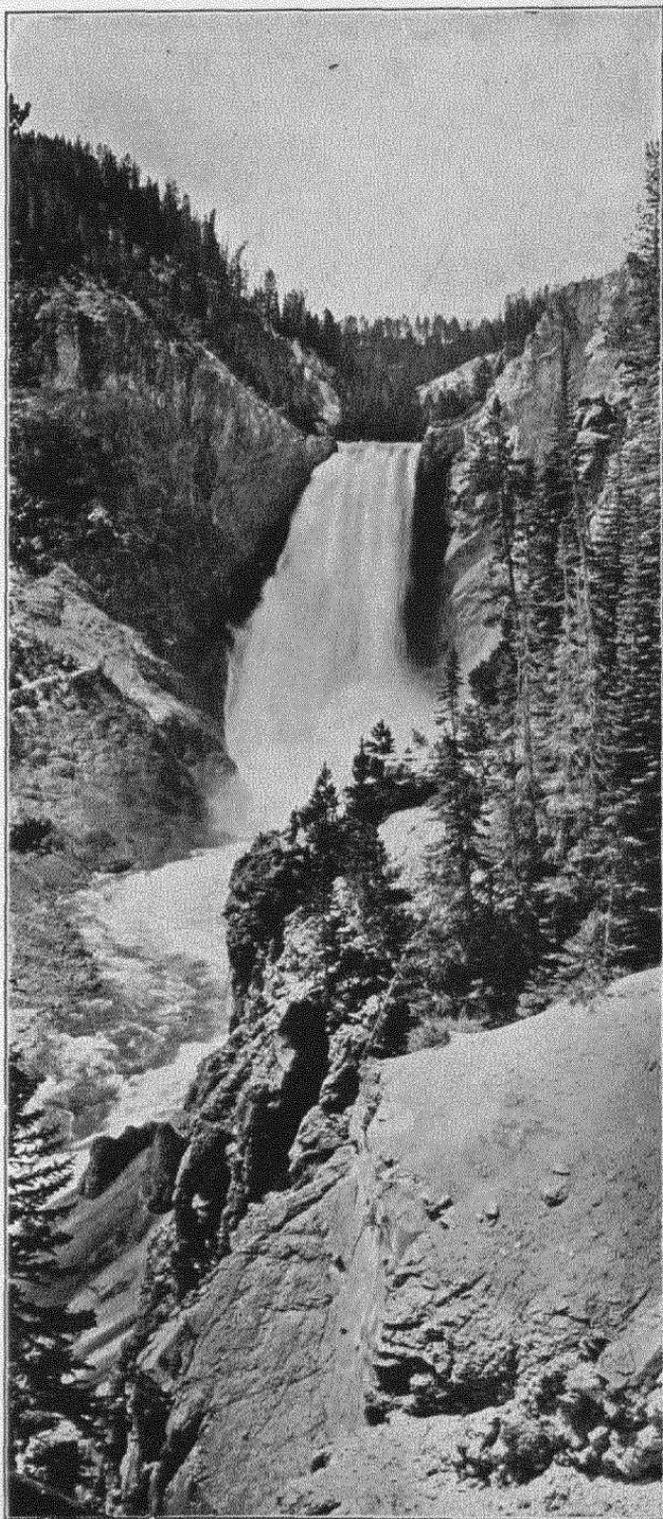


THE
TO THE
OF GYSTONE



YELLOWSTONE CANYON AND FALLS

A Family Trek to the Yellowstone

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**A FAMILY TREK TO THE
YELLOWSTONE**

BY

MRS. N. E. CORTHELL

AND

TWENTY-FOUR YEARS AFTER

BY

MRS. JOHN A. HILL



Foreword

THIS is a foreword by the family relict. Coming home from a professional trip to Lander, he was confronted by a man with a bill for a team and a covered mountain spring wagon, bought by the family and in training and fitting for the overland trip to the Park. He tried to explain the difficulties. He expressed apprehension at the prospect. It didn't matter. All that could be done was to commend them to his friends along the trail, Mr. Dyer, Mr. Fourt, Judge Meldrum and Captain Chittenden. Still it seemed a fantastic undertaking.

John Colter had done it in a primitive way in 1807. Nobody believed him; and he was classed with Munchausen until later explorers confirmed his story of the marvels. He did it on foot. The Corthell party did it a century later with a plodding horse-drawn vehicle. At this time, one seems quite as incredible as the other.

But shall we say that the Hill family, with its motor car of 1927, has ended the Saga? Not at all. The tour has become a fashion. In this family it seems to have become an inheritance. Only the method changes. It would be rash to predict how it will be achieved by the third generation. The commonplace motor hike of 1927 may be as much out of date in 1950 as the horses and wagon of 1903 already are. What has been done is here related. What will be done is left to the imagination and to the initiative of the new woman.

N. E. CORTHELL.

Laramie, July, 1928.

A Family Trek to the Yellowstone

CHAPTER I

NEARLY half a lifetime I have lived in Laramie, with all the while a great longing to see the wonders of the Yellowstone—in season, out of season, when the house was full of babies, even when it was full of measles. Ever since President Arthur, as he came out of the park in 1883, declared, "Nothing I have ever read, nothing I have ever heard, equals what I have seen," made me too yearn to "see."

As the older children outgrew marbles and dolls, I conceived the bold idea of stowing them all in a prairie schooner and sailing away over the Rocky Mountains, deserts, forests and fords to the enchanted land five hundred miles away. My husband offered strenuous objection of course to the crazy project, but could only fizz and fume and furnish the where-withal, for the reasons advanced he found irresistible; such an ideal vacation for the children—a summer out-of-doors, seeing their native state! A chance for their geography, botany, zoology, to be naturalized. To be drivers and cooks would put them on their own resources somewhat, a valuable education in itself. So economical, too! Such a fine opportunity for stretching of legs and lungs, with the park at the end! Reasons to turn a man's head you see, so when the boys wrote along the wagon top "Park or Bust" that settled it and we started July 4th, 1903.

I had read Stewart White in "The Outlook," and resolved to "go light." A two seated spring wagon, tent, stove, bedding, clothing, two weeks' provisions, besides my live freight, made up the load behind a pair of big road horses.

The first day out was glorious. We drove thirty-three miles to the steel bridge down the Laramie River. The bracing air, fresh from Snowy Range, the changing scene, the fragrance of prairie flowers and wild sage, the blue of lupine and larkspur giving the effect of lakes here and there, the peaceful herds in grass knee deep created a charm which we accepted as a good omen of the unknown before us.

We camped without tent or stove that night, for the small boys were "heap big Injuns," who scorned civilized ways out in the open. They whooped along on the warpath, examined old trails, read the sky, sent the "stinging fatal arrow" after rabbits, clamored for pioneer tales, then rolled up in blankets around the camp fire with only the stars overhead.

During the night we had an amusing (?) experience to scare a tenderfoot blue. Sometime after midnight when the moon rose, I awoke amazed to see a hundred head of range cattle lined up around us in a semi-circle, still as mice, their great eyes bulging with curiosity. I called to the boys, several heads bobbed up, and away the cattle scampered, only to return again and again in wild-eyed astonishment until their curiosity was sated, when they grazed off. After that I tried to sleep with one eye open. It can't be done out camping. Why does the morning sun inspire one with the fine courage lacking in the pale moonlight? Now I'm brave enough to "shoo" a whole herd of Texas steers or to grapple with all the dragons kind friends conjured for me—Beaver Hill, treacherous fords, snakes, bad lands—all of them, each and every.

You are wondering how eight people can be comfortable in two seats? That's easy. We piled our bedding fore, aft and amidships, with clothing in pillowslips, so had seats for all—even choice ones. If you were a small boy, for instance, you could sit on a roll of bedding or sack of grain, hang your bare feet over the dash board and hold the whip, if very good, the lines, or you could perch behind ready to hop off to chase a rabbit, or curl up on a soft pile, lay your head in mother's lap and sleep away the drowsy afternoon.

To the bridge there is one road only, beyond the bridge there are a dozen. Which one led to Little Medicine Crossing, our most direct route to Shirley Basin, we didn't know, and couldn't find out, for one may travel a whole day beyond the bridge and not meet a soul, so we took the wrong road and had to make a dry camp at Como, reaching Medicine Bow the third day at noon. From here we drove north among the Freezeout Hills, through which "The Virginian" piloted Owen

Wister on his way to the Goose Egg Ranch. We arrived at the old Trabing place about four o'clock. This is one of the famed historic spots in Wyoming, and many thrilling events have occurred here, but now it is abandoned, save that it is occupied by three young freighters passing through.

They courteously offered to camp outside and give us the house, but we were afraid of strangers, so after a hasty supper moved on ten miles and spread our tarpaulins on the bare plain.

Arriving at my friend Kirk Dyer's the next morning I told him of my foolish fears that the young men having lost their horses might have designs on ours, etc. He rebuked me sternly and read me such a lecture as I shall never forget.

"Country people are honest," said he, "and you must take it for granted you are safer here than in Laramie and you will get a square deal every where. Trust people and don't harbor suspicions."

Such a happy day the children spent riding horseback and eating Mrs. Dyer's cream biscuits.

Adjoining this ranch are the fossil fields of the Freezeout Hills, in which two University boys were working. One would have taken them for young Comanches from their yells at sight of home folks.

I should like to tell of our adventure with an antelope, but the least said the soonest mended.

We turned west from here and camped in Shirley Basin just one hundred miles from home and five days out. None of the country passed looks so good as our own Laramie plains, though we had majestic snow capped Elk Mountain on the west and misty Laramie Peak on the east for two days.

All are jubilant over the trip. No sickness, no accident, not much complaining, except a hankering for a saddle horse that permeates the very atmosphere from the driver's seat to the perch behind.

We have slept without a tent three nights out of four and there is a nice tender haunch browning in the oven. So

far the trip is better than my dreams as "The Virginian" would say, though in dreams I had traveled in automobiles.

Next day was different.

We were driving gaily along through the Quealy meadow, where suddenly the wagon sank in mire. The horses struggled to pull it out, the king bolt snapped and off they walked with the front wheels. My driver boy quietly stepped over the dash board and walked off after them, still holding the lines.

For one despairing moment I thought the end of all things had come when my wagon parted in the middle. Noticing my forlorn face one youngster thought it was time to laugh and exclaimed, "Gee, Mamma! This isn't exciting. The horses should have run away and smashed a few kids." Seeing how much worse things might have been I thanked my lucky stars and took heart again.

Shirley Basin proved to be the land of the Good Samaritan, where every ranchman is your friend and neighbor, who pulls you out of the mud, mends your king bolts, agrees with you in politics, praises your husband and treats you to ice cream in the evening, so the accident makes pleasant memory.

Our next objective was Indian Grove, twenty miles away and when it seemed we must be nearly there we inquired of a ranchman how much farther it was. "It depends which way you're traveling" said he. "It is six miles coming and eight miles going."

We were going and we found his answer quite correct, for the interminable hills nearly wore us out. Live freight that scrambles up the hills is not so hard on the team. Eventually we arrived at Indian Grove and oh, how lovely! The finest view we have had, yet so situated as to be a perfect farmstead. We are here early in the afternoon, and we linger in the morning, drinking of the rare beauty, and the cold spring.

The noble mountains with intervening valleys are so near, so clear cut, withal so enticing, we still linger; besides, our farmers are kindred spirits and we have discovered mutual friends.

We are tempted to visit Boney Ernest the old pony express rider whose outer range we pass, but resist, and after circulating around and among the Seminole Mountains we finally wound up in Alcova just a week from home. This is where mountain and river strive to occupy the same space.

Here is the wonderful Platte Canyon mentioned by the "Pathfinder" seventy years ago, so inaccessible that few people in Wyoming know of its existence today. Yet it is second in grandeur, yielding only to the Yellowstone, and Wyoming is abundantly provided with canyons.

Alcova itself is isolated and almost inaccessible and contains only a store, postoffice, boarding house and bridge. Yet I'd like to have the enthusiasm of that postmaster. To him every barren hillside covers a big bed of coal, Benton shales reveal to him the possibilities of oil, while gray old granite Pedro Mountain contains fine veins of gold, and the red cliffs along the river, oh they are rich in cinnabar. He shows faith by works, too, for he moved in with the greatest difficulty some thirty thousand pounds of oil machinery, hired an expert, had a well down five hundred feet and the country smelling and tasting of oil as we passed through.

But I didn't begin this narrative with any idea of advertising Wyoming products, yet it might be wise to add that a very desirable brand of bachelor abounds in this region from the Big Muddy clear to Indian Grove. It is respectfully suggested that the next Teachers' Institute be held in Shirley Basin, thus bringing the mountain to Mohamet, as it were. These bachelors would come a wooing—they inquire diligently concerning the fair fields of matrimonial promise beyond their ken, but the work laid on them to do—the filling of the great maw of the Beef Trust, gives them no time to seek home and happiness.

Is Teddy, the Thesens, come to deliver them from this hated Minotaur?

CHAPTER II

WHERE the river pours through the mountain cleft at Alcova—that is where the government is making the “Pathfinder dam”—named in honor of General Fremont. As the Sweetwater flows into the Platte at the head of the canyon ten miles above, the reservoir created by the dam will flood the Sweetwater valley, as well as the Platte valley for some distance.

We could have reached the river at Boney Ernest’s, above the canyon direct from Indian Grove and so have saved perhaps fifty miles, but we were cautioned everywhere not to ford the “treacherous Platte,” so we went around and crossed on the bridge at Alcova, built years ago by Isaac Van Horn. Besides we wished to explore the canyon, wait for mail and dip in the Platte a little.

Now I must tell my troubles. We had started really on the third of July, ran into a snow storm and returned. But it was clear and warm and bright the next morning, and in our haste to be off we left the pocket book in my desk. Imagine my predicament. A mother totally unused to business or cares outside her own domain, one hundred and fifty miles from home, with seven children and two horses to provide for, and not a cent of money!

Fifty miles from telephone or telegraph. We discovered our loss a few miles out from Laramie, but just then met friends driving in, who promised to have it forwarded promptly; and we went serenely on our way into this dilemma. We were put to our wits end to get oats, as yet our only necessity. The driver suggested that we trade off a hammock; daughter thought we could better spare bacon; being a hot day, little Tad generously offered his overcoat as a basis of trade, and the driver and I went to the store each trying to brace the other. One was to mention bacon, that failing, the other, to try—hammock. Oh I know exactly how a tramp feels when he begins asking for cold bites. At the first question, “Have you oats?”

We received a "no" almost with relief for now we needn't show our hands here.

We walked over to a ranchman's house, nerved up to try a bargain, until we saw the man, and the fine style in which he lived. Then we realized it would be like asking the President to swap a sack of oats for a side of bacon. No, we must put dignity into our need, so quaking like two criminals, I asked Mr. Blank for oats and "to send the bill to my husband please." A fleeting, quizzical flutter of his eyelid brought out the wretched blunder of the pocketbook.

"But, my dear Madam," said he, "you must not be traveling with all those children to care for and no money." Then he brought from his desk a generous sum, saying, "Your husband can send me his check when convenient." My troubles were over, but was ever a deed more chivalrous "in days of old when knights were bold?"

Though some might call it trouble—that Platte Valley sand—terribly we toiled up the endless hills through deep sand. Sometimes it would be so sidling we would take turns with the spade and literally build a stretch of road. Sometimes we would all help push the wagon up a steep pitch for the dear horses were in a sheep eaten country at Alcova. When the smaller children grew very tired climbing they took turns driving. The next older ones I partly carried, partly coaxed until finally we were all up the last cruel hill. We suffered severely from thirst for the water jug had bumped out and broken coming down a rough canyon on the other side of Alcova.

Suddenly some one said "tomatoes." Away down beneath the bedding we found them, cool and just to our taste, one quart can; two, then a third. And as Stewart White said of the cool breeze under a fallen tree, "Never have dinners or wines or men or women or talks of books or scenery or sport or the daintiest refinements of man's inventions given me half the luxury, I enjoyed from that cup of tomato." To quote him further, "Real luxury cannot be bought, it must be worked for."

But climbing sandy hills is really not trouble when one is desperate for oats. Still it brought home vividly the suffering of the forty-niners, as the want of the pocket book made me feel the shame of the penniless tramp.

Next morning, July 15, we drove into the ruts of the Oregon Trail at Independence Rock, where the trail finds the Sweetwater. For in early days there was no bridge—they had to ford the Platte and so cut off all the days I had been going around by Alcova.

This solid granite hill standing on the plain was a prominent landmark on the overland route. The annual rendezvous of fur traders and trappers occurred here. The Mormons left their names on it. The Whitman wedding party sojourned here and witnessed an annual rendezvous. Here a great celebration took place July 4th, 1850, when General Fremont was carried to the top and made a speech. This rock is covered with thousands of names and dates, and would have many more, but that a miner's chisel and hammer alone will scratch it as our children found to their disappointment. That night we camped at Tom Sun's on account of rain, but were glad to stay there on any pretense, for the old scout, Tom Sun, was the one figure needed to complete the panorama spreading before us of the Oregon Trail, Independence Rock, Indian Ambuscade, Devil's Gate, Pony Express and hillside graves of long ago.

Tom Sun was adopted by a Frenchman named LeFevre and brought to Wyoming in the Fremont party. He knew Kit Carson, Jim Bridger and many of the scouts and trappers of the first regime. He has a fine ranch, romantically situated, just within the Devil's Gate, and an interesting and handsome family, including a young Tom Sun. So he forms one of the last links between Wyoming's adventurous past and her enterprising future. I rejoiced that the children could meet with one who had borne a part in the stirring history of frontier days.

He came into our tent while it was raining and for three hours he held us spellbound with stories of Wyoming when

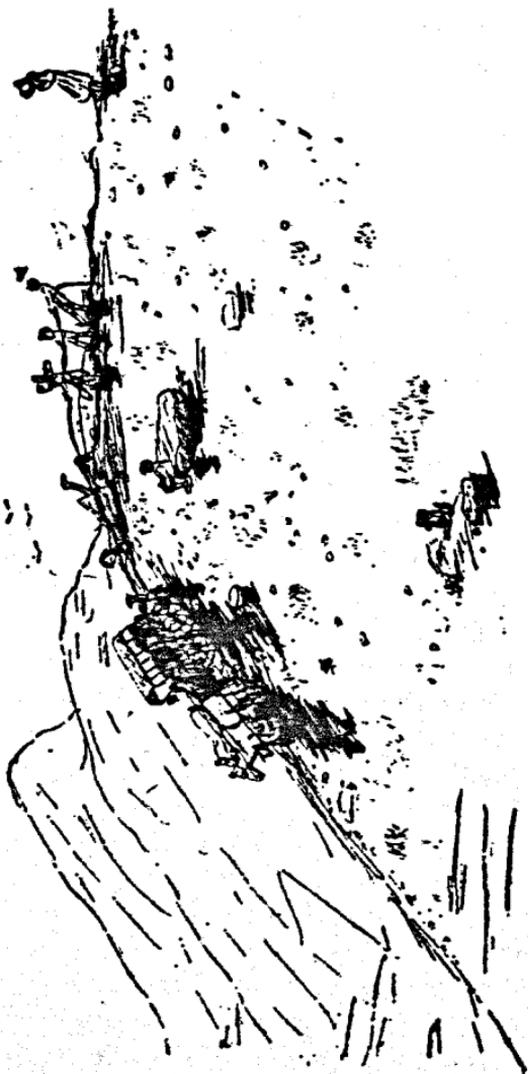
the Indians still possessed it. One story I will repeat, which gives a different side of his nature from what one would expect of an old Indian fighter.

Devil's Gate, where the Sweetwater once cut through a mountain range, and now leaves a fine roadway, was a death trap for pioneers. It was the best ambush the Indians had for a hundred miles in either direction. So the hill was covered with graves when Tom Sun, a young man, settled on his ranch. On one pine slab only could he read distinctly the inscription. A woman from Racine, Wisconsin, had been killed there in 1850 and Tom Sun determined to renew that slab and keep that inscription readable. He went to Rawlins, sixty-five miles away to get a hard wood board and kept his resolve for twenty years. Then some movers going by used it for their camp fire.

It is farther to Lander via Alcova than by way of Rawlins, no doubt, but here we can be sure of good feed, for the Sweetwater is the dead line for sheep, besides, we are deeply interested in every step of the way. It is hallowed ground to us. The sight of the worn old ruts, made by long trains of patient oxen fifty years ago—memories of childhood stories, the history of those times recalled by Tom Sun brought tears, and aroused and fed the imagination until in fancy we were pioneers fearful that behind every bush there lurked a savage. It is said that owing to the granite hills on either side of the river the Overland Trail has changed little in forty years. Anyway the sand ruts are very deep. The granite in the ground also accounts for the "sweet" water. No alkali, no sulphur here.

The children are eagerly interested in everything they see, hear or can catch. Tad announces that we have seen eight horned toads, caught five and mailed three to the chum at home.

Query: Where is the medicine that was in those boxes? Well if they spill the tablets they will have to drink sage tea when ill. Marvelous cures of many kinds in bitter sage.



Beaver Hill—Where the Hold-Back Held Back.

Every body is growing handy, even expert in camp work. The boys can skin a cottontail or dress a sage hen equal to Kit Carson himself; while daughter prepares a savory dinner or packs a mess box good enough for an army general.

The immensity of Wyoming begins to dawn on them. They hunt, swim, explore and so learn to enjoy the special individual flavor of each locality. But all grow tired of the limitless sage—one million acres after another. If we could understand the idea behind it. Why do the vast treeless plains bear one species of wood only and that so abundantly? When all the coal beds are empty and all the oil wells are dry, Wyoming sagebrush may be relied upon to warm and light the world. It makes an ideal camp fire and bakes biscuits perfectly.

We are now over two hundred miles from home and approaching the Beaver Hill dragon. We have heard so much about it though, we are braced for trouble. With a good steel brake and a seventy-five' foot picket rope fastened behind for the children to pull back on and me boosting on the underside to help the wagon on the sidling places out on that steep windy comb we arrived safely at the foot, though three stage coaches had blown over in one day the week before.

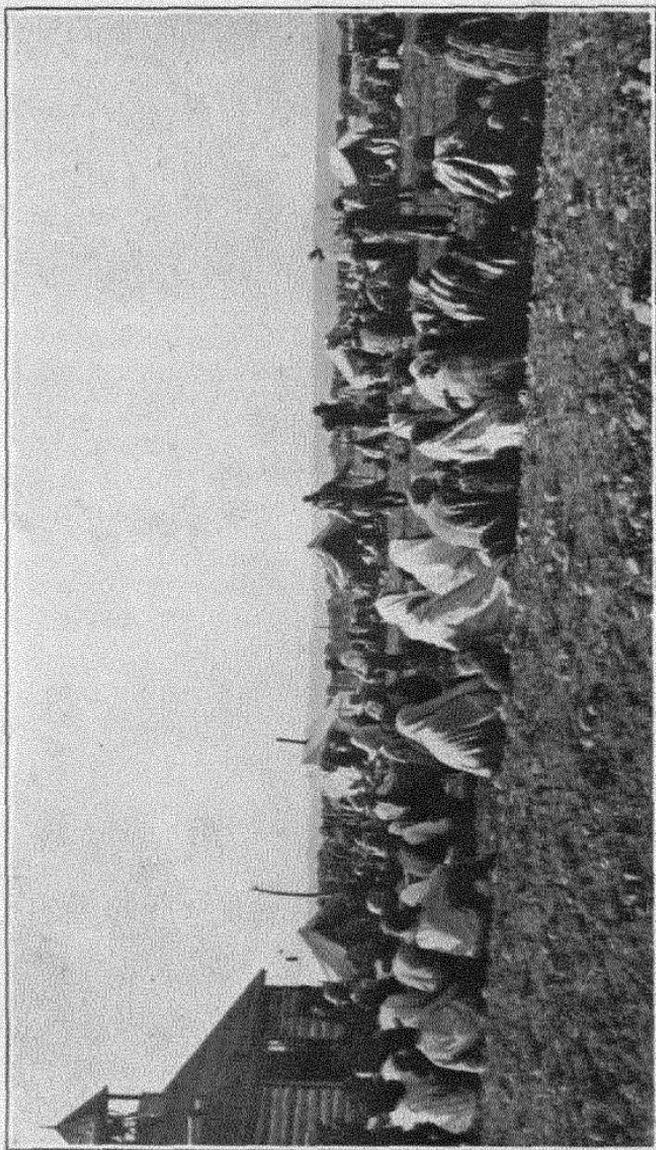
While cooling off at the foot of the five mile hill we wrote this note to the anxious one. I should explain here that Tom Sun had given us another water jug.):

Well sir, we're down your Beaver Hill all right,
Horse and foot and wagon train.
But it must have been a funny sight
To ye dwellers on the plain;
So many kids stretched out behind
Straining with a hold-back tug,
Along the stout rope bravely lined,
While "Baben" totes the water jug.
Just where the pitch made greatest strain
(Wonder if the coyotes grinned)
One small shirk had a convenient "pain;"
Another's little hands were skinned.

"Tommy has blisters on his pants,"
The driver said, with a hasty glance.
While a jeering crow above grew dizzy
Seeing the parlous squad get busy.

Reaching the foot of the final slope
The "hold backs" came to grief of course,
Tumbling over the picket rope.
Prairie dogs laughed till they were hoarse,
So funny Tad looked as he skated in,
On nose and back and heels and chin.
While I the Atlas of young beholders
Carried the world upon my shoulders.

One should not expect to travel from the southeast to the northwest corner of Wyoming and not have his ups and downs.



INDIANS ON THE WIND RIVER RESERVATION

CHAPTER III

HOW good the green fields of the Popo Agie valley looked to us weather-worn, dusty pilgrims, but the foolish horses, having the chance to revel in clover up to their knees, turned away to the native hillside grass "exactly like a person who prefers brown bread to cream taffy," the children said.

We entered Lander July 22nd, where we received our first letter and the pocket book. The anxious one was impatiently waiting to telephone, so I was soon at that office rejoicing to hear the dear familiar voice, even in "Hello." Then, "are you coming home or going on?" "Going on, of course." A nervous little laugh came over the wire, then silence. A pole fell or a wire broke somewhere out on the endless plains and our talk was over. Such hard luck. Still thankful just for the sound of my husband's voice, we hurried on seventeen miles to Fort Washakie—a rare stroke of Fortune!

The Shoshone Sun Dance was on the tapis in a tepee when we drove up. This will be a remarkable event to the children who have never seen an Indian, except at the Pan-American Exposition, strange as that may seem to easterners.

Fifteen hundred Indians are gathered here for the solemn ceremony. There was a large tepee on a common, surrounded by a whole village of small ones. Half of this huge tepee or dance lodge, was filled with stalls made of green branches. The other half was occupied by tom-tom players.

In each stall were two young braves, dressed in modest loin cloth and much paint, who, in turn, while blowing a whistle, danced to the central column (more like a great tree than a pole) and back, keeping time to the music. Thus while sixty young men were entered for the dance, half alternated with the other half every fifteen minutes in dancing. This they continued from Tuesday night till Friday morning without food or drink or rest. As an added test of endurance, a great feast was going on outside all Thursday afternoon, which they could see and smell, but might not taste.

There was a two-fold object in this solemn ceremony—one to propitiate the sun god so that he would give them rain, the other to teach the youth endurance. And I dimly understood a deeper motive. They seemed to think that by torturing the body through hunger, thirst, fatigue, they could purify the soul, make it independent of the body and fit for communion with the Great Spirit. Whichever dancer saw visions, he might become "Medicine Man."

They brought their sick on pallets among the stalls as if the very atmosphere were healing and strangely, too, wonderful cures are effected. I suddenly lost interest when the interpreter pointed out one very sick Indian who had spotted fever.

Nevertheless I had to remain in that vicinity for the Indians were so completely under the spell of these religious rites that they would not talk "pony" to me and the children could not go on without one. They had to have a pony. They wanted seven, but they could be placated with one.

I met a number of friends at the dance lodge, among them Miss Annie Talbot and Mr. Sherman Coolidge, an educated Indian, who quickly helped me to a bargain in ponies.

Sitting in a carriage, near the feast ground, I was cautiously counting out the money to pay for one, from among other bills, when the lady beside me, a Lander lady, whispered, "Look!" An Indian on horseback had his eyes glued to my money as if he meant to possess it. Clearly the lady from Lander was frightened, so I ought to be, and promptly fell into such a panic as set my teeth chattering. Some of the children were there with the pony so we hurried to camp. On the way I laid half a dozen plans for escaping robbery and murder, Kirk Dyer had given no directions for such a plight.

Nearing camp, daughter came to meet us and I gasped, "We must move at once, up under the guns of the fort, report the incident and get away before daylight or we'll all be killed."

She took my arm saying, "Don't worry. Another family joined us an hour ago and wish to travel with us all the way to the park."

"But are they nice?"

"Nice! They're from Cattaraugus County, New York, and know every Morris and Cortell up and down Ischua Valley, excepting Papa. They are both graduates of Ten Broeck Academy, and Mrs. Turnbull's grandmother is cousin Lucien Searle's aunt. There!"

To be raised in a moment from the abyss of fear to ecstatic heights of safety made me fairly dizzy. And never did mere man look so good to me before. From that day on the Turnbolls fitted into our plans and became as congenial as the choicest friends of Laramie would have been.

I always supposed coincidences, timely rescues, etc., in fiction, were manufactured, but they do happen in real life to my own knowledge.

Our little caravan set forward the next morning with the feeling that we were saying goodbye to civilization, to plunge into the desert, the wilderness, the jumping off place, but the children were cheerful enough, for they had acquired a new stock of Indian togs and they had their pet, Washakie. Three days I carried Mrs. Turnbull's alarm clock in the seat beside me that each horseman might have exactly his allotted time. Oh, but the waits were hard to bear. Human nature came out strongly during these tests. It was amusing and pathetic to see a small boy shake the clock to make it go faster.

The Shoshone reservation is as large as a good sized eastern state, and for seventy miles we had the whole country to ourselves. When the loneliness of the wide treeless plains grew oppressive, the children sang, "Good Old Summer Time," or else they made "fudge." They sang from pure joyousness mostly, for this free outdoor life is sweet to nature's own boys and girls school housed and book ridden all year. Each is a different kind of plainsman from the rest. One catches things with his gun, one with his hook, one with his bow, one with his hands. The latter is the naturalist of course, engaged

just now in switching a water snake into a beer bottle with which he proposes to ornament his temporary totem pole. Every time the wagons stop, up springs a tiny dance lodge, a tom-tom is improvised and Indian ki-yis revive the weary plain.

The girls like to press curious plants in books. Apropos of books I shudder to this day when I recall the difference between the reading planned for them and what they read. Very carefully I searched the shelves for a few choice volumes. One of Shakespeare's comedies. I would take plenty of time some rainy day to read it well, when they must like it—even the youngest; Ethics of the Dust went in, for I longed to have my dear daughter a follower of Ruskin, too. Besides it was such a little book. One of Dickens, Captain Chittenden's Yellowstone Park guide book, two or three recent Outlooks, a first year Latin in case a backward child wanted to study,—of such was my collection. Well the only book they opened was the Headless Horseman, which a chum handed the driver as we were starting. Up and down the line it went over and over.

Another dragon fell before our gallant cavalcade today, July 25th, and all are more or less shaky heroes in consequence. We forded Dinwoody, the ugliest tributary of Wind River. The water didn't flow quite over the horses backs, for they are big horses. Yet it wasn't deep water alone, but the swift mountain current and the slippery upsetting boulders washing along that made the ford so dangerous.

Eleven times we forded the Wind and its tributaries, then Dubois. Here between the Indian reservation and the forest reserve is a narrow strip of government land standing on end along the upper canyons of the Wind, where young settlers are trying to make homes. The best locations were taken up long ago, one of them by a ranchman named George B. West, said to be the original of the "Virginian." He wouldn't own up that he changed the babies, but did go so far as to say he was at that dance on the old Gallatin ranch. And Owen Wister has spent several seasons on West's ranch.

Dubois has the distinction of being farther from the railroad than any other post office in the United States, they say.

It is two hundred and fifty miles to Rawlins or Casper from here, and four hundred miles to Laramie.

The responsibility and anxiety of the long trip are laying hold of me, till I'm nearly overwhelmed. Four hundred miles from home, and only one letter!

What may have happened in all these weeks. Suppose a child should sicken. There's a man at home who would never forgive me should one of them be lost. Will the horses hold out? The food? Already two spokes are broken and wrapped together with baling wire. My bold driver says we shall go on if we have to drive into the park with every spoke bound up with baling wire. And the dangers anticipated did add a certain zest. "Give Ma something to fret about and she's happy," observed our twelve-year-old philosopher.

After the fords our problems narrowed to a question of food with the continental divide looming in the distance. How to cook enough for all those hungry children, where bread could not be bought, and still get ahead fifteen or twenty miles a day was a poser. The capacity of my oven was two tins of twelve biscuits each. These I filled three times at night, when darkness overtook me. That made seventy-two biscuits, three apiece every meal, but the boys wanted six and that was the problem. We caught a few fish, but saw no game from Lander on. We had gooseberry pie, all we wanted, and fresh strawberry short cake once. All grew tired of our staples—bacon, beans, corn, coffee, sardines, prunes, etc., and cold water biscuits. When the boys felt particularly cross and sarcastic they gloated aloud over the memory of Mrs. Dyer's cream biscuits. Yet it is only fair to add that keen appetites and inspiring scenery made the want of variety of food seem unimportant, even when the butter gave out.

The ninety miles from Dubois over the continental divide to Jackson's Hole was a continual surprise—the road was so good, smooth, hard, well graded—thanks to Captain Chittenden. The plain just gradually lifted up from Lander Valley

until it rested on the divide, two hundred miles away. The final spurt that took us over the pass wasn't so gradual. It was straight up.

But oh it is fine to climb a thousand feet and look about you! Then when you have mounted to 10,000 feet and gaze abroad over the crest of the continent, the Atlantic slope behind, the Pacific slope spreading before you, range after range with intervening valley, gorge, river, lake, with the Grand Teton gleaming over all in the distance—magnificent, inspiring—your soul is filled with exaltation.

And now the near approach from which we see the Tetons, here at Allen's ranch, with only Jackson's lake between—no foot hills to hide the view from base to peak, from avalanches to glacier, is a scene so majestic one stands spell bound before it.

The cloud effects are inexpressibly beautiful, but when sun and cloud together play among those lofty domes and pinnacles, even the babe takes off his hat in admiration.

I get the grandeur of it under stress. When they called me to see the clouds lift from the brow of Mount Moran I was piling up smoking hot butter milk pancakes. Later, as the sun shot his golden lances among the fleecy mass, and the woods echoed the children's hallelujahs I was up to my elbows in the wash tub making us spick and span for the park. So with a little sudsy shirt in my hand I'd run to see earth and heaven and morning meet in a burst of glory on Teton heights.



THE GRAND TETONS

CHAPTER IV

WE STAYED here over the day while Mrs. Allen baked bread for us. Twenty-one big, farmer's loaves I stowed away under the back seat in fifty-pound lard cans.

Miss Talbot, coming a week later, with the Coolidges, who live at the fort, and wishing to join us for the fun of camping out from Lander to Laramie said she traced us clear to the park as the "people with twenty loaves of bread."

We have picnicked so much along the way we must be behind the main body of tourists. We meet so many outfits returning, from Salt Lake, Idaho, Kansas, everywhere. Few have come so far as we, though we traveled two days with families from Jewell, Kansas, who would have gone before reaching home a thousand miles farther than we.

One of the men said he never had a vacation before and now he meant to have his fill. They intended to stay until the hunting season opened to get big game.

Many of the returning outfits had great four-horse freight wagons, loaded with bed springs, mattresses, chairs, tables, Easter bonnets, and a multitude of burdensome luxuries. "Burdensome," their careworn faces said plainly. Grateful we are to Stewart Edward White for his advice to "go light." And it is interesting to make one dish serve for six. By putting pillow cases inside gunny sacks we carried necessary clothing without much weight or waste of space. Grocery stores are never more than three days apart so why a mess wagon? We hauled just enough canned goods over the divide to last us to Moran, that is, Allen's ranch, where all good things were to be had, even butter.

I know one young man who made the trip in company with his mother, sister, sweetheart and others, but no larger party than ours, yet he had a regular caravan, a four-horse mess wagon, phaeton, buggy and horseman. We camped near them occasionally and saw how every night he had to be responsible for a dozen horses, see that they had good feed; and

it is no picnic to watch horses in heavy timber, for they break loose and wander off. Then he had to round them all up every morning, feed oats and drive a four-horse rig all day. I must add that he kept his temper and stood the ordeal so well that his sweetheart married him soon after his return to Lander. Being a newspaper man, maybe the hard work of the trip was play and rest and vacation to him. Seeing him and others working so hard for their pleasures, I was glad we had but a light comfortable spring wagon and only two horses. Of course the pony was never out of sight of the children.

Moran, almost the loveliest spot on earth, is named in honor of the painter who spent a good many summers here; so also is Mount Moran, the statliest Teton of all.

Mentioning Laramie we were immediately asked on all sides, "Do you know Will Owen? He climbed the Grand Teton! Nervy! Well no one around here would care to try it."

From here to the edge of the park, twenty-three miles, we passed several pleasant homes—abandoned. It is probable that as this is within the forest reserve, the government has encouraged residents to vacate their lands by exchanging them for something better.

As we cross the borders of the wonderland each step grows more enticing, and after the many years of waiting and the long, laborious journey, I demand much.

The shady avenues of young pines, lovely Moose Falls on Snake River, climbing the divide again into the Atlantic basin, the live beaver homes and haunts, enchanting Lewis falls and lake and river; the noble forests of a thousand years' growth and the pure, rich color of mountain flowers, all is satisfying. How much greater the delight of descending into Yellowstone valley!

The wonder and charm grew until, throwing care to the winds, yet with a firm grip on the pocket book, we yielded to a delicious abandon, sure that every anticipation would be realized.

Yet it is a pokerish kind of pleasure trying to enjoy the ravings of the demons from the bottomless pit at the "Thumb."

As for me I was kept busy counting the children. Everytime one moved I felt certain he would stumble into a boiling, wallowing vat of mud. That it was delicate rose, emerald green, or heavenly blue mud did not reassure me. The children only laughed. Even the youngest pertly informed me he had not come all the way to Yellowstone Park to fall into a mud hole. Still the horrid smells and awful groans and the gaping mouths clear to Hades aroused such emotions of terror that in sheer desperation I hurried over to the Lake. Playing with silver-tipped waves or silver-tipped bears was safe in comparison.

From here we telegraphed the anxious one and rested in the sweet peace that reigns over this corner of the park.

The children know "Wahb" and "Johnny Bear" by heart of course, so they eagerly followed the hotel guests along the little trail to the garbage glen to find if the Seton Thompson stories are true. They are all true. There was another little black Johnny Bear "who wanted to see." Another big lumbering Wahb, younger, maybe, but just as grizzly, and cinnamon bears and silver tips, growling and fighting over their food. I wasn't stampeded here as at the "Thumb" for a stout fence separated us from the ferocious monsters.

Refreshed and in fine spirits we started early down the Hayden valley, where we came in contact with the hard rules of the park. One of them is, that always four-horse stage coaches have the right-of-way, and you have to turn out so as to give them the safe side. That is, if you are on a steep grade you have to turn out on the precipice side, giving them the inside, no matter whether you are turning to right or left and no matter if you have eight people and they but two. We were obliged to turn out that morning for ten separate coaches. Sometimes there are twenty coaches going along fifteen minutes apart.

But we didn't mind. We were too elated to mind. We had only sixteen miles to go and wanted time to enjoy every beautiful, exquisite prospect. Professor Nelson told us before starting not to fish in Yellowstone Lake or River because the fish are diseased. He said that scientists from the Smithson-

ian Institution had made careful study and gave it as their opinion that excretions from pelicans, which swarm on the lake, and which fish devour, contain a parasitic growth that infects the fish.

As we drove along the river's edge there were pools and shallows in which we saw hundreds of fish looking bruised and sickly, even showing naked bones, yet swimming about. Presently we passed riffles and cascades among which road workmen were fishing. They said fish that could live in a cataract were not diseased. Mr. Turnbull having only a second-hand account at best was not greatly impressed with the sick fish story, so he and our young driver were soon pulling out fine big rainbow trout. When they had a dozen we went on to lunch in a cozy meadow, dotted with lovely blue fringed gentian, close by the river's edge, though just beyond we noticed a steaming and a smelling.

The small boys hardly took time to eat, for they wanted to catch big fish, too. After lunch Mr. Turnbull proceeded to examine the beautiful trout. There was a coil of worms in the flesh or entrails of every fish. Then I fled for the fishermen. They couldn't hear me call. I saw where their bare feet had gone around a patch of ground which appeared to be neither marsh nor sand bar—a crusty shiny, disagreeable place. I could cut across. Not looking so much where I stepped but keeping the boys in sight, my feet burned. I knew then what it means to be over a lake of fire and brimstone. Good sprinting brought me to safety. Then we investigated the awful roaring from the cliff above.

On the side of a hill there was a great black chasm, partly filled with black mud that angrily flopped and spluttered and moaned. Around on the other side of the hill was a cavern called the Devil's Cave. In it was a pool of boiling water which presently disappeared in the bowels of the hill, to reappear in a few moments, roaring and howling. There were other frightful mud geysers gaping like the jaws of Hades. I had walked on the crusted overflow. Again I fled fearing they would snap up my little people.

But the glory of Yellowstone Canyon speedily restored our nerves. Now are we most grandly repaid for every moment of weariness and anxiety of the journey, nearly six hundred miles long.

Tongue and pen and brush and camera are all inadequate to give a picture of the canyon, which for resplendent beauty in form and color stands unequaled, unique in the world. At Inspiration Point every soul was dumb with rapture. Even Spring Jaws, as they call Tad, had nothing to say. He too, was enchanted, lifted to the seventh heaven, as it were, so that only twice I think did he squirm outside the rail over the precipice. To see him so impressed was great relief to all of us. Oh it is wonderful to see a canyon so broad it is almost a valley, yet so deep you can not hear a sound of the rushing torrent below; so brilliant in all the colors of the rainbow your eyes cannot bear it long; so studded with nature's architecture you see a thousand ruins of cathedrals and coliseums, and at the head of all a waterfall over three hundred feet in depth. Remember Niagara is only one hundred sixty-five feet deep.

Of course we remained here a day or two, sight seeing, cooking, resting, awaiting a telegram. But it seemed sacrilegious to return to camp after that glorious gaze into nature's proudest wonderland and go baking beans, yet we had to have a change from Van Camp's. I wouldn't speak of it now only that is how we came to have a visit from a bear.

The beans were not done at bed time, so I put in pine knots, thinking they would be just right for breakfast. It was so hot the stove was outside. About midnight there was a great clatter of falling stove. Sure enough a bear had tipped it over trying to get my beans. He was trying so hard to work the combination of the oven door that he never noticed our excitement. Not until I threw things at him would he go away. On the whole, I presume, we would have been disappointed if one bear, at least, had not paid us a visit. We never thought of being afraid, but I used all my ingenuity in hiding bacon and sugar from prowling bears, every night.

Captain Chittenden built a magnificent cement bridge over the cascades, just above the falls. It was receiving finishing touches as we arrived on the scene. I thought at first it was a wooden bridge, but the wood was only a frame for concrete. Great masses of rock had been crushed in all sizes, in all directions. Immense floors for mixing cement were prepared. Then came workmen from every corner of the park—three hundred of them. Electric lights were strung and for seventy-two consecutive hours cement and concrete poured into those wooden forms held by strong steel cables. The wood will remain all winter and next summer there will appear a splendid concrete bridge over which tourists may cross to the far side of Yellowstone Canyon, and by that means reach the foot of the Lower fall. Those who have, through prodigious effort arrived at the foot say that no idea of the height is apparent to one standing at the brink. Of the three hundred ten feet, one-third is lost in spray.

CHAPTER V

WE SPENT the forenoon of the next day taking a last long look into the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone.

On our way back we found at the Canyon hotel our expected message: "Will meet you at Mammoth Hot Springs, August 8th."

Oh then we flew as fast as our faithful horses could plod, for August 8th is tomorrow and Mammoth thirty miles away.

It is love that makes the world go round after all. Beauty may exalt, but love vitalizes. The mere thought of seeing our beloved so soon lent wings to our feet and new life to our hopes and joys, so that surmounting the divide which separates Yellowstone from Norris basin was not so much work as a needed exercise for holding down our jubilation. The prospect of losing most of my responsibilities sent my spirits floating skyward.

We camped at Apollinaris Spring in a charming grove at the edge of a grassy glen. The very air seemed resonant with human life and presently the children discovered a large party of Wylie tourists camping in the grove beyond.

Soon after supper there was a great commotion. A big black bear came down the mountain, "out of the wilderness," for a drink of soda water.

Fifty young people instinct with life, with the adventure, the wonder, the romance, the joy of the trip, fell on the bear, who through years of practice, eluded them. Then they fell on our Mim as a promising diversion. Now Mim, like the bear, was raised in the west, and couldn't see the point in eastern dudes having fun at her expense, so she put on a bold front, though she was amusing to them. There she stood in cropped hair, short dress, dark blue long-sleeved apron, with a hole burned through the middle, showing a red duck suit beneath, and swinging a dish towel, for she had just left her work to join in the commotion.

"So you came to see the bear too." "Sure."

"How far have you come?"

"Six hundred miles, about." Not believing her they teased.

"Aren't you afraid to be so far from home?"

"Oh, we've been to the Pan-American." Still not believing her they said:

"And you'll be going to St. Louis next?"

"Of course."

"Well, we live in St. Louis. Be sure to call."

"Can't. It will keep us busy seeing curiosities *inside* the fair."

"Then where will you go?"

"Europe, I spose."

"But you can't go in a wagon."

"Oh Papa will round up an air ship by then."

"What grade are you in?"

"I'm not in any grade. I'm a prep in the University."

Everybody laughed. "And what do they do with a tot like you in the University?"

"The big prof. puts me in his pocket when I'm noisy, the little prof. hangs me on his watch chain for a charm and the middle sized—oh I must go do my dishes."

Off she dashed—a crowd following, who said, "We want to meet the mother of a little girl who can stand off a whole Wylie camp."

They were very pleasant people, mostly school teachers from Fort Dodge, Iowa, and vicinity and we spent a happy evening getting acquainted. As their coaches passed next morning they called "Good bye little watch charm."

We arrived in Mammoth five minutes ahead of the stage from the railway station at Gardner. How we rushed to make camp homey. The driver quickly unhitched and had the horses grazing; Daughter, Tom and Babe set the tent; Tad brought wood, Glad water, and Mim speedily had a roaring fire; while I popped my biscuits in the oven, sliced bacon, seasoned corn, opened a jar of jam and brought on the baked beans that were left, and set the coffee simmering.

Daughter watched the fire, Glad spread the tablecloth, Mim tidied the mess box and the boys put the bedding to air

in the hot sun. Then we had a moment to primp, wondering what Father would bring, for shoes and hats had seen hard service. Little Mim, sensing the hopelessness of primping said, "I wish he could bring me a new face."

But he never minded our weather beaten appearance, though we had "roughed it" for five weeks. We all looked good to him and the wonderful "springs" reflecting the joy of the occasion gleamed in rainbow tints.

Luncheon over, the strange formations soon attracted us. Pulpit Terrace, Jupiter Terrace, Liberty Cap, Devil's Kitchen are intensely interesting—all are wonderful. These terraces are fully three hundred feet above the town, but flowing toward the town. If I lived there I should be in constant fear that a fresh new boiling spring would spout in my cellar. The Meldrums are afraid of it I know, for a new hot spring recently appeared beside their fence.

The Meldrums have a handsome home of gray stone in a bower of vines and flowers. We had a good visit with them, but I believe that spring has whitened her hair. The children said it would be handy on wash day. She laughed saying, "Jack says all we need is a cow to start a dairy." Just the same she is nervous over that spring. One discerns at once what lay heaviest on Mr. Meldrum's mind.

Laramie people remember, of course, that he is "Judge" Meldrum. It is his business to punish those who damage the park. During our visit he would be talking away, asking about old-timers, then break in with, "Say Corthell, be sure to put out your camp fires while you are in the park." For a few minutes he would discuss political prospects and again burst out, "For heaven's sake Corthell, put out your fires." Then he asked about our trip, adding, "Whatever you do, Nellis, put out your fires."

Before leaving they took us to their garden, for he was as proud of his green peas as she of her English violets. Again he admonished us. And after we said goodbye at dusk, my husband trudging ahead with a gunny sack full of their good

green stuff over his shoulder, I looked back and heard faintly, from cupped hands, "Put out your camp fires."

It works great hardship on careless people who don't put out their fires, but think of the calamity to those noble forests a fire may cause. We have not seen all the wonders of the park—in fact we are just half way around, still we have reached the farthest limits and are six hundred miles from home.

Now a new spirit has entered camp. The business man has come to take his family home. We have to hurry. Oats are increased three-fold and three-fold our speed. Then ho! For the geysers!

But first I want to say I received five letters at Mammoth, one of them containing the news of Professor Knight's death. So my rejoicing was clouded with sorrow. Of all the people I know in Laramie, Professor Knight was the only one, except Mr. Ingham of the Boomerang, who believed I could take the trip, encouraged me in my plans, made me acquainted with the best roads, and the people I would pass, marked my map and gave me letters to his friends along the way. How I yearned to talk it all over with him on my return for no one else knows Wyoming as he knew it.

And now we must climb the hill from Mammoth, four miles long. But it is a fine smooth road of gentle, even grade and a magnificent view of snow capped peaks, peaceful valleys and age-old forests, from Golden Gate. While the park roads are smooth as city streets, still you go up or down, up to mountain heights, down to cool, dark canyons. As a matter of course there is no road in the world like it—a road 150 miles long that passes such variety of scenery—scenery so majestic, so wonderful, so beautiful, so horrible. Yellowstone Lake itself is three hundred feet higher than Laramie—7,450 feet—and several times going over divides we saw altitudes marked on mile posts over 9,000 feet.

By and by we are back in Norris basin, taking time to look at the Devil's Frying Pan and other steaming, sputtering curiosities. At the former spot was a guide board having several

notes in pencil beneath the sign addressed to his Satanic Majesty. One read, "Dear Devil: We called on you today and were right glad to find you out, whooping it up for the other sinners. Now when it comes our turn, please dear Devil, we don't want to boil in your cave or bake in your kitchen or sizzle in your frying pan—give us the dynamite route—sudden and not too hot."

The Black Growler, a hideous, shrieking, hissing monster, we admire for his titanic and Satanic power, but hastily pass on to cool, solid ground after a glance at the Hurricane, a mighty steam vent whose violent gusts are like the blast of a tempest. We camped in Gibbon meadow that night and fished in Gibbon river. The next morning we drove slowly through Gibbon canyon in order to admire the beauty of Gibbon falls. Then we climbed another divide so as to get down into Firehole Basin, where the "hot times" really are, as the name indicates.

We lunched on the Firehole river fully ten miles below the Lower Geyser, cool mountain brooks flowing into the river between, and yet the water was unnaturally warm.

We all went wading and were greatly fooled by the extraordinary clearness of the water. I'd guess it would come knee high, and find myself in up to the waist.

And now a word about the "good luck" that pursued us and stayed with us all the way from the breaking of the fifth wheel in Quealy's meadow. People call it luck. I like to call it Providence.

When we arrived in Lander the blacksmith told us that the boxes in the axles were worn out. He wondered that we got down Beaver Hill without accident. I knew the wheels wobbled badly, and that something was wrong, but there was nothing we could do except go on.

Once the oats gave out just as the horses had a hard climb before them. In gathering wood that morning the boys found a half sack of oats forgotten by a freighter. We lost our axe after the handle was broken, to find a good one in the very next camp.

We failed to reach Moran the day we wished, so stopped ten miles the near side on account of a drizzling rain lasting all night.

When we finally drove into Moran we found they had had a terrific hurricane the night before. The ground was strewn with broken branches hurled in all directions, and we would doubtless have been killed had we camped in the heavy timber there that night, instead of among the willows on Buffalo Creek.

The Wind River would have been higher to ford had we arrived earlier, the Dinwoody worse, had we come later.

As we drew up on the bank of Firehole River today, there was a steep little pitch from the road to the ground above—just a deep rut. The horses could not pull evenly as one stood above it, the other below, so a whiffletree snapped clear in two. That is to say “the new camp spirit” took chances that the boy driver and I never did. But good luck was with us this day, too. In fifteen minutes a big freight outfit came along having an extra whiffletree which they very kindly loaned us.

I have inserted this good luck story in here because I did not want to speak of the geysers, which come next, until I could have plenty of space for a full swing at them.

CHAPTER VI

THERE are only three important geyser systems in the world,—one in Iceland, one in New Zealand, one in Yellowstone Park, U. S. A., the latter being the most significant.

The general theory of a geyser is, that a long tube reaches down to a reservoir of water which is heated by rock—probably volcanic rock.

The pressure of the water rising in the tube, and the gathering steam cause an explosion, or play of the geyser, when the reservoir is emptied. It is, sooner or later, refilled from some underground river, becomes heated, then the explosion repeats.

You would naturally think when you had seen one geyser you had seen all. But there is as much variety in their form, action, attractiveness, as in the flowers and animals of the woods beyond. Some are natural fountains having bowls of rarest beauty; some build cones above a mound of rich lace work made of many-hued flint; some shoot straight, tall columns of water; some send up showers of dew drops. Some play independently and with the regularity of clock works; some always wait for their elders to spout first.

Of the unnumbered thousands of steam vents, only the more important can be mentioned. It is nothing there to see a dozen tiny threads of steam puffing up in the middle of the road, while if we had just one in Laramie we would quickly build a summer resort around it.

The first geyser we saw in action was the Fountain, one of the finest in the Lower Basin. It is on a hill commanding a splendid view of the whole valley, and spouted a beautiful column of water ten or fifteen minutes. But its dear, little neighbor, Clepsydra, which spouted immediately afterward, captured my heart. It sent up a sparkling shower of dew drops no higher than a man's head which in the bright sunshine resembled a lovely bush loaded with gems. One cannot understand the perfect transparency of the water until he realizes that every particle of animal, vegetable, mineral solids

held in solution in cold springs is here completely boiled out, steamed out and deposited long ago. To be sure there are pools so full of earthy substance, that the steam only evaporates and wastes trying to purify itself—then we have the Paint Pots which have been mixing their paints a thousand years.

The most noted of these is the Mammoth Paint Pot just across the road from the Fountain Geyser. It is a pit fifty feet across, full of rich, smooth, strawberry ice cream, which somehow bubbles up six or eight feet, then drops back into exquisite roses and tulips. Quite a band of material has formed about the rim in a path soft and springy and smooth. The barefoot boys were cantering around it in great glee when I called them away, fearing one might stumble in, where he would disappear instantly, and forever. "Oh mamma!" said Tad, "I never had so much barefooted fun in my life!"

The Great Fountain Geyser is a mile beyond the Fountain. It is considered the chief wonder of the Lower Basin, but as I didn't see it play, we'll go on to Middle Basin, where there's something doing all the time.

Here is the famous "Hell's Half Acre," a vast seething cauldron 350 feet long and 200 feet across, 20 feet deep, with cliff-like edges on all sides but one. On that side, protected from winter's cold, and always having more than summer's heat, we found a yellow flower growing. It must have been a tropical plant, but how did it get there?

Professor Nelson found a few tropical flowers in such situations also. This huge boiling cauldron is now known to be a geyser and is named Excelsior, but the name the old trappers gave it fits better—means more, but not too much. As a dynamic force it has no equal. Think of a body of water of such stupendous dimensions being hurled 200 feet in the air! Its last eruption occurred in 1888 when the volume of Firehole River was doubled. Captain Chittenden calls it a water volcano.

Five hundred feet west of Excelsior is Prismatic Lake, the largest, most beautiful spring in the whole region. Over the central bowl the water is a deep blue, changing to green

toward the margin: while the shallow edges are yellow, shading into orange. Outside the rim is a brilliant red deposit, fading into browns, grays, purples. It rests on a selfbuilt mound sloping gently in all directions.

Whenever the steam lifts so that the waters are visible, the play of colors is strikingly vivid. We were here when the sun was low so possibly the brilliant coloring was more dazzling than in midday.

Turquoise spring near by is a quiescent pool 100 feet across, remarkable for its lovely transparent blue. When Excelsior played the water in Turquoise sank ten feet and didn't recover its volume for a year. We made camp here just as quick as we could find a cool, safe spot, for we wanted the beauty of Prismatic Lake to sink deep, but unconsciously, the horror of "Hell's Half Acre" pressed deeper.

Up before sun the next morning such a wierd, ghostly spectacle met us. Apparently, smoke stacks and steam engines are sending their cloudy columns above the dark foliage in all directions—yet no cities, no factories, only the silence of the forest.

A big day lies before us, we know we are approaching the climax of the park's wonders. Old Faithful, "The Guardian of the Valley," will appear around the next bend.

As we turn the corner and the Upper Basin spreads before us we instinctively exclaim, "Dante's Inferno!" Here grouped, within a mile's space are the grandest, mightiest geysers in the world, and silent pools of scalding water, unequaled in beauty of form and delicacy of coloring. The entire valley is covered with a gray-white sepulchral deposit that is ghastly; clouds of vapor hang shroudlike above it; the earth trembles with a strange rumbling, the air is heavy with sulphur fumes and all vegetable life is extinct; though the forest presses like a dark fringe close around and emphasizes the ghastly look of death and destruction.

To be sure the other basins were similar, but this greater in degree—a culmination of it all, probably older than all.

The next thing to take the tourist's eye was the very appropriate nomenclature; Jewel Geyser, Biscuit Basin, Sapphire Pool, The Morning Glory, The Sponge, The Saw-mill, Grotto, Castle, Giant, Punchbowl, and beyond all at the head of the valley on the summit of a self-made mound on a hill, stands Old Faithful. Captain Chittenden says, "Any other geyser, any five other geysers could be erased from the list better than part with Old Faithful. The Giant, Giantess, Grand, Splendid, Excelsior have more powerful eruptions. The Bee Hive is more artistic. Great Fountain has a more wonderful formation. But Old Faithful partakes in a high degree of all these characteristics, and in addition has the invaluable quality of periodicity of action. It is in fact the most perfect of all known geysers. To it fell the honor of welcoming civilized man to this region. It was the first geyser named. In its eruption this geyser is very fascinating. Its graceful column rises with ease, to a height of 150 feet. The steam when carried laterally by a gentle breeze unfurls itself like an enormous flag from its watery standard.

With an average interval of sixty-five minutes it varies little either way. Night and day, winter and summer, seen and unseen, this tremendous fountain has been playing for untold ages.

Only in thousands of years can its lifetime be reckoned; for the visible work it has wrought at its present infinitely slow rate of progress, fairly appalls the inquirer who seeks to learn its real age.

Its daily work is enormous. The United States Geological Survey reports show the out-pour for an average eruption to be not less than 1,500,000 gallons, which gives 33,225,300 gallons per day.

"The combination of conditions by which the supply of heat and water and the form of the tube are so perfectly adapted to their work, that even a chronometer is scarcely more regular in its action, is one of the miracles of nature."

We camped across the road from Old Faithful and saw it play five times; but we shouldn't have stopped there, we were

taking chances. The park rules are very strict in regard to trespass on the formations, and thereby hangs a tale: But then, you would not expect such a large family to pass among a whole valley full of yawning gulfs and smiling springs and shooting geysers,—absorbed until they forgot time and place and circumstance—and not have something happen, would you? Since none of them fell in a hot spring what could matter?

Well, "The New Camp Spirit" got arrested! And that mattered a good deal.

The horses found feed scarce in the very heavy timber so came into the open where the road lay. Just across, on forbidden territory, was a bunch of grass that poor Star wanted. Now he didn't intend to swallow Old Faithful, or tramp on its flinty surroundings. We were busy spreading a good, hot dinner on the table cloth, so failed to notice Star quite quick enough. Presently we saw, and sent a boy to drive him back, but a soldier on horseback got ahead of him, and swearing like a trooper at boy and horse, he came thundering up saying, "Consider yourself under arrest, sir, and come with me!" In his very very sweetest manner and most persuasive tone, Mr. Corthell, asked, "May I finish my dinner first?" "Well, yes sir," somewhat mollified. And he sullenly stood in the back ground.

But dinner had lost its savor. This is an experience we had nowhere reckoned on. What if it means jail! Forgotten pocket books, broken wagons, floods, nothing, ever created such consternation as this. But we didn't fall into a panic. The chief victim was so placid, so serene, even sweetly content, that the example set composed the rest of us.

Before the walk to headquarters was over, sweetness won the day, so the fine was only two dollars when it might have been a hundred.

From this on the "New Camp Spirit" took no more chances and always put out his fires.

The drive from here to the "Thumb," nineteen miles is charming, the scenery is so beautiful and varied. In the deep

forest at the head of a gorge is Kepler Cascade, attractive in itself, but more noticeable to us because the older children remember the original Kepler Hoyt for whom it was named. He made the trip when only eleven years old with his father, Governor Hoyt, going through by pack train, fully twenty years ago.

Again we cross the Continental Divide and are on the Pacific slope eight or ten miles, whence we have a magnificent view of Shoshone Lake and Teton Mountains. It is said there is another geyser system on Shoshone Lake, second only to that on Firehole River, but this is one of the side trips made on horse back which we cannot take. So ascending the divide again we drop down the Atlantic slope toward Yellowstone Valley.

CHAPTER VII

THIS time the Paint Pots at the Thumb really are beautiful and fascinating. Here is where you pull a fish out of the lake and throw it into a boiling spring, without moving.

Further along the lakeside we had to stop an hour to mend the wagon. While waiting, the two little girls in red walked a short distance into the grove. Presently two graceful deer appeared out of the forest attracted by the red dresses. Softly, gently, step by step they advanced, Mrs. Deer, two paces in front of Mr. Deer, having the greater curiosity. I wonder? Everybody kept perfectly still. The dog was tied, then sat on by the boys. When within fifty feet of the girls, the deer paused, gazed long and curiously at the bright red, then as gently, quietly retreated into the forest.

As we are going home over the new Cody road which begins at the wooden bridge over the Yellowstone River at its head, or where the lake pours into the river, why of course, we must detour to the Canyon. I have quite a curiosity to know if Mud Volcano, Devil's Cave, etc., will appear so formidable to me as before. My husband thinks they are frightful—the most horrible sights he has met. I believe I put "Hell's Half Acre" first, in the list of my horrors, Black Growler second, and Mud Volcano third.

The next day, on our return from the Canyon we saw a small band of elk cross the road just in front of us. Soon after we pitched our tent on the bank of the lake close by the bridge, for tomorrow we plunge on into the unknown again. This road has been completed less than four weeks, and for ninety miles we expect to be deep in the mountain forest.

Now I hope no one will think I have even attempted the briefest description of the park's wonders—only lightly touched here and there. You must view it with your own eyes, that is the only way.

Such pines I never saw before, though born in a Wisconsin lumber camp. Had a child wandered two rods from the road he would have been lost. But there was another reason

why we must not become separated. The workmen at the Canyon, who had just finished this road, warned us that a rogue buffalo was loose in the forest.

Sometime before, the park authorities had taken a buffalo bull from the park herd and set him at liberty in these woods, hoping he would join the wild herds and make it possible to capture and domesticate them. Unfortunately they would have nothing to do with him, and the result was he went mad. The workmen said if we met him on a grade he might frighten the horses.

I wonder how many readers know what that means? I didn't at first. It means that roads in this region are mostly made roads; that is, a trail along a cliff is graded, then blasted from rock, and so you go up along the side of one mountain and down another.

The roads are so placed as to give you the finest views of the most interesting scenes; no matter how difficult the feat Captain Chittenden is equal to it. And in proportion as he receives appropriations from congress, he widens these wonderful road beds. You see how serious it would have been, had we met the rogue buffalo on a grade, with a precipice below on one side, and a tall cliff above on the other. Going up a tolerable grade where the sand was deep, we saw tracks showing he had jumped across the road not two hours before.

But our irrepressibles couldn't stay scared all the morning; the strawberries are thick, and spruce gum abundant, so progress is slow. Higher up, the brilliant mountain flowers claimed time and attention. Often as we mounted some bold prominence the pines stood away revealing the beautiful valley and lake of the Yellowstone surrounded by noble mountains in range after range, with the lofty Tetons in their cold splendor against the far horizon. The Alps of America! About it all the dark mantle of the impenetrable pine forest was spread.

Long before night we reached Sylvan Pass, and here we stop, to fish in Sylvan Lake, to climb Old Grizzly, or some bald peak, to pick and pick the lovely flowers.

The climbers can take to a tree should the buffalo show up; and the fishermen are on an island, reached by a raft; the flower hunters can watch from the corners of their eyes, then run to shelter; so I lean back and drink it all in, with a full heart. This is the crowning joy of the trip. The park swarmed with people. Wherever we pitched our tent, hundreds had camped before us, to say nothing of the crowded hotels and the Wylie tourists. But here in the very heart of the mountain wilderness,—surely we are the first white woman and children to go over the trail, to fish in Sylvan Lake, to climb "Old Grizzly" to camp in the sacred haunts of Wahb, once lord of the Wind River Range.

Here is the beginning of things upon the crest of these mighty mountains. Great rivers flowing to the sea have their sources here, in these everlasting snows. "This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlock." Think of it! One may admire a shining waterfall, a glorious cascade or series of them, and as his eyes follow up, up, he beholds the glacier feeding them!

On one side the depths of a gloomy canyon, a lake above, towering pines on every hand, exquisite flowers, vines, ferns at his feet, here and there a bald peak, rising over all. The wildness of it! Yonder nook is the very spot for a mountain lion, a savage or a grizzly. Oh, I had rather be here at this moment than anywhere else in the world, here where nature speaks with power and sublimity. It gives strength just to view such massive strength. It gives purpose, it preaches truth, this mighty stronghold of nature. But Buffalo Bill will put up a hotel, a stage line will go through, then good bye to nature's inspiration, when silks and diamonds and pompadoours strive to distract the attention.

At the Lake hotel I saw women in party silks and loaded with diamonds strutting out to the garbage glen to look at the bears. And the same parade the next day divided its time between admiring its own looks and the looks of the canyon.

... The biggest illustration of "grade" in the whole park region is the long hill at the beginning of Shoshone Canyon

just as you go over the divide. At the very head of the canyon there is a curious piece of road. Upon the bare granite ridge, separating the eastern and western slopes, there is a gap or gorge, filled in with broken bits of granite with not a particle of soil among them. There was no soil to be had for the road makers—nothing but granite. Poor Washakie never had a shoe on, and it was a slow job getting him over those sharp stones.

Over this troublesome ridge, the children had a snowball fight with their father in mid-August, and we began our descent of the long, winding grade, blasted from the rocky side of the mountain nearly the whole distance—the man says the hill is not over three miles long, but I say it's ten. It may not measure more than three in feet and miles, but there is so much to see and fear.

In places the road is only a tiny thread reaching around the brow of a cliff and in others the water pours from upper snows right on top of your wagon. You not only hear and see bridal veil falls, but you feel them—are in their midst, and it's all right—you want the sensation too, but altogether you'll find without indulging in much imagination the hill is ten miles long and it is a constant grade—not one level step, not one spot you can camp. Don't let night overtake you on that hill. I suppose that part of the road is since widened and the water spouts carried over the road.

This night we are nestled in a lovely meadow and between two lofty pines, with the brawling river across the meadow. The river started away up where the canyon began, in a hot sulphur spring, probably the very one in which "Wahb" cured his rheumatism. But plenty of cold streams have been flowing in, so a boy goes fishing, while the cooks prepare the fish caught in Sylvan Lake.

When supper was ready, I stepped down to the river to call the fisherman. It was then quite dusky, so I couldn't see him. The noisy waters prevented all hearing between us. Just then I heard a twig on the ground break, and a body move

very close to me, but it was not the boy. My only thought was, a mountain lion had gotten the boy and another was after me, so I went tearing into camp. Our guns had all been sealed since we first entered the park, except my husband's pistol which had been lying in his grip. Seizing this, he and I went up and down the river, calling, screaming for our boy. After an age of awful suspense and during an interval of our screeches, we heard a whistle, the sweetest whistle I ever heard. Just the same, it was an ideal spot for mountain lions to me, who didn't know that there was a soldiers' camp around the next bend. There is still a drive of thirty miles through this canyon, over the forest reserve, after we reach the line of the park at the soldier camp. Here our guns are unsealed, and now wouldn't we like to get a lion or bear! We are thankful though, just to get gooseberries. They are so thick along here that we stop the wagon, and in fifteen minutes have a four quart pail full. We never saw a raspberry on the whole trip, and so far have not seen or heard a rattlesnake. How much more comfort I could have had all these weeks, if only a little bird had told me at the start. Now it is time to begin fretting about the snakes we may see on our way home; but not today we are too high up yet. So for one more day, we greedily enjoy these forest depths, we who have lived so long on the Laramie Plains, and come so far over sandy wastes.

CHAPTER VIII

AND now as we get down out of the granite country, the sandstone peaks along the ranges on either side of the river present a strange appearance. It is as if magnificent figures and groups of marble statuary had been placed on these lofty pedestals. For miles and miles we enjoy them, and amuse ourselves interpreting each group as those of the Garden of the Gods at Manitou are named. Just here we discover which child had the most vivid imagination. Somehow the rest of us were not quick enough to see the life-like resemblance until he spoke.

"There's a picket squad," said he. Then we saw the soldiers plainly.

"There's Napoleon with his hands behind his back."

"There's an old hen and chickens. And oh, there's Aunt Polly Ann! Don't you see her, kids? She's at the door yelling at the boys to wipe their feet! Watch her jaw! See her little pug of hair. And her apron strings."

Oh yes, they could all see her and roared lustily the likeness was so good; but I fancied their father winced a little, at such free handling of Aunt Polly Ann.

The driver boy on Washakie has gone ahead to find a good camp, and presently comes galloping back and calls for the rifle, remarking as coolly and carelessly as his excitement would permit, "Guess I'll get a lion's skin for the hall floor." His father jumped into the game, too. "You go ahead with the rifle and I'll catch up with the shotgun and pistol." And the procession, for of course the small boys tagged, headed for the promontory which abutted the river with a made road along the cliff between. They must shoot some distance or run the risk of losing the animal by a long climb. "There he is." "I can see his eye." "I can see his ear twitch," thus the small men encouraged the big one, while the woods resounded with shot after shot, still they hadn't dislodged their lion which aroused some suspicion, so after a long detour to gain

a closer inspection they found a sinous yellow root cunningly wrapped around an old gray stump.

While the hunters were gone, we turned squaw and made camp, a familiar occupation nowadays.

We had great fun with the boy who saw the wooden lion's "ear twitch," but probably it was only the same imagination taking him a little farther afield than when he beheld Aunt Polly Ann in the wind-blown rock.

We reluctantly pass the last out-post of Shoshone canyon to find ourselves in the Big Horn Basin, a rolling plain so vast that the splendid range of Big Horn Mountains bounding it on the farther side, looks like a narrow, vapory streak on the horizon, probably a hundred miles away.

Here lies the village of Marquette surrounded by many fine ranches; and here we found that everybody knew and loved Bruce Kinney, who had preached for them and recently organized a Sunday School there.

We were told that by keeping to the left of a certain black spot on a mountain—all the while looking for a dim, old road through a pasture, and so on and so forth, we might cut across the country, leave out Cody and save ten or fifteen miles. But it would be taking chances,—the road might be washed out, for since the railway reached Cody this road had been abandoned—maybe fenced. And there! A little while ago I said we stopped taking chances. I don't believe we did, when I look back more carefully—except where there were swell-head soldiers. Anyhow we went on our way, guided partly by the black spot, into the dim old road. Then we stopped awhile to let the horses feed on the good range, and to have supper. But it is no place to camp, so on we go.

Night overtook us ten miles from water. For two hours we plunged along the dim road in inky darkness down dreadful pitches where every hand had to hold back, over ditches where we all but lifted the wagon, up hills so steep that even the youngest pushed with might and main, each one listening, looking for water. A light spot yonder proves to be only an alkali bed, and all the ditches are dry. We dare not camp for

the horses will break any fastening to go in search of water. As we get down out of the roughest country some of the children ride, and so with the driver boy walking in front, literally feeling the way, father driving, mother leading the pony behind, daughter soothing the tired little ones, all at times singing not so cheerfully, but cherrily as they could to encourage one another, and the drooping team, eventually we splashed into Sage Creek, and in fifteen minutes we were comfortably housed and bedded and laughing over the night's incidents.

Good water became the problem from this time on, till we reached the pure mountain springs bordering our own Laramie Plains.

From Sage Creek to Meeteetse must be nearly forty miles; and it is thirty miles to any water, except a small spring at the head of a gulch, a half a mile from the road. Here we lunched, washed our dishes and filled our water jug from two pails of water.

While the older ones were resting and dozing when work was over at the noon hour, the small boys were investigating the country, of course. Now there were no hot springs, no buffalo, no precipice, no lake or quicksand, no snakes—you would think one might feel reasonably safe in letting those boys roam at will and build tepees of quaking asp. Yet one boy came leading another out of the quaking asp grove plastered in soft, sticky, blue mud up to his waist—he was that near to getting mired all over.

Don't ask me how I got the boy clean on a tin-cup full of water.

Once before I had thought they were safely gathering pebbles and shells on a sand bar at the edge of Jackson's Lake in Moran, when they came to me white as ghosts. One of them had been drawn in up to his armpits by the terrible quicksand. They had just presence of mind enough to push him an oar, by means of which he slowly wiggled loose.

We saw a curious sight when, after much difficulty, we had climbed out of the gulch to the top of the upland range. There spreading over a vast, high plain, were little hollows

close together, and sodded over, a hundred, I don't know but five hundred of them, buffalo wallows, they were. And just before reaching Meeteetse that night, the road wound around a wonderful scene in the bad lands—wind-blown weather-beaten rocks in most fantastic forms suggestive of gnome land, fairyland. Oh, how I longed for the camera, which had just about reached Mr. Meldrum's on its tour of the Park behind us.

At Meeteetse we heard Bruce Kinney, our Baptist missionary, spoken of again with admiration and affection.

From here to Thermopolis the road is good, but the grass and water are nothing to brag of late in August. Gooseberry creek has no gooseberries, and Grass creek no grass, Owl creek no owls, and Cottonwood creek few cottonwoods. When we reach Thermopolis, the city (to be) of hot springs we find that the Wind River has here become the Big Horn. It is Wind River above the canyon, Big Horn below. The springs have many curative properties, it is said, and there are numerous baths. One is a sulphur spring, and close beside it is an iron spring, and there are other mineral salts in other springs. They are only about forty feet above the river so there is not much chance for the wonderful terrace displays of Mammoth.

The village electric light plant is run by water, however, derived from the forty foot fall from the springs into the river.

We followed the Big Horn down six miles and forded where it was wide and shallow. Then began the real trials of the journey, that is, what we had anticipated would be the real trial and that was, to travel a hundred and fifty miles with water very poor and very scant. We laid in a big stock of lemons at Thermopolis, having an idea that their acid would act as an antidote to the alkali we would be obliged to drink. Then we watered the horses, filled the jug and drank and drank at a fine cold well beside the Big Horn, and began the climb of the old Bridger trail to Casper, across a real desert of alkali.

The first twenty-five miles is as smooth a piece of road as there is in the country—good enough to be in the park.

I imagine one could fly coming down it, we are going up so rapidly. Now this is the day we celebrate. Our brave driver boy is sixteen years old today, and since we cannot have a party up here on top of a mountain, three hundred miles from home (more or less), we'll have to do the next best thing, and give him all the green corn he wants, which is the only treat the country affords. So we stop long enough to get up a sumptuous dinner for campers so long on the trail.

Roast mutton, good bread and butter, green corn, fresh radishes and cucumbers, potatoes in their bursted jackets and currant jelly. We had green corn for dessert, and then some. But we kept on going up, hoping when we reached the highest spring of Kirby creek, it would not be so strong of alkali. Vain hope. However, good luck was with us here, too. It rained all night, turned cool, and then we were not thirsty. Getting over the divide the next morning, we found the storm had been very severe, that we had been on the edge of it only—some more good luck—all except the sticky gumbo.

For thirty miles we plodded through it, reaching Lost Cabin early in the afternoon. I never can express my feelings concerning the country I saw that day. Such desolation! Such glaring, white plains and hills. The misery of it—the hopelessness. You look the blistering plain over and over, trying to think out a way to redeem it from alkali—then the upland beyond, all in gleaming white. Then the hills, that is the most despairing feature—that the hills on the horizon should all be covered with the hated coating of white. Can it be that alkali may yet become a useful commodity? Or is there some precious gift to mankind lying deep in its bed here? What fortune and blessing await the genius who can find good in alkali.

The streams, swollen with last night's flood, flow angry red rivers which would kill the horses, should they drink. But no danger. Like folks, they are not thirsty before such prospects. You can almost count the blades of grass as you drive along. There are forest crowned mountains to the left, the only object to rest the eye. In the center of this weary

landscape is Lost Cabin, like an oasis in a desert. When I heard the name first I supposed vaguely that somebody's lost cabin had been found and that was what we should find.

What we actually found was a forty thousand dollar villa, surrounded by a beautiful lawn, and a village, a trim little school house, store, hotel, livery stable, etc. J. B. Okie, a big sheep man, is the owner. I am glad some one has faith in the country and can prosper here. Surely no cattle man would hate the sheep that can pick a living from this land. The freshet last night destroyed or impaired their water works and only a red poison creek flows by. We suffer from thirst here worse than anywhere else, but while ice and lemons hold out, we won't give up the prairie schooner.

CHAPTER IX

AS AFORESAID, Lost Cabin is an oasis in a desert, so we have three days more of the dreary alkali before reaching Casper. Ten miles east of Lost Cabin is a stage station, called Round Hill, where the main road from Casper forks, one branch going to Thermopolis, the other to Lander. It is about seventy miles to either place, and farther still to Casper, yet every drop of water they drink here has to be hauled from one of those distant points.

A deep well was dug recently where horses do drink, but it is not good for them even.

We met people from these different stage stations on their way to Thermopolis for baths "to rinse the alkali out of their systems," they said. The rule of our camp was, three grumbles bars lemonade, our solace. The efforts the children made to avoid complaints were quite amusing. One night when we had barely pitched camp after a long hard day's ride in the heat, Baben, very hungry, impatient exclaimed, "Dog gone. Why haven't you got supper rea-ra-ra-ra, boom de ay!" It was his third grumble, but he got his lemonade. Wolton, the next station, is appropriately named judging from the wool-warehouse-look of the place.

Upon a bleak hill beyond Wolton the second day from Casper, we stopped to lunch—for the feed is the kind horses like best. Our tarpaulins and blankets were spread out in the hot sun, and while their elders rested, the children explored the resources of the hill. They had found an Indian arrow head, and were just going to find some moss agates, when the dreadful thing appeared that had haunted my dreams for a thousand miles. Why do women have such fear and horror of a snake?

To guard against possible snake bites, I had bought the small boys strong, sturdy boots which, of course they discarded as soon as the novelty wore off and the sun was hot.

The warning rattle came but six inches from a bare foot. The owner of the foot thought it was a grasshopper, so paid no attention. An older child nearby, thought it was a bee, an-

other thought it was paper rustling in the wind. Not so the boy with the lively imagination. He heard the warning note; though it was the first time in his life, and snatched little Bare-foot out of danger not an instant too soon.

At such a time all my instincts would have been to run, but none of the children showed the least fear. They stood their ground and pelted the snake to death with stones. We saw only three rattlesnakes all summer, though this one was more than enough.

Along here we pass the head waters, upper sandbars is more correct, of the Powder River in a wonderful canyon. The rest of the family said it resembled the Yellowstone. When I scolded because they didn't wake me up, they said they shook and shook, and screamed and yelled, but there was no such thing as rousing me; all of which goes to show that the law business at the Laramie end of the route presses too hard. But when there was a long trying hill to get out and walk up, I never failed them but once on the whole journey; and the hills between here and the park are numberless as the hairs of your head. Some of the children throw it up to me yet, that they worked their passage to the Yellowstone "hoofing it."

On the Laramie Plains, in Shirley Basin, along the Sweet-water, we rarely shot a rabbit, sage chickens and grouse were none too good. In fact our young hunter aspired to antelope. But here in this sheep eaten barrenness a jack rabbit becomes the greatest delicacy.

One night just before reaching Lander we camped below a saloon called, "Do Drop In." At Lost Cabin we camped behind a saloon named in rich euphemism, "The Dew Drop Inn." How is that for a name in a thirsty desert where dew drops are as rare as nectarines? At Casper creek we camped in front of a saloon, too tired to notice whether it had a name.

The observation would intrude that where water was lacking whiskey flowed freely, though probably not free. I presume the money spent for liquor would put up good water works and redeem the desert in part.

We were a sorry looking, jaded, delapidated party that drove into Casper, though a watermelon went a long ways toward reviving us.

Melons, letters, newspapers, I didn't believe it was in us to respond so readily even to these influences; yet we were nervous and watchful, dreading to meet friends.

While the good man circulated around doing business at the bank, getting provisions, talking politics, etc., the rest sat in the covered wagon debating the point as to which one looked, or could be made to look, respectable enough to go after our letters. Glad had burned too big a hole in her skirt; Mim had tipped a frying pan of bacon in her lap; daughter's last clean waist was the color of Casper mud; my shoes were impossible; Baben had a sore toe, and the other boys were off color, too, somehow. Daughter at last borrowed a hat of Tum, a ribbon of Mim, an overcoat of the driver and sallied forth, both hands in her pockets and swinging her coat to make it look like a girl's raglan, never minding the scorching heat.

There had been a cloud burst here a few hours before, when we had been back at Casper Creek in a refreshing shower; and things looked too sloppy for camping here, so with some good Casper mutton, a case of fruit, besides melons and other things as much as our wagon would hold, we traveled on down to a bend in the river, four miles below for the night. The children were eager to see how Washakie would behave at the sight of his first engine. The big horses reared and plunged, but Washakie was simply curious like a child. And the first time he saw an automobile, he ran up and began to smell it, inquisitive as a ten-year-old boy to see what made it go.

Next day we drove down the Platte River twenty-five miles to Glenrock, and then some.

The road was never near the river, hayland, pasture lands, have been fenced in next to the river and the road is left high and dry. It doesn't seem right that a great river like the Platte should be taken away from the public at a twenty-five-mile stretch, by one individual, does it? Anyhow you mustn't be

thirsty during these twenty-five miles for you'll have a time getting to water.

At Glenrock the children visited a coal mine, an experience strange and interesting to them. Ten miles below Glenrock we took chances again, leaving the main road to avoid going farther east, and striking off into the mountains of the Box Elder creek. This time we got lost in a multitude of gates and ditches and high hills, and finally wandered into a snug little meadow nestling among the mountains. There was a comfortable farm house and most hospitable people. Next morning they loaded our wagon with the choicest vegetables, such as no one could buy along the way we have come, and such as we are hungry for—string beans, new potatoes, etc. We, in turn, divided with them our fruits, game and newspapers. It took us pretty much all day to get out of this tiny paradise, on to the mountain heights into the LaPrele country; but we succeeded, and camped at Point of Rocks that night; and maybe we didn't enjoy the pure, ice-cold mountain spring, and the grouse!

Next day coming through LaBonte Canyon, we got a big gunny sack full of sage chickens, the first time we'd had enough since leaving the Sweetwater. I don't know whether this is too big a story to tell, but it is true. We had dinner at noon that day, and we fried seven of those chickens, every one as big as a farm yard fowl. We covered the stove with skillets, then made a camp fire of pine knots, put over it a kettle with bacon and butter in the bottom and filled with chicken. In a few minutes all was deliciously brown, tender, savory, and with string beans, green corn, radishes and hot biscuits and currant jam gave us a dinner fit for the most strenuous President. Even the dog scorned bacon that day.

Next morning we were royally entertained in Mr. Laughlin's home on the North Laramie, at a ten o'clock breakfast, and the day after, we drove into our own back yard.

We were gone sixty days, and altogether traveled a distance of twelve hundred miles, having every sort of experience

imaginable, except a snow storm and a runaway, and those we had the day before we left home.

We stood the journey well, (even the horses) and never, never had such a wonderful, satisfactory summer. Not a moment palled. One must love the life though to say that, must crave the out-doors and thrive on it so well that the sand will never be too deep, the waters too high, or the way too long.

Apropos of floods, the last time I was in Cheyenne, January, 1905, was during the late stock convention. There I met George B. West, said to be the original of the "Virginian." His ranch is near Dubois, and he told me that Dinwoody and other dangerous fords are now bridged. Captain Chittenden has been given generous appropriations in very recent years which he has put to good use along these roads. Mr. West told me that in the early days, when the road from Dubois to Washakie was only a trail and there were no bridges, once a year only, ranchmen went after supplies. If some poor fellow delayed, so as to be caught in deep snow or high water, it went hard with him.

Then I asked Mr. West if he really changed the babies as in the story. But, like the Virginian, he is very modest in recounting his own exploits. He did go so far as to admit that he attended that particular dance, and that it occurred at the old Gallatin ranch.

Our trip is one that any family in Wyoming can take, or any family in the west. It is not expensive. Our outfit is as good as ever, and aside from that, the cost was not over twenty-five dollars apiece. As for Washakie he is worth his weight in gold every day to the children.

He cost only fifteen dollars and we have been offered fifty for him a good many times.

The trip does not call for a great amount of courage, or I must have failed as the following story proves: We were sitting on the benches at the brink of Lower Yellowstone falls when a party of young ladies, librarians from Wisconsin, joined us. Soon they knew that we were mother and children come five hundred miles overland. "Oh, that is the ideal way

to travel, but without a man—weren't you afraid? How dared you?" In the full flush of achievement I answered loftily, "You shouldn't take counsel of your fears."

"That is so," said one, rebuked.

"Nothing yet was ever accomplished by fear."

The next afternoon we were driving through a canyon along the Virginia Cascades. I had an outside seat. Now it always makes me deathly sick to look over a precipice—to be over one, why I could faint. So I asked the driver to draw away from the brink a trifle,—then the children burst forth, "Mamma you're a fraud. You told that lady not to take counsel of fear, and you are afraid all the time. You were afraid we'd be drowned in the Platte, that snakes would bite us, that Indians would get us, that we'd fall in a hot spring. We'd have got that bobcat on the cliff if you hadn't been afraid. Just mention one thing you are not afraid of."

Now if a timid mother with a wagon load of children (oldest boy not sixteen) can take the trip, anybody can, and everybody ought to, for its compensations are boundless to old and young. I think our small boys got more out of it than I did, although it opened up a new heaven and a new earth to me. But a twelve-year-old boy can bend every force in nature, every resource, to his own uses. When the wagon stopped, up sprang a miniature dance lodge, a tom-tom was improvised and the peaceful twilight made lively with Indian kiyis. They made friends with barking prairie dogs, and chirping chipmunks until I thought of Hiawatha and his "chickens." The road to Moran after the rain was rich black leaf mold, so Mrs. Turnbull playfully called our youngsters, "Blackfeet." They were delighted, refusing to ride and have their feet obscured. They trotted the whole ten miles along side of the wagon. The bleakest hill offered a chance for an arrow point, the tiniest ditch—a chance for a dam.

They played in the Platte, the Sweetwater, the Popo-Agie, the Wind, the Snake, the Yellowstone, Lewis, Firehole, Shoshone, Gray Bull, Big Horn and Laramie rivers. They have

seen their native state as no books can teach it, and came home in the finest health with ravenous appetites.

We had with us, fifteen dollars worth of medicine and never took a dose. The witch hazel got spilled, so did the ammonia. They emptied out the camphor to put specimens in, I had a notion to give the quinine to those sick Indians, what was left, when the children were tired of mailing horned toads. The boys plastered the arnica salve on the pony and the dog ate up the cold cream. We divided our eight bottles of mosquito dope among ranchmen where we stopped, and broke the bottle of squills.

Our wagon created some amusement on our arrival for it bore the inscription: "July 4, Park or Bust!" on one side, and "Sept. 1, Park and Busted!" on the other.

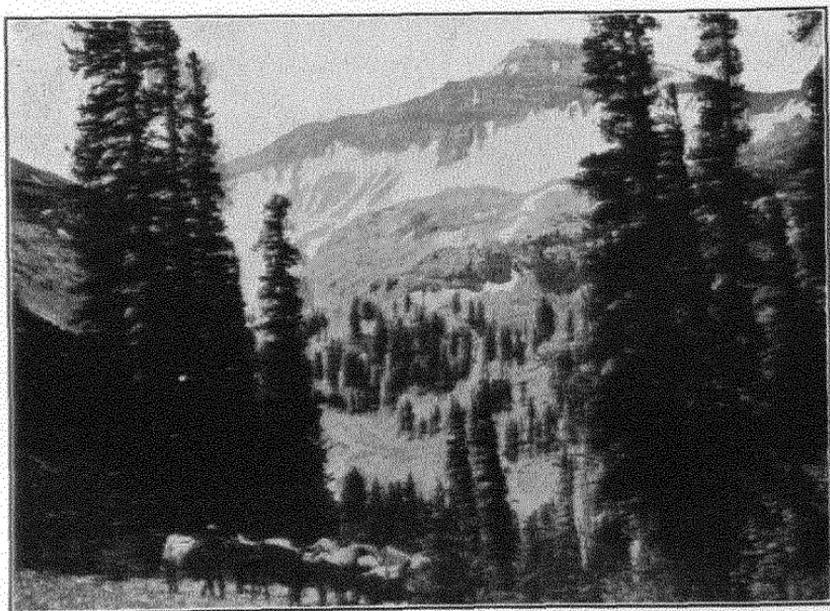
We will have lifelong memories of the grandest scenes the Rocky Mountains can produce.

Oh, for more Yellowstones to conquer.

THE END



SITE OF THE ALCOVA DAM



THE HEAD OF THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER

Twenty-Four Years After

LAST June, twenty-four years after the trip you have been reading about, the Hills—five children and mother, who was “daughter” in the former group, left Laramie for Yellowstone Park in a Franklin car. The first party talked about “going light” in a wagon. No one knows how to “go light” until he has tried touring in a car.

This lovely June day nobody thought of turning back for a fresh start; though one may run into, and out of a storm very quickly, in a car.

Instead of going via Shirley Basin, we kept on the main highways, for we are not hunting horse feed, gas stations interested us more.

On the Lincoln Highway to Rawlins, going around Elk Mountain, a storm threatened, so Bobby drove even faster than he dared, to avoid the mud of a freshly made grade.

Elk Mountain is a majestic sight, with storm clouds rearing and darkening behind it.

We reached Parco by four o'clock, but didn't escape the rain entirely. Here the sun was shining on its broad pavements, gray buildings and cool fountain in the public square. Parco is new and looks as if a town of the southwest had been picked up and set down in one piece on the plains. There was the distressing scar of the terrible explosion of stills, leaving ragged, twisted beams of steel and cement burned black, to tell the story of the awful tragedy.

A few minutes later we drove into Rawlins, finding the approach up and down amid bare, black dismal hills. Once in the town many improvements were seen going on. It was a busy place and we felt quite at home getting our supplies of gas and fruit for the next day.

Driving out we passed the state penitentiary with high walls enclosing green lawns, and looking more like a refuge from the weary waste than a prison. We left the Lincoln highway at Rawlins, to go northwest through the Red Desert, which was muddy and uncertain after a heavy rain. The fill-

ing stations, few and far between are the only signs of civilization, except an occasional band of sheep, with herder, or a car going the other way. Once we passed men working the road with graders. We were trying to reach the Sweetwater for camp, because I remembered it to be clean, sandy, with good water. Toward sundown we gave up the river and resolved to stop in the first dry spot we came to, and finally spread our tarpaulins on a hill top near the road.

We built a smudge of green sage to drive off mosquitoes, and a fine, blazing fire for cooking from the gnarled old sage wood. Our first night out was comfortable, even joyous, and we had come on our way farther than my mother did in a week. We must do better than that, though. We must do in two weeks what it took the other group two months to do, for Bobby and Johnny can be gone only between planting and haying. Next morning we were up at six, keeping an eye out for woodticks, though knowing we couldn't dodge 'em with our beds spread over sand and sagebrush.

How the children enjoyed getting breakfast in the open! Not a soul in miles, how they whooped and cheered! We hustled with our housekeeping, however, so as to have more time at the river. Twice, startled antelope near the road raced away toward the hills.

By ten the river showed its shining thread across the valley below. As we came up the children scrambled out to play in the water, a treat of which Rocky Mountain children have all too little. What water there is in the mountains is usually too cold to play in, but this is not Snowy Range—it is Sweetwater valley. We realized a little how the pioneers of seventy years ago felt on approaching this river and why they called it the Sweetwater.

For the next hour or so, we had an up and down and winding road before arriving at Beaver Hill, which I dreaded even as my mother before me, but Bobby shifted into low on the first dip and Johnny held the gear there and they saw everything on both sides and far ahead. It was a long slow road down, but we were glad we were going down and not

up in the steepest places; although the boys said we could have made it of course.

The erosion of the vast cut in the limestone and sand makes a beautiful scene for the layman, and an interesting one for the geologist.

Many more bare hills brought us to the fertile Lander Valley, green and cultivated; with a firm road all the way. The farmers were cutting alfalfa. I had remembered Lander as a pleasant village all these years, because of the river that flows through it, the Popo-Agie. The inhabitants stress the second syllable—Po-PO-ah-zhee.

The children were eager to see Indians first, though I wanted to explore the Lander Sinks which we couldn't do on the other trip. We went on out to the reservation, hoping to see a Sun Dance, but no such luck this time. We could see tents in a big camp, but no way to get there. As we turned a corner, to go back to town, Johnny saw a sign pointing along a narrow, muddy road to Sacajawea's grave. We decided to take a chance and drove along for several miles, apparently getting nowhere. An Indian boy on a pony, directed us to a distant hill and said "Two, tree mile," and on we plowed, through the mud. After more corners and worse roads we came to a forsaken looking grave yard, with an abandoned cabin fenced in with it. There were rocks with clumps of wild grass, sparse and dry. There were many graves, some with iron bedsteads around them, some with wood head boards and paper flowers, or branches of trees stuck in the ground with bright colored scarfs waving in the wind. Diligent search revealed a square gray cement monument with Sacajawea's name on it.

We didn't go over to the Indian camp, as they were leaving, getting ready to go to Lander for the Fourth of July celebration.

By the middle of the afternoon we got around to the Lander Sinks, where we were to camp our second night out. This is where the Popo-Agie river flows into the side of a

mountain to emerge seeping out across the canyon, under the road several hundred yards farther down.

The children looked at the wonderful sight a few minutes, then began playing in the moist sand, which was just right for sand houses, barns, garages and fences, and forts.

When we went down to take a final look the next morning, the water had risen a foot and washed the sand village away.

That morning we drove through the farming district, around Riverton, which was an alkali plain twenty-five years ago; then on north to Shoshone and Thermopolis, where we had a hot swim in the Sulphur Spring. A good place to relax. We spent the night in Basin, because we couldn't find a place to camp outside. This was our first night in a regular auto camp, so we were curious to see what the ways of the people are. It was also our first experience in cooking with gas. The talk everywhere was, "How many miles?" "How many flat tires," and so on. People going east camped beside people going west, and they were all just folks, that one meets every where.

I found too, right here, that, if we were not to become a nuisance in such close quarters to neighbors, the big boys mustn't tease the little ones but must help me keep them serene and gentle.

Early the next morning we went through Greybull and marvelled at such excellent paving in so small a town. Later we learned that mud and dust are unusually bad there. Besides, Greybull was once a flourishing oil town and in its palmy days built greatly for the future. Let us hope, not in vain. We arrived in Cody before noon, and found there would be a big Fourth of July celebration, and dedication of Buffalo Bill's museum.

The boys were told they couldn't shoot firecrackers in the park, so insisted on staying over in Cody. Two big camps were filled with tourists from every state in the union. There was every make of car, every kind of tent, forty kinds of cooking devices and people of almost every nationality one ever heard of, settled down inside of a square mile. One could sit

in the door of his tent and be entertained all day long. And so far as I saw every body was amiable, except a lady in the tent next ours, who told our Blink to clear out back to his own quarters or she would give him a kick in the pants. Blink was seven, and her nephew, sixteen, had been baiting him, leading him on.

The museum was to be dedicated at sundown by Senator Kendrick, Governor Emerson, several millionaire friends from the east and other people interested, so, I went up to see it. A cowboy taxi driver was showing some eastern society women around and I heard him tell them about the Buffalo Bill monument at the edge of town. Gertrude Payne Whitney, who made the design, first sent out sketches of a polo player on a polo pony, at which the cowboys laughed in derision. Whereupon the president of the Campbell Soup Company sent a cowboy, with a cowpony to New York to be her models for six months. The splendid statue, now in place, is the result.

The rodeo started out with a big band and parade and plenty of wild horses and Indians the next afternoon, but a downpour in the middle of the performance scattered the crowd back to town and camp, all the red neckerchiefs wilted and dripping wet.

We headed up Shoshone canyon on the morning of the fifth, wound around the side of the canyon through several tunnels in the rock up a steep hill to the dam. So many cars were following, as many more coming down to be met, that it was rather breath-taking, to find a place to stop. On top of that, while I was getting out of the car to get hold of Blink and Sally before they could run out on the dam, a government agent of some kind shoved in between us saying, "Here, madam, wouldn't you like to look at some pictures of the dam?"

"No!" I shouted. "I want to see the dam." By that time five-year-old Sallykin was out in the middle, leaning over the rail and perfectly at home.

Blink and I saw it from the bank. Next we went on up the canyon, past the reservoir, where the river has backed up the valley for seven miles, noticing particularly the tall needle like dark red and brown igneous rock formations that occur all along from there on to Tower Falls.

Sylvan Pass was so beautiful, but everyone of us would have enjoyed it more walking along the precipice. Bobby laughed at my fears as he drove, but I held down his speed as sternly as I could, encouraged by a sickly, sinking feeling inside. All the children were interested in the place where the road goes under itself, and walked up so they would be sure not to miss anything.

The drive was lovely on past Sylvan Lake and the meadow and through the tall pines to Yellowstone Lake. We looked for the big boat, that used to be there, but it was gone, and after trying to impress them with the fact that it is next to the highest big lake in the world we hunted up a garage, got all our flat tires repaired, bought groceries and continued our journey to the canyon, past the mud geysers and down Hayden valley along the river. The geysers which were deep, black hideous holes half full of growling mud twenty years ago, are now full of boiling water.

Two bear cubs stood up beside the road having their pictures taken by a dozen kodaks. The river was high, muddy and swift, and I was glad we were not to camp near it or the lake. I seem to have inherited my mother's fears after all.

We reached the canyon by five, and were soon spread out for the night's camp. The only place level enough for beds was so worn off we spread the Denver Post around before unrolling tarpaulins.

I had a sick headache. The boys all helped prepare a good supper, and looked after Blink and Sally, but when they had cleared up and washed the dishes away they went to see the falls.

Toward dark I began to feel uneasy, but before it was pitch dark Johnny and Ross returned with the small ones, so there was only Bobby to worry about. I knew he could take

care of himself and that he wouldn't do anything foolish, but I couldn't be comfortable until he came into camp between nine and ten. He had been up and down the 498 steps at the Lower Falls!

In the morning we drove to Artist Point and then to Inspiration Point. All felt the wonder and beauty, so that no one said a word. The immensity and gorgeous color overwhelmed them. Presently they saw an osprey dive to the river, bring up a fish and carry it to its nest on a high rocky spire standing in the middle of the canyon. That was an exciting moment.

Soon after noon we came to Tower Falls. The children took a look from the side of the canyon, then hurried down the winding path to see the falls from below. By that time it was getting hot. We went past needle rocks and rock columns and made a detour to see the petrified tree. We climbed all afternoon. The road was rough and dusty, the day was hot, the engine was hot—we were hot and tired.

When we crossed the bridge over the Gardiner River we could see Mammoth Hot Springs, with a winding road between us. Once in camp, tent pitched; water, wood and fire ready, the boys stole off for a swim, while little Sally and I got supper.

Next morning the older boys packed the car—all the heavy stuff, then they went for a seven mile hike with a ranger and his party to see and hear about the formations at the Springs. The rest of us drove up the hill and walked the path over the "formation." I was surprised to see so many springs dried up and crumbling away to dirty gray dust, that had been running over and gleaming in lovely colors when I saw them before. As we walked along there was an uneasy feeling that hot water might bubble up anywhere, but there was nothing beautiful to see, comparable to the visit a quarter of a century ago. We went down the Devil's Kitchen, which appealed to the venturesome spirit of the children, and back by Angel Spring which was running a little. By the road a few more over flowed in yellow and orange.

At noon we were on our way to the Lower Geyser Basin, through beautiful woods; with towering peaks beyond. We stopped at Obsidian Cliff to gather specimens, and tucked 'em away in tomato cans.

While lunching at Norris Basin the boys ran about freely, past forbidding signs, which helped to increase my watchfulness at more dangerous points later. It was spooky business trying to see, no matter how carefully one watched his step. There were unexpected holes of hot water and fissures big enough to drop into.

The Mammoth Paint Pots had changed too. They were fenced in, but were no longer pink or green or lavender mud, which bubbled up into rose like forms. Now there was just gray muddy water having a smell of brimstone. All these changes gave me a feeling of uncertainty wherever I walked. That heat had gone somewhere and could burst out in the middle of the road. Would it?

About five we arrived at Old Faithful and went into camp with four hundred other cars. This was the center of human activity in the Park. In the evening the head ranger gave talks about the bears, while the crowd watched them eat the day's garbage. Another ranger sat with his gun ready for an emergency. The brown bears had a peaceful meal until old grizzly came lumbering out of the woods. The feed lot was his from then on. One evening two deer appeared in the opening, and even the ranger, who was talking, stopped, wondering what would happen. It was something he had never seen before. A great many bears died during the hibernation last year, because of the long, hard winter and late spring. After dark another ranger gave a talk around a bonfire on the history and geology of the park. When he finished the band struck up out by the formation and a movie began at the Lodge. Spot lights were thrown on Old Faithful as it played, and dancing went on into the night.

Thousands of people were quartered in the Inn, the Lodge, the camps and the auto grounds. New building was going on to accommodate still larger crowds next year.

Next morning rangers took groups over the basin and explained the formations. Our boys were everywhere, listening and watching. Ross saw Old Faithful play eleven times. Bobby found a swimming pool when he came in from the hot morning hike. Blink and Sally were lost and found several times. Johnny was quiet but he didn't miss anything, and each night we bought two Denver Posts to spread under our beds.

We hated to leave Old Faithful—the children had waited hours for the Giant to play. It was reported imminent, while people from Utah, California, Ohio and other states had stationed themselves in relays for two days and nights to see it, but it went off at two in the morning, so most of them missed it. It is said to go twice as high as Old Faithful.

We were anxious to get on, and I was more than eager to be away from here where a misstep could be so serious, the chances being multiplied by five for me. We bought cookies for bears we might meet and took the road to the "Thumb." When we came to the bear haunt several other cars were already there and the bears were so busy catching food thrown to them that we tossed our cookies unnoticed and drove on.

At the Thumb we found handsomer Paints Pots, but the formation was dangerous to walk over, the most risky place of all, close by the lake. Like my mother, I kept counting the children and was glad to get away from there also.

The road south had been open only two or three days, so we were very pleased to have a nice big Lincoln bus ahead of us through the mud holes and high snow banks.

Ralph Herron let us out of the Park, and told us that Bob Walton had let us in. (Students of the University.)

On the way to Moran we crossed the Snake River several times. We stopped at Moran for gas and groceries, then went on to Jenny Lake.

Passing Jackson Lake we met another car in a narrow spot and our outer wheels eased over the edge in the weeds and down eighteen inches or more. We all fell out on the upper side in our haste to avoid a plunge into the lake.

The man in the other car observed our plight and stopped. Then he and Bobby went back to Moran, a mile or so, for help. They brought a garage man, who hooked on our front axle with chains, while the rest of us lined up on a tow rope, tied over the top to keep the car from going over when it moved. In a few moments we were as level as ever, and on our way again.

It was four o'clock when we reached Jenny Lake. The children all went down to wade, throw pebbles and skip stones. They came back just long enough to eat, then bolted for the water again. When I joined them later, Bobby was gone to explore the south end of the lake. Near dusk we heard and saw a tiny motor boat crossing the lake over at the foot of the mountain. At dark I shooed the four up the bank and to bed, and wondered why Bobby didn't come, if he was lost, or whether he went swimming and got cramps from melting snow water, and a dozen other horrors I conjured up.

But when he came long after nine he said he had run that motor boat clear across the lake. It may not be the first time he ever saw one, but it certainly was the first time he ever touched a motor boat, and the water was 1,500 feet deep by the cliff. The engine had run out of gas and the other boy was hunting for a can to fill the tank. But if you don't have to worry about children, Jenny Lake is one of the most beautiful, inspiring bits of scenery you can imagine.

The Tetons rise straight up from the water and evidently 1,500 feet of them goes straight down under the water. We watched the sun set behind them and saw cascades, waterfalls, even avalanches falling down the sides of these mighty mountains. They would be thrilling to explore.

Sunday morning we left for some where nearer home. We didn't worry as to which road we took just so it was in the direction of Laramie. We crossed Menor's Ferry, and stocked up at the first grocery and filling station. There we learned that the bridge over the Gros Ventre had been washed out by the landslide above Kelly, making it doubtful whether we could cross.

I wanted to take the children to see the landslide but it was a long way up to the mountain and back, besides we had a bad detour ahead. So we decided to give up the landslide and get the detour over with at once. We didn't like to anticipate it all day, and somehow the urge to get on had gotten hold of us. We left a lot of interesting things undone just because of that driving something that keeps one on the main road, making as many miles a day as possible.

About ten, after we had already gone over miles and miles of rough road, rocky, rutty, sidling, with steep pitches and hills, I relieved Bobby at the wheel. In less than half an hour I was stalled in the middle of a stream, trying to shift to low and the poor boy had to wake up to get us out. He did a lot of hard mountain driving for a fifteen-year-old. When he had extricated us and we were on a better road I took the wheel again to go to Wilson. Now presently we passed a filling station, which looked like just a filling station, taking a nice fine road to the right that wound up around a hill. I kept on going serenely enough, glad that Bobby was getting a little rest. Pretty soon I realized we were climbing a mountain, but kept on going. After awhile I stopped to cool the engine, and to wonder, "Why this mountain?" while going to Wilson. There was no chance to turn back. The mountain was so steep by this time that the road wound back and forth where we could see several turns at once. It looked as if it reached to the sky, and our engine was lacking in pep. We stopped to change our oil. The road in front was so steep that the crank case had a nice incline to drain it. A Pierce Arrow came down the mountain as carefully as we were going up. When we finally got to the top on a level stretch of road we were so glad to be up where we could go in high again that we whizzed past all the signs and started down the other side merrily, still thinking we were going to Wilson, although a queer road to travel. We went down three miles just as steep as the three we had climbed. There we met a truck driver who needed a tire pumped and while we hooked on with our engine pump we asked him how far it was to Wilson. "Wilson," he said,

"you've just come from Wilson. You are headed for Victor, Idaho!" "Is there any other way back?" "Back over the mountain pass is all." "Is there no other way back into Wyoming?" "Around by Pocatello." That meant hundreds of miles out of our way, so we cut our watermelon, ate our sandwiches and went back over the Teton Pass again.

This time we stopped on top to look around. There lay the whole Gros Ventre valley, showing the awful waste and damage of the flood. Without the unpleasantness, this view must be magnificent—well worth the climb to see. Wilson was the filling station that was "just a filling station."

We crossed the valley, where big operations were going on, rebuilding roads and bridges, and went through the hills to Hoback Canyon. We realized we were in a beautiful country and ought to take time to enjoy it, but the road was narrow, with steep pitches and with cars to be met. There, too, spring floods had left their mark. In one place the road had fallen into the river, so that what we saw was a road we had to creep along over with just a glimpse now and then across the river at a fine wall of colored rock, abundant foliage, and a new, wider road in construction.

It was a big relief to emerge. The rest of the afternoon we went through rolling country, with Pinedale as our objective. We could see a storm coming up, and hoped to make camp ahead of it, but failed. We crawled slowly through the Pinedale camp ground, just at dark, looking in vain for a dry spot to spread our beds. There were two boys trying to dry bedding by a fire. They had a Ford bug with a little lean-to. They had come from Kansas and had been on the road three days with out sleep trying to find a dry place, and this night they thought they had gotten away from the rain. In the rain we pitched our tent, in the rain we ate a cold supper, in the rain we unrolled our beds and went to sleep. In the rain we ate breakfast and drove on the next morning. But when we came upon the hills the rain stopped. That day we had the finest driving of the whole trip, the road is so good from Pinedale to Rock Springs, and, being Monday morning, little traffic. We enjoyed the view of prosperous farms around Eden Valley.

We had intended to see one of the famous coal mines of Rock Springs, but that demon "Urge," let us get gas and food, read "Slovensky Dom" and another sign or two in that town that shelters people of forty nationalities, then drove us back on the Lincoln Highway, toward Rawlins.

We tried to eat lunch by the roadside. It can't be done on the Lincoln Highway in July.

The road was like a washboard all the way to Rawlins. The way to feel it least is to go fast; so we raced a freight train for several miles. We were glad to come into Rawlins from the west, through the residential part of the town. It changed our first impression entirely. They are more ambitious than Laramie about paving. Between Rawlins and Parco we met a great many cars. It was supper time and many who work in Parco live in Rawlins.

We determined to go home over Snowy Range, so we turned off to Saratoga, where we spent the night, encouraged by two flat tires and a sick boy.

Bobby still felt wobbly in the morning, so I drove until we got high up on the range.

By that time he felt better and brought us over the new road that had just been cleared of snow for President Gray's party. At the worst turn before we got to Silver Lake, a Ford, loaded ten feet high with enormous cans, swung around the corner, with us on the outside. My heart jumped into my throat, and back where it belonged the next instant for the Ford vanished, leaving us intact.

That night we slept on our own mountain cabin ground. The cabin wasn't there then, but is now. Everybody relaxed. John Hill had been there and pitched a tent for us, the nearest thing to home.

The next afternoon we came down from Snowy Range to Laramie, arriving a few hours before the two weeks were up.

Sally is expected to tell, twenty-five years hence, how she took her children to the Park in her aeroplane in just half my time.

(THE END)