Yellowstone Log

My first solo trip

Douglas Evans

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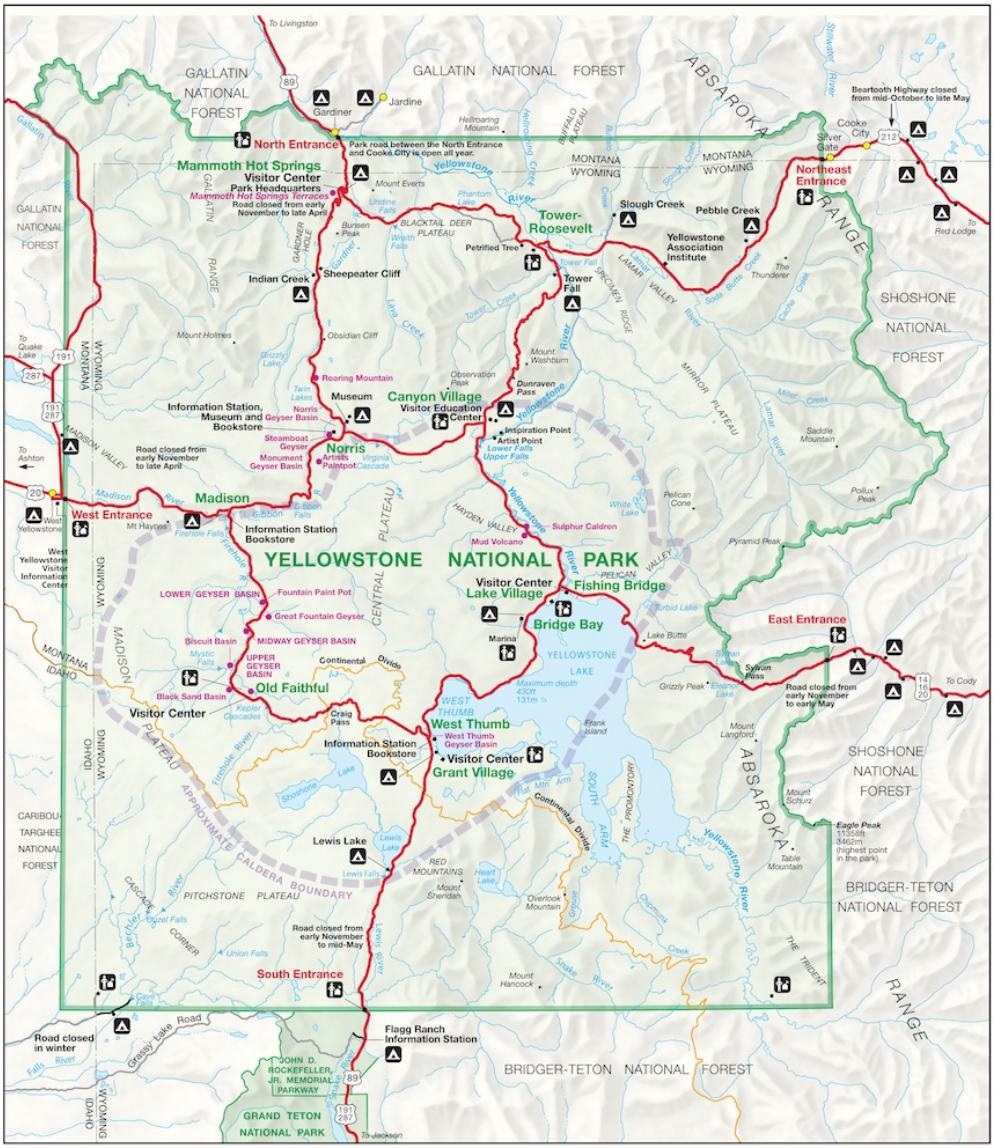
WT Melon
www.wtmelon.com

"good stories; good tunes"


GALLATIN NATIONAL FOREST
GALLATIN NATIONAL FOREST
ABSAROKA RANGE
North Entrance
Park road between the North Entrance and Cooke City is open all year.
Mammoth Hot Springs
Visitor Center
Park Headquarters
Mammoth Hot Springs Terraces
Road closed from early November to late April
Gardiner
Jardine
Mount Evarts
Tower-Roosevelt
Slough Creek
Pebble Creek
Yellowstone Association Institute
Petrified Tree
Tower Fall
Sheepeater Cliff
Indian Creek
Northeast Entrance
Beartooth Highway closed from mid-October to late May
Cooke City
Silver Gate
SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST
Roaring Mountain
Museum
Canyon Village
Visitor Education Center
Information Station, Museum and Bookstore
Norris Geyser Basin
Steamboat Geyser
Monument Geyser Basin
Norris
Artists Paintpot
Road closed from early November to late April
Madison
West Entrance
Information Station Bookstore
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK
Visitor Center
Lake Village
Fishing Bridge
Bridge Bay
Sulphur Caldron
Mud Volcano
LOWER GEYSER BASIN
Fountain Paint Pot
Great Fountain Geyser
MIDWAY GEYSER BASIN
UPPER GEYSER BASIN
Old Faithful
Visitor Center
Black Sand Basin
Craig Pass
West Thumb
West Thumb Geyser Basin
Information Station Bookstore
Visitor Center
Grant Village
YELLOWSTONE LAKE
East Entrance
Sylvan Pass
Road closed from early November to early May
SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST
BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST
Lewis Lake
PITCHSTONE PLATEAU
APPROXIMATE CALDERA BOUNDARY
Road closed from early November to mid-May
South Entrance
Road closed in winter
Flagg Ranch Information Station
JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR. MEMORIAL PARKWAY
GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK
BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST
CARIBOU-TARGHEE NATIONAL FOREST
MONTANA
WYOMING
IDAHO

Days

1. Day 1&2
2. Day 3
3. Day 4
4. Day 5
5. Day 6
6. Day 7
7. Day 8
8. Day 9
9. Day 10
10. Day 11
11. Day 12
12. Day 13
13. Day 14
14. Day 15
15. Day 16
16. Day 17 & 18

This is a journal I kept during my first solo trip when I was sixteen from my home in Minnesota to Yellowstone National Park. In this book, published fifty-five years later, I changed no words. I only corrected spelling and punctuation mistakes.

Day 1 & 2

At 10:30 on June 23th a shy young boy entered the Minneapolis Bus Depot, at 11:00 a shy young boy left the Minneapolis Bus Depot. He had missed his 10:50 Bus.

I finally caught the 4:55 Bus to Seattle. I sat next to a fat old man who said nothing, so from Minneapolis to Fargo the Bus trip was uneventful. We reached Fargo a 11:30 P.M. and the old man got off. I had 7-Up and Good-N'-Plenty's for supper. I boarded the Greyhound bus again and saw that my pack had been removed from the bus, so I asked the Driver to put it back on.

I got a window seat then, and next on staggered a man. There were a lot of empty seat but of course he sat down next to me. He was carrying a hand bag and set it on the floor. Clang! went the whiskey bottles in the Bag. The Bus took off. I tried sleeping But the guy kept talking.

His name was Lucky Louie, he said he was a guitar player for John Denver. He said John didn't like him much because he drank too much. He kept throwing his coat over a baby in the next seat, and the mother kept throwing it back.

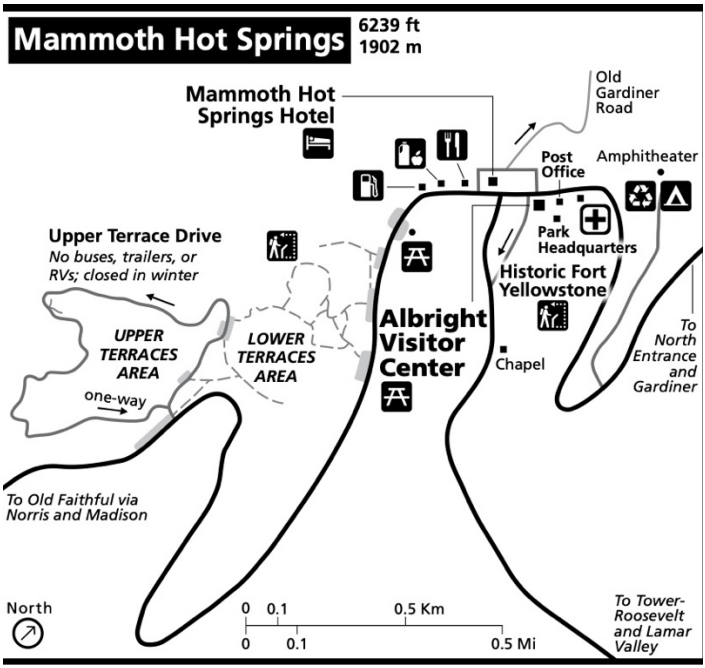
The ride was horrible from Fargo to Billings. We went through Bismarck, ate at Mile City, and again in Billings. At Billings the guy got off and I had a seat to myself from Billings to Livingston where I got off. I saw mountains for the first time in my life.

At Livingston I had a 2 hour wait for the bus to Yellowstone, so I bought some junk and walked around Livingston. It was funny to see and hear the people of Billings and Livingston. All the men were old looking, wore flannel shirts, bola ties, had gray hair, wore cowboy hats, and said, "Howdy" to me.

I finally got on the Bus to Yellowstone, a two-hour ride. It took 21 hours from Minneapolis to Livingston. I got to Livingston at 3:00 and to Yellowstone at 5:00 P.M. On the way the bus driver pointed out the Yellowstone River which was way over flood stage. The bus was full of kids my age going to work at Yellowstone. The bus entered the North entrance of Yellowstone and left me off at Mammoth Hot Springs. I found a place at the campground and stayed there that night. I set up my tent, and built a fire to try and pop some popcorn. It never popped. The grease had spilled in my pack, as did the Cream of

Wheat. It was a mess. I bought a new container for the grease.

Next, I visited a museum at Mammoth Hot Springs, went through the stores and toured the Hot Springs. I bought a tour bus ticket at the Motor Inn to take me to Old Faithful the next day at 1:30. I walked back to the campground and played the tape recorder. The tent was very unorganized. But I went to sleep.



Day 3

The next day I woke up and organized my pack. I cooked Cream of Wheat for breakfast and since I forgot a spoon I cooked it solid so I could eat it with a fork. Next, I propped my pack up against the tent pole to pack it and the tent pole broke in two. I spent over an hour trying to repair it but failed.

It was 12:30 so I left to catch the bus, but first I took a short hike and toured the hot springs again to take some pictures. I caught the tour bus and we took off for Old Faithful 55 miles away.

The bus was full of people from England on tour in Yellowstone. They were interesting to listen to and were very funny. The bus driver was very informative. Our first main stop was Morris Geyser Basin, a large terrace with little geysers all over.

After that we saw Madison Junction where

the man gave us a lecture on the history and geography of the park. We saw elk, moose, and bison by the road.

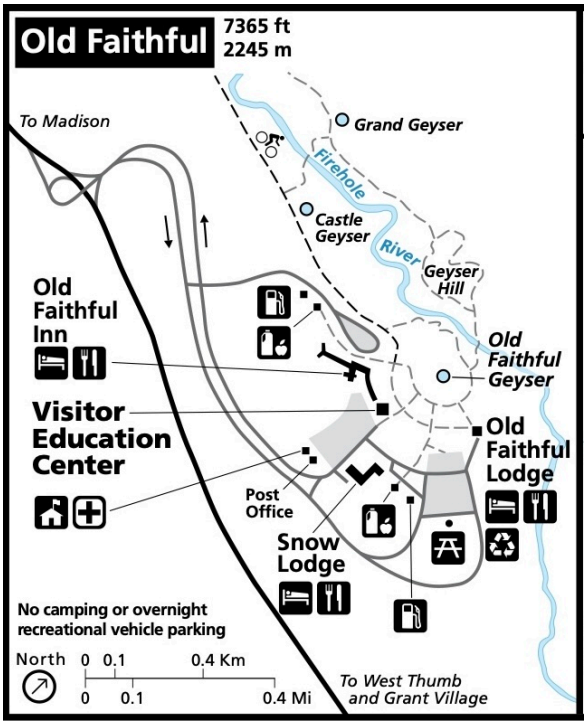
Next came the Lower Geyser Basin filled with bubbling mud of different colors. More geysers and smoking mountains. Next came the Upper Geyser Basin with the largest geysers and the beautiful hot pools. I got off at the Old Faithful Inn as did the other English people. I was stunned to find there wasn't a campground there. So I was forced to pay for a cabin to stay in $10. I got my cabin and brought my pack to it. It was a beautiful thing, hot and cold water, heater, comfortable bed, and electricity to play my tapes with.

It was then that I decided to take a few more days and see the tourist sights of Yellowstone before going into the back country. I was enjoying the sights and meeting all the interesting people.

It was now about 5:00. I went and saw Old Faithful erupt. It was great. I then looked over Old Faithful Inn, the largest log structure in the world. It was beautiful. Next, I went to the cafe and got a frank. I met a counter girl there who was from Bloomington and knew a lot of people from Edina that I knew. There were many kids working at Yellowstone, 14, 000 of them and they were all my age. Many times I wished I was working there.

Next, I went to the grocery store and bought some junk and to the sport store, where I bought a spoon and a bamboo fishing pole to serve as a

tent pole and walking stick. I returned to the cabin and wrote postcards. It was about 8:00 so I took a fantastic hike of the Upper Geyser Basin. I was all alone on miles of boardwalk which wound around hot pools, geysers, hot springs, and bubbling pools which were beautiful in the twilight and full moon. I returned to my cabin, played the tape recorder, and slept in the most comfortable bed I ever slept in. It rained.



Day 4

I dragged myself out of bed at 7:30 the next morn. I packed the pack and checked out. I went to the hotel and bought another tour bus ticket to the Grand Canyon which left at 9:00 AM. I decided to tour the geysers again. I saw Old Faithful erupt for the second time. It was very cold and rainy out. I caught my bus and we took off.

The bus was full of very weird people. There was a Mexican woman who never saw snow before and went wild when she saw it and there was a blind woman. The bus rolled West to West Thumb of Yellowstone Lake. We crossed the Continental Divide twice where there was still a foot of snow on the ground. The bus driver was more informative than the 1st. He told us about the plants and wild life of Yellowstone. At West Thumb he told us about fishing regulations and Yellowstone Lake. Yellowstone Lake was huge,

the largest lake above 7500´ in the world. From W. Thumb to Grant Village we went where most of the people took a boat ride across the lake.

The bus driver and me drove to meet the boat at Bridge Bay where it came in. On the way, the bus driver told me a lot of interesting stuff about fishing in Yellowstone. He said that the cutthroat trout was most abundant in the lake. This lake was the farthest eastern body of water where the cutthroat was found. No fishing license was needed in Yellowstone and only artificial bait could be used. 3 cutthroats were the limit at least 14" in length.

The bus reached Bridge Bay where I bought a great grill for backpacking. The boat soon arrived and we left for Lake Village. We had lunch at the beautiful hotel. I had 7-Up and jaw breakers. Most of the people were going to stay at the hotel that night, so when the bus took off for Canyon Village there were only 3 people on the nus, me, the rich lady, and the blind lady. The bus came to mud volcanoes and Devil Cauldron, a fantastic cavern with hot water gushing out every so often. The Mud Volcanoes were great. There were various pools bubbling some. The mud was red, some blue, green, and mixed.

The bus passed through Hayden Valley. The bus driver said that this is where most of the Yellowstone grizzly bears lived. Then the bus reached the south rim of the Grand Canyon. It was fantastic. The bus driver helped the blind lady while I helped the rich old bag to the lookout

point.

The bus dropped me off at the north rim, Canyon Village. I then started searching for the campgrounds. I walked 1 1/2 miles down a road where I came to a sign pointing at me saying campground 1 1/2 miles. So back I went and finally found the grounds about 100 feet from where the bus left me off.

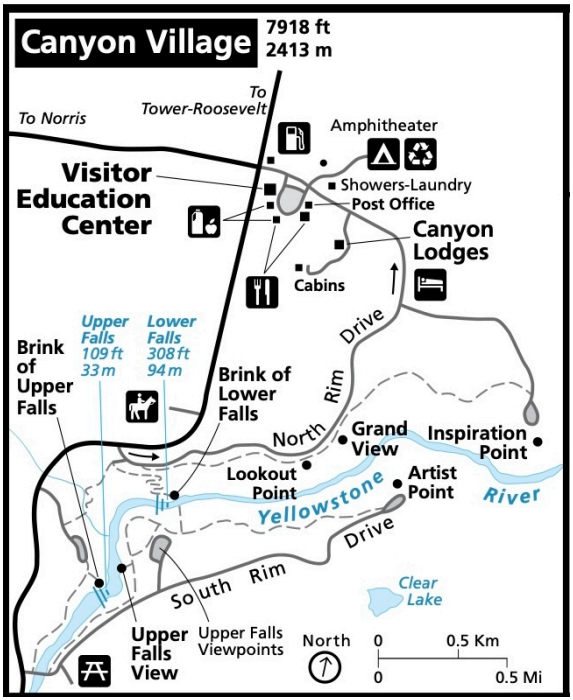
Then I saw a sign saying because of the high number of bears in the area the campground was restricted to hard sided campers. I threw a tantrum. I stormed to the ranger station. The ranger suggested that I hike a trail north and camp there. But I wanted to go south and the only trail south was the Howard Eaton trail through Hayden Valley. Yet I got a backpack permit for that trail anyway and read up on grizzly bears.

The people wished me luck and I set off. First, I stopped and got a frank and coke. The trail head was about 7 miles away on the other side of the canyon. So I started off on the North Rim Trail about 5:00. The trail gave me great views of the canyon, the lower falls, and the upper falls.

I finally reached the Howard Eaton Trail head. It was 16 miles from there to the lake. I walked about 1 mile in. I didn't want to sleep too far in the valley. I set up my tent. But I was scared. The sun was about to set when I climbed up a hill to look around. The terrain was beautiful. A rolling hill meadow was all around

me as far as I could see.

Back to my tent I went and right to Bed. I was scared. I played the recorder very loud that night and hung my backpack up a tree. Then I heard a noise outside and quickly shut off my recorder. Next, a coyote let off a bloodcurdling yell, followed by another farther off, followed by a few farther off. I buried myself in my sleeping bag and went to sleep. It rained and thundered and was cold.



Day 5

It was raining and cold the next morning. Everything looked hopeless. I knew I had at least 16 miles to walk to get out of Hayden Valley by nightfall. Everything was soaked but I packed up and rolled up the tent. The pack was extra heavy with all the water, but on I walked wearing my poncho.

The first few miles were OK. The land was beautiful, but the trail was muddy. Many times the trail disappeared, and I had to follow the red trail markers in the trees or on poles where there weren't any trees. I crossed many springs running from the mountains to the Yellowstone River. The water was cold, clear, and good.

Then I came to a deep creek. The water went up to my waist as I crossed it. I lost the trail for about 1/4 of an hour, but found it. I was now cold as the wind blew into me. It rained hard. Up hills I climbed. Up more hills I climbed. I climbed

down, up, down, up. It was miserable, but beautiful.

Finally I stopped and sat down, ate my trail lunch, put my poncho over me and slept. I had, had it. I couldn't go any farther. Hours passed and the wind and rain continued. I woke up two hours later. The sky was clearing up a little, and I looked up ahead and saw smoke rising. I knew this was smoke from a geyser basin from the foul smell all geysers and hot springs give off.

Seeing where these hot springs were on the topographical map I bought I found that I was farther than I thought and that I was almost out of Hayden Valley. I got up and started on. The sun came out at last and the wind turned mild. It was great.

The trail turned towards the river and where it reached the river was a spot which looked like a good spot to camp. So I made camp there on the banks of the Yellowstone. I set up the tent and dried it out, made a fire and had the best spaghetti dinner I ever had. The grill was perfect; everything was perfect. Scores of birds flew by me as I ate. it was great. The sun was beautiful as it set, and I hit the sack. The coyotes yelled again that night, but my fear of bears was almost gone.

Day 6

The next day was clear. I got up and cooked oatmeal and hot cocoa for breakfast. I had only five miles to hike that day until I got to Fishing Bridge Village, so I didn't hurry. I finally packed up. Everything was dried out and I felt good.

The trail entered the forest for the first time. There is only one type of tree to speak of in Yellowstone. That is the lodge pole pine. The whole forest is made up of this skinny, straight tall tree. The soil of Yellowstone is shallow and this tree had the shallowest roots of any other so it is dominant. Yet they blow down very easy, and I climbed over many of them.

The trail followed a cliff over the Yellowstone River. It was beautiful. I ate trail lunch in a field. Every trail lunch was the same, raisins, Turkish Taffy, Ry-Krisps, peanut butter and jelly in ideal

squeeze tubes and Kool-Aid or Fizzies.

I slept there for an hour. The trail soon came out at a road which I followed and was soon at Fishing Bridge. The campgrounds were full so I checked into cabins at Fishing Bridge. They were great cabins for $3.50 a night with cold water, bed, pot-belly stove, and electricity, so I checked into one of these. The campground was $3.00 so this was a lot better.

The cabin wasn't ready yet, so I toured the Fishing Bridge. First, I went to the museum and turned in my backpack permit to the Howard Eaton Trail. I then walked along the shore of Yellowstone Lake. The lake was beautiful surrounded by mountains.

People were fishing all along the shore, especially at the mouth of the Yellowstone River. The river was closed to fishing until July 15 as was Fishing Bridge which was a bridge which people line up along shoulder to shoulder to fish. The people in the lake were all catching cutthroats. I couldn't believe it. I went and got my telescopic pole and tried it. I caught nothing.

It was about time for my cabin to be ready, so I got in to cabin 481. I cut some firewood and organized everything in my pack. The guy in the next cabin was filleting fish, so I went over there and watched him. He showed me how to do it. I told him of my poor luck and he said everyone uses the same lure, a Domino or Spin o' Lure. So I went to the store and bought one. I also bought a quart of 7-Up, a bag of pretzels and 7 dozen

cookies.

At 9:00 I went to the campfire over at the campground where a very weird ranger told us about the geology of the park and about the great earthquake of 1959. He had slides and it was very interesting. Back to the cabin I went for a party. I lit a candle, turned off the lights, lit a fire in the stove to warm up, and tried popping popcorn. It never popped. I drank 7-Up and cookies instead and played my new McCartney tape. It was great. I decided to stay another day in the cabin Before starting on another trail.

Day 7

The next morning I slept late. I checked in again for the cabin and had hot cocoa for Breakfast. I first wanted to try my new "sure-thing" lure in the lake so I did. First cast, the line snapped and flew away. Like an idiot in my fury I waded into the 40° water and got soaked But never found the lure. I walked around a bit to dry off.

Next, I walked to the Lake Village Ranger Station about a mile away. I bought some licorice and a big bag of Smarties there. I got a backpack permit for the long trail around the lake. I sat By the beautiful lake a while and walked back. I bought another Spin-o-Lure and a quart of Hires for a big party before I hit the long trail.

I called Mom and Dad that night and had a frank for supper at the counter. My money was now running low. I returned to the cabin, got

wood, and had my party, root beer, music, pretzels, cookies. It was great.

Day 8

The next day I packed up and checked out. It was about 10 miles from Fishing Bridge to the trailhead, so I tried hitchhiking. It failed. I walked six miles, thumbing as a car went by, nothing. I sat down and ate some licorice and walked some more.

Finally, along came an old school bus filled with Boy Scouts. It stopped and picked me up. They were so impressed with the heavy load I carried. I had now plenty of time and walked up a mile to an overlook of the lake. It was breathtaking. Way off in the distance I saw the Tetons some 60 miles away. I didn't know then that would be the only time I'd ever see them. I had a talk with an English man at the overlook and walked back to the road.

It was a short distance to the trailhead. But there was the old school bus, abandoned at the foot of the hill. I thought the school bus must

have broken down and the Boy Scouts walked on, so I started on the trail. I walked on. There was a lot of mud and mosquitoes in the forest.

I walked a few miles and came to a clearing where I ate my trail lunch. I took a drink of water out of a creek and slept for an hour. I woke up and started walking. I came to a creek called Cabin Creek with a trail running along it to the lake, so I followed that hoping to find a campsite at the mouth of the creek and Lake Yellowstone. I walked a few hundred yards in, and I was surprised to meet two fishermen way out here, yet they said there were a lot more at the mouth. So I walked on and came to a clearing and the lake. Fishing there were the thirty Boy Scouts who picked me up. They all waved and I set up camp. They soon left, but first they showed me their fish 26 large cutthroats.

Next, a ranger spotted me from his boat and checked me out. I was OK. Then two boys in kayaks came and camped down the creek. That ruined all my privacy. But it was a great campsite.

I tried fishing. I huge cutthroat every cast. They fought like mad. It was great. I kept 3 16" fish and got ready to fillet them. I waited a while for the fish to croak and hacked away. By the time I was done I had about two square inches of meat, not bad for my first fish. I rolled the fillet in flour and cooked it in grease. It tasted great. I think. Next, I buried the fish guts and walked out to the point and sat. I fixed supper, veg-a-rice.

That dehydrated food filled me up. The mosquitoes were so bad, so I hit the sack early after reading part of the Return of the King. It rained that night and was cold. But I felt great. That night I decided not to take that long trail around the lake, but to stay a few days here.

Day 9

I got up the next morn. The sun was shining. I didn't know or care what time it was because I let my watch stop. For breakfast I had oatmeal with raisins and Tang. I fished, slept, and relaxed. I walked over to the other side of the creek to a point and sat and read The Return of the King. It was so pleasant out there, a nice breeze, no mosquitoes which were always thick around the tent. I enjoyed sitting around there so much. The Book was good too.

Then someone shouted, "Hi!" Two people were sanding by my tent. I first thought they were the two boys in the kayak, so I ignored them. Then suddenly a storm approached, and I went to the tent. Then the two people, a young couple just married, asked to stay in my tent until the storm past. They were really interesting. It turned out that the girl was from my old home town of Mayfield, Ohio, and they were

hitchhiking from Oregon to Cleveland. They were just hiking on the trail today.

The storm ended, and we went outside and talked. They gave me an apple But didn't leave. I walked out to the point to rid of the mosquitoes and they went into the tent. It started to rain again but I didn't want to disturb them so I stayed outside. Then they left and I was alone again.

I fished and made rice and Bannock for supper. Then a huge storm hit, the bamboo pole broke and the tent fell. I fixed that and read through the storm. Frodo and Sam were climbing Mt. Doom as the thunder and lightning outside boomed. It was great. After the storm I tried popcorn again. this time every kernel popped. I fished and hit the sack.

Day 10

It was the third of July, and I just didn't feel like leaving, so I didn't. Not much happened that day. I just read and fished so I will tell you about Yellowstone National Park. Yellowstone is the second largest national park in the world, the first established in the world in 1872. Next year is its 100th Birthday. It holds the largest thermal area in the world. Steamboat geyser is the tallest geyser. Old Faithful is about 10th in height. Only about 3% of Yellowstone is seen by 98% of the people.

I hoped to see it all. Elk, bison, bear, moose, mule deer are all abundant in Yellowstone. I saw them all. So much for facts. I looked up from my reading. Across the lake I saw a beautiful storm approaching. I had trail lunch for supper and waited out the storm in the tent. After the storm, I washed some clothes in the lake and hit the sack. The night was very cold.

Day 11

I got up early the next day. I thought I had a long way to go so I packed up right away. But luck hit. Some people in a fishing boat stopped by and offered to take me across the lake to Fishing Bridge and they did. They were Texans who came to Yellowstone every year for ten years to fish.

They took me to their car in their boat and drove me to Fishing Bridge. I was there very early on the. 4th of July, and I again got a cabin, Cabin 474. The cabin wouldn't be ready until 5:00 so I relaxed all day.

I first bought a lot of licorice and cookies and walked to Lake Village and turned in my permit. I walked by the lake and slept for about four hours. I read some and watched the fishermen. It was funny to see the different ways the women and men cast. There were fat women, old men, little girls, old pros, and perfect ladies.

I finally got my cabin and gathered fire wood. I bought hot cocoa and little cakes for the party and had an ice cream cone. I read the newspaper and washed up. At 9:00 I went to the campground campfire and heard about animals of Yellowstone. That night I held another party. I lit a sparkler and drank hot cocoa and cakes. I almost forgot, for supper I bought spring noodles, but I couldn't get water to boil on the pot belly stone. By the way the boil point is 198 at that altitude. But I had uncooked springs and lemonade for supper. After the party, I hit the sack and played the recorder.

Day 12

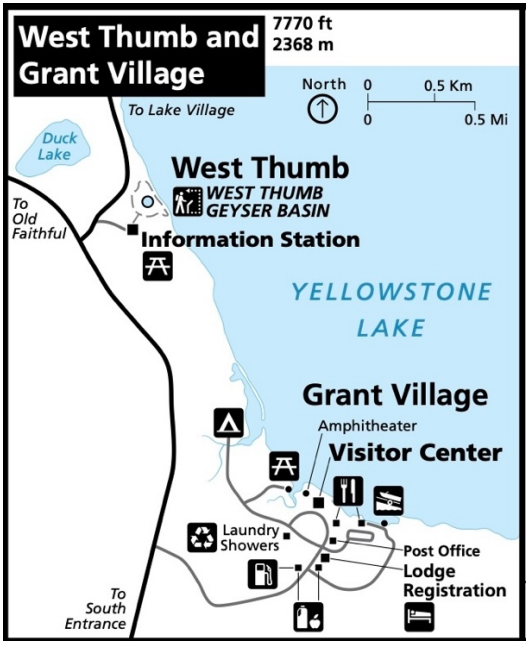
I packed up the next day. By now packing was very simple, because I had worked out an organized system of packing. I checked out of my cabin and tried hitchhiking to West Thumb 27 miles away. After about 15 minutes two people picked me up and drove me to West Thumb. They fed me M&M's and were really nice.

So I was at West Thumb early. The campground was a mile south of there at Grant Village, so I left my pack at the store and walked to the campground and picked out a beautiful site. I hitched hiked back to get my pack, bought a box of cookies and walked to the grounds again.

I set up my tent and had cookies and lemonade for lunch. The campground was beautiful. I read the Return of the King and finished it. It was great.

At 8:00 I went to the museum and toured the marina. I was really low on money and was very hungry. I got another backpack permit for the long trail to Grand Teton and saw another campfire slide production. A real jerk gave a talk on photography in the park.

Back to the campground I walked. Tomorrow I would start my long journey into Grand Teton via the Heart Lake Trail and the Snake River Trail. I cooked some hot cocoa and broth and played the recorder.



Day 13

The next day I packed up. I guess I was supposed to pay $3:00 for the campground fee, but I just walked through the woods to the road. I had ten miles to go to the trailhead. I got picked up by three boys in a VW. There was a little drunk kid in the back who offered me wine. I was at the trailhead in no time.

The first trail led eight miles to Heart Lake. This was a populated trail so much that I had to reserve a campsite. I also met a person about every hour. It was disappointing. The trail was beautiful. It wound through a valley which ran through snow-capped mountains.

I ate my trail lunch about four miles in and walked. Finally I came to a beautiful overlook. It overlooked a small geyser basin, Heart Lake about 3 miles away, and mountains in the distance.

The trail then led down steeply. It was very tiring carrying the 60 lb. pack. Finally I came to Heart Lake. There was an emergency cabin there and quite a few fishermen. I was disappointed that I still wasn't away from people. The campsite I reserved was filled so I decided to walk around to the other side of the lake where there weren't any people. One man decided to camp with me.

I walked about three more miles. The man came with me about 3/4 of the way. I finally came to a place which looked like a good place to camp, so I stayed there. I was very windy, so I didn't set up the tent in fear that the bamboo would break. I fished, caught nothing, made a fire and had veg-a-rice and springs for supper. It was great.

I then hiked up a mountain and saw a beautiful site. I was alone at last, and I didn't see another person for a long time. I felt good up on the mountain. I had come a long way to get to this lake. Now for the rest of the trail I could take it easy, go for as far as I wanted to go per day, do what I wanted to do and stay where I wanted to stay.

It was about forty miles to Grand Teton, and I was on my own. I returned to my tent. The wind was calmer, so I set it up. Inside I listened to Rossini and Hayden and read the appendix to the trilogy. It was great. I had originally planned to stay another day at this lake, but I was

excited to find out what was beyond the mountains.

Day 14

I took my time getting packed the next day. I felt really good. I planned to walk only about five miles to another little lake. The trial was beautiful. There was a lot of swamps, but mainly it was meadow full of a lot of fallen trees, some burnt and still standing forming eerie shapes. Mountains were on both sides of the valley. The trail came to a creek and followed that. I was amazed at the clearness of the rock-bottom water, no weeds, no algae, no bugs. It was cold and great.

The trail continued. I really enjoyed following it. I passed the little lake I planned to stay at after sleeping there for about an hour. A little way farther down the trail I ate tail lunch by the creek. I walked on after sleeping another hour or so. The trail came to an enormous prairie. I was surprised not to see any animals. I had only seen I mule deer all day.

The trail lead across the prairie into a forest. I crossed the prairie and then noticed something moving in the woods ahead. I got really close and noticed it was a herd of elk laying down about 20 of them. I got closer and the elk took off into the woods. They were huge.

I walked on. On the way I found many bones, elk antlers and moose antlers. They were too large to take home. I found a small bone and kept it. Then the trail came to the mighty Snake River. At that point the creek I was following emptied into the Snake. I was on top of a cliff and stood in awe as I saw the rushing Snake which I've heard and read about so much.

The trail followed the Snake for a while, and I found a beautiful campsite by its bank. The river's current was fast. I tried fishing but my lure would not stay out long enough to catch any fish. I set up my tent and built a fire. For supper I had macaroni and cheese, extra great. I hiked up another mountain that night and beheld the mighty Snake winding North, South North South. I hit the sack early that night after playing Water Music and reading more of the appendix. I felt really good, peaceful, alone, and free.

Day 15

The sun shined brightly the next morning. After I checked the map, I figured five more days to Grand Teton. I slowly packed up and was on my way. The terrain was generally the same as the day before, fields with standing dead trees and fallen trees.

For about four miles I walked until I came to a sign one pointing straight ahead saying Harbel 2.5 miles, the pointing west say cut off trail. This trail was a short cut to the trail that went into Grand Teton. Instead of following the Snake River Valley, it led me over the mountains of the valley. Up and up I climbed until I came to a ridge which the trail followed. The Snake was far below.

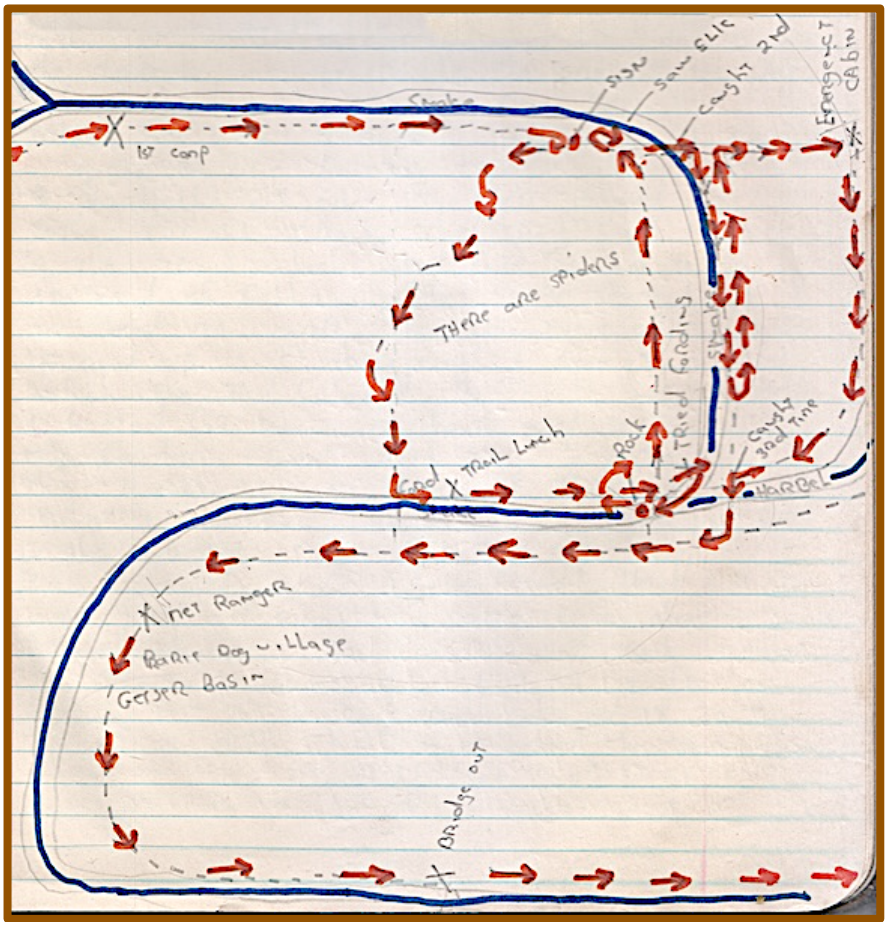
I rested for about a half hour and continued. A mile farther I went and then lost the trail. this really got me worried. For over an hour, I wondered through marsh, wood, and

field in the general direction which I thought the trail should follow. I walked and walked and got very worried. Finally I came to a clearing and across the way I saw a poke and trail marker.

It started to rain and I put on my poncho. I came at last to the trail and followed it to the top of a cliff which overlooked the Snake River again. It was beautiful. Down I went into the Snake River Valley, and I ate my lunch on the banks of the Snake River. The sun was out. It was a great lunch. There I decided that I would have the big meal I was saving so long that night, apple sauce, spaghetti, and Welshes Grape Juice.

At the place where I was eating was according to the map a ford. But the Snake, was over flood stage, like the Yellowstone. The river was about 50 yards across at this point and rushing. I wasn't going to chance crossing it and getting caught in the current. But I had to get to trail on the opposite shore which ran into Grand Teton, so I followed the Snake River south to another ford on the map. It was about two miles away.

I was beginning to worry. Finally, I came to the place. At this point the Snake turned east and the Harbel Trail came into it from the south. There was no way for me to go but back or across. (see map)


1st camp
There are spiders
Trail Lunch
Rock
Tried fording
Harbel
Net Ranger
Prairie Dog village
Geyser Basin
Bridge out

After the river was rapidity and about 40 yards across. After a slight attempt at this point, I gave up hope of crossing here. Above the point where the Harbel entered the Snake wasn't as wide. But the current was strong. I didn't know how deep it was though.

My plan was to cross at this point and then cross the Harbel River to the trail. I entered the water and crossed very slowly. The water was cold But clear. Yet I couldn't see the rocky bottom in the middle of the river. I walked on. before each step I felt for bottom before me with my faithful bamboo tent pole and walking stick. The water came up to the bottom of my sleeping bag.

Two more steps and it was almost at my waist. My sleeping gag was under. This was the point I was little less than 1/2 way across. I knew I could go any farther or I'd be swept by the swift current. I jammed my stick into the rocky bottom downstream to brace a fall and began to turn. I was immediately swept off my feet. I pulled on the stick to stand up again, But my trusty stick snapped. With one painful "oh, no" I went into the Snake with my pack on top of me. I tried to get a footing. It was painfully hopeless.

Once at the point where the Snake turned north, I managed to stand up for about five seconds. I tried so hard to unbuckle the waist strap of my pack, but the current swept me into

the deep water. My pack held me underwater. I gasped for air.

The current of the inflowing Harbel River carried me to the near center of the river. One million thoughts flashed through my mind. One was of a canoe passage I read which said to always point your feet downstream while riding rapids. I struggled to turn around and managed to. Now my feet pointed downstream and I was floating on top of my pack, riding the current.

I could no longer touch bottom. I floated through some rapids but failed to grab on to any rocks. Then I spotted a large tall rock in the middle of the Snake. I flipped and managed to grab the rock. I held on with one arm as my other arm unstrapped my pack waist belt, and two shoulder straps. It was unbearable. I was now holding onto the rock with one arm, my legs were flowing downstream pulling me and I held one shoulder strap with the other hand. I soon released my pack. I quickly grabbed the rock with both hands and tried pulling myself up onto it. I couldn't do it. I thought of many things. I thought of Timmy and Lassie, how Lassie always helped. I thought of the great life I still had to live.

A practical thought ran through my mind. If I were able to get onto the rock there wouldn't be anybody to help me off anyway. I was alone, on my own, and I never regretted it. I released my hold on the rock and after a few more yards of floating I managed to gain a footing on a little

reef of pebbles. I leaped to shore and grabbed a small tree. I crawled on the shore and immediately ran down the shore in search of my pack. I never saw it again.

My new pack, my tent with the hole in it, my telescopic fishing poke and Spin-O'Lure, my tape recorder, Abbey Road, Let It Be, McCartney etc., my sleeping Bag which I had all through my life, my new grill, my camera, all my beautiful pictures, the spaghetti dinner, my moccasins, my glasses, all gone with one release of my hand. Almost everything I worked so hard at Howard Johnsons to buy myself. It was all mine. My years diary was gone as was my $10,000,000 book of songs I'd written; five new songs sense I'd come to Yellowstone. The Return of the Kings was gone, Diane's birthday present, the sunglasses which Charlie gave me and the radio Diane gave me and my itching medicine all gone.

I thought little about my lose at that moment. I was cold, wet, night was coming and clouds were mounting for a storm. I was scared. My thoughts immediately turned to the map which I pictured in my mind. I knew of most the trails and of an emergency cabin about five miles away. I found one trail I knew and followed it. I walked fast.

At one point I stopped because I thought I heard voices. I yelled out, no answer. I walked on. A few miles and behold I came to the sign I had read earlier saying cabin 2.5 miles due

south. I was amazed to realize I was back at this point. I quickly followed the tail in the direction of the cabin.

Soon I was at another ford of the Snake. I had to cross it. I looked up stream and two huge elks were bathing in the river watching me. I felt so helpless. I entered the water again and about halfway the current swept me again. But this time I was only carried about 20 yards before the river turned and I caught a tree branch at the turn. I pulled myself onto the opposite shore. I was on a trail now which I thought led to the cabin. So I followed it and followed it.

The trail followed the Snake River and finally after two mile I decided this wasn't the right one. Back I trotted to the ford and found another trail and followed this. The trail cut through a wood and came to a clearing. Out of the woods bolted a moose which ran past me. Then out hopped three deer who stared at me. I felt so hopeless.

On the trail again, I was getting worried. Then finally I came to a clearing and a tiny cabin. The door was bolted on the cabin so I broke a side window and unlatched the window. I crawled into the dark cabin. It was about sundown and the storm was upon the cabin. I thanked God I had finally found the cabin. I first found a Coleman lantern and lit it. The rays of light revealed a pot belly stove and a huge pile of wood in one corner of the log cabin, a cabinet in one corner, blankets, mattresses,

and pots hanging on the wall. Next, I opened the cabinet and found some food. I ate Saltines and cookies. I built a fire in the pot Belly stove and oven to warm up the place.

Next, I took a large pan outside to the nearby creek and got water. It was raining, thundering and lightning. Inside the cabin I set up an army cot By the stove, heated up some water and dry milk and drank hot cocoa. I took off my clothes to dry them out and laid on the cot. I cooked some dehydrated peaches. I add cookies, hot cocoa, and peaches in the cot.

The lantern went out, but the stove lit the cabin. It was so perfect and peaceful. Yet all I had left was my windbreaker, canteen, knife, compass, boots, sweatshirt, jeans, and my Der Verien T-shirt. Yet at that moment I didn't think about the loss. I just thought of how nice it all was in a tiny cabin, drinking hot cocoa by a pot belly stove snuggled in blankets on a cot with thunder roaring and rain on the roof, eating cookies twenty miles from any other person or building. It was great.

Day 16

I rose early the next day. I had another beautiful dream that night. Every night at Yellowstone I had a beautiful dream. It was amazing. Without getting out of the cot, I opened a window to let the sun shined in. I made a fire and hot cocoa then slept some more.

The second time I woke up, I made pancakes. I walked outside, got more water, and mixed some Bisquick. I heated up the pan But the pancakes looked bad without eggs. Then I found some instant pancakes mix just add water and made that. The pancakes were great. I had Tang, hot cocoa and pancakes and syrup.

I was very tempted to stay at the cabin another day But I talked myself out of it, so I washed the dishes, swept the floor, and cleaned up. I found a great map which showed a trail to the nearest ranger station 12 miles away.

But the trail forded the Harbel River right where it entered the Snake. But the trail did follow the Snake, and I thought I might find my pack on the way, so I said good-bye to the cabin and walked on. It was 3 miles to the ford. The trail was beautiful, and I sang most of the way.

Then I came to the ford. I looked bad very Bad. But with all my experience I decided to try it. I had to. I had but some crackers, matches and the map from the cabin. I put those in my sweatshirt and wrapped it around my neck. I entered the water. I chose to cross at a point where the river ran in two channels with an island in the middle. The first channel was fairly easy to cross, but the channel on the other side of the island looked really bad.

I entered the second channel. I was so scared that I'd be swept in the Snake again. I made it over half way, but the river still got deeper. Then I felt myself again being swept away. I leaped for the opposite shore and caught a branch of an outgrowing tree. I pulled myself on to shore. Boy was I happy.

I was finally safe I thought. I found the trail and headed north. After a little way I saw three men with packs trying to ford the Snake. I talked with them and said forget it. I walked on. I was totally wet again as were my crackers and map.

The trial followed the Snake awhile, then cut into the woods. I walked very fast. Finally after a long way I came upon a ranger with a

pack going up to the cabin to check it out. I told him what happened and what I did and he said I did the right thing. Then he said I had about 7 miles more to go to the trails end. But the bridge over the Snake was out to get to the ranger station, so I'd have to go way south till I came to a car bridge, then hitchhike back.

I walked on. The trail was beautiful but long. Then the trail cut out to the Snake again. The shore of the Snake was beautiful. The rock formations were incredible and there was a geyser basin and hot pools. Running among the rocks were scores of prairie dogs. It was incredible. I walked on through a deep marsh, through woods and finally I came to the end of the trail.

I was about 200 yards from the ranger station but the Snake separated me from that. I started south along the shores of the Snake. I soon passed a Yellowstone Park boundary marker. I walked on hoping to see a bridge but it never came. I walked on and on. I had to climb up cliffs when there wasn't any bank. Down I climbed, up I climbed. It was terrible, woods, mud slides, deer, beautiful overlooks.

From one overlook I saw the Snake winding south for miles, but I saw no bridge. I kept on. I lost my map, socks and hope on the way. I was a muddy, hairy, wet mess. It was terrible. Then I finally heard the roar of cars and around one more bend I saw it, the bridge. Still two creeks, a brush and a deep marsh

separated me from it. But my hope was back and I crossed these barriers. I was finally on the bridge. Across the bridge was a complex called Flagg Ranch, a gift shop and grocery store. I spent a long while there and bought a box of cookies.

I found out that I was five miles south of Yellowstone and ten miles North of Grand Teton. I left Flagg Ranch and walked toward Yellowstone. I walked and hitchhiked. I felt so helpless standing there 1000 miles from home in the middle of nowhere. No one would stop to pick up that dirty scum with dirty pants, filthy jacket, torn sweatshirt, dirty face and hands, sloppy hair.

I stopped walking. I stood there munching my cookies. It rained. It poured. Then for the first time on the whole trip I cried. I went into the woods and bawled so the cars wouldn't see me. Then I got up and hitchhiked some more.

Finally a blessed man swerved to the side of the road and picked me up. He was a photographer, traveling through Jackson Hole to take pictures. We came to Yellowstone and drove a stretch of the road I hadn't taken before. We passed Lewis Lake and Canyon. The guy stopped on the way to take pictures. Then we passed Henry Lake trailhead where it all began only a few days ago.

The guy drove me to Grant Village. There the ranger station was closed so I got to the visitor's center and found a ranger. I gave her

my permit and told her my story. She said she would report the loss. So there I was.

Next, I tried hitchhiking to Fishing Bridge to get a cabin. That was my only hope for a place to sleep that night. Luck was with me. After 10 minutes a man picked me up. He was great. He was going all the way to Lake. He was working at Yellowstone on the new freeway through the park. This new freeway was ridiculous. Already there were cloverleaves and ramps.

The guy left me off a Lake. Then I hiked to Fishing Bridge. Luck was with me. They had a rustic cabin for four left. I cost me $4.50 with a blanket rental. I got my cabin, got woods, and made a fire. Then I called home again and told Diane what happened. I went to the store and rebought her birthday present, an ice cream cone, Pepsi quart, and Jiffy pop. It was about 8:00.

I then went to the campfire talk and low and behold that idiot talking on photography was there. I went back to the cabin and cooked the Jiffy Pop and Pepsi and hit the blanket.

Day 17 & 18

I got up at 7:00 the next day. I knew this had to be the last day in Yellowstone. I couldn't afford another one. I checked right out away, bought some licorice, and started hitchhiking north.

Then all the luck in the world struck me. After fifteen minutes of hitchhiking two boys picked me up. They were unbelievably nice. Ed and Bill were from Washington. They had driven to Minneapolis to visit relatives and were driving back. But they wanted to see Yellowstone all in one day, so I took them through the entire park. First, we went North to Tower Falls. The way was beautiful. the road rounded cliffs and mountains. They had a Road-runner with 8-track stereo.

They fed me baloney sandwiches after baloney sandwich. I must have had over fifteen total. It was great. We stopped at Tower Falls.

About the only place I hadn't been. Ed Bought me coffee, and we saw the falls.

West to Mammoth Hot Springs went we. We saw those. Seventeen days ago I first camped at Yellowstone. Ed had a Polaroid and took pictures. Next, we went South to Norris Geyser Basin. It was still fantastic the second time. I said "hi" to my favorite geyser "Little Whirlygig" and left. I ate more Baloney sandwiches at Tower Falls.

They also bought me more bread and baloney. It was great. 35 miles south we went to Old Faithful. But first I had the thrill of my life just north of Norris. First, we saw a bison. The moose was OK, but the car jam that occurred was unbelievable. At Fishing Bridge there were was a moose and baby and 20 cars. I walked right by in front of 20 cameras. Here the poor bison was surrounded by photographers. It was funny.

Then about five more miles it happened. I saw my first bear. There were about ten cars in the bear jam. Ed wanted a picture, so bill threw a piece of bread at the bear and it came towards our car. Ed got out, and the bear came to the car and put its huge paws on the bottom of the window that was up. I was about 1/8" away from it. Ed got a Beautiful picture of the bear on the car.

Finally we came to Old Faithful. We were an hour early for the eruption so we sat an hour

and waited. The eruption was great in the blue sky. It was my third and last witness.

We moved on back up North to the West Entrance and left Yellowstone for the last time, for good, too soon, at last, it was a great trip. We drove to W. Yellowstone City and north through Montana. It was beautiful, mountains, rivers, ranches.

Then we came to Bozeman. They drove me out of their way to catch the bus at a gas station. Ed Bought me a Pepsi, and we said good-bye. I'll never forget them. They were beautiful people.

I walked through downtown Bozeman to the bus depot. It was about 6:30. The bus left at 9:30 so I bought a lot of candy and pop first. Then I walked around a bit.

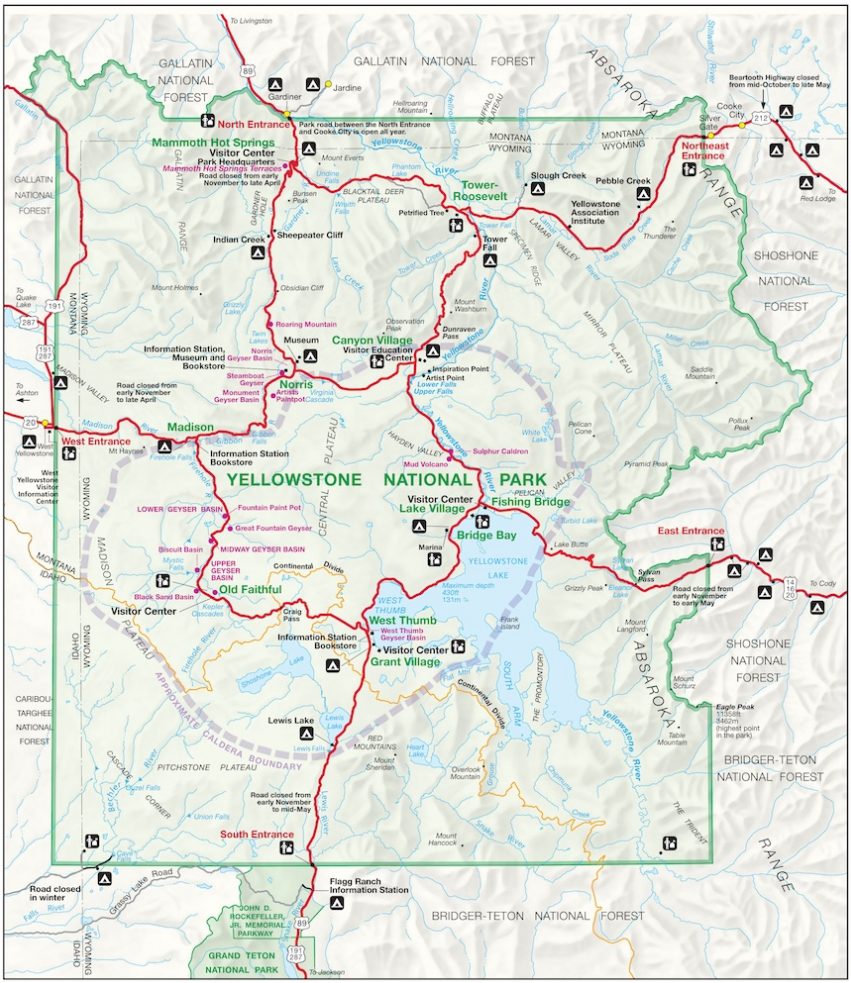
I went to a movie *Le Mans* at the downtown Bozeman theater. The movie was great, cheap, and cheered me up. It was over at 9:00 and I caught the bus. Back on the Greyhound was I. I sat by a Black guy, weird. He carried books about 100 of them on his lap all the way to Bismarck and never left the bus.

At Bismarck, a freak from NY sat by me. We talked a lot. It was a long ride. But finally there I was in Minneapolis at 11:30 P.M. I quickly went to Hennepin Ave to try and catch a bus home. But they didn't run late on Sunday so I called home and Dad brought me home.

I entered the house. There was home, Mom, Duchy, the TV, Dad, six dozen

doughnuts, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, and milk. I felt like I just left this place. It felt good to be home. But it didn't feel like I'd been on a Great Adventure. I felt strange, so I ate first and looked at my slides of Yellowstone.

I felt like I just had woken up from a beautiful dream of adventure, beauty, survival, spectacle. I was home. Only two nights ago, I was in that river. I have little to show to prove to myself that it wasn't a dream.


YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK
GALLATIN NATIONAL FOREST
North Entrance
Mammoth Hot Springs
Visitor Center
Park Headquarters
Mammoth Hot Springs Terraces
Road closed from early November to late April
Park road between the North Entrance and Cooke City is open all year.
Gardiner
Jardine
Cooke City
Silver Gate
Beartooth Highway closed from mid-October to late May
Northeast Entrance
Tower-Roosevelt
Slough Creek
Pebble Creek
Yellowstone Association Institute
Petrified Tree
Tower Fall
Indian Creek
Sheepeater Cliff
Canyon Village
Visitor Education Center
Museum
Information Station, Museum and Bookstore
Norris
Artists Paintpot
Steamboat Geyser
Monument Geyser Basin
Road closed from early November to late April
Madison
West Entrance
Information Station Bookstore
Inspiration Point
Artist Point
Lower Falls
Upper Falls
Sulphur Caldron
Mud Volcano
Lake Village
Visitor Center
Fishing Bridge
Bridge Bay
Marina
East Entrance
Road closed from early November to early May
LOWER GEYSER BASIN
Fountain Paint Pot
Great Fountain Geyser
MIDWAY GEYSER BASIN
UPPER GEYSER BASIN
Old Faithful
Biscuit Basin
Black Sand Basin
Visitor Center
Craig Pass
West Thumb
West Thumb Geyser Basin
Visitor Center
Grant Village
Information Station Bookstore
Lewis Lake
Road closed from early November to mid-May
South Entrance
Flagg Ranch Information Station
Road closed in winter
JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR. MEMORIAL PARKWAY
GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK
BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST
SHOSHONE NATIONAL FOREST
ABSAROKA RANGE
PITCHSTONE PLATEAU
APPROXIMATE CALDERA BOUNDARY
YELLOWSTONE LAKE
MONTANA
WYOMING
IDAHO