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NUMBER



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound"



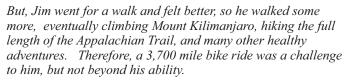
BIKING THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL COAST-TO-COAST

Introduction by Mark Mowbray

One night last winter I got a call from a friend of the past forty vears, Jim Marx. The reason for his call, he said, was that his Peace Corps plans were on hold, so he was thinking of riding his bicycle across the United States. He wondered if following the Yellowstone Trail would be a good choice. I assured him that it was a great idea and that the YTA would provide him with maps, contacts, and would assist him in any way we could.

Jim was always physically fit. But, a couple of years ago he was diagnosed with a serious heart condition that was not treatable. The heart specialist basically told

Jim to go home and sit in his rocking chair.



Jim Marx

On the YellowstoneTrail

Besides, his heart condition has disappeared, much to the puzzlement of his heart specialist. Jim was not puzzled. He knew that the exercise was the reason.



AMTRAK from Michigan to Seattle with the bicycle in a box.

Part One: Getting Started by Jim Marx.

Once I made a decision to do a cross-country bicycle ride, the next question was which route to take. Biking across the country provided many routes available; Route 66, the Lincoln Hi-way, Hwy 10 or Hwv 2 came to mind. I also recalled a

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booklet Mark Mowbray shared with me a few years ago about the Yellowstone Trail. I called Mark, who is now the Executive Director of the Yellowstone Trail Association, and discussed the possibilities of biking the Yellowstone Trail. Mark told me that there are maps of the route available state-by-state, but informed me that there are sections which are now not drivable, or have been built over by the interstate hi-ways, and that some sections have changed over the years. Mark termed it "a ride on the Yellowstone Trail corridor". I checked out the maps and decided it was doable. I would plot routes from city to city along the Yellowstone Trail, following the original route from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound as close as possible.



Near the western terminus of the Yellowstone Trail, Seattle.

I planned on using my 1982 Peugeot bicycle. It has served me well over the years. I biked the weeklong SAAGBRAW in Wisconsin on it, and have already been on 100-mile days with it. Everyone I talked to thought I was nuts, but I had confidence in my bike, it was not until I broke a spoke while on a training ride that I decided to get a new bike. Based on recommendations, I bought a Trek 520 touring bike; it worked great for me. In hindsight, I don't think my antique Peugeot would have made it out of Washington State over the back roads and dirt trails I took as part of the Yellowstone Trail route. Con't next page

BIKING THE AUTO ROAD -

I did not spend a lot of time training for the ride. I was already accustomed to regular 32-mile bike rides. I decided to start with an easy 30 miles per day for the first week, then increase to 40 miles a day for the second week, 50 miles per day in the third week, and peaking at 60 miles per day for the rest of the ride. However, it was on a training ride heading into a stiff westerly wind that I decided to reverse the traditional course of Yellowstone Trail travel and begin my ride in Seattle and bike east toward Plymouth Rock in hopes of using the prevailing westerly winds to my advantage.

I did spend a lot of time researching and procuring equipment for the ride as well as researching the route. What started out as just an interest in identifying which roads to take, became an infatuation with the Yellowstone Trail and its history. I got



All packed up and ready to leave Seattle, from the ferry dock on Puget Sound. During Trail days, the autoist drove Madison St. from here to Lake Washington and took the ferry to Kirklland.

excited about riding along the same route, over the same roads in some cases, that early cars used to cross the continent nearly 100 years ago. Maybe I would even stay in the same hotel, or camp at the same site as they did.

To get to Seattle, I took the Amtrak Empire Builder train from Chicago. This turned out to be a good choice as I got a preview of the terrain I would be biking back across in the next couple months; the Midwest, the High Plains, the Rockies and the Cascade Mountains. The plains looked like long stretches of openness, and the mountains long stretches of constant uphill riding. I knew I was starting at sea level at Puget Sound and ending at sea level at Plymouth Rock, so for every uphill climb, I would have a downhill coast.

On Sunday morning, May 23, I began my Yellowstone Trail cross-country ride at the ferry dock in Seattle on Puget Sound. The highlight that day was riding on the red brick road east of Redmond. I could just picture Models T's driving on the road still paved with the original bricks from 1912. After 30 miles of biking, I spent my first night at a B&B in Fall City knowing that biking across the U.S.A. on the Yellowstone Trail was going to be a great experience.



About six miles east of Kirkland the YT followed the Red Brick Road. Now 196th Ave NE.



The beautiful Snoqualmie River near Fall City, Washington, the first night "on the Trail."

COMING IN FUTURE INSTALLMENTS

Jim will report more about his 3,657 miles and 65 days on the Yellowstone Trail in coming issues of the *Arrow*.

Arrow #17 Jim tackles the Rocky Mountains, crosses the Continental Divide, gets rained on a lot, and is missed (barely) by a tornado in Billings, MT.

Arrow #18 After a long and hard ride across the Dakotas and Minnesota, Jim follows a section of the original Yellowstone Trail route...by boat!

Arrow #19 His home state of Wisconsin (and some fun times) behind him, Jim blasts through the "windy city" and pushes hard to Plymouth Rock.

Arrow #20 Jim's wrap-up and future plans.

HISTORY CORNER

HILLS AND RADIATORS by Dave Habura

Unless you drive an 18 wheeler, you probably don't pay much attention to how steep the grade you are climbing may be. About the only response is a little more pressure on the throttle. But at one time it was a serious matter on the Yellowstone Trail and other early highways.

On any grade of consequence in the summer, drivers on the Yellowstone Trail were seen parked by the roadside waiting outside their overheated vehicles for nature to intervene....unless there was a source of water nearby.

Steep grades meant going slower. Less air passing through the radiator meant two things, boiling water and vapor lock. Radiators boiled over, and fuel lines got so hot that the



gasoline vaporized in the lines and stopped flowing to the carburetor. The solution was cool water added to the radiator judiciously so that a sudden drop in temperature didn't crack the engine block, and water poured over the hot fuel lines to cool them. Or you could sit by the road with the hood open and wait for things to cool down, which could take some time on a hot day.

Highway departments and volunteers built fountains on many grades where a spring or small creek offered a source of the cooling fluid. Like vistas and overlooks, water fountains were a gathering place for weary travelers,

who quenched their thirst as well as that of their automobiles. The water meant there might be shade trees to languish under for a few minutes while the children filled their cheeks with water and squirted one another, or splashed each other with water from the trough.

The adults entered friendly exchanges, often about the road ahead. Was it rough, steep, under construction, and what was waiting to be seen or experienced. Where are you from,



where are you going, what did you see, where did you stay.....all the common questions. The roadside water fountain offered the opportunity to meet other intrepid travelers and share the excitement of a road trip.

The author of this article, Dave Habura, was just named Western Regional Correspondent to the YTA. He introduced himself:

My long time interest in road trips and road maps began when I was family navigator for our auto trips in the 1940's and 50's. My old road map and road ephemera collection may be the largest in the northwest, so my interest in the Yellowstone Trail comes naturally.

About ten years ago I found Introducing the Yellowstone Trail by John and Alice Ridge, an excellent work which helped focus my Trail interest. I remain in awe at what they have accomplished. More recently my "discovery" of the National Parks Highway has added to my interest in the Yellowstone Trail because the two are intertwined in many ways

My lovely wife and oft time road trip companion, Sheila, and I live in Olympia, Washington.

Dave is also a contributor of commentary and great pictures to the American Road Magazine's Forum. It is worth a visit!

Grades were of such concern that in this country and in others, guides describing the grade were published for the benefit of the highway traveler. In this country the most common was the Mohawk Hobbs Grade and Surface Guides. A section from the 1926 edition for the Yellowstone Trail (see below) shows the grade over Pipestone Pass between Butte and Whitehall, Montana.

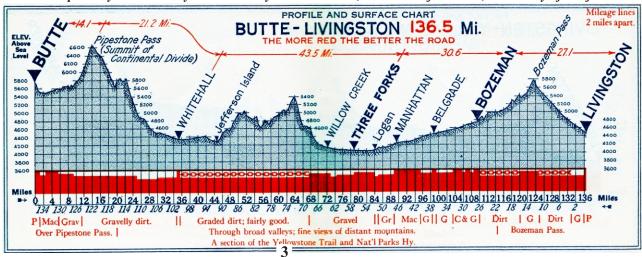
Two old time fountains, see pictures, can be spotted on the western slope of Pipestone Pass (at coordinates 45.8703, -112.4487 and 458657, -112.4450.), along switchbacks that were familiar to

Trail travelers. Both have been painted white and converted to memorials with flowers and flags in the troughs where water once collected. Behind one stairs are still visible that led down to a stream where hot travelers might cool their feet and splash in the water.

Those days are long gone, and while we may miss the friendly greetings at the fountains, we don't miss the hiss of a boiling radiator or the faltering and jerking of the car as it stalled and came to an unplanned stop with vapor lock.

Editor's note: According to an article in the June 30, 2004, Montana Standard, the fountains pictured above were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps. They were recently maintained by Barbara Baker, a member of the YTA, in memory of her father.

1926 Hobbs Grade and Surface Guide



A WORD FROM MARK

Hello, and welcome to the first "Members Only" Arrow newsletter. As you know, we are now sending all newsletters by e-mail, although a few long-term supporters have made other arrangements. We now have 75 active members, and we appreciate the support of you returning members and of those of you new to our group. We have also received some generous donations. We welcome and appreciate those and any other personal or corporate support you can provide our group. Remember, we are an all-volunteer, non-profit group.

Membership

It is not too late to suggest to your friends who may be interested in the Trail that we would value their membership also. In fact, we are offering a "Special" on a two-year deal. See the last page of this newsletter for more details, or visit our website at www.yellowstonetrail.org.

Speaking of the website, if you have not visited it or explored the hundreds of pages we have developed, now is a good time to do so. Feel free to explore!

What I Did On My Summer Vacation

Actually, now that I am retired, every day seems like a vacation day but I kept quite busy traveling portions of the Trail and attending YT meetings. I also had the opportunity to visit a few special Yellowstone Trail celebrations.

One of them was the first of what we hope is an annual event. Yellowstone Trail Days, was held in Hudson, WI in May. There were three car shows, historic home tours, a church social, geo-caching events, and other local activities. The

highlight of the weekend was a special sign dedication held under the 1920s Welcome arch located on the St. Croix River and presided over by the Mayor and Chamber of Commerce officials. I attended as the YTA representative and was impressed at the turnout of YT fans and the more than twenty Model Ts that were displayed. An ambitious group of YT fans from Hammond was also present with a very nice information table.

In June and July, I thoroughly enjoyed following Jim Marx's web log of his cross-country bike ride of the entire Yellowstone Trail. The story is on page one. I was able to act as a "Guide Car" for part of his journey across Wisconsin. He and I stayed in touch during his 65 days on the Trail and I was able to help, in a small way, his travel on "A Good Road From Puget Sound To Plymouth Rock".

Wow, this year is really buzzing along, but I will have more news in the next Arrow.

Volunteers Needed!

The Yellowstone Trail Association is always in need of volunteers in all areas of the country and with all types of skills. Whether you are a high tech computer guru, have printing or artistic skills, want to write an article, research local YT history, or just help distribute a few flyers in your town, let us know.

I welcome your comments and suggestions. E-mail me at <u>mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org.</u>

Happy Trails,

Mark Mowbray, Executive Director

TRAIL-O-GRAMS, PART 1

Tom Barrett Retires. The treasurer of the Yellowstone Trail Association is retiring. After six years of serving the Association and 15 years as Director of the Convention and Visitors Bureau

in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, Tom is off to clean pelicans, victims of the BP oil spill. Our temporary treasurer is Sara Brish, Tom's replacement Director. Thus, for the time being, YTA dues will still be sent to the Stevens Point address on our literature. Meanwhile, we are looking for a new volunteer treasurer. Don't hesitate to volunteer or nominate someone!

Tom was in the hospitality business all of his working life with senior positions at the Sheraton International Hotel at O'Hare, Wyndham Conference Center in Milwaukee, and senior vice-



Tom at his retirement party with Sara Brish, behind.

president of Sprecher, Barrett, Bertalot and Company advertising and public relations in Milwaukee.

With his business savvy he was instrumental in constructing the YTA by-laws and acquiring legal confirmation of that document. He also is a "people person," putting the YTA officers in touch with business people and Wisconsin State Tourism Department people who could assist the Association.

We Have a Song! We Have a Song!! It's called "On the Yellowstone Trail" - what else? Jerry Way of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, is a retired school music teacher and a life-long afficionado and writer of folk music. He specializes in songs about local happenings (Chippewa Falls is on the

The name Trail-O-Grams comes from the original *Arrow* published during the days of the first YT Association

Trail). After he picked up a copy of the book *Introducing the Yellowstone Trail*, he deftly lifted out the essence of life along the Trail 1912-1930 in three verses. The music has a slight western sound. Although the Trail crossed the whole of the US, it was the West that embraced its importance and promoted it.

Click <u>here</u> to hear a bit of it. If you are not on the Internet, you'll just have to believe that it is worthy of the YTA. Jerry has given the YTA permission to use his song free of royalties on our website and at YTA presentations. He is aware of non-profit historical associations' desire to promote history. If, on the other hand, you wish to own the song and others on his latest CD, it will cost you \$15. Let Alice and John Ridge know at P.O. Box 65, Altoona, WI, 54720 and they will get a copy right out to you.

Jerry and his group, "The Swampers," premiered "On the Yellowstone Trail" in Chippewa Falls on August 11. For three nights they played to packed audiences with photos displayed on a large screen in the background and dialogue befitting the photos. Mandolins, guitars, banjos, harmonicas and harmonizing voices brought life to the songs, the history depicted, and to the Yellowstone Trail.

YT TRAVEL REPORTS

Sue Kennedy and her husband asked for maps of the Trail through Wisconsin in preparation for their short but intensive trip. Later, they reported their trip.

Not that we haven't been around the state but this was just so different. I was able to print out all the Trail information from your web site by county and highlighted a few things that I wanted to see for sure.

Since we live in the southwestern part of Sheboygan county (Wisconsin), we picked up the trail on Wis. 175 into Fond du Lac. Very nice to see the Yellowstone Trail Park in North Fond du Lac. Took the early trail most of the time. North through Oshkosh to

Greenville. On that corner was the painted rock and the two tree lined roads. Then just a pretty westerly direction to Fremont, Weyauwega, Waupaca and Stevens Point. Stopped in Thorp (on County X, the Yellowstone Trail) for the night. In the morning when checking out, the lady behind the counter



asked us why we were staying there and we told her what we were doing. She was in the organization in those counties (Hwy 29) Partnership) and mentioned you and what a great job you have done.

Had a great stop at Boyd at St. Joseph's Church. Went inside and took pictures and walked the cemetery. Some names were there that



are the same as my husband's distant relation. Stopped also at the Yellowstone Cheese Factory near Cadott. Bought some of the Yellowstone Crunch Cheese, a little different for sure, but good! Had a nice visit with the lady there who knew why the cheese shop was called Yellowstone; obviously, it was on the old Yellowstone Trail.

Then through Chippewa Falls and on to Menomonie for lunch and took a self tour

of the Mabel Tainter Memorial Theater. What an awesome building. We were so happy we stopped there. Had a picnic in Knapp at the nice park area there. Then on to Hudson, the end of the line for us. We enjoyed seeing all the old Victorian homes there. Such beauties they must have been even in the early years.

Wherever the signs were posted was a great help in finding the way, and hopefully the counties that haven't done that yet will do so in the future. We were fine most of the time, just got turned around a little in Hudson. My husband still says we should have taken one of our model A's on the trip. That would have been really in the period of touring!

We still talk about the trip and have told numerous people about it. It was an experience that we loved. We like the historical aspect of trips like that and when we do go anywhere we stay mostly on the back roads to take in all the small towns. But you and your group are doing a fabulous job; keep it up!! 5

Bill and Terri Sherwood from Tieton, Washington, began planning their Yellowstone Trail cross-country trip last fall with a request for maps and literature. After much planning

(and coralling of two friends to travel along) and preparing of their beautiful motor home, they set out in May. They have kept a marvelous picture blog, thesherwoodstravelbl og.blogspot.com. Their trip included many non-YT voyages to West Virginia, Kentucky and other places, but their picture blog gives the viewer a taste of the Trail terrain today. They joined a growing number of travelers who stick with the Trail "from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound" or the reverse. They also point out that the YTA has a big job ahead of it to get more of the

Trail marked.



These buildings in Hicksville, Ohio, look pretty much the same today as they did to a Trail traveler in 1920.



Ipswich, South Dakota.



An original YT marker still stands in Haynes, North Dakota, even though most of the town has disappeared!.



The Convention and Visitors' Bureau in Aberdeen, got these (non*authentic but effective)* sign up across the state.

YT TRAVEL REPORTS - CON'T.

Traveling the Yellowstone Trail Again. His first time was 84 years ago.

With the miracle of the Internet, the recent-day trip of Jack Roth was detailed in a "blog". He relived his 1925 trip along the Yellowstone Trail from Seattle to Minnesota in a 1923 Buick touring car. After a side trip to Duluth, this present trip, in a much newer car, included a bit of the Yellowstone Trail in Wisconsin for good measure.

Jack remembers a great amount of the 1925 trip and some pictures from the first trip are being shared on a "blog" written by his daughter Carol who accompanied him. Visit here to read the day-by-day account of this trip and see pictures of places along the YT and learn about things you never knew before. (Or go to

http://www.rothyellowstonetrail.blogspot.com







There is more storage space in his 2009 van than the auto Jack rode in on the 1925 trip! Jack Roth showing his Yellowstone Trail sign while at Old Blewett Pass in Washington.

WHAT'S ON MY BOOKSHELF?

I love road trips. I even like reading about other people's road trips. So, I have accumulated a small collection of books over the years. Many bought used on Amazon.com or Alibris.com.

Since I recently became more involved with the Yellowstone Trail Association, I have also been reading and collecting books about the history of the early days of auto touring, including such interesting (or daunting) subjects such as roadside camping, flat tires, breakdowns, unsavory "auto gypsies", and muddy roads.

In reading some of the books on this subject that were written in the past twenty or so years, one person's name kept coming up as a reference...Belasco.

That's Warren James Belasco, and his book is entitled:

Americans on the Road - From Autocamp to Motel, 1910 - 1945, MIT Press, 1979

by Mark Mowbray

Belasco does a masterful job of explaining the early days of auto travel. He covers the "autoists" disdain for stuffy hotels and ridgid railroad schedules, and their desire for freedom to roam the countryside, what he calls "automobility".

Included are developments that led from rough roadside camping to tourist cabins to motels and the many technical improvements to the autos themselves are highlighted.

Throughout the book, the changes in society itself are discussed.

The years 1910 to 1945 saw a revolution in travel and in the American culture. Those were very exciting times, and Belasco captures them clearly.

This, in my view, is the seminal book on early travel by automobile.

One thing we do know, as things continue to change, we still value our "automobility".

HOW TO CONTACT YTA OFFICERS:

President: John Ridge - <u>jridge@yellowstonetrail.org</u> 715-834-5992

Vice-President: Sheila Nyberg- sheila@clark-cty-wi.org
Secretary: Alice Ridge -ridgeaa@yellowstonetrail.org
Acting Treasurer: Sara Brish - treasurer@yellowstonetrail.com

Executive Director: Mark Mowbray - mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org 608-436-3978

If you have news or upcoming events you'd like to share, contact John or Alice Ridge. For membership questions, contact Mark Mowbray.

The Yellowstone Trail Association is reviving interest in the 1912-1930 automobile route "from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound." The Yellowstone Trail was the first transcontinental named auto highway through the northern tier of states. You can still travel its route, over three thousand miles of life in the slow lane – off the Interstates.

Enjoy the Yellowstone Trail!

TRAIL-O-GRAMS, PART 2

- Leave it to the folks in Ipswich, South Dakota, home of Yellowstone Trail founder Joe Parmley, to host a really bang-up Trail Day weekend, actually. June 11, 12, and 13 saw the usually quiet small town bustling with contestants for a Fun Run on the Yellowstone Trail, and for the art show and pie baking contests. Auto, big rig, motorcycle and firetruck shows maybe were topped by a "Unique Inventions" show. Hm-m-m. The yearly "Bullriding Bonanza" and the Saturday night Main Street Dance topped off the weekend. Of course, the two museums dedicated to Parmley had their open houses.
- Hudson, Wisconsin, held a **Yellowstone Trail weekend** in May which featured the unveiling of YT signs, holding an antique auto show, a car parade and open house at the famed old Octagon House.
- Another "Yellowstone Trail Daze" event was held 1000 miles east of Ipswich, in Hamlet, Indiana Aug. 20-22. The YTA was invited to be a presence there, but, unfortunately, could not make it. Hamlet is advantageously located on the old Lincoln Highway (present US highway 30) as well as the YT. Marilyn Goodrich has been very active in promoting the Trail.



Events included an 1800's Re-enactment Camp, musical performances, a tractor show, a magician, motorcycle rides, an auction, and the list goes on.

Thirty antique cars appeared unannounced in Owen, Wisconsin, July 28. They were traveling the Yellowstone Trail in central Wisconsin and stopped in Owen for lunch at the Cozy Corner Café. They then moved on to Mauel's Dairy for ice cream cones. Mauel's has been on the Yellowstone Trail for 91 years - since 1919. The restored cars created quite a stir on Main Street as they basically filled the streets.



Bonnie Smith of Hettinger, North Dakota, Dakota Buttes Museum recently raised a good question: What can Hettinger do to celebrate the **100th anniversary of the founding of the YT** in 2012? That was a wake-up call. Considering the many miles between YT active towns, it would seem that activities will have to be planned by those local communities. All communities celebrating on the same single day does not seem possible. Let's think together about activities that are truly historic in nature, memorable and attracting. E-mail Alice Ridge for suggestions that towns have used in the past AND make sure to send **your** suggestions. ridgeaa@yellowstonetrail.org.

The Dakota Buttes Museum has a YT display shown in the pictures.

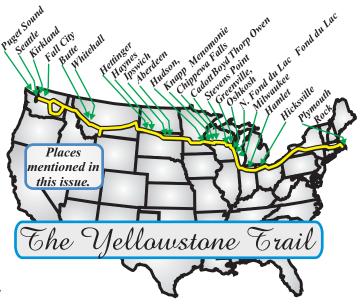




Knapp Fire Another landmark on the Yellowstone Trail has been destroyed by fire. The Knapp House restaurant in Knapp, near Menomonie, WI, went up in flames July 15.

The first restaurant on that spot on present US Highway 12 was named the Trail Inn. Although it was built in the early 1940s, you can tell by its name that the Yellowstone Trail was still very much in the minds of the residents.

It became the Knapp House some years later and remained so for decades, excelling in the upper-midwest specialty food - the Friday night fish fry. It closed around 1990 for 13 years but reopened for a short time as "The Bar Chord Music Club" and then it was reestablished as the Knapp House in 2004 by Rick Bloomfield.



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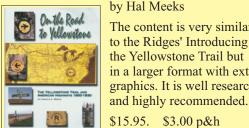
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Introducing the YT, A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound, 1912-1930. Alice and John Ridge. 2000. \$5.95 \$3 p&h

On the Road to Yellowstone; The Yellowstone Trail and American Highways 1900-1930.



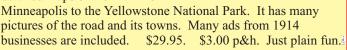
by Hal Meeks

The content is very similar to the Ridges' Introducing the Yellowstone Trail but in a larger format with extensive pictures and graphics. It is well researched, very readable,

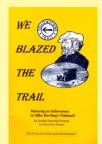
\$15.95. \$3.00 p&h

On the Yellowstone Trail. In 1914, the Yellowstone Trail Published a large format 96-page soft cover book as their "First Year Book." It documents the founding of the Trail, describes the first meetings of the association, gives the world history of roads, and gives detailed maps of the Trail from

two years at the regular \$15 for the first year and only \$10 for the second year.



We Blazed the Trail; Motoring to Yellowstone in Mike Dowling's Oakland!



This is the story of the historic trip west on the then new Yellowstone Trail by the third president of the YT Association. The author, Barry Prichard, begins: Almost 100-years ago, Michael J. Dowling, my grandfather, led three families on a "first time by

automobile" adventure run and blazed the way for building one of the first highways across America. \$9.95. \$3.00 p&h.

1919 Yellowstone Trail Folder. The Yellowstone Trail Association published an annual Trail Folder from 1914 into the 1930's. A republication of the 1919 Folder is now available. \$4.00 \$1.00 p&h.



On the YELLOWSTONE TRAIL