

Philetus W. Norris, energetic pioneer, perpetual showman, and second superintendent of the park.



Harry Yount, the park's first "gamekeeper."

One of the first needs was more thorough exploration. During the more than two decades following its establishment, a number of expeditions traversed much of the park and added greatly to the general store of knowledge. Especially notable were the elaborate Hayden Expedition of 1872 and a series of military explorations of the park later in the same decade. In 1883 an impressive bevy of scientists and celebrities escorted President Chester A. Arthur during what was more a pleasure trip than an exploration. By the early 1890's the park was well mapped, most of its features had been recorded, and it had even been penetrated during the bitter winters.

But the emerging park soon faced a new set of problems. Squatters had already moved in, and vandals and poachers preyed on its natural wealth. No congressional appropriation provided for protection or administration.

The Secretary of the Interior did, however, appoint a superintendent. In May 1872 this honor fell to Nathaniel P. Langford, member of the Washburn Expedition and advocate of the Yellowstone Park Act. Receiving no salary, he had to earn his living elsewhere and entered the park only twice during his 5 years in office, once in the train of the 1872 Hayden Expedition and again in 1874 to evict a particularly egregious squatter. When he was there, his task was made more difficult by the lack of statutory protection for wildlife and other natural features.

Because there were no appropriations for administration or improved access, the park remained inaccessible to all but the hardest travelers. Some of the visitors who did make their way to the neglected paradise displayed a marked propensity to go about, according to an observer, "with shovel and axe, chopping and hacking and prying up great pieces of the most ornamental work they could find." In 1874

Early abuse of Yellowstone's wildlife. The elk in the photograph below were brought down to help feed the 1871 Hayden Expedition. Thirty years later buffalo were confined near Mammoth so that the visitors could see them with little effort.





**The blockhouse, long called Old Fort
Yellowstone, built by Superintendent Norris
at Mammoth for park headquarters.**

Jack Baronett foresaw the attraction the region would hold for others, and in 1871 he built the first bridge across the Yellowstone to capitalize on traffic into the area.

These photographs show (top) the original bridge built in 1871, and (below) the Army's reconstruction after the Nez Perce had destroyed the first bridge.



a Montana newspaper queried: "What has the Government done to render this national elephant approachable and attractive since its adoption as one of the nation's pets? Nothing." Langford complained, "Our Government, having adopted it, should foster it and render it accessible to the people of all lands, who in future time will come in crowds to visit it."

Political pressure stemming partly from accusations of neglect of duty forced Langford's removal from the superintendency in April 1877. He was replaced by Philetus W. Norris, a hyper-energetic pioneer of quite a different stamp. Shortly after taking office, Norris became the regular recipient of an annual salary and appropriations "to protect, preserve, and improve the Park." Bringing skill and industry to the task, he constructed numerous physical improvements, built a monumental "blockhouse" on Capitol Hill at Mammoth Hot Springs for use as park headquarters, hired the first "gamekeeper" (Harry Yount, an experienced frontiersman), and waged a difficult campaign against poachers and vandals. Much of the primitive road system he laid out still endures as part of the Grand Loop. Through ceaseless exploration and identification of the physical features, Norris added immensely to the geographical knowledge of the park. In this effort he left a prominent legacy, for among the names he liberally bestowed on the landscape, his own appeared frequently. One visitor felt he was "simply paying a visit to 'Norris' Park." Another caustically suggested:

Take the Norris wagon road and follow down the Norris fork of the Firehole River to the Norris Canyon of the Norris Obsidian Mountain; then go on to Mount Norris, on the summit of which you find . . . the Norris Blowout, and at its northerly base the Norris Basin and Park. Further on you will come to the Norris Geyser plateau, and must not fail to see Geyser Norris.

Despite the physical improvements he made in the park and his contributions to scientific knowledge, Norris fell victim to political machinations and was removed from his post in February 1882. As the ax fell, a Montana newspaper lamented:

We are led to infer that Peterfunk Windy Norris' cake is dough; in other words he has gone where the woodbine twineth; or, to speak plainly, he has received the grand bounce. It is extremely sad . . . We shall never look upon [his] like again.

The removal of Norris was indicative of Yellowstone's plight. During its formative years, the park was fought over by interests that for political or financial reasons hoped to claim it as a prize and control it totally. Without legal protection against such exploitation or against poaching and vandalism, the park suffered greatly during its first two decades. An active and conscientious, if abrasive, superintendent like Norris was unable to fully protect the park. After his dismissal, promoters of schemes to build railroads and toll roads in the park and to monopolize accommodations usually blocked the appointment of capable superintendents and harassed any who showed signs of honestly striving for the benefit of the park. A succession of powerless and mediocre superintendents took office. Of one of them it was remarked:

It need only be said that his administration was throughout characterized by a weakness and inefficiency which brought the Park to the lowest ebb of its fortunes, and drew forth the severe condemnation of visitors and public officials alike.

It should be pointed out, however, that the national park was a totally new invention. No one had experience in the administration of such a preserve, and a long period of trial and

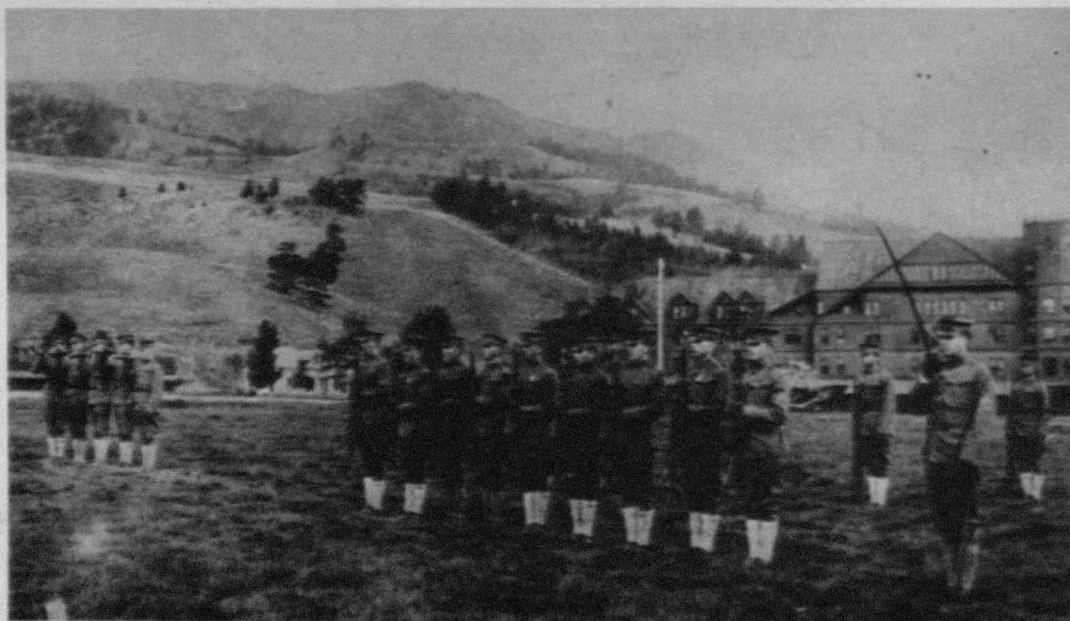
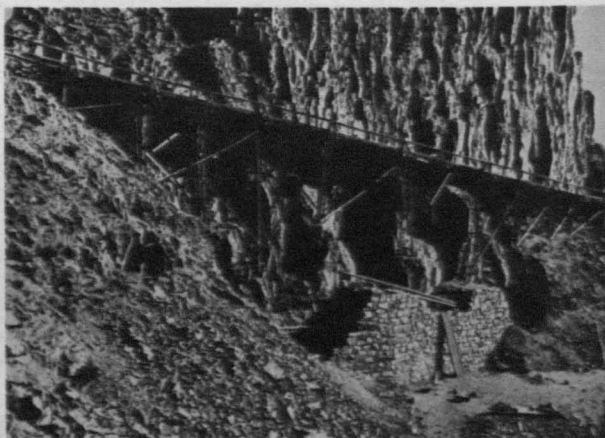


Capt. Hiram M. Chittenden, 1900.

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Off-duty soldiers pass the time at the Canyon Soldier Station, 1906.



**The first bridge at the Golden Gate,
built by the Army in 1884.**





An Army ski patrol sets out from Yancey's cabin.

While the Army administered Yellowstone, visitors were treated every day to the spectacle of troops on parade. This platoon is drilling at Fort Yellowstone.

error was bound to follow its establishment. The legal responsibilities of the Government were not fully recognized, for it was commonly believed that the public could best be served and the park best be protected by concessioners. Yet it was difficult to distinguish the honest concessioner from the exploiter, to determine what kind of legal protection would best serve the common good, and to identify those human activities detrimental to the park. The isolation of Yellowstone compounded these handicaps. Although some visitors were destructive and a few rapacious exploiters wielded enormous influence, the Government was honestly striving to find the proper course in a new enterprise. Fortunately, most early visitors restricted their activities to the peaceful enjoyment of Yellowstone's wonders.

Attempts were made in the early 1880's to bring law and order to Yellowstone. A body of 10 assistant superintendents was created to act as a police force. Described by some observers as "notoriously inefficient if not positively corrupt" and scorned as "rabbit catchers" by Montana newspapers, they failed to check the rising tide of destruction and the slaughter of game. For 2 years the laws of Wyoming Territory were extended into the park, but the practice of enforcement that allowed "informers" and magistrates to split the fines degraded the hoped-for protection almost to the level of extortion. After the repeal of the act authorizing such "protection" was announced in March 1886, the obviously defenseless park attracted a new plague of poachers, squatters, woodcutters, vandals, and firebugs.

The inability of the superintendents to protect the park appeared to be a failure to perform their duty, and in 1886 Congress refused to appropriate money for such ineffective administration. Since no superintendent was willing to serve without pay, Yellowstone now lacked even



Horace M. Albright, 1922.



**One of the first naturalists at
Yellowstone, 1929.**

the pretense of protection.

This circumstance proved fortunate, for the Secretary of the Interior, under authority previously given by the Congress, called on the Secretary of War for assistance. After August 20, 1886, Yellowstone came under the care of men not obliged to clamor for the job, and whose careers depended on performance—soldiers of the U.S. Army.

Military administration greatly benefited Yellowstone. Regulations were revised and conspicuously posted around the park, and patrols enforced them constantly. For the protection of visitors, as well as park features, detachments guarded the major attractions. No law spelled out offenses, but the Army handled problems effectively by evicting troublemakers and forbidding their return. Cavalry, better suited than infantry to patrol its vastness, usually guarded the park.

When appropriations for improvements increased, the Corps of Engineers lent its talents to converting the primitive road network into a system of roads and trails that in basic outline still endures. The soldier who left the greatest mark on Yellowstone was one of the engineers, Hiram M. Chittenden. He not only supervised much of its development and constructed the great arch at the northern entrance, but also wrote the first history of the park.

Army headquarters was at Mammoth Hot Springs, first in Camp Sheridan and after the 1890's in Fort Yellowstone, which still houses the park headquarters. A scattering of "soldier stations" around the park served as subposts. One survives today at Norris.

The most persistent menace to the park came from poachers. Although these intruders never killed any defender of the park—there was only one shoot-out with poachers in more than 30 years—their ceaseless attempts to make petty gains from the wildlife threatened to exter-

minate some animals. In 1894, soldiers arrested a man named Ed Howell for slaughtering bison and took him to Mammoth. The presence there of Emerson Hough, a prominent journalist, helped to generate national interest in the problem. Within 2 months Congress had acted, and the National Park Protective Act (Lacey Act) became law, finally providing teeth for the protection of Yellowstone's treasures. Howell entered the park later that year to continue his bloody pastime. Appropriately, he became the first person arrested and punished under the new law.

The Army compiled an admirable record during its three decades of administration. But something more than competent protection was needed. Running a park was not the Army's usual line of work. The troops could protect the park and ensure access, but they could not fully satisfy the visitor's desire for knowledge. Moreover, each of the 14 other national parks established during this period was separately administered, resulting in uneven management, inefficiency, and a great lack of direction.

It was generally agreed by 1916 that the national parks needed coordinated administration by professionals attuned to the special requirements of such preserves. The creation of the National Park Service that year eventually gave the parks their own force of trained men who were ordered by the Congress "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

A Park Service ranger force, including several veterans of Army service in the park, assumed responsibility for Yellowstone in 1918. Protection was complicated now by the growing number of visitors that toured the park in automobiles. The influx of cars meant that in time a significant

part of the ranger force spent as much effort on controlling traffic as on protecting natural features. Increasingly sophisticated techniques and approaches were called for.

The appointment of Horace M. Albright to the post of superintendent in 1919 portended a broader approach to the management of the park than just protection of its features. Serving simultaneously in that office and as assistant to Stephen T. Mather, the Director of the National Park Service, Albright established a tradition of thoughtful administration that gave vitality and direction to the management of Yellowstone for decades. In 1929 he succeeded Mather as Director.

An innovation that the new Park Service brought to Yellowstone was "interpretation." Professional naturalists were hired to perform research and use the results of their study to give campfire talks or conduct nature walks for the public. Trailside museums, gifts of the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Foundation, supplemented these personal services. Eventually, as the needs of the public grew, programs became more sophisticated and went beyond merely explaining the natural features of Yellowstone. The naturalists now sought to interpret the complex web of life and the role of man in the natural order.

But the greatest contribution of the Park Service was a sense of mission that viewed a national park as an entity valuable for its own sake. This attitude signaled that the new protectors of Yellowstone would not function merely as caretakers, but would see that the park was managed and defended according to the best principles of natural conservation. During the 1920's and early 1930's the park's boundaries were adjusted to conform more closely with natural topographic features. Lands were also added to protect petrified tree deposits and increase the winter grazing range of elk and other



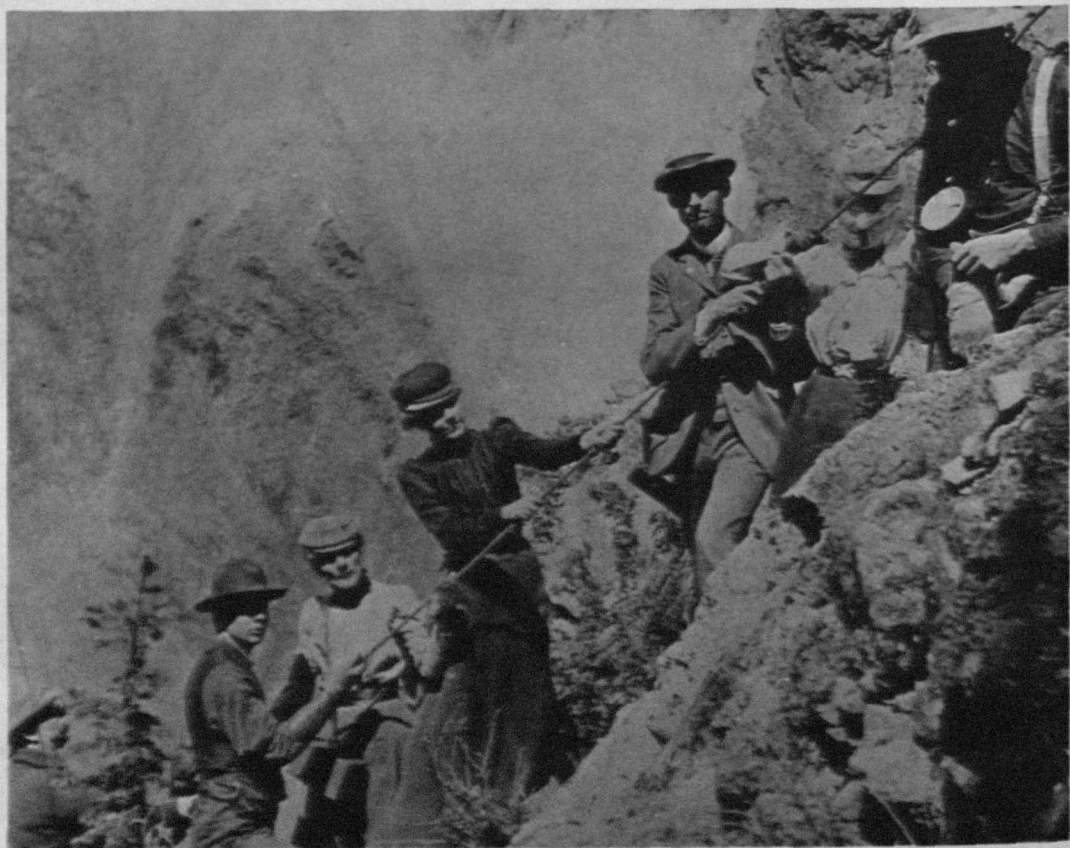
Hot baths in Yellowstone. Primitive bathhouses, such as McCartney's at Mammoth (shown above in the 1870's), eventually gave way to more elaborate accommodations like the Old Faithful Swimming Pool .



Uncle Tom Richardson always served a good picnic to visitors who hiked into the canyon.



Descending into the canyon by way of "Uncle Tom's Trail," 1904. These hikers are wearing the typical sporting attire of the day.





A soldier explains how it works, 1903.



This well-dressed angler tries his luck from the "Fishing Cone" at West Thumb in 1904.

wildlife. An offshoot of the boundary revision campaign was the establishment of Grand Teton National Park to protect the magnificent Teton Range—a movement in which the superintendent of Yellowstone, Horace Albright, played a crucial role. During the same period the Park Service helped to marshal the advocates of conservation to prevent the impoundment of Yellowstone's waters for irrigation and hydroelectric projects—reminding the Nation that Yellowstone's founders considered its wonders so special that they should be forever preserved from exploitation.

Over the years a wide range of knowledge and new understanding were brought to the management of the park. More sophisticated views of wildlife and forest management helped ensure the perpetuation of the natural environment. A deeper understanding of the park's ecology in turn influenced the course of physical development, which was charted to minimize the impact of a large number of visitors on the environment while affording them the maximum opportunity to appreciate the Yellowstone wilderness.

Touring the park

The experience of tourists in Yellowstone before the days of the family automobile was quite unlike that of modern visitors. The natural features that have always attracted people to the park appear much the same today, but the manner of traveling to the park and making the Grand Tour in the early days would now seem utterly foreign. "The old Yellowstone—the Yellowstone of the pioneer and the explorer—is a thing of the past," wrote Chittenden after automobiles gained free access in 1915.

To the survivors, now grown old, of the romantic era of the park who reveled in the luxury of "new" things, who really felt as they wandered through this fascinating region that they were treading virgin soil, who traveled on foot or horseback and slept only in tents or beneath the open sky—to them the park means something which it does not mean to the present-day visitor. And that is why these old-timers as a rule have ceased to visit the park. The change saddens them, and they prefer to see the region as it exists in memory rather than in its modern reality.

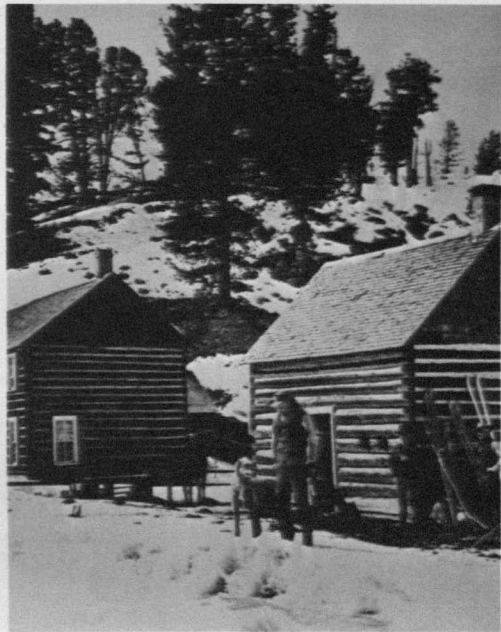
One of the greatest attractions of old Yellowstone was the opportunity to bathe in the hot springs. In a day when a hot bath was a luxury and people were less sophisticated about their medical needs, hot mineral baths were popularly believed to have curative powers—not to mention the simple pleasure of soaking in hot water. Hot springs around the world enjoyed long careers as "spas" for the well-to-do and resorts for health seekers. And it was the hot waters of Yellowstone that attracted many of its first pleasure-seekers. In July 1872, while the second Hayden Expedition was exploring the park, a crowd of at least 50 people enjoyed the waters of Mammoth Hot Springs and the delights of James McCartney's hotel—really a log shack—and ramshackle bathhouse—in actuality a set of flimsy tents sheltering water-filled hollows in the ground. Gen. John Gibbon patronized the establishment in 1872 and left a record of this peculiar form of pleasure:

Already, these different bathhouses have established a local reputation with reference to their curative qualities. Should you require parboiling for the rheumatism, take No. 1; if a less degree of heat will suit your disease, and you do not care to lose all your cuticle, take No. 2. Not being possessed of any disease I chose No. 3, and took one bath—no more.

McCartney's facilities became somewhat more comfortable, then passed from the scene, but other such resorts appeared throughout the park. Bathhouse enterprises, offering springs of various temperatures and presumed medicinal powers, sprouted in the several thermal areas. They enjoyed a brisk business well into the 20th century, when changing modes of leisure reduced their popularity.

Fewer than 500 people a year came to Yellowstone before 1877, but thereafter the number of visitors increased steadily. Getting there in the first few years was a great problem. Tourists either transported themselves or patronized one or more of the intermittent transportation enterprises that carted them from Montana towns to the park. Once in the park they were on their own, finding sustenance during the early years only from a few concessioners or squatters who provided rude fare and minimal sleeping accommodations. Some early tourists were wealthy aristocrats, including a few titled Europeans who came well prepared to tour in grand style. But most of the earlier visitors were frontier people accustomed to roughing it—and they had to.

During the 1880's a visit to Yellowstone became easier. Access improved as the Northern Pacific Railroad reached Gardiner, on the north edge of the park. The Bozeman Toll Road Company, later known as the Yankee Jim Toll Road in honor of its colorful owner, also facilitated travel. The railroads, particularly the Northern Pacific, took an increasing interest in the tourist business of Yellowstone and were the financial angels of concessioner operations. After the early 1880's tourists could step down from a Northern Pacific train, and as part of a ticket package visit the prominent features of the park. Yellowstone acquired a number of the large, gaudy hotels popular as resorts in that day. Stage-coaches took visitors on tours of the park, usually on a 5-day schedule. For the man with money,



Uncle John Yancey, with his ever-present dog, poses with guests in front of his Pleasant Valley Hotel in 1887.



During the Grand Tour, the stages stopped at places like Larry's Lunch Station at Norris.

Those who declined the opulent grand hotels could stay in one of the park's tent camps, as this group did in 1895.



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Another load of tourists arrives at Mammoth,
1904.

The *Zillah* was one of the first of the
many tour boats that have plied Yellowstone Lake.





Yellowstone soon became a rewarding and enjoyable place for a vacation.

Yellowstone was not yet a park for all of the people. Because of the expense of transportation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the travel industry in general was patronized mainly by the upper middle class—the affluent leaders of the industrial revolution. People accustomed to spending summers in Europe or at rich resorts like Saratoga Springs, N.Y., were the principal patrons of the Yellowstone package tours and “See America First” campaigns of the railroads. Though some people of lesser means did visit Yellowstone in the stagecoach days, the concessioners were dependent mainly on the “carriage trade.” The difficulty of cross-country transportation and the expense of such a vacation for many years put the enjoyment of Yellowstone’s wonders out of reach for those who could not go first class.

Even wealthy tourists—“dudes” as they were called in the park—faced a few inconveniences. Stagecoach travel could be bumpy and dusty, but the scenery more than compensated. The coaches frequently had to be unloaded at steep grades, giving the passengers an opportunity to stretch their legs and breathe in the cool air while following the vehicles uphill. Stagecoach accidents were a rare possibility. And, of course, there were a few holdups.

Despite the attention the popular press gave to robberies, there were only five stagecoach holdups in the park—four of them involving coaches on the Grand Tour. The second, in 1908, was the most impressive of the 20th century; in a single holdup one enterprising bandit fleeced 174 passengers riding 17 stagecoaches. Despite their cash loss, holdup victims were entranced with their robbers, for some were entertaining fellows who never seriously hurt the well-heeled “dudes.” A holdup was an added bit of excitement to an already enjoyable tour. As one tourist remarked, “We think we got off cheap and would

not sell our experience, if we could, for what it cost us.”

Most visitors to the park exhibited that attitude. The minor inconvenience could not combine to eliminate the pleasures of “doing Yellowstone.” Mingling with their own kind, breathing an atmosphere pretentiously reminiscent of the luxury resorts of the East, well-to-do vacationers easily accepted small discomforts while they visited Yellowstone’s wonders.

The typical tour of Yellowstone began when the tourists, outfitted in petticoats, straw hats, and linen dusters (a few were persuaded to buy dime-novel versions of western wear) descended from the train, boarded large stagecoaches, and headed up the scenic Gardner River canyon to Mammoth Hot Springs. After checking into a large hotel they were free the rest of the day to sit in a porch chair (perhaps the same one that President Arthur had used); to spend their money on such souvenirs as rocks, silver spoons, photos, and post card views of frontier characters like Calamity Jane; and to fraternize with Army officers and frontiersmen like Jack Baronett, who had built the first bridge over the Yellowstone. Most of the visitors spent the afternoon touring the hot springs terraces, under the guidance of a congenial soldier or hotel bellhop, or bathing in the waters. Those who wanted to know more about the terraces, as Rudyard Kipling did in 1889, could purchase a guide to the formations “which some lurid hotel keeper has christened Cleopatra’s Pitcher or Mark Anthony’s Whiskey Jug, or something equally poetical.” A heavy meal and retirement to a soft bed usually ended the tourist’s first day in the park.

For the next 4 days, the tourists bounced along in four-horse, 11-passenger coaches called “Yellowstone wagons.” They were entertained by the colorful profanity of the stage drivers, who urged their horses over the dusty roads of the Grand Loop. During the several halts at important na-



Calamity Jane, a Montana character popular with tourists, received permission in 1897 to sell this post card portrait of herself in the park.

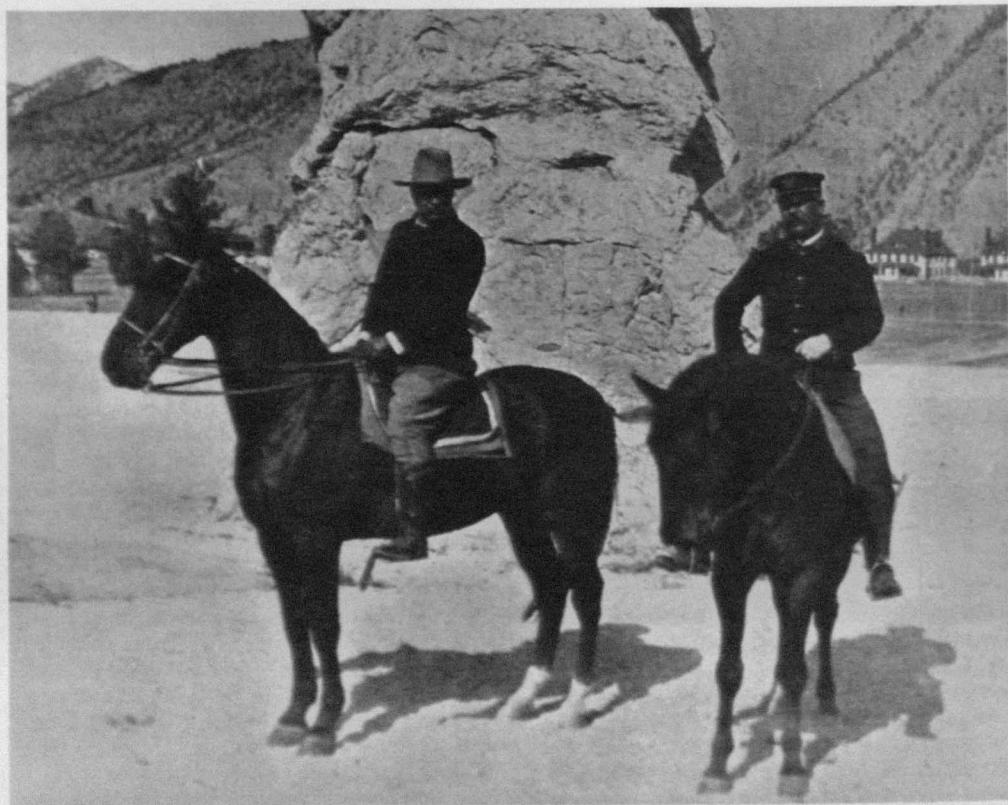
tural features, the drivers further amazed their passengers with exceedingly imaginary explanations of the natural history. At midday there was a pause for refreshment at a lunch stop like Larry's at Norris. Each night there was a warm bed and a lavish meal at another grand hotel, such as the elaborately rustic Old Faithful Inn or the more conventional but equally immense Lake Hotel.

Yellowstone did have a few genuine hazards for visitors. In 1877, as the Nez Perce Indians came through the park after the Battle of the Big Hole, they captured two tourist parties and killed or severely wounded a number of the people they encountered. The brief flurry of the Bannock War in 1878 raised fears of another Indian foray. These dangers were soon replaced by the occasional accidents of stagecoaching and the hazards that awaited the careless.

But the delights outweighed the perils. After the late 1890's people enjoyed the nightly spectacle of bears being fed hotel garbage and even helped with the feeding, few worrying about the effect on the bears or the danger to themselves. Some of the early tourists were even honored by the placement of their names on the map—in 1873 Mary Lake took the name of one of its first visitors, and in 1891 Craig Pass honored the first woman driven over it on a new road. And there was always the possibility that a tourist might rub elbows with a European nobleman or an American dignitary like President Theodore Roosevelt, who toured the park in 1903.

Some of the tourists availed themselves of optional pleasures. Boats offered peaceful tours of Yellowstone Lake, while back at Mammoth wildlife could be closely observed at the "game corral."

As a contrast to the elaborate hotels, rustic tent camps provided simple but comfortable accommodations among the trees. Uncle John Yancey's "Pleasant Valley Hotel" hosted teamsters and U.S. Senators alike. Uncle John, accord-



President Theodore Roosevelt paused at Liberty
Cap, Mammoth, with an aide
during his long tour of Yellowstone in 1903.

This group, visiting in 1904, seems unimpressed
by the thermal spring.

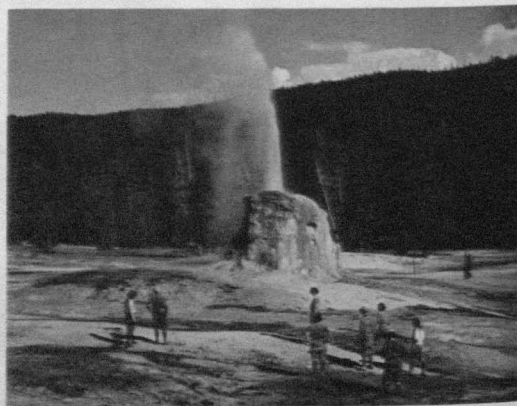


Busloads of visitors, fresh from a
Northern Pacific train, enter the
park through the Gardiner arch in 1927.





Though automobiles drove horse-drawn coaches from the roads, visitors who still wanted a Grand Tour could go by “motor coach,” as these Italian bishops did in the 1920’s.



Lone Star Geyser in the 1920’s.

ing to one patron, was a "goat-bearded, shrewd-eyed, lank, Uncle Sam type," whose unkempt hotel offered those of simpler tastes welcome relief from the opulence of the great resorts in the park. And one guest noted that "A little bribe on the side and a promise to keep the act of criminality a secret from Uncle John induces the maid to provide us with clean sheets." The affability of Uncle John was later matched by the wholesome friendliness of Uncle Tom Richardson, who served splendid picnics at his trail into the canyon.

Altogether, touring Yellowstone was a pleasant, if arduous, experience. But the reactions of some visitors were not always what might be expected, according to a stage driver: "I drive blame curious kind of folk through this place. Blame curious. Seems a pity that they should a come so far just to liken Norris to hell. Guess Chicago would have served them, speakin' in comparison, just as good." In keeping with the unspoken rules of the wealthy tourist's social class—which required a calm demeanor at all times—few of the many photographs taken during Grand Tours show smiles on the dignified faces posed among the natural wonders. Yet the "dudes" carried home memories of experiences and sights that were unforgettable. They recommended the tour to their friends, and each year more of them came to Yellowstone to gaze upon its wonders.

But as increasing wealth and technological progress enabled more of the public to travel, Yellowstone could not remain an idyllic resort for the few. The first automobile entered Yellowstone in 1902, only to be evicted because regulations had already been adopted to exclude such conveyances. Yet "progress" could not be staved off forever. Over the years the pressure mounted. Political favor swung toward cars, and many people foresaw benefits in admitting them to the park. Accordingly, in 1915, the Secretary of the Interior made the fateful decision, and on July 31 of that

year cars began to invade Yellowstone. Although they were severely regulated and a permit was expensive, their numbers increased steadily, forcing the concessioners to replace their stages with buses. Horses were relegated to the back country, while many of the tent camps, hotels, lunch stations, and eventually all but one of the transportation companies disappeared. They were replaced by paved roads, parking areas convenient to scenic attractions, service stations, and public campgrounds to accommodate the growing number of motorized visitors.

But the automobile changed more than just the mode of touring the park. No longer just a vacation spot for the wealthy, Yellowstone became a truly *national* park, accessible to anyone who could afford a car. Without resorting to the concessioners, visitors could now pick their own way around the park, see what they wanted, take side trips, and camp in one place as long as they liked. But never again would a visitor be a pioneer explorer, facing an unknown wilderness, leaving his name on the map. For better or worse, a new day was beginning. The time lay far in the future when the car would appear as an enemy threatening to suffocate the park; meanwhile, it was all to the good. Thanks to this noisy, smoking, democratic vehicle, Yellowstone was now truly a "pleasuring-ground" for the people—all of them.

The legacy of Yellowstone

The generation that set aside Yellowstone National Park created more than anyone could have foreseen at the time. The establishment of the park was initially a negative reaction to the prospect that this wondrous region might be divided and exploited for private ends, thereby denying it

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The first automobiles to cross Sylvan Pass,
July 4, 1915.

The compleat camper, 1924 style.





Few visitors could resist the temptation to
drink from Appollinaris Spring.





Enjoying the pleasures of Fishing Bridge
in the early 1920's. Expensive petticoats
and parasols no longer predominate among
visitors to Yellowstone.

← Suppertime in an auto camp, 1921.

to others. The founders determined that Yellowstone should be reserved for the "benefit and enjoyment" of all. Over a half century, the practicalities of what such a national park should be were worked out.

Yet Yellowstone was always more than a place for a frolic in the wilderness. The park was something to be proud of, and its creators exhibited their pride throughout their lives. It was a pride that came not from "civilizing" the wilderness but from knowing that a place of wild beauty had been preserved. Yellowstone was, as they saw it, their gift to the people.

But their gift was greater than even they realized at the time. The years have shown that their legacy, the establishment of Yellowstone National Park, led to a lasting concept—the national park idea. This idea conceived the wilderness to be the inheritance of all the people, who gained more from an experience in nature than from private exploitation of the land. In time, the idea blossomed in the form of many new national parks, begotten in the same spirit as Yellowstone.

The national park idea was part of a new view of the Nation's responsibility for the public domain. By the end of the 19th century, many thoughtful people no longer believed that the wilderness should be fair game for the first persons who could claim and plunder it. Its fruits were the rightful possession of all the people, including those yet unborn. Besides the areas set aside as national parks, still greater expanses of land were placed into trusteeship in national forests and other reserves so that the country's natural wealth—in the form of lumber, grazing, minerals, and recreation—should not be consumed at once by the greed of a few, but should perpetually bestow its rewards.

The preservation idea, born in Yellowstone, spread around the world. Scores of nations have preserved areas of natural beauty and historical

worth so that all mankind will have the opportunity to reflect on their natural and cultural heritage, and to return to nature and be spiritually reborn in it.

Of all the benefits from Yellowstone National Park, this may be the greatest.

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