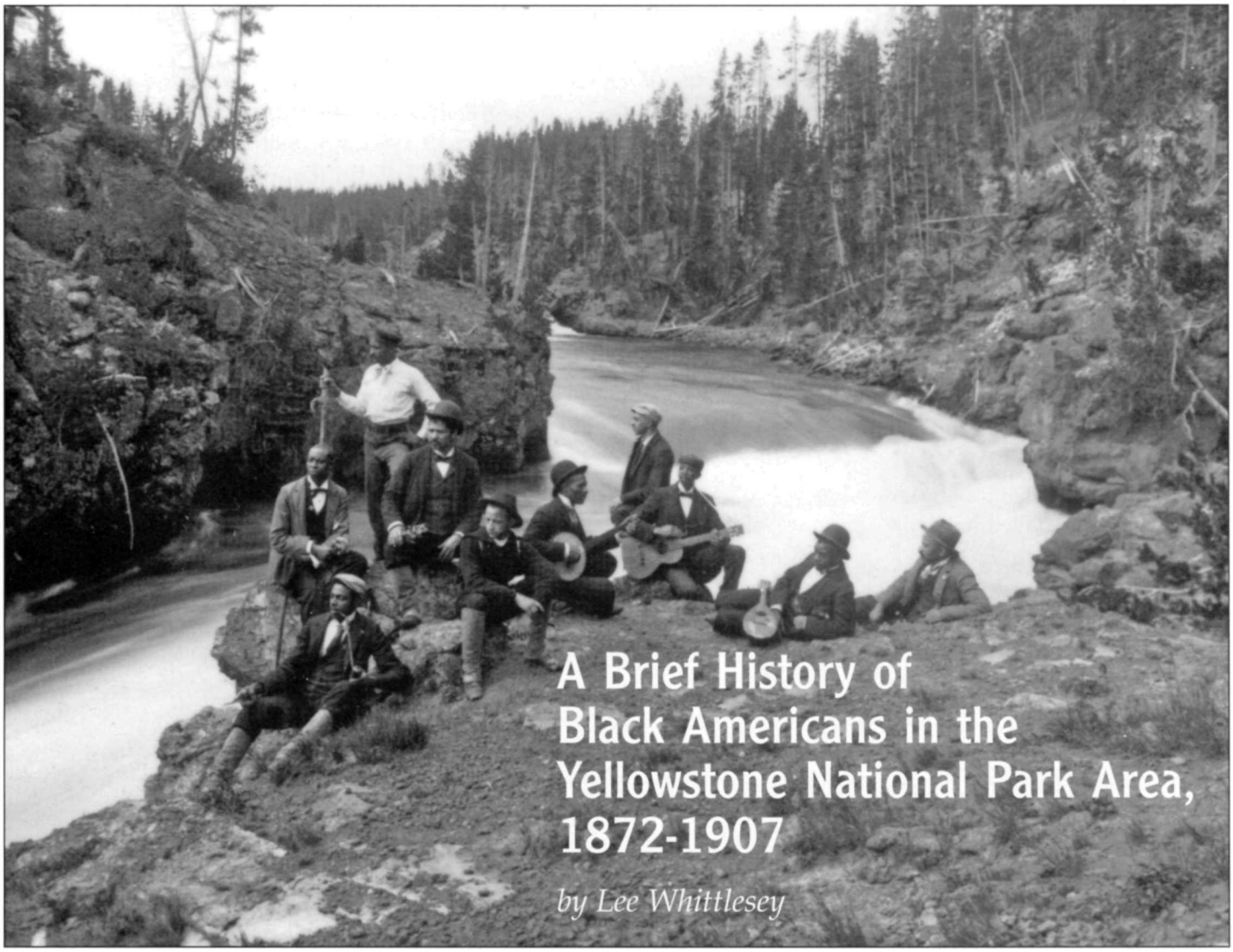


Haynes Foundation Collection, Montana Historical Society

A Brief History of Black Americans in the Yellowstone National Park Area, 1872-1907

by Lee Whittlesey

In the history of Yellowstone National Park and surrounding area, black Americans have not played a forefront role; in general not many persons of that race inhabited northwestern Wyoming and southern Montana during the period 1872 to 1907.[1] But a thorough survey of the vast literature of Yellowstone National Park turns up a number of instances of black persons residing in the Park and in nearby areas during that carriage-trade period. They were a very small contingent of African-Americans living and working in a rural, western area attracted perhaps by the novelty of Yellowstone National Park and its need for temporary employees during the summer season.[2]

We do not totally understand why blacks were largely absent from the upper Yellowstone country during this period (they certainly were present in many other areas of the American West), nor do we know why these individual blacks were in the Yellowstone area and whether or not their lives were changed by the experience; good firsthand accounts

1. For Montana area bibliographic information, see Lucille Smith Thompson, *The Negro in Montana 1800-1945, A Selective Bibliography* (Helena: Montana State Library, 1970). For context, see W. Sherman Savage, "The Negro in the History of the Pacific Northwest," *Journal of Negro History* 13 (July, 1928): 255-264; Quintard Taylor, "The Emergence of Black Communities in the Pacific Northwest, 1865-1910," *Journal of Negro History* 64 (Fall, 1979): 342-351; Quintard Taylor, "From Esteban to Rodney King: Five Centuries of African American History in the West," *Montana Magazine of Western History* 46 (Winter, 1996): 2-23. Dr. Taylor, of the University of Oregon, has also finished a manuscript entitled "In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528-1970," from which he graciously loaned me chapter five: "Migration and Settlement, 1875-1920." See also note six below.

2. The author has been researching the history of the upper Yellowstone country for nearly twenty-five years. This article is taken from his years of notes. Thanks to Dr. Quintard Taylor who offered constructive suggestions.

of life on the upper Yellowstone River by black Americans simply have not yet surfaced.

Why would African Americans venture to such a remote location? The most obvious answer is economic; there were temporary jobs in Yellowstone, into which blacks could be hired. A second reason might have been a desire to escape racism; indeed, the West has always "summoned" downtrodden persons from many different groups, persons who dreamed, however naively, that a new start somewhere else might be free of "backhome" discrimination.[3]

These questions remain unanswered, but the little information we have about blacks in the Yellowstone area is fascinating, even if it generates more questions than we can currently answer and even if most of the observations are secondhand ones from whites. With that in mind, perhaps the information provided here tells us more about the attitudes of whites of the period than it does about the few blacks of which we know. For example, while area newspapers sometimes defamed these black Americans, southern Montana editors at other times found racial violence a "hideous evil," indicating (apparently) only differences in individual editors' outlooks.[4]

Certainly one of the earliest black visitors to the Yellowstone country was fur trapper James Beckwourth, a mulatto whose dark skin fooled the Crow tribe in the 1830s into accepting him as one of their own. His "autobiography" and several biographies are well known.[5]

A look at census figures for the period 1880-1910 reveals that very few black Americans resided then in the upper Yellowstone region. In 1880, Wyoming Territory had only 298 blacks, none in any areas close to the new Yellowstone Park. Montana Territory had 346 blacks, and of those, only thirty-one lived in Gallatin County (the county which then abutted Yellowstone Park). In 1890, the numbers were 922 for Wyoming and 1,490 for Montana, of which 74 resided in Park and Gallatin Counties. By 1900, when Yellowstone National Park was first given its own place in the census, one black person was shown as living in the park, fifty in nearby Park and Gallatin Counties, and 1,523 in Montana at large. And in 1910, the park was shown as having four blacks living there with only seventy living in Park and Gallatin counties.[6]

Of these blacks living in Montana Territory, most had migrated there after the Civil War and most lived in the cities of Helena and Butte, towns which even had black newspapers. After 1900, Great Falls and Anaconda also had sizable black populations. But except for these four towns, there were few black persons in Montana.[7]

The United States, during this era, was a racist nation in a good measure, and the Yellowstone area was no exception. Reading the newspapers, books, and periodicals of the era, a researcher of today is often horrified at the anti-minority sentiment and actions which are matter-of-factly recorded in the press. For example, the *Livingston Enterprise* routinely used words like "nigger" and "chink" to refer to blacks and Chinese in its columns.[8] The purposeful "burning of Negroes" in southern states was a continuing, hideous evil which was ongoing at that time.[9] And during those days long before the U.S. Supreme Court abolished prohibitions on interracial marriage in the case of *Loving v. Virginia,* comments on such occasional miscegenation were generally derogatory. For example, a newspaper published at Gardiner, Montana (the north entrance to Yellowstone Park) noted in 1903 that a fifty-eight-year-old "negro janitor" had married a white woman in

3. A classic example of this is found in the Mormon migration. See LeRoy R. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion: The Story of a Unique Migration, 1856-1860* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1992).

4. See note six below.

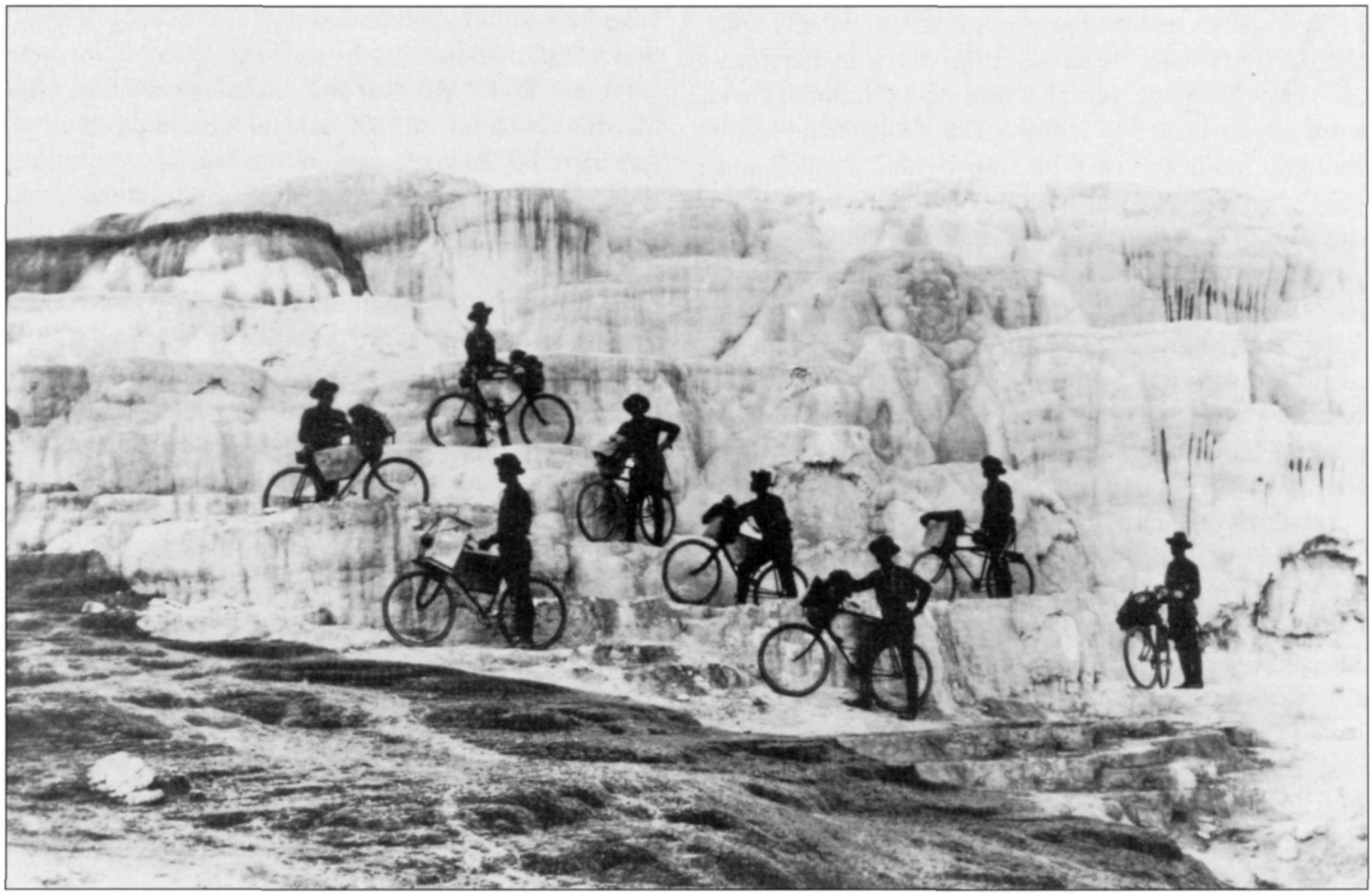
5. T.D. Bonner, ed., *The Life and Adventures of James P. Beckwourth* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1856); Gordon Speck, *Breeds and Half-Breeds* (New York: C.N. Potter, 1969); Elinor Wilson, *Jim Beckwourth: Black Mountain Man and War Chief of the Crows* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1972); H.W. Felton, *Jim Beckwourth, Negro Mountain Man* (New York: Dodd, 1966).

6. *Compendium of the Tenth Census (1880)*, pt. I: 360, 379 (Washington: GPO, 1883); *Compendium of the Eleventh Census (1890)*, pt. I: 490, 515 (Washington: GPO, 1892); *Twelfth Census of the U.S. . . . 1900*, pt. I: 591, 608 (Washington: GPO, 1901); *Thirteenth Census of the U.S. . . . 1910*, vol. 1: 239, 246.

7. Taylor, "Emergence of Black Communities," pp. 342-347.

8. "Famous Landmark in Gardiner is Destroyed by Fire," *Livingston Enterprise*, December 4, 1912. For Chinese racism in the West, see Liping Zhu, "'A Chinaman's Chance' on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier," *Montana Magazine of Western History* 45 (Autumn-Winter, 1995): 36-51, and his book in press.

9. "A Growing Hideous Evil," *Livingston Post*, August 22, 1901.



Members of a black infantry unit pose on the Minerva Terrace with their bicycles. (National Park Service, Yellowstone National Park)

Missoula. Said the editor, "While the woman was not prominent in society her standing seems to have been good and the marriage has [therefore] occasioned much comment."[10]

Another example of racism in Yellowstone area newspapers was published in February of 1900. An editor for Livingston's *Park County Republican* offered the news that a black theater group would soon perform in that town at the Hefferlin Theater, presenting a musical production entitled "The Hottest Coon in Dixie." The production was performed by what was apparently an all-black cast from Denver, Colorado. The newspaper stated that "the show is superior...to the average 'coon' show...In the peculiar songs of their race, these dusky vocalists seem simply matchless." Thus racism thrived even as the newspaper proclaimed what great talent the performers had and that the production was an excellent one.[11]

In the upper Yellowstone country, the few black people that sallied forth to make the area home seem to have been at least accepted in the region. The region was part of the larger "separate but equal" society that had been shamefully endorsed by the U.S. Supreme Court in the 1896 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson.*[12] Blacks seem to have enjoyed some acceptance in southern Montana, possibly for their sheer novelty in an otherwise mostly-white area, but they no doubt encountered occasional discrimination.

10. *Gardiner Wonderland,* January 15, 1903, p. 2. Loving v. Virginia, the celebrated miscegenation case which declared Virginia's prohibition on interracial marriages to be a violation of equal protection, was published at 388 U.S. 1 (1967).

11. *Park County Republican,* February 10, 1900.
12. 163 U.S. 537 (1896).

Against this background, it is noteworthy and somewhat unusual that black Americans were employed at Yellowstone National Park from its earliest hotel days. The Northern Pacific Railroad made this possible; it provided a quick and easy way to reach Yellowstone National Park beginning in 1883. The railroad already employed black Americans aboard its trains; hence, why not employ them in the new hotels it was building in the National Park? At least initially, it was apparently not easy to acquire three-month employees to staff hotels in the remote mountains of Wyoming and Montana.[13]

The Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel in Yellowstone Park, which was partially erected in 1883 and which "opened" at the end of that year, seems to have hired "colored" waiters from its inception. Traveler A.M. Ingersoll reported them there in 1884, Emily Catherine Bates encountered them there in 1886, and J.E. Williams, editor of the *Amherst* (Massachusetts) *Record*, saw them in 1888. Williams' comment illustrated the precept that persons like him, some of the country's supposed "best" people, were sometimes outright racists: "We arrive at the hotel, are assigned our rooms, and sit down to do ample justice to a good bill of fare, served by 'coons,'—excuse me, I should say colored waiters who are blacker than coons."[14]

Presumably black waiters or other black employees were at Mammoth in 1889, but they were definitely there during the summers of 1890-92, and 1896. Park tour guide G.L. Henderson saw them in 1890, called them quiet and courteous, and noted that they "would be a credit to the best hotels on the continent." In 1891, geologist Thomas McKenny Hughes and his wife Caroline had a different view. They complained that dinner at Mammoth was served "with long pauses between courses." "The black waiters," they noted, "expect us to wait not them."[15] Bicycle traveler R.O. Vandercook mentioned that the Mammoth Hotel in 1892 had a "colored bell boy" (perhaps he mistook one of the waiters "standing near" for a bell porter). And we know that the black employees of the hotel were there in 1896, per the diary of traveler Moses Ezekiel, who was informed of their presence while touring the Mammoth Hot Springs.[16]

It is not known when Yellowstone's Mammoth Hotel ceased having a good number of black waiters, but a photograph and a newspaper article indicate they were in place in 1901. The *Livingston Post* for May 30, 1901, stated that in just two days "colored" porters would arrive for the park hotels. A Frank Haynes photo, number H-4847, depicts black waiters and porters at Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel in 1901. Rube Shuffle's account, discussed below, indicates that black waiters were working at Mammoth in 1903. Probably African-Americans were a continuous presence at Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel from 1884 to 1903, and possibly for a much longer time.

A black piano player was apparently employed at the Mammoth Hotel at least for the summer of 1901, and before the "Thomas Orchestra" arrived in 1902. Area old-timer Clarence Stearns recalled that in 1900, the Yellowstone Park Association employed a "nigger piano player alone." Stearns stated that the black piano man played ragtime music "upstairs when the coaches arrived."[17]

A piano man (possibly that one) and the black waiters at Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel were apparently involved in 1901 in a ruckus which resulted in complaints to the Department of Interior. Park visitor James Stokes of New York City griped that when he arrived at the hotel on July 21, he was confronted

13. Dee Brown, *Hear That Lonesome Whistle Blow: Railroads in the West* (New York and London: Touchstone), 1994, p. 178. For the Northern Pacific's Yellowstone branch, see Craig Reese, "The Gardiner Gateway to Yellowstone," *The Mainstreeter* (NPRR Historical Association) 15 (Spring, 1996): 5-21, 29-30. For general Yellowstone National Park history, see Aubrey L. Haines, *The Yellowstone Story*, two volumes (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, revised, 1996).

14. J.E. Williams, *Through the Yellowstone Park. Vacation Notes. Summer of 1888.* Copied From the *Amherst Record* (Amherst, MA: no publisher [*Amherst Record*], no date [probably 1888]), p. 8; A.M. Ingersoll, "My Trip to the Yellowstone Park," in *Gems of the Northwest* (no place: Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railway, no date [probably 1885]), p. 75; E. Catherine Bates, *A Year in the Great Republic* (London: Ward and Downey), II, 1887, p. 194.

15. G.L. Henderson, "Here's Henderson.", *Helena Daily Herald*, September 24, 1890; Thomas Hughes, "Yellowstone Park to Arizona. Exerpts from the Diary of Thomas McKenny Hughes . . . ", 1891, p. 7, typescript in YNP Research Library.

16. R.O. Vandercook, "A Bicycle Oddyssey.", unpublished typescript, Montana State University, 1944 [1892], p. 6; Moses Ezekiel, Diary, July 27-August 14, 1896, p. (7), YNP manuscript file.

17. Jack Haynes interview with Clarence G. Stearns, Sr., May 7, 1953, in Jack Haynes collection 1504, box 101, file 41, Montana State University.

with a "great noise going on in the second story." He was told by his valet that if he wanted to see the "goo goo eye break-down," a dance by one of the black waiters, that he should return to the same place. "I investigated," grumbled Stokes, "and there he was singing and dancing, chaperoned by the head waiter. I never heard such a noise except in the Chinese quarter, and this on the Sabbath day!"

Stokes stated he complained to the management and the noise was stopped. More than a year later (he appears to have been in no hurry to register his complaint) when a copy of his letter arrived in the park, superintendent John Pitcher issued the order that "there will be no more singing and dancing at the Mammoth Hotel, or any other place in the Park, such as that referred to within." We know for a fact that music continued at the various park hotels, so one must wonder whether or not this decree was aimed strictly at blacks.[18]

Like the Mammoth Hotel, Yellowstone's second Canyon Hotel had black waiters and porters in its employ. 1901 traveler Inez Russell Howell Smith ran into a black waiter there who played guitar and mandolin and sang songs in addition to waiting tables. Moreover, two spectacular Haynes photos show these employees playing and singing at the Canyon.[19] Apparently not all African-American music caused complaints.

One of the most interesting pieces of black history in the Yellowstone country concerns a black house of ill repute, or perhaps more than one, which operated, appropriately enough, at Horr, Montana. Horr was the small coal mining town just north of Yellowstone National Park which thrived from 1887 to 1910. It was renamed "Electric" in 1904, when, according to local legend and subject to no historical documentation thus far, the townswomen objected to living in "Horr" houses. Gardiner, Livingston, Helena, and many other small Montana towns had their white "red light districts," but in Horr there was a black brothel.[20]

It was mentioned in the *Livingston Post* for January 25, 1894. In a story which outlined the acquittal of "murderer" Charles Northrup, a reporter noted that a cabin near the Park Coal and Coke Company's wood camp "was occupied by a colored prostitute, named Bell Price, with whom defendant [Northrup] has been in communication."[21]

This black brothel seems either to have lasted for many years at Horr or else another one sprang up, for a *Gardiner Wonderland* newspaper article ten years later carried the following story:

> On Monday night the house of "Miss Lulu," of Horr, was broken into and robbed by two men of that place whose names we did not learn, but who secured quite a sum of money. "Miss Lulu" made complaint to Justice of the Peace Piser, and he had the men under his surveillance awaiting the arrival of Under Sheriff Beller, but in some unaccountable manner both men got away and up-to-date have not been caught. "Miss Lulu" is the proprietress of a colored house of ill fame, and it is said that she is not conducting the same on [a] quiet basis, and that considerable trouble eminates therefrom.[22]

Coincidentally or otherwise, there had been another "Lulu" in the same business in Livingston, for a newspaper article reported her death there in 1898, with this derogatory notice:

> Lulu St. Clair, colored, one of the habitues of the red light district, died on Sunday morning of typhoid fever. Her funeral on Monday afternoon was well attended, the members of the Salvation Army and a number of friends of the deceased

18. James Stokes to William C. Sangar, July 29, 1902, letter number 3161 in National Archives, Record Group 79, Patents and Miscellaneous Division, Box 70. Later dancing in park hotels is in Aubrey L. Haines, *The Yellowstone Story* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press), II, 1977, p. 191, and in numerous park hotel pamphlets.

19. Inez Russell Howell Smith, "Diary of Inez Russell Howell Smith, June 24, 1901 - August 9, 1901, A Trip to Yellowstone Park," original and typescript (SC 1268) at Montana Historical Society, 1901, p. 7; Frank J. Haynes photos, H-4873, Canyon Hotel colored waiters and river; H-4874 Canyon Hotel colored waiters and river; Montana Historical Society.

20. For Horr's history, see Bill and Doris Whithorn, *Photo History From Aldridge* (Livingston, MT: *Livingston Enterprise*), n.d. [1966], especially pp. 9, 33; and Lee H. Whittlesey, "'They're Going to Build a Railroad!': Cinnabar and the Gardiner Addition to Yellowstone National Park," 1995, book manuscript currently in draft and peer review, YNP Library, pp. 15-17.

2. "Northrup Acquitted!", *Livingston Post*, January 25, 1894. For Northrup's complete murder story see Lee H. Whittlesey, *Death in Yellowstone . . .* (Niwot, Colorado: Roberts Rinehart), 1995. An additional black Livingston resident was one "Wash" Kelley who complained loudly to the newspapers about the Northrup affair. "Local News", *Livingston Post*, February 1, 1894.

22. "Our Local Field," *Gardiner Wonderland*, April 30, 1904.

> being in attendance. There are no lacking those who say that she was generous, honest and kind and had many qualities that made her wasted life more to be regretted.[23]

We do not know the history of either of these houses of prostitution, nor do we know how (or even whether) they figured significantly into the history of the Yellowstone region. Certainly at least part of their reason for being was strictly economic; those folks had to make a living. Moreover the attitude of newspapers of that day was different from today. While today's newspapers still give undue emphasis to what society considers the aberrant and spectacular, most do not overtly discriminate or parade their biases as they once did.

One definite black American is known from the local newspapers to have resided at Livingston, Montana during this period. He was referred to as a "prospector" by the *Livingston Enterprise* which claimed that he drowned in the Yellowstone River there in 1896. Nearly simultaneously the *Livingston Herald* referred to what was probably the same man as "John Thomas, the well known colored man who was interested in mining claims [around] Livingston." The Herald stated that he drowned in the Big Horn River of Wyoming.[24]

A black resident of Gardiner, Montana (at Yellowstone Park's north entrance) between 1900 and 1915 was "Black Boy Lastus," real name unknown. Perhaps he was one of the one to four blacks listed in the censuses of 1900 and 1910. Area historian Doris Whithorn found a photo of him and published it in one of her books, stating that he was "a swamper for two saloons." She also found a newspaper item which stated that he played mouth organ at Tom Somerville's Gardiner wedding in September of 1906.[25]

Another mystery with regard to lost "black" history in Yellowstone National Park is the complete story behind Rube Shuffle's book *Yellowstone Letters*, although some of the story is known. This book, published in 1906 in New York and Washington by the Neale Publishing Company, lists "Rube Shuffle" as its author and A.G. Heaton as its illustrator. The book's Preface, written by Heaton, states that the series of letters, written in what appears to be black dialect, came to his attention through the "good-looking maid" of wealthy Chicago friends. When she heard their conversation turn to Yellowstone, the maid told her employers that her "attentive lover" had written a number of letters to her while traveling through Yellowstone National Park as a "valet" in the summer of 1903. Heaton stated that he then met Shuffle when Shuffle "happened to call that evening upon his sweetheart in the kitchen," and Heaton therein got permission to publish Shuffle's letters. Heaton stated that following his return from Yellowstone, "Rube left a position that had become uncongenial to resume his dress coat as a head waiter in a well-known hotel."

We do not know for certain that Shuffle was black, but his name and the dialect of his letters, along with certain other references such as "maid," "head waiter," and "uncongenial" make it very likely. Moreover, at three different places in the book, Shuffle alludes to "white girls" who were waiting tables at Fountain Hotel, Old Faithful, and West Thumb. Finally, a woodcut drawing (see opposite page) shows what is probably Rube Shuffle at Lookout Point looking like Steppin Fetchit.

Shuffle's letters provide a detailed look at touring in Yellowstone Park in 1903, and mention that the waiters at Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel that summer were black. In fact, Shuffle, if he was black, showed as much racism toward them as many white writers of the day.

He takes up the story for us at Mammoth Hotel at dinner, indicating that the black waiters practiced discrimination against him, and thus giving us still another reason to believe that he was black:

> By an by I'm let in to a fur table an sees as there's coon waiters. When my nigger fetched in a stack o' dishes I didn't order an forgot what I did an lay'd for a quarter wid a saucer o'toothpicks, I some how seed my former callin wery different. So I tries a bluff as onct seems wery contemptuous, an I says, "Sam, I pays a high hotel bill coverin everything. You gets a salary fur your waitin, an you dont half know how to wait. You brings a lot of dishes, scarce eny of what I wanted, an then wants

23. *Livingston Herald*, February 17, 1898.

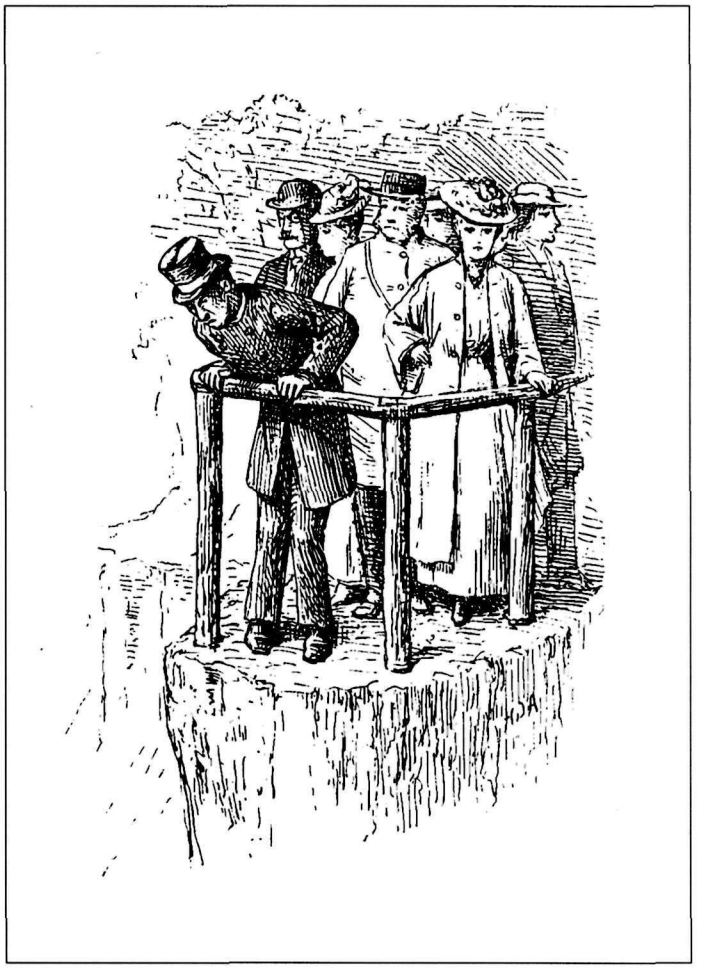
24. "Local Layout," *Livingston Enterprise*, Sept. 5, 1896; "John Thomas Drowned," *Livingston Herald*, September 3, 1896.

25. Whithorn, *Photo History of Gardiner, Jardine, Crevasse* (Livingston: Livingston Enterprise, [1966]), pp. (10), (19).

a quarter or a half at each feed. Its a imposishun." Then I walks away as severe as some gents what's giv me this to chew. Sam didn't say nothing at all, but that evenin at supper him an all them other coons was that deff an near sighted as I had to get the head waiter to show em I was in the dinin room, and then, ater half a hour more, the grub I got was cold leavins. When I thinks that I wus sometimes practicin the shameful ways ov them niggers, I feels mighty mean and mortified. Howsomever, bein hungry this mornin an onable, ater that bluff, to say as I'd bin sort ov in the same lodge, I jus shells out a half dollar, swell as a drummer, an coons wus around my table as thick as blue bottle flies.[26]

I interpret this passage as telling the following story. Shuffle was seated at a "far" (remote) dining table at lunch (because he was black?) and noticed that the Mammoth Hotel waiters were black. His waiter brought in a stack of dishes Shuffle had not asked for and a saucer of toothpicks for which he asked Shuffle to pay a quarter. This angered Shuffle who at that point saw all the Mammoth waiters, of whose profession he had formerly been a member, as rude and greedy. He asked the waiter why he (Shuffle) was being asked to pay at each round instead of once for everything at the end of the meal. That evening the waiters acted as if they could not see Shuffle, who complained to the head waiter of no service and was finally served cold, leftover food. Shuffle felt badly that he had sometimes pulled the same stunts on others. At breakfast the next morning, he elected to flash his money and thus got immediate service from the black waiters.

That passage in Shuffle's book is a fascinating look at racism in 1903 as exhibited in Yellowstone National Park. The rest of the book gives Shuffle's detailed impressions of the Yellowstone Park tour as written lovingly to his back home girlfriend Sophie. The book is noteworthy for its minutiae regarding the elements of an unhurried, week-long 1903 tour of Yellowstone Park; Shuffle admitted to taking constant notes and asking many questions so that he could record detailed information on park geysers, road scenes, regulations, hotels, and stagecoaches. And regardless of what race its writer was, Rube



A.G. Heaton illustration showing "Shuffle" on Point Lookout. (From Yellowstone Letters by Rube Shuffle, *published in 1906 by The Neale Publishing Company)*

Shuffle's book provided the following very human comment to the woman back home about his trepidation at visiting the wilderness of Yellowstone, with its mountains, boiling hot springs, and wild animals:

> "So I tells you . . . if by chances I takes a header down some mounting or gets biled in eny hot water hole or drounded in eny onruly river or chawed up by eny bar or udder savige critter in them wild places I am a goin into, that I loves you steady and true."[27]

Another story of black Americans in Yellowstone Park may be found in documents in the Yellowstone archives which deal with the boat operations of E.C. Waters. Ella C. Waters ran the boat called the Zillah, which plied the

26. Rube Shuffle and A.G. Heaton, *Yellowstone Letters by Rube Shuffle Written From the National Park to His Sweetheart* (New York and Washington: Neale Publishing Company), 1906, pp. 23-24.

27. Shuffle, *Yellowstone Letters . . .* , 1906, p. 37.

waters of Yellowstone Lake from about 1891 to 1907. Waters became known to park officials for his overcharging of park tourists, his poor treatment of animals he kept on Dot Island, and his generally rude, overbearing, and erratic ways of dealing with everyone he encountered. A file of letters in the Yellowstone archives shows that Waters tried to get out of paying W.H. McKaulass (or McKandlass) and "five other colored people" for work they had done for him in 1907. The six were principally singers and players (called "colored minstrels") whom he had hired for the entertainment of his visitors. But by that year, park officials were fed up with complaints about Waters, and this incident was simply one more to add to the file. Waters was ejected from the park.[28]

These few stories are all that are known which deal with black Americans in the upper Yellowstone country before 1910. No doubt history has others which are yet undiscovered. How these African Americans fared in the Yellowstone country without a distinct black community to support them is an unanswered question, as we have no first-person accounts other than that of Rube Shuffle. Those black communities, which existed in places such as Helena and Butte, Montana, and Cheyenne, Wyoming, certainly made life easier for the black Americans they housed, but the small groups of blacks who lived in the Yellowstone country 1880-1910 appear to have survived adequately, at least for short periods, without such support.[29]

One might wonder how the numbers of black Americans living and working in the Yellowstone region during the period 1880-1910 compares with numbers in other national parks. A check with Yosemite National Park's historian revealed that while Yosemite (in southern California) had Hispanics and Indians working there, blacks were few. Historian Jim Snyder knew of at least one black cavalry unit which protected Yosemite sometime 1899-1904 and of one black stagecoach driver, George Monroe, who worked there during the 1870s. Snyder stated that commercial brochures at Yosemite's Camp Curry in or about 1910 went so far as to state that all employees there were white.[30]

This article is merely a preliminary study in an area that is fascinating and essentially unexplored. Further research on the topic of black Americans is needed for both Montana and Wyoming, as is a comparison with other rural areas in the American West.

28. Item 33, file 3, file marked "case dropped," YNP Archives. See also Archive Document 3072 for the complaint in October of 1896 of D.S. Terry of Fridley, Montana, that two of Waters' hirees, a white man and "a Negro," stole ranch equipment from him.

29. Personal communication from Dr. Quintard Taylor, University of Oregon, to Lee Whittlesey, May 14, 1997. Todd Guenther of the Pioneer Museum at Lander, Wyoming has recently been researching blacks in Wyoming. While his larger-scale work is unpublished, he has produced "Y'all Call Me Nigger Jim Now, But Someday You'll Call Me Mr. James Edwards: Black Success on the Plains of the Equality State," *Annals of Wyoming* 61:2(Fall, 1989):21-24.

30. Author's conversation with Jim Snyder, Park Historian, Yosemite National Park, June 10, 1997.

HEBARD COLLECTION ACQUISITIONS

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To mark the 125th anniversary of the founding of Yellowstone National Park, acquisitions cited in this issue of *Annals of Wyoming* relate to the history and natural history of our nation's first national park.

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New Publications

The Ecological Implications of Fire in Greater Yellowstone, Proceedings, Second Biennial Conference on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Fairfield, WA: International Association of Wildland Fire, 1996.

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Elhard, Jay Robert. *Wolf Tourist: One Summer in the West.* Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1996.

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SPECIAL ISSUE COMMEMORATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

On the cover:

The summer of 1883 in Yellowstone was noteworthy for the opening of the Yellowstone Park Improvement Company's facilities, the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad's branch line to the park, and the first visit by a United States president. President Chester Arthur traveled to Wyoming on the Union Pacific Railroad, and then from Green River to Fort Washakie by wagon. From there he rode horseback, accompanied by a troop of cavalry soldiers and 150 pack mules (with the requisite wranglers and packers) to tote the tents, beds, furniture, linens, china, silver, crystal and gourmet provisions that were needed to make his expedition comfortable. His party included General Phil Sheridan, Secretary of War Robert T. Lincoln, Senator George Vest of Missouri, Governor John S. Crosby of Montana Territory, and other dignitaries. In the cover photograph the president and his fellow travelers are shown picnicking in a grove of pines. President Arthur is seated in the chair at the center. (Photograph from the collection of the Riverton Museum)

On the back cover is a photograph showing some of the first cars to enter Yellowstone National Park after the August 1, 1915 opening of the park to motorized vehicles. (Photograph from the collection of the Pioneer Museum in Lander)

Grateful acknowledgement is made of the assistance provided by Tamsen L. Hert in the preparation of this issue of *Annals of Wyoming*. Ms. Hert was instrumental in the solicitation of appropriate articles and the acquisition of illustrations.

The editor of *Annals of Wyoming: The Wyoming History Journal* welcomes manuscripts and photographs on every aspect of the history of Wyoming and the West. Appropriate for submission are unpublished, research-based articles which provide new information or which offer new interpretations of historical events. First-person accounts based on personal experience or recollections of events will be considered for use in the "Wyoming Memories" section. Articles are reviewed by members of the journal's Editorial Advisory Board and others. Decisions regarding publication are made by the editor. Manuscripts (along with suggestions for illustrations or photographs) should be submitted on computer diskettes in a format created by one of the widely-used word processing programs along with two printed copies. Submissions, queries, and requests for detailed authors' guidelines should be addressed to Editor, *Annals of Wyoming*, P.O. Box 4256 University Station, Laramie, WY 82071.

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The Wyoming State Historical Society

The Wyoming State Historical Society is a confederation of more than 20 local chapters located in every area of the state. Members enjoy the frequent gatherings of their local groups and participate in programs and activities that preserve and interpret their communities' history. Several times each year, members from all across Wyoming come together for major events where they celebrate common historical interests.

Membership in the society is open to everyone. Member benefits include a subscription to *Annals of Wyoming: The Wyoming History Journal*, a quarterly journal devoted to broader public understanding of all aspects of Wyoming history; and *Wyoming History News*, the society's newsletter, which is published ten times each year. Membership dues also provide support for a comprehensive awards program that recognizes people who are doing something to preserve and interpret local and state history; for Wyoming History Day, which allows thousands of Wyoming school children to participate in history projects and to compete at district, state and national history day events; for research grants that support the study and publication of Wyoming history; and for a variety of special projects which help preserve and interpret the state's rich history.

If you are already a member of the Wyoming State Historical Society we solicit your continued interest, involvement and support. If you are not a member, or if you know of other non-members who share an interest in Wyoming history, we urge you (and them) to join. Contact a member of your local historical society, or write to the Wyoming State Historical Society at 1740H184 Dell Range Blvd, Cheyenne, WY 82009.

Membership dues are: $20 (single), $30 (joint), $15 (student, under 21 years of age), $40 (institutions). For those who wish to support the society in a more substantial way, participation at one of the following levels is appreciated: contributing member ($100-$249), sustaining member ($250-$499), patron ($500-$999), donor ($1,000 and over). In addition to all benefits of regular membership, participants at these levels are recognized in *Wyoming History News*.

The northwest corner of what is today the state of Wyoming attracted special attention from visitors long before it was set aside as the nation's first national park.

And while the natural features that make Yellowstone National Park so spectacular remain basically the same, the experience of a park visit has changed dramatically with new modes of transportation, improvements in accommodations, and the values of visitors. This special issue examines the history of some of those changes while acknowledging the 125th anniversary of the founding of Yellowstone — in 1872.

Particular attention is given to the years between 1910 and 1920, when the automobile came of age. That focus is significant because it was the automobile that brought an end to a Yellowstone era that had been dominated by a moneyed class of visitors who could afford to travel to the park via the railroads, pay for the luxurious accommodations offered in Yellowstone's hotels, and enjoy the scenery while being driven about in the park's stagecoaches.

The opening of the park to automobiles on August 1, 1915 not only made the park more accessible to a much larger group of visitors, it also changed the nature of park accommodations. Ultimately, that change led to the kind of Yellowstone experience that we know today.