

Our Trip West: The 1923 Diary of Pete and Flo Johnson

NPS History Collection (HFCA-01653)

This document is a transcription of a 1923 diary kept by Pete and Flo Johnson, a West Virginia couple, on a trip west including visits to eight national parks. The transcript has been prepared by Nancy Russell and Elizabeth Loomer of the NPS History Collection. To retain the original “feel” of the diary, spelling errors are noted with [sic] but have not been changed. Their sentence structure and punctuation remain. The bold text on the dates have been added to make it easier to read. Any other information added for clarity is within square brackets [].

Special note: Practices in the 1920s aren’t consistent with how the NPS manages its resources and visitor safety today. Please do not approach or feed wildlife or get too close to geysers as Pete and Flo did. When visiting a national park, rangers can provide you with information about marked trails, safety, and other available services.

Our Trip West

Mr. & Mrs. R. P. Johnson

June 5th to August 20th, 1923

Purchased book in Indianapolis June 9th

15,396 [Starting odometer reading]

Tuesday, June 5: Left Parkersburg at 1:30 via of Athens. On thru Logan Lanchester [Lancaster] Kirksville Newark. Had an awful hard driving rain outside of Lanchester [Lancaster]. Granville 9:00. Got room with Mrs. Rolley. 124 mi.

Wednesday, June 6: Went up to the house and saw a lot of fellows. Took a look at the athletic field. Went to house for dinner. Went down to Letha (Whitier/Jacksons). Marion and Jim Whitier were there also. “Our wedding anniversary-(1) one year.”

Thursday, June 7th: Flo went into Columbus with Letha. I went to Newark to get a cut out. I loafed around on the hill. Decided to leave at 3:30. Got away at 6:30. Flo had her hair bobbed. Had a real hard rain. Parked in camp on West Broad. Cold damp night. 28 mi.

Friday, June 8th: Left Columbus at 9:30. Springfield saw John Rosenthal. Dayton Richmond Ind. Greenfield. Had puncture in R Rear. Saw James Whitcomb Riley’s birthplace. Indianapolis 7:00. Went up to speedway. Couldn’t get inside. Ate and went to bed. Park is on Riverside Drive 2 miles from speedway. 178.5 mi.

Saturday, June 9th: Went to see Fort Benjamin Harrison. No fort just quarters. Very pretty. Changed oil and left at 10:15. Had poor detour just before Terra Haute. Beautiful drive between green fields of wheat as far as one could see. Shot my revolver at a groundhog but missed him. Came on to St. Louis at 8:30. Found camp at 9:30 in Forest Park. Ate and went to bed. 246 miles.

Sunday, June 10th: Got up and had breakfast late. Walked over to see the zoo. Came back and had lunch. Packed up and went sights seeing. Went to the art museum then out King's Highway then to the Shaw's Botanical Garden. Then across the Mississippi twice. So foggy that we couldn't see much. Not much larger than the Ohio. Went down along the bank and watched a excursion boat come in, then to the Catholic cathedral and back to the campground and bed.

Monday, June 11th: Got up early and started on way to Kansas City, about 8:00. Cold rainy day. Sticky Missouri mud can't be beat. About 27 mi out of St. Louis a string of cars were held up for about 3 hours for a car stuck up. Got to Jonesburg about 6 and it was still raining. Park in the school yard of the little village. Only 75 mi but we were willing to call it a day.

Tuesday, June 12th: Started out at 8:00. Roads drier. Came to Marshall Camp. Crossed the Missouri on ferry at Richport [Rocheport]. Pete shot at rabbit and we cleaned it before we got to camp. 125 mi.

Wednesday June 13th: Left at 8:00. Roads quite a bit better but still damp. Got to Kansas City about 2:00. Parked and I washed the car. Had nice evening in camp and nice chat with a fellow and wife from Cal[ifornia].

Thursday June 14th: Got up and started to get ready to go down town but it rained. In the afternoon went downtown to get some rain coats. I got a black one. Came back and Paraffined our tent roof. Went down street and got something to eat.

Friday June 15th: Fixed the poles for the tent. Cleaned up around camp. Went down town and got a water bag, stool, table and some fishing tackle. Car was gone when we came out and we found it at the police station taken for violation of the parking ordinance. Came back and got all set for an early start in the morning.

Saturday June 16th: Started out about 8. Looked very rainy, so we fooled around undecided just what to do, thot [sic] we would go to Leavenworth for the day, if not any farther but met a family from Wheeling (Nickisons) who were on their way to Topeka and on, so we decided to go together. Found the roads fine and had a good day so we made 153 mi. Stayed in Junction City camp.

Sunday June 17th: Started for Denver. Nickisons also. They left us at Russell. We saw our first real west and got a piece of cactus. During the afternoon had quite a bit of trouble with the engine heating. We took some pictures where we got the cactus and also had lunch. Had dinner at WaKeeney so we could drive on at night but did not drive far. It seemed so lonely. Stayed all night in camp grounds at Quinter. It was hard to get the tent up on account of so much wind. 212 mi.

Monday June 18th: Left about 6:30. Had fine roads. Flo felt awful bad for a while. Engine kept heating. Changed fan belt carburetor and at Flager [Flagler] changed timing. Rain hailed and a very strong wind stopped us at Flager [Flagler] Colo[rado] at 4:30. We had to park at the hotel over night. 180 miles.

Tuesday June 19th: Started out about 8:00. Had bad roads for a while. Good detour over the hills through a field just a few miles out. That bird at Flager [Flagler] made the engine so it would miss. Still heated up. Got to Denver about 3:00. Spent from 3 to 5 at Norton Buick trying to get the engine fixed up but they could find the trouble. Got our mail. Came out to Overland Park. Fine place. Hot shower stores and everything. Had a good bath.

Wednesday June 20th: Went down town and got some things. Came back and washed car. Put new brake rod in for each brake and fixed up the brakes. Went down town. Got Flo some tweed knickers and went out to see Berkly, Rock Mountain (?) and City Parks. Capitol building and lots of the town. Came home and ate and read some of the literature.

Thursday June 21st: Went down and had the car fixed. [\$]10.50 new plugs. Got packed up and got some things and started out. Came to Golden up Lookout Mt. Saw Buffalo Bill's grave and relics. It sure was a pull up the Mt. Very crooked road. Then went on to Echo Lake 1050 ft above sea level. Then back to Bergen Park where we are staying all night. 17261

Friday June 22nd: Got started around 7:45. Went to Idaho Springs. Saw Monument on spot where gold was first discovered in the Rockies. Crossed the Continental Divide via Berthoud Pass then to Grand Lake. Went thru some snow on the pass. The lake was quite large and extremely clear. No bottom in some places. Left Grand Lake at 3:30 for Estes Park. The roads were rather bad. They had just been opened up after a bad snowstorm two days before. We came thru snow on each side higher than the car. Scratched a little paint off the top. The scenery was grand especially from Milner Pass (Con[tinental] Divide) on this side. We drove for 5 miles about half the time in snow. They certainly have some real scenery around here. Camped just about 3 miles out of Estes Park. 17379-118 mi.

Saturday June 23rd: Came to Estes Park then to Loveland via Big Thompson Canyon. It was very pretty. We saw several irrigation dams. One very pretty and took picture of it. Then into Denver expecting to go through the Mint but it was closed to visitors indefinitely. We then decided to come out to Colorado Springs. Got there just after dark. Parked in Stonewall Camping Grounds just outside of Manitou.

Sunday June 24th: Went up to Pikes Peak in a Cadillac. It is a wonderful road smooth steep and wide. Very crooked. Not very much snow. Not as much as we hit Thursday. There is a wonderful view from the top and from various places all the way up. We saw the cog railroad, a tablet set on the top by the Masons and one to General Pike. We went up and came down via the Ute Pass. Famous Indian trail and the one the Gold seekers used in the forties. Got back about 1:30 ate and then took the 40 mile circle trip in a Pierce Arrow. It sure is some car. First we went to the Cave of the Winds. That certainly is a place not to be missed. It is on three levels and simply grand. Men who started it paid \$1000 for it and now take in 2000 a day often. Met a Phi from Colo[rado] Beta who was a guide in it. We then went to the Garden of the Gods. Had various rocks pointed out to us. The Kissing Camels. Queen of the Gardens. Castle Rock. Cathedral Rocks. Elephant Rock. Faith, Hope, & Charity Rocks, etc. We saw the Petrified Indians or Cliff Dweller. Helen Hunt Jackson named the Rocks. 2 Pueblo Indians who gave a little dance the Gateway of the Gods (got a hand painted picture of it). We then went to South Cheyenne Canyon

thru the Pillars of Hercules to the Seven Falls. They were beautiful. Climbed the stairs by them. The water was as clear as a crystal. The white water spray adding much to the beauty of the falls. Came back and I greased the car getting ready for a trip to Canyon City [Cañon City] and Royal Gorge. I never was so tired in all my life I believe. 17565

Monday June 25th: Left Manitou and went over to the Cripple Creek Gold Mining District. Went thru the Mary McKinny mine. Went down shaft 1350 ft and a man explained how gold was mined. Got ourselves a couple of samples. Then came on to Canon City [Cañon City]. Went thru the Colorado State Penitentiary and got souvenir letter opener. Then went thru the tunnel drive into the mouth of the Royal Gorge. It sure is a gorge. We then went out and drove to the top of the canyon. We then walked down the east rim of the canyon and saw the hanging bridge of the Denver & Rio Grande RR [railroad]. The gorge is indeed a real thrill. We have seen nothing to equal it in beauty. We came back to Canyon City [Cañon City] via Skyline drive. It was a thrill almost equal to the R[oyal] Gorge. Saw a beautiful sunset. Came on to Pueblo. 17718

Tuesday June 26th: Went out to see the San Isobel [Isabel] Forest and got badly stung. It wasn't worth the effort. Came on to Raton. Crossed the pass. Very easy grade. 17882

Wednesday June 27th: On the road on the west of Las Vegas as we passed thru a rather quaint village San Jose. All Dobe [adobe] houses low and full of Mexicans. Had a rim bust in the Virginian tire. Don't know when we can get it fixed. Stopped in Santa Fe. It certainly is a quaint town. 18068

Thursday June 28th: Came to Albuquerque area and spent from 2:30 on trying to find a man who sold caterpillar tires. Got stuck in a ditch and spend three hours getting out and then had puncture in R R [right rear] tire. Tube shot. Put a different one in and then found our man and he did not handle them any more. Spent the night there. Had windstorm that blew sand all thru everything. 18146

Friday June 29th: Had blowout in Rio Grande [tire]. Retread. Threw it away. Put on the Goodyear. Had puncture in Oldfield. Came out to Socorro and traded the Goodyear for \$5 in on WSR Card. Put it on front left and replaced Talbot [tire] on Rear. Drove until late and stayed in Quemado. 18333

Saturday June 30th: Drove from Quemado to Holbrook and thru. Bought a Fisk cord [tire]. \$32.60 Came to Winslow. Bought a new brake rod and put on to replace one broke. Got my first tase of alkali water. Not so bad. 18517

Came thru the Petrified Forest. Got souvenirs.

Sunday July 1st: Came out of Winslow on some awful rock road. Left at 8:15 got to Flagstaff at 12:30. 68 miles. Came on to Grand Canyon. Had blow out in LR [left rear] Talbot [tire] 4 mi out of G[rand] Canyon. Put Fisk [tire] on. Got our first view of Grand Canyon a little after sunset. It sure is nature's masterpiece. Words can't express its beauty. 18665

Monday July 2nd: Got up late. Went up to look at the Canyon. Went to Kolb Bros [Brothers] to hear the lecture and see the motion pictures going down the canyon in boats. It certainly was

good. We then took the Rim drive. Had some wonderful views of the canyon. Came back and saw some Indian dances. Bought some curios.

Tuesday July 3rd: Got up and went down the Canyon on mules. It sure was a rough ride down. Saw some wonderful views of the cliff. 7 ½ miles down. It sure was hot down at the bottom. It was a lot better coming back. Got back at about 5:00 ate and then drove to Maine [Arizona]. 18746

Wednesday July 4th: Left Maine and drove on thru. Had puncture in WSR Cord [tire]. Came on thru Needles to Klinefelters Camp. It sure was a hot drive. 18972

Thursday & Friday July 5th and 6th: Stayed in camp all day. It sure was hot. Had quite a chat with Frank Graff a relation of Graffs of Parkersburg. He is now located in Wyoming. Left around 6:00 and drove to Ludlow and stayed there from 1:00 until 5:00. A Los Angeles man in a Hudson Graff and another car made the party. Our desert drive was right comfortable. Not much different country from what we had been over. Got up at 5:00 and came on thru to Long Beach. Had to drive thru a sand storm just outside of Victorville. We struck the pavement then. Came over Cajon Pass. Very beautiful & different. Then on into Cal[ifornia] proper. This certainly is a wonderland. Everything is so well kept and the homes so beautiful. Our camp at Long Beach impresses us as a mess. Saw the Pacific. Boy it was worth the trip. 19275

Saturday July 7th: Flo washed and I took the car down to see about generator. Man changed the brush [?] and it worked alright. Went down and took in some amusements. Had fine time on rolly coasters etc.

Sunday July 8th: Got up and went to Catalina Island. Went over to the SS Avalon. Had real nice ride, danced a little and looked to the rear. Took ride at Avalon on glass bottom boat and saw submarine gardens. Then took a ride along the island in the Betty O and saw the dry seals on seal rock. Came back on the Hermosa boat in about 8:30. Fine day. Flow was sea sick on way back. 19315

Monday July 9th: Got up and went down about car. Front axle bent and wheels out of line. Came back ate and went swimming. Came back about 7:30 and ate and went to bed. Had fine time. Surf not as violent as on East Coast. 19346

Tuesday July 10th: Got up and tried to get started. Got started about 11:30. Came down the Coast Route. It sure was pretty the surf on one side and the mountains on the other. Got to San Diego at 6pm. Ate at Balboa Park. Peach of a place and then went onto Chula Vista to find Gross's. After inquiry we found them by shore in Coronado 963 J St. Drove on over. Got there about 10pm. Had nice chat and then bed. We sure were glad to see them and they us. 19486

Wednesday July 11th: Got up late and got ready to go to Tia Juana [Tijuana] Mex[ico]. Left about 11:30 got there about 1:30. It certainly is a loose town. Had lunch at the Foreign Club. Looked around in the curio store. Came back and saw the Plant then on home. Dinner and a ride around town in Gross' Star [Durant Motors company 1922, Star Car]. Very nice. Went to hear band concert. 19528.

Thursday July 12th: Got lunch and went over to San Diego and Mrs. Gross had hair bobbed. I got some money and we went to Balboa Park and had lunch. Went to see the zoo and Mission Cliff Gardens. Came back. Had dinner and chatted till bed time. Gross's 963 J St. Coronado, Cal. 19550

Friday July 13th: Left Grosses, went over to San Diego had the front wheel straightened. Took until 11:30. Got into Los Angeles about 6. Looked for the mail then went to Lockwood Auto Camp. After dinner we went to a musical comedy. No good.

Saturday July 14th: Took the car down to get the ignition fixed. Took until 2. We then went to see about the tires, traded the Oldfield [tire] for Firestone and one Talbot [tire] for another \$47.50. Changed oil and went back to camp. Ate and went to San Gabriel Mission and the Mission play. It certainly was a vivid story of the struggles of the Spanish padres to settle Cal[ifornia]. Then the second act Missions at their height the third in ruins.

Sunday July 15th: Got up and went to Hollywood. Saw the Million dollar home of a Jap[anese] Importer. It certainly was a grand home & grounds. Jap[anese] gardens statues etc. Home inlaid with gold. Then we went past Doug Fairbanks & Mary Pickford's studios. Saw inside of Dougs and saw scenery of Robin Hood. Then we went to Beverly Hills and saw the homes of various stars and the big hotel. Then over to Pasadena and saw the stadium of the Tournament of the Roses and a lot more beautiful homes. Then thru Los [Angeles] and about 75 mi on the Ridge Road. It certainly was a delightful drive. Long, slight grade, winding in and out of the mountains. Parked 4 mi on southwest of Lebec. 19853

Monday July 16th: Came on thru Bakersfield & up to Sequoia NP [National Park]. Had to wait from 2:45 till 5:30 on account of a control road. Then started up to the park. It was an extremely winding road rather rough. The sunset was very beautiful setting down among the lower peaks as seen from the colossal trees. It was indeed a "different" drive and one not to be forgotten. Got up to park and parked about 9:00. 20034

Tuesday July 17th: Got up and went out to see General Sherman Tree the largest and oldest living thing in the world. The Giant Forest is a glorious place to camp in. Then came back and went out to see Moro Rock. Climbed it and had a fine view of the range in all four directions. Coming back we saw 3 does and took a couple of pictures of them. Left about 2:30 and drove into Gen[eral] Grant Park via Woodlake & Badger. Arrived 9:00. Nice drive. 20115

Wednesday July 18th: Got up late. Decided that the park had nothing much to see so started for Fresno. Got there about 2:30. Came on thru Merced and on towards Yosemite. Parked at Mineral Springs about 15 mi west of Wawona. We are up in the mountains again right by a mountain brook. 20288

Thursday July 19th: Drove on to the Mariposa Big Trees. Drove thru the California Tree and Wawona Tree then on thru Wawona to Yosemite. Had a control road down into the valley. It sure was steep. Came to the valley and on thru to Bridal Veil Falls. Climbed to the foot of them. Words can't express the beauty of the rainbow perfect and almost a complete circle that we saw in the pool at the foot. Went thru the village and on past Camp Curry. Attended their

entertainment and saw the Fire Fall from Glacier Point. Very beautiful. We then went to the dance and had several dances.

Friday July 20th: Got up and got started about 8 o'clock. Went up thru Happy Isles and then up to the Vernal Falls. Then to the top of them and on to the foot of Nevada Falls. This was indeed some climb but it was fully worth the effort. They were beautiful. Both are the Merced River. We then went on to Mirror Lake and then to the zoo and then to Yosemite Falls. Here the water certainly does drop over a thousand feet. I climbed up about 2/3 of the way up the lower falls as far as I could go and took a picture side view. Then we came down past Yosemite Lodge a beautiful place. Had a very interesting talk with a ranger there. We then drove down towards El Portal and back to the El Capitan checking station and on out. Road not bad nor steep but it made up for that beyond the control station. Camped at Carl's Inn right by the creek. 20393

Saturday July 21st: Left early and came up and down some very steep grades. Came through San Jose Mission into Palo Alto. Stopped with Mr. and Mrs. Gatts 319 Alma St. Had good bath & rest. After dinner had drive in the Gat's [sic] car by the Leland Stanford U[niversity]. 20565

Sunday July 22nd: Got up late. After breakfast loafed around then went to the university & walked around through the grounds and saw the chapel. It is beautiful. Came home had diner and just sat around until late. Went for short drive.

Monday July 23rd: Pete went to bank, while I fixed some plumbs Mrs. Gatts wanted us to bring along. Got started for San Francisco about 11. Went thru the Golden Gate Park went down to beach. Saw cliff house, Sutro Baths. Saw forts & Golden Gate. Went by the Presidio, Place of Fine Arts. Took in the Turin Peak drive where one gets a wonderful view of the city. Parked the car in Palace Hotel Garage. Went to dinner. Had a French dinner & lots of fun. Went at 8:00 with a party on the sight seeing bus to Chinatown. Great evening only a bit disappointed in Chinatown. Bot [sic] an incense burner in Sing Fats & Cos. Got the 11:15 ferry to Oakland (no camp close in at San F[rancisco]). Heard about Maggie & Jenks—Dirty and Pickles weddings.

Tuesday July 24th: Went up to Berkley [sic] University of Calif[ornia]. Not nearly so pretty as Stanford. Saw The Greek theater. I found Loucile Shippherd and talked to her while Pete went to see about a Calif[ornia] certificate. Left about 11:30. Had a puncture Firestone on right rear (stone-cut). Later had another puncture in spare we had put on. Came to Arbuckle & camped. 20760

Wednesday July 25th: Left about 8:30. Came on north. Had some rough gravel roads and another puncture. Came on in almost to Ashland, Ore[gon]. 266. 21026

Thursday July 26th: Got up early and went to Crater Lake Park. 82 mi of rather rough road. Got there about noon, only stayed about an hour. The lake is perfectly beautiful. Came back to Medford to the Merricks Motor Inn. The nicest camp we have had 50¢ & every thing some one could want. Had a wash rack so we washed the car, had dinner then a good hot shower put on our bathing suits & went to the pool in the camp. 21196

Friday July 27th: Left about 6:30 Came to Roseburg 100 mi. by 11:00 and had battery and box fixed. Came on into Portland. Saw Paper Pulp Mills and Columbia River. Parked in Municipal Camp at 7:30. 314 miles-10 ½ hours 21510

Saturday July 28th: Got up and went to post office and left tire to be fixed and started up the Columbia River Highway. It certainly is a glorious drive. The scenery is gorgeous. Rocks, waterfalls, tunnels thru mountains, gorges, etc. It is a grand drive all they claim. We went up to The Dalles. There we had a leak in the gas tank fixed. Discovered I had lost some travelers checks. Came back down past Hood City [city of Hood River?] and went back on the hill and saw Mt. Hood in the distance, a beautiful snow covered mountain. 130 mi. 21639

Sunday July 29th: Drove to Portland. We camped about 60 mi out on the Columbia Highway. Found out about the road to Seattle & got started about 11:00. Had paved roads all but about 25 mi. Saw small forest fire. Camped next to a stand and service station in the edge of Seattle. Got there about 8:30. Fresh salmon for dinner 21914

Monday July 30th: Got up and came on up into Seattle. Next to Hudson Bay Co[mpany] Store. Got route to Vancouver BC [British Columbia] and started out about 10:30. Went thru the customs houses and came on into Canada. Got to Vancouver at 6:00. Drove around town and down to the C.P.R. depot & Ferry. Had nice talk with man about tie off boat, etc. Drove around Stanley Park then out to camp. 22083

Tuesday July 31st: Got up late and went down to the boat. Boat left about 1:30. Had nice trip. I greased the car on the way. Left Nanaimo about 5:30 and had a very pretty drive down to Victoria. Drove along the edge of water most of the way. It was beautiful. Parked about 9:00

Wednesday August 1st: Got into Victoria about 8:00. First place of interest was the Parliamentary Building. A little boy took u [sic] through & to the dome where we could get a good view of the city. The interior all made of Italian marble in this room hangs a large hand painted picture of the King & Queen. We next took the Marine Drive, then we drove down the street where the Gov[ernor] general of B.C. [British Columbia] lives & where all the pretty homes are. Many homes are built on the old English style & a great many things on the entire island makes one think of England. We were in a hurry to make the 10:45 boat so we started for Sidney, but took the side drive to see the Butchart's Gardens which are very famous with its Japanese and Sunken Gardens. It was very pretty but we we[re] two [sic] rushed to see and appreciate it all. We made the boat just in time. Had lovely ride over, got into Bellingham about 2:30. Short distance out from there discovered our Firestone, bot [sic] in Los Angeles had gone bad. Came loose from the head in a big place. Stopped unusually early (about 6:30) about 30 minutes out of Seattle. Talked with some very interesting folks from Ohio. 22280

Thursday August 2nd: Went into Seattle. Need to see about the Firestone first thing. He gave us a new one for \$10, so we figured we are out only about \$5 on the tire. Went to Hudson Bay Co[mpany]. Got a fellow by the name of Jameson Early of Huntington a reporter to get a check cashed. Left and came towards Spokane. Had fine roads. Crossed the Cascades and then drove to the Columbia River. It was beautiful. Reminded one of a great deal of the Grand Canyon. Vantage Ferry. The sunset was glorious. Came on just outside Quincy and ran out of gas. Filled

the Vacuum Tank and came into a gas station He filled up the vacuum tank and kerosene (?) and it has been missing ever since. Monkeyed with it a lot. Our lights went bad and a cop stopped us. We fixed them with a string and then monkeyed with the engine again and finally parked. Winchester. 22499.

Friday August 3rd: Got up and limped on down the road about 50 mi. I cleaned the spark plugs and it worked alright after that when the choke was on. Met a big bump and bent rim but got it fixed alright. Came on into Spokane. Had carburetor adjusted [unclear] fixed also lights. Saw the falls in the heart of the city. They certainly were beautiful. Came on out past Coure-d-Elaine [Coer d'Alene] Idaho and parked on the east side of the Mt. 22703.

Saturday August 4th: Had some quite steep and some rather rough Mt. roads. Drove into Missoula. Got gas and another brake rod. Came on out about 25 mi and parked. I greased the car and tried to fix the muffler & adjust the brakes. 22872

Sunday August 5th: We did not put up tent and got rained on a little. Nothing hurt tho [sic]. Cleared up in the morning but we got a little rain that had been threatening for two days. Had some poor and some fine roads. Saw some mighty pretty scenery. Drove into Livingstone and parked for the night. 23122

Monday August 6th: Got some groceries and left for Gardner. Very pretty drive. Saw the Devil's Slide. Got some gas and entered the park. Came to Mammoth Springs and got our park booklet. Saw the Sulphur lime spring terraces. They certainly were beautiful. All colors with boiling water running down over them. Saw also the White Elephant and the Devils Kitchen. Came on thru Silver Gate and Golden Gate. The rocks here looked like real gold and had a very pretty water fall down over a sort of a cliff between the walls of the canyon. Came directly out of the rocks into a beautiful mountain valley, Swan Lake Valley. All along the way were little lakes and boiling springs. One called the Frying Pan was typical of its name. Saw Roaring Mt. The Tavern Lakes blue & green. Parked at Norris Junction Ranger Station Camp. While I went fishing Flo saw a cute little cub bear. I caught nothing. 23209.

Tuesday August 7th: Pete got up at 5:00 and went fishing. Didn't get anything and nearly froze to death. It had frozen on the night before. The first thing was the Norris Geyser Basin. Quite interesting with its bubbling spouting geysers each one different. Next the Lower Geyser Basin and Upper Geyser Basin. The Fire Hole Geyser had little blue flames coming from the bottom in several places. Saw the Morning Glory Lake, certainly did look like a big blue morning glory. Came by the Giant Geyser, the largest one there but seldom active. Took some pictures there. Came on down to Old Faithful, spent some time in the curio store, bot [sic] some more fishing tackle and started out to fish. Went up the river a time & spent most of the afternoon but no luck. Came back just in time to see Old Faithful go off. Very pretty, about 150 ft in the air. We then went to Old Faithful Camp. Just after dinner we went to the bear feeding place. Watched for long while & finally fine bears came out. Three black & two brown ones. Very interesting to watch. Then went down to the permanent camp where they were having an entertainment. Later a dance. We had about four good dances, then to camp.

Wednesday, August 8th: While eating breakfast we heard that the Giant G[eyser]. was playing. Its only plays from 18 to 14 days, so we were very anxious to see it. Hurried thru & fixed up camp & went over. Quite fortunate in doing so as we saw some moving picture people working. Rupert Hughes was directing his story "Law against Law" in which Helene Chadwick, George Walsh, & 2 small children were acting. Also one scene with Dale Fuller (who took part of maid in "Foolish Wives") and Mr. Allemond [Orlamond]. Took some snapshots of them. Also got a picture of Lew Cody, Carmel Meyers, Miss Fuller & Mr. Allemond [Orlamond] & Rush Hughes (son of Rupert Hughes). Drove on to Yellowstone Lake, stopped to feed a bear along side of the road, went a little farther when a mother bear & her little cub came alone so we stopped to feed them. Stopped at Thumb where they said fishing was good so fished about one hour.

There were plenty of fish playing around the line but they wouldn't bite. Went on around the lake. Stopped at Fishing Bridge for a while but no one seemed to be getting anything so we went on up the river towards the Canyon. Stopped & went down about 500 steps to see the falls. Went on to Inspiration Point where we could get a wonderful view of the canyon. Very pretty in some ways much more interesting than Grand Canyon. Came back about 8 miles just above the rapids where there was a good camp & fishing. Pete fished while I got dinner. Before I had finished dinner he caught a nice big salmon trout & the lady next to him got a little one & gave that to us so we had plenty of good fish for dinner. We felt that we had had an unusually interesting day filled with varied experiences.

Thursday August 9th: Pete got up & fished awhile but didn't get anything. He built a big fire & I got breakfast while he fished "spasmodically". Made up camp & came back up to the lake. Got a boat at Fishing Bridge & went fishing in earnest. Had several good bites & it wasn't long until we pulled in four nice big salmon trout. Left about noon for Cody. The road over Sylvan Pass winds around quite a bit & down grade. Two Fords ran into each other coming around the bend & we helped a little by a shove with our bumper. No one hurt only one Ford's front wheels twisted around and bent. Stopped few minutes at Pahaska Tepee, the old hunting lodge of Buffalo Bill. Then down thru several valleys over the sides of which were numerous odd and beautiful rock formations. We then came on down along the Shoshone Dam Reservoir to the dam. It certain is a wonderful feat of engineering. 80 ft at the base 200 at the top 180 feet thick at the base 10 at the top. The canyon was marvelously beautiful. Road was very steep but not bad. Cut right out of the cliff and had quite a few tunnels. Came over into Cody and parked early. Asked about the roads but could get no two stories the same. 23403

Friday August 10th: Left Cody at 7:15 and came to Billings. Roads fair. We were told to take the Yellowstone Trail thru. Came on via it. Broke brake rod. Stopped and had it welded and adjusted the brakes, both of them. Properly, I think. Came into Forsythe [sic]. 23633

The mosquitoes nearly ate us up.

Saturday August 11th: Came to Fallon on the Yellowstone Trail but took the Nat'l [National] Parks Highway from there. Came to Glendive & had another brake welded & put springs on the rods in hopes they would then hold. Started on passed through the Badlands of N.D. [North Dakota]. Very pretty. Little hills of first red then white rock. Had a blow out in the new

Firestone. Came into Dickinson about 6. Fixed the Firestone & while we were fixing it the Talbot [tire] we put on instead of the Firestone blew out & tore the tube almost in to [sic]. It was about 8:30 by the time we got the tires fixed so we parked there. 23875

Sunday August 12th: Left Dickinson about 7:00 Had another puncture in the Firestone we fixed last night. When Pete took it off decided that it was tearing away from the head just as the other Firestone had done. Put on the Talbot but wasn't long before we had puncture in that. Put on the Virginian & went on to the next village where we could get air, then patch the Talbot & put a boot in the Virginian to hold the rim. But, got into Bismark [Bismarck] about noon where they told us the road was gravel to Fargo (200) but we found it quite different. In fact some of it was nothing more than a cow path thru a field but the roads got better & we made fairly good time. Our bumper [sic] jarred off so when we got into Valley City had to have that welded which took about 1-2 hours. Got parked about 8:00. Pete met some BOTT [Beta Omega Pi fraternity?] from Miami & they talked while I got dinner. Then we had a good warm shower bath. There was a fine (Free) camp in Valley City. It is truly a "valley" city too. Just a valley among the plains & you hardly know its there until you are right upon it. 24136

Monday August 13th: This being the thirteenth certainly proved our "unlucky" day. When we got up in the morning found the Talbot [tire] that we put the boot in was tearing more. Spent about an hour trying to find a different one for it but didn't so we started on toward Fargo. The engine began missing so we didn't get into Fargo until almost noon (38 mi). Went to see the Firestone man about an adjustment on our tire. After talking & arguing about an hour he decided to give us a new one for \$8. Then took the Buick to the garage & he fixed up the top of the vacuum tank. Saw a WS Tire Branch and had him take a look at ours. He gave us a new one for \$11.00. Went to his place and had it put on and brought the old one along too. Started off on wrong road. Asked about a dozen people how to get the right one and finally got it about 3 miles south. Came on to Fergus Falls. I went down to take out the Virginian [tire] on account of the boot being too large and put it in the old Royal Cord [tire]. Found a short in the lights and tried to get it fixed but couldn't.

Tuesday August 14th: Started for Minne No Place [Minneapolis]. Engine went bad and we had to play with the vacuum tank all the way. Got to the city about 3:00. Went to Buick place and fixed the vacuum tank. Cleaned out and the short located. I called up Stu Cammett while we were there and we went out to dinner. It certainly was a treat to see him again. They have a beautiful home. After we dressed in one of his suits and went to a dance at the Minneapolis Automobile Club. It was a beautiful place with rooms all around the dance floor. All in while the grounds were artistically fixed also. Had a peach of a time. 24496.

Wednesday August 15th: Got up and went back to Buick and had him change carburetor and got maps and headed for St. Paul. Called up Walter Wood and went out to see him. He and Faith have a might cute little boy. Dean Rosenthal and his wife are living with them. We stayed for lunch and had quite a visit. After lunch we had some music. It was almost like old times. I hated to pull away. They brought us out of town about 4pm. We came as far as Eau Claire and parked. 24598

Thursday August 16th: Had puncture in the Firestone. Fixed it at the next place and came on. The Royal Cord [tire] then blew out and we put the Firestone back on and stopped at the next air place and put the new Firestone on rim on rear. About this time three of our four brake rods were broken and we had no brakes at all. Had novel time driving without brakes. Came to Oshkosh and got new brake rods. Went to camp site down by the lake and parked. I put rods on the foot brake. The third rod was too short. 24812

Friday August 17th: Got started about 7:00 for Chicago. Came thru Milwaukee [sic]. Talked about an adjustment on our 2 tires. No luck and got our mail. Came on to edge of Chicago. No camp in city proper and parked about 4:30. Mighty poor place in a sort of foreign element. Right by Niles. 24976

Saturday August 18th: Left camp and came down into the city. It is indeed a big city. Went down and got a new Royal Cord [tire] for 22.20. Before this we drove up by the campus of Northwestern University on Sheridan Road. Sheridan Road is a very pretty drive most of it along the lake & many wonderful homes & good looking apartments. Decided to park the car and take the elevated [train] to see the stock yards but were told there was nothing doing there on Saturday so we walked about 3 blocks to the P.O. [post office]. Then got the car & started on. Drove by Chicago University then out Western Ave out of the city. Had pavement all the way to Danville although some of it was very narrow. Drove around thru Danville & tried to find out about roads to Indianapolis. Got some groceries then came to camp. Very nice large grassy camp in Garfield Park. 25154

Sunday August 19th: It was raining about 6:00 so we slept on until 7 then it had quit raining & we had a very nice day. All gravel roads & very good into Indianapolis when it was paved. Got into Indianapolis about 12 o'clock. Our engine began missing & Pete had to fix that several times. Got into Columbus Camp about 7:15 where we made our first camp on the trip June 7th.

Monday August 20th: Got out of camp about 7:00. Went down town and had the oil changed and called at the P.O. [post office]. Went out to Auld's and had pin engraved and cleaned and left Flo's ring. Then started for Janesville. Got route there from Auto Club which we followed. Left Janesville at 11:30 via Chandlerville High Hill Hackney Beverly Lowel [Lowell] Marietta. Just outside Marietta we broke the connection on the battery. Got some high tension wire from a follow traveler and came on in. Got home at 5:00. We sure were glad to get there. We parked and let the car sit. 25562

End of Trip

Tuesday August 21st: Went down and weighed the car. It weighed without Flo 3935 lbs. Washed and cleaned it up. . .

[The rest of the diary has not been transcribed as it is about their life at home, not their travel to national parks. If you have questions, please contact HFC_Archivist@nps.gov]