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## THE YELLOWSTONE

One month ago today, we started from Salt Lake City for an outing through the Rockies to the Yellowstone National Park, going by Union Pacific to Market Lake, Idaho, thence by team to Teton Basin, where we packed up at the ranch with broncos, and started across the mountains, going via the North Fork of the Snake River. Our party consisted of Dr. J. R. Park, president of the Deseret University, Harry Squires, the artist, Milando Pratt, and his daughter, Miss Viola Pratt, and B. W. Driggs, Jr.

This whole north-country is yet in its infancy in its development by man with, here and there, an oasis in the desert, made by cultivation and the introduction of canals from the immense water resources of Idaho.

Rexburg is blooming into quite a thrifty city, and is the trading mart for the district for fifty miles around. The next town is Teton, ten miles beyond, and is one of the most beautiful places in the west for situation and extent of country around, lying as it does, on an upland plain resembling the slopes east of and beyond the Rocky Mountains. Here is a wonderfully extensive range, not many years since the home of buffalo, whose bones and wallows still abound. This is among the most fertile regions of the Snake River country, and is being fast settled, mostly by "Mormons."

Beyond this, a days drive, is the beautiful Teton Basin. There also is a country rich in natural resources – good land, lots of timber, and plenty of water. The valley resembles Cache Valley, with the grand Teton mountain to the east, winding streams running down to the river in the west, and low mountains skirting the western edge of the valley. The Basin is being fast settled, mostly with people

from Utah, who have come in the last two years. Game and trout are abundant.

Following up the North Snake is a vast extent of good farming and grazing country, which is just beginning to be occupied. That surrounding the little settlement of Springville (name later changed to Marysville) is especially rich for farming. Water is conveyed from Falls River.

Passing over this extensive plain we next strike the uplands, plateaus, and mountains which are covered with timber. We found an old trappers trail leading from up the Warm River, or "Mormon Mule River" as it is sometimes called. The trail is very dim, and leads up to near the vicinity of the Vioia Falls on the Snake River. We were told these falls were worth spending a day to see; but it being a wild country, without roads, very few people ever visit them. We camped on the Warm River, after following its winding course half a day, and found it one of the best places for fishing in our experience. One of the party pulled twenty trout out of one hole while we were getting supper on. Dr. Park distinguished himself as a fisherman by capturing the finny beauties at the rate of about one a minute, until we had all we wanted. But for the Doctors conscientious scruples about throwing them away, we might have continued fishing just for the sport.

Leaving here we were, for a time, uncertain as to whither we were going, but managed to reach the Falls after a series of windings around and through openings in the woods and over fallen timber. We were grandly surprised on coming along the great plateau of Island Park to see, far down the canyon, beautiful cascades, where the whole river dashed through narrow passes between cliffs of rock, and falling in places from twenty to thirty feet. Just above these our eyes discovered dense mist which hid the Falls

from view until a nearer approach unveiled the miniature Niagara. The river goes over a precipice one hundred feet high and about three hundred feet wide, in the shape of a horse shoe, on the west, like Niagara Falls from the Canada side, then, on the east, it resembles them from the American side. The cliffs on either side are covered with moss and other verdure from the spray constantly falling like rain over the rugged sides.

If people knew of the wondrous beauties of this country, it would not long remain without roads or trails. Unlike other parts of the western slope, with its arid planes of sagebrush and deserts, the whole country here, for hundreds of miles, is covered with fresh green grass and forests of pine and spruce, reminding one of the country east of the Missouri, or more particularly, the pines of Northern Michigan.

We were riding for days through natural parks, studded with trees, looking in places as though they had been cultivated in groups, with openings here and there through the denser parts sufficient to pass through without much difficulty. Wild deer and antelope made these haunts their home, though we could see very few of them at this time of year. Besides, the country being covered with a luxuriant growth of grass, there is an occasional wild hay meadow, with brooks, springs, and river winding through.

We followed up the vicinity of the Snake and Buffalo rivers to Henry's Lake, a beautiful sheet of water lying at the foot of the Shoshone Mountains. It is the source of the North Fork of the Snake River and is near the Continental Divide, where the waters start on their winding course towards both oceans. Fishing is excellent in Henry's Lake, which abounds in large salmon-like trout. We carried thirty pounds on our pack animals

from there. We also had trout three times a day for ten days, until all were satisfied.

From Henry's Lake, we passed over into Montana, where the horse flies were so bad that we were obliged to shut the horses up in the shade in the day time and travel at night.

Not long after passing over the Continental Divide, we entered the limits of the Yellowstone National Park. There our guns were sealed up by the soldiers and not unsealed until we got out again. But fishing is not interfered with. The government is trying to preserve the game that roams in this natural wild retreat and has soldiers stationed at all the entrances and throughout the Park for this purpose. In order, however, to do this the country east of the Tetons and in the vicinity of Jackson's Hole should be included in the Park, as the game goes there in numerous quantities to winter. One rancher told us he had to lay out by his hay stack all winter with his gun to keep the elk from eating him out. They pay no attention to a fence. Even now the elks and antelope are more numerous around Jackson's Hole than in the Park. We saw hundreds of them feeding over the hills and plains like sheep on the range. We had venison while in that vicinity.

Bears are also numerous. One large black one came within twenty feet of us one evening, to eat refuse from the camp. He paid no attention to us, but ate his supper and returned to the woods. As they are not allowed to be killed, they are not afraid, but come around the hotels at night to eat scraps that are thrown from the tables.

The last official report stated that there were 400 buffaloes in the park, but you seldom see them. They keep back in the high mountain plateaus. Last week, however, as the stage was passing an opening in the woods, two

buffalo bulls came out fighting, ran into the coach, upset it and injured some of the passengers, one lady being hurt quite severely.

The region at the source of the Yellowstone, 65 miles long by 55 miles broad, was reserved by Congress from occupancy and set apart as a national park in 1872. It is said to have been, for the first time, explored in 1870. Now it is known as one of the most wonderful spots on earth, and is visited by thousands every year. While we were there, the arrivals averaged about one hundred people every day. The hotels were crowded, and the stage coaches, by the dozens, were moving from place to place with excursionists gathered to see these wonders of nature.

We saw a number of the hot springs or geysers in active operation, covering the hillsides with a snowy-white deposit like frozen cascade. Some have craters formed wholly of the sinters thrown out, like that which forms on the inner side of a tea kettle.

As the geysers only played at intervals (sometimes of days intervening), we were unable to see the eruptions of some, but were fortunate in arriving at the proper time for others. By waiting about an hour, we saw the "Fountain" play; then rode over to the "Excelsior" just in time to see one of its grandest eruptions. The water in this boiling crater began upheaving, and dense steam hissed forth; then the explosion occurred, sending the water about 250 feet high. This continued for a few minutes, when the river below increased one-half in size and was colored like milk by this boiling geyser, the water from which heated the whole river. While we were there, the "Grand" played for the first time this season. The "Giant" plays once a week; we were one day too late to see it.

One of the most interesting of these wonders, however, we saw in all its power. The "Castle," which had not played for three days, began its eruptions while we were encamped near it, and lasted for over an hour; it sent forth columns of hissing steam and water from one to two hundred feet in height. Half a dozen engines blowing off their steam at once could not equal this for the noise and amount of steam.

The whole valley here looks like a vast manufacturing place, from the steam and boiling water. Beside all these geysers I have referred to there are numerous and remarkable caldrons, paint pots, fireholes, etc., where one can see blue flames burning away down, alike sulphuric blazes. The paint pots, resemble huge craters of lime mortar slacking; a thoroughly mixed mass of siliceous clay continually boils up plop! plop! rising in rings and cones and jets. The country in the vicinity of the "Excelsior" is known as "Hell's Half Acre." After taking in the Fire Hole Basins, we visited the geysers and springs at Norris and Mammoth. From there we followed the trail that leads over the mountains via Lower Falls, a trip that few take because of no wagon road, but one of the most interesting and amid the grandest of any scenery in the world. It is a wild and rugged picture. The falls come over cliffs 150 feet high, and are surrounded with tower like rocks. In the grand canyon below, and all around, are high mountains, including in the distance Mount Washburn, which was ascended, and from which we viewed the surrounding country. It is called the "Observatory of the Park" and is 10,840 feet high. From its summit we looked down upon the whole panorama. I doubt whether there is another scene so majestic and beautiful in the whole world. Your vision darts a hundred miles or more around. The sky seems to meet the earth on every side; within sight are ranges of snow-capped peaks and the grand

Tetons are seen in the distance, over a hundred miles away. The lower hills are folded in the thick draperies of pine, and beautiful park-like places where the trees refuse to grow, while the prairie spreads its smooth sward in the sunlight with, now and then, silver water falls, icy glaciers, and the lovely deep blue water of the Yellowstone lake and river. Below us runs, with a mighty force, the river flowing on its journey to the Missouri, and going through that tremendous gorge, the Grand Canyon, it is said, that the starts are visible in the day time. There is no way, however, of getting down into the gorge without peril, and then there is hardly room to stand when one does get there. Passing along its top, or plateau, we next see the Falls of the Yellowstone. The Lower Falls have a sheer descent of 400 feet, with the whole Yellowstone River flowing over and falling in spray, with a snowy like appearance, to the abyss below. It is a grand and inspiring picture.

Leaving the falls, our next camp is on the quiet river above. There the trout were more plentiful than any fishing place we had. They were pulled out by our experts about as fast as the hook could be thrown in. Your correspondent, however, is a failure at fishing. I borrowed the best fish pole in the outfit, but the first trout that caught on pulled it apart and down went the whole tackle over the falls.

We passed round the Yellowstone Lake, over the Divide about twelve miles to Shoshone Lake. There are no fish there nor animal life whatever, although there is fresh water. The fish have probably been killed off by some phenomenon of nature; and as there are high falls below, they cannot get up. The government has a scientific party there now examining the cause of the destruction. It is the intention to re-stock the lake with brook trout.

This was the coldest point in our travels. Ice froze solid in our coffee cups, and the copper kettle had a covering as thick as ordinary window glass. This was August.

We next started on our homeward course, via Lewis Lake, down the South Fork of the Snake River, east of the Teton Range, passing Jackson Lake, down to Jackson Hole, and then over the range into Teton Basin again.

The Teton Mountains, as seen from the east side, cannot be equaled for grandeur in the world. At the foot lies Jackson's Lake, mirror-like in its quiet repose, surrounded by woods; then rising in majesty are these grand peaks with their rugged, almost perpendicular towers, that rear their heads toward the skies 13,840 feet, with their glaciers of ice and snow, which the hot rays of the summer's sun fail to penetrate – a series of peaks that are monuments of the compass a hundred miles around.

For an enjoyable out and thorough trip to the Park, and for picturesque grandeur and game, the route we took cannot be improved upon. We saw the country better by traveling on horse back instead of by stage.

Teton Basin, Aug. 10, 1890