



FINDING AID

RICHMOND FAMILY PAPERS

1913-1915, 1929

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09/18/2012

Yellowstone National Park Archives
P O Box 168
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190-0168

Catalog Number: YELL 109420

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HISTORY

Siblings Geraldine, Lyle L., and Paul J. Richmond worked as "savages" or summer staff for the Wylie Permanent Camping Company. Geraldine, or "Jerry", and Lyle were college students when they made the trip west in 1913, they were joined by younger brother Paul for a return trip in 1915.

The siblings were the children of Elijah Dewey Richmond of Lacon, Illinois. Elijah was an attorney and a judge of the Marshall County court. Elijah, whose first wife's name is unknown, married Jennie M. Hoyt in 1892, whereupon she became the stepmother to Geraldine (then five years of age), Lyle Lee (four years), and Paul James (two years). The couple later had one son: Donald Dewey.

Geraldine followed her stepmother's example and devoted her life to music. Jennie was a graduate of the Boston Conservatory of Music, had taught music at Cornell College (Mount Vernon, Iowa), and continued to offer piano lessons from her home following her marriage. Geraldine attended Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, and graduated from the Peoria Musical College with a degree in public school methods. She taught music in Sanborn, Iowa, around 1920, before returning to Lacon where she continued teaching, first in the public schools and later in her own studio. Geraldine appears never to have married, instead spending time traveling (she returned to Yellowstone as a tourist in 1929) and later sharing a home with her widowed stepmother. Geraldine was the first of the siblings to pass away, probably before 1962.

Lyle (b. May 7, 1894) was also musical--in one letter from Yellowstone he is noted as singing in the Wylie camp evening performance--but in his professional life he followed his father into the law. Lyle graduated from Beloit College in 1916, later serving as the chair of the 50th reunion committee. He entered the legal profession about 1922 and worked as an attorney in Chicago for nearly fifty years. He married Marion about 1926 and the couple had two children: Lyle, Jr. about 1930, and Jeanette "Jean" around 1932. Lyle died while on tour in London on September 2, 1970.

Paul was born July 10, 1896. While his musical interests are not recorded, it may be assumed that he, too, was talented as the Wylie Company specifically sought out college students with musical or dramatic skills to perform in nightly pageants. Paul found a career in technology, working as a supervisor for the La Grange Telephone Company and later as a planning engineer for North Illinois Bell Telephone Company. He married Dorothy about 1925 and the couple had at least one daughter: also Dorothy, born about 1932. Paul passed away in April 1983, in Wilton, Connecticut, where he had moved to be close to his daughter.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

RICHMOND FAMILY PAPERS 1913-1915, 1929

CATALOG NUMBER YELL 109420

VOLUME 0.5 LF

DESCRIPTION Correspondence, photograph album, and ephemera of the Richmond family's time as employees of the Wylie Permanent Camping Company in Yellowstone National Park in 1913 and 1915 as well as photographic prints of a return visit in 1929.

The collection consists of correspondence, reprinted as news clippings, a photograph album, and ephemera. The album has leather covers embossed with the word "Photographs" and black construction paper pages to which the images have been affixed. Due to the volume of pages and the brittleness of the paper, the album has been unbound and the pages individually numbered and sleeved in Mylar.

The correspondence, primarily written by Geraldine, describes the family's experiences as employees with Wylie Permanent Camping Company. Included are descriptions of the camp, wildlife, and people. Also described are work activities, including the evening entertainment, as well as leisure activities such as excursions and hikes. Descriptions are detailed and vivid, which is probably why the recipients then made them available to the local newspaper for reprinting. Locations visited include the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone via Uncle Tom's Trail, Yellowstone Lake and Lake Hotel, Sulphur Hill, Roaring Mountain, Hell's Half Acre, Gardiner (Mont.), and the Old Faithful Geyser Basin. Subjects include horseback riding, camp set up and break down, the introduction of automobiles to the Park, and bears.

The photograph album contains images illustrating those events described in the letters as well as additional views. Images include the staff at work--a tour guide leading a group, constructing (or deconstructing) the tent camp, the laundry crew, peeling potatoes, cutting wood, the dining room waitresses, the office staff, a freighter or teamster, the night herder, maids with broom and buckets, and dressed for work in aprons, dusters, and sunbonnets--as well as at play--toasting marshmallows, singing, playing a

guitar, on a picnic, swimming, horseback riding, hiking, boating, a 4th of July party, tug-of-war game, pie eating, a bonfire, "rotten-logging" (kissing), and dressing up in costumes. Individuals pictured include Mr. Askey, Kitty Aspen, Tom Bath, "Texas" Bill Brody, Tom Brown,, Shorty Brown, Clay Fidler, Claude Green, Dr. Knight, Clyde Merrill, A. W. Miles, Doc Northrup, "Ma" Rhodes, Phil Sprague, Willard Torgrim, Min Tourtelot, Mr. White, Earl Williams, Mae Williams, and numerous people identified only by first name. Also shown are stagecoaches, including a surrey and a "Tally-ho"; a molly cart, a wampus cart, and the interior of the Lake Camp office tent.

Places depicted include the Canyon, Lake, and Fountain Hotels; the Old Faithful Inn; Lake Pier; Lake Camp; Lake Ranger Station; Old Faithful Camp; the Roosevelt Arch, Livingston (Mont.); Gardiner (Mont.) railroad depot; and the U. S. Fish Hatchery at Yellowstone Lake. Geysers and thermal features include Black Warrior, Castle, Cleopatra Terrace, Daisy, Economic, Emerald Pool, Excelsior, Firehole, Fishing Cone, Giant, Green Gable, Grotto, Liberty Cap, Lone Star, Mammoth Terraces, Mud, Norris Geyser Basin, Oblong, Punch Bowl, Rainbow Pool, Tom Thumb, Turquoise Spring. Landscape features include Artist's Point, Bunsen Peak, Dunraven Pass, Elephant Back Mountain, Firehole River, Golden Gate, Upper and Lower Falls of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, the Hoodoos, Kepler Cascades, Lamar Valley, Mount Sheridan, Mount Washburn, Natural Bridge, Red Rock Trail, Roaring Mountain, Sleeping Giant, Steamboat Point, Steven's Island, Sulphur Mountain, Sylvan Pass, Sylvan Lake, Uncle Tom's Trail, Yellowstone Lake. Wildlife shown includes deer, elk, pelicans, Kermit the bear, and Wampus the horse.

There are also some images from travel outside the Park including places in Colorado such as Box Canyon, Garden of the Gods, Mount Corona, Ouray Toll Road, and Pikes Peak; an unidentified town in North Dakota; Wyoming sites including the Cody Bridge, Cody Road, and the town of Green River; and the Oregon Washington Limited railroad.

ORGANIZATION

Materials arranged alphabetically by format. The album remains in its original order, although the string tie was removed and the pages are now loose. Pages were numbered prior to unbinding.

PROVENANCE

Gift of Dorothy Greenlee, 1998.

CONTAINER LIST**Box 1**

File Unit Nbr	Title
01	Correspondence
02	Handbook and pamphlet
03	Photograph album, pp. 1-30
04	Photograph album, pp. 31-60
05	Photograph album, pp. 61-90
06	Photograph album, pp. 91-120
07	Photograph album, pp. 121-150
08	Photograph album, covers
09	Photograph prints
10	Songs and poems