



Official Publication of The Yellowstone Trail Association  
"A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound"



## Continuity of the YTA Organization?

To: Members of the Yellowstone Trail Association &  
Friends of the Yellowstone Trail Association  
From: The Board of Directors and Officers

**The future of the YT Association has never been brighter. Nor as problematic.**

It is **brighter** because more and more of you are showing your interest in the history and enjoyment of the Yellowstone Trail. Membership is growing, a major book about the Trail will be published before the end of this year, family auto travel is growing, Association meetings are being proposed, and a major state affiliated YT group is maturing and providing a model for others.

It is **problematic** because success is based on the need to expand the new efforts of enthusiastic members. The majority of your leaders are growing old, which necessarily reduces their ability to do what needs to be done, and the other leaders are from the tourism promotion industry, suffering mightily from the economic implications of the the big, bad virus; they do not have the financial and personnel resources needed to run the Yellowstone Trail Association.

We want you to join us to make manifest the **brighter** potential for us all. How?

Well, first, think about something you would find rewarding. We will try to give you an idea, but if you don't enjoy it, it won't work! We know that.

For some time, the YT Association has appointed Trailmen, and a Trailwoman or two. People with an interest in searching out historical information about the route or the people who traveled it locally. Or they helped "get the word out" locally. But we need to keep up communication with our Trailmen, learn from them and record information they glean. **IDEA: Become our Trailman Coordinator. Talk to our Trailmen via e-mail, and record the information they might provide, and support and encourage their interest. And keep the membership informed about Trailmen activities through the Arrow.**

Of course, Trailmen are always a good idea. They might

1. research the route of the YT and its variants in a state or region.
2. assist a local group to acquire and deploy Trail markers
3. assist a local group to acquire and deploy a YT interpretive sign
4. deliver a presentation about the YT to a local or regional group. (YTA will provide a video to use.)
5. identify and record historic "things" along the YT (Remnants of old YT pavement, bridges, signs, Museums, libraries etc. that hold objects and records related to the Trail; Things that provide appropriate historic ambiance.
6. search for and share travel diaries and pictures and stories about travel on the Trail.
7. monitor travel conditions and current events along their part of the Trail and report them to be shared.

Over some years the Association has coordinated the placement of interpretive signs about the Trail. We have some funding to continue that means of providing information about the Trail. **IDEA: Keep members (or local citizens) informed about the opportunity to place interpretive signs. Create a list of placed signs and remind members and friends with notes in the Arrow .**

**Continued**

A contact list or directory of members and “friends” is maintained by the Association and would be available. We are in dire need of someone to receive annual dues payments and membership applications and record such information on our database. It means entering data on a computer, filing papers so we have a record of actions, and depositing checks (probably by using a cell phone) for those who pay by check. Not extensive, but crucial.

**IDEA: Become our Administrative Assistant, or even better, our Recorder of Fiscal Transactions?**

And then there is the YT website. **IDEA: Help with technical support, or content support.**

And then there is the YT Facebook Page. **IDEA: Become its “monitor” or “editor.”** Everyone might help by being a participant! Discuss. Add. Complain. Answer. Ask.

There always are good promotional benefits and a lot of fun in Sociability Runs. Both for antique cars and modern cars. **IDEA: Find auto clubs or groups that might be interested in a sociability run along the YT in their area and coordinate their participation.**

Add your inspiration. Suggest your personally rewarding and helpful proposal:

**IDEA: Drop us a line and let’s see where we can go! Join with us. We really would like to hear from you!**

**Email: [YTA@yellowstonetrail.org](mailto:YTA@yellowstonetrail.org)**

Board of Directors: John W Ridge, Alice A. Ridge, Sara Brish, and Sheila Nyberg

Executive Director: Mark Mowbray

## **Memberships Are Due June 1 from Mark Mowbray**

I have sent out emails to you recently, reminding you of your membership status.

**If you are paid up, ignore this** or better yet, extend your membership another year or make a donation to help our activities.

If you are a past member or have never joined our great organization, please consider it!

I am behind in my work, as mentioned in the previous Trail-O Gram, and I am into my mid-70’s, and have been beaten-up with cancer treatments, so bear with me and I will acknowledge your payments. I will not send out Certificates to individual members, as that is very time-consuming. If you wish for me to create one for you and email it, let me know.

## **Trail-O-Gram**

**By Alice and John Ridge**

Long time Trail Association member Eugene (Gene) Garber of Ismay, Montana, reached the end of the Trail February 25. He was 95 ½ years old. We had a long Trail Association friendship with this history-buff rancher and his wife, Fernande. Ismay is one of the smallest towns in the U.S., but it had past glory and Gene was active in trying to preserve it. Ismay was involved in the 1913-era dust-up over the “Knowlton Cutoff” vs Terry Trail issue. Gene was a knowledgeable defender of the Cutoff route to Miles City. We defended the Trail Association route through Terry. We will miss those politely heated discussions and the pictures he took defending his position. Burial will be in the Garber family cemetery at the ranch. Ψ



## YTAWMN planning to hold Sociability Run in September

By Scott Tedrick, YTAWMN, President



The Yellowstone Trail Alliance of Western Minnesota (YTAWMN) has sought to stay active despite the COVID-19 pandemic and is now planning to hold a **“Sociability Run”** in the summer of 2020.

YTAWMN officially launched in August 2018 as an organization to align the cultural and historic assets of a corridor of eight Minnesota communities, utilizing the Yellowstone Trail (YT) as the connecting thread. In November of last year, the organization incorporated an additional seven YT Trail communities that together span the western half of Minnesota.

Tentatively set for Saturday and Sunday, September 12 and 13, the Sociability Run will be held amongst all 15 western alliance

communities, running 107 miles from Ortonville to Buffalo Lake, along the Yellowstone Trail.

The inaugural event is still in the early planning stages, but is inspired by national YTA President John Ridge. Ridge recalled a 1915 relay “race” held to bring recognition to the trail’s greatness by demonstrating that a letter could be delivered from Chicago to Seattle in under 100 hours.

A total of 21 drivers took part in the relay, passing along a letter while traveling day and night. In the end, the drivers would cover 2,544 miles in a span of 97 hours and 10 minutes, averaging a “spectacular 26.2 miles per hour.”

While some sort of relay race is not out of the question, the sociability runs of 100 years ago served as gatherings of motorists who drove together to a single destination often for just the fun of it—perhaps sharing a meal at the end of the journey. It is in this spirit of coming together, that an ad hoc committee of the YTAWMN board has met to organize the Sociability Run.

On Friday, May 29 the ad hoc group held a Zoom meeting with several representatives of area car clubs for guidance. In future discussions, the group will also look to engage historic and tourism-related community organizations.

During the meeting, it was decided that the Sociability Run would provide special recognition to antique cars, but also extend invitations to any and all motorists to partake in the Sociability Run. Drivers will have the opportunity to begin at either end of the run (Ortonville or Buffalo Lake) with a destination Saturday afternoon/evening in Granite Falls.

Whether departing from the west or east end of the western alliance communities, participants will have the opportunity to experience historical and cultural features highlighted in communities as part of special presentations or overarching activities (ie. a sight-seeing treasure hunt). Additionally, a Saturday car show will allow drivers to feature their automobiles, as well as compete for top dog in a variety of categories, during a Yellowstone Trail car show likely to be held either downtown Granite Falls or the nearby Prairie’s Edge Casino Resort.

The next full YTAWMN meeting will be held Friday, June 12 via ZOOM. Discussion will include the Sociability Run as well as ongoing progress with the forthcoming YTAWMN Map and brochure, website and community signage initiative. All are welcome to attend our meetings. If you

are interested in receiving ZOOM sign-in info or would like to join our organization, please email: [yellowstonetrailalliance@gmail.com](mailto:yellowstonetrailalliance@gmail.com). Ψ



Left - Java River coffee shop owner Becky Daly lifts up the Yellowstone Trail brand with the installation of new YT signage on her storefront located along the Main Street of Montevideo in Minnesota this March.

Continued



## The 1918 Spanish Flu and the Yellowstone Trail by Alice Ridge

[**Author's Note:** Months before the Covid-19 pandemic erupted I had prepared this essay for our forthcoming book. The essay focuses on the 1918 Spanish Flu. I had chosen the topic for the book because it affected the Trail. Although our health care systems and knowledge about viruses are vastly different from that long ago pandemic, there is an eerie echo stalking us today.]

“It started with my younger brother’s cough. Then moved like lightening to my two other siblings and both parents. I never got it, so I spent days doing laundry and making soup for five people all headed for our one bathroom. My business college classes were canceled so I was home. Oh, my family all survived, but I remember it clearly, now decades later. Do you know that the mailman even stopped going down our block? He, literally, dropped the mail at the corner and we had to go pick it up,” said Lydia Kohl.

My mother reminisced only once about the Spanish flu that hovered over their house in 1918 in Wisconsin when she was 18. I never asked her more about this ancient (to me) historical event. This was only one of possible millions of stories that could be told by flu survivors, and those told about the millions worldwide who died. Statistics showed that a very high number of the American victims were young adults, the numbers possibly skewed by soldiers fighting World War I falling ill.



Seattle police with flu masks -Nat'l archives

It was called the Spanish flu because Spain was neutral in World War I and freely reported flu activity, whereas in the U.S., communications about the severity of the disease were kept quiet to keep up public morale in wartime. This, unfortunately, backfired because the populace was not warned sufficiently and people still gathered in public places like a Philadelphia parade which likely caused the deaths of 5,000.

What was this cataclysm, this “mother of all pandemics” and why did it spread so quickly worldwide? *Remembering the 1918 Influenza Pandemic* by The Center for Disease Control and Prevention provides much information. Modern science has been able to determine the genomic sequence of some of the virus’s genes from autopsy tissue. The *New York Times* of October 6, 2005

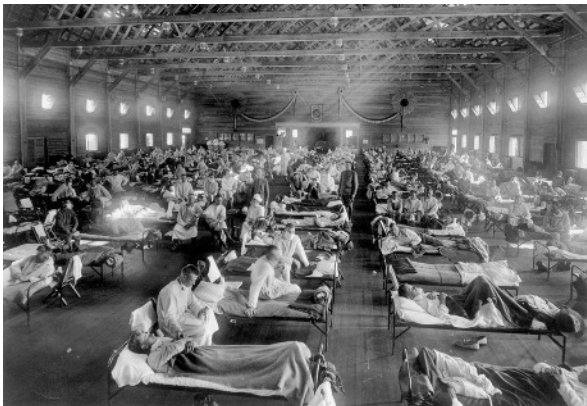
announced that the deadly flu was actually the bird flu virus, H1N1 that jumped directly to humans and adapted.

Recent theory posits that Asia was the site of the beginning of the epidemic, but no specific country can be identified. Reported beginning and ending dates of this calamity vary. But all conclude that a person could be fine in the morning and dead by dark. It was spread by droplets in the air from a cough or a sneeze, settling in the lungs and breathing passages of the receiver, causing a sore throat, headache and fatigue. Evangelist Billy Sunday said the cause was sin.

World War I was raging, troops were crowded in camps and troop transports, and the lack of vaccines and treatments helped spread the flu. The first cases in the U.S. were reported from Fort Riley, Kansas, in April of 1918. Within a week, the number of cases there quintupled. By May hundreds of thousands of soldiers were shipped to Europe. Some died on the ships before they even saw the war. Military doctors had to treat the war wounded and flu victims simultaneously. Three distinct waves were identified: spring and August- October of 1918, and spring of 1919. Citizen efforts to stem the flood ranged widely: isolation from neighbors, quarantine, closure of public settings, mandatory use of face masks, and fines for people who did not cover their coughs. Baseball games were canceled; schools were closed, including our third cousin’s rural school in Montana. And, apparently, as my mother had reported, mailmen did not have to go door-to-door. Scientists had not yet known about viruses. There were no antibiotics to treat the pneumonia that accompanied the flu virus. Even into 1920 it raged, with Chicago reporting 6,000 cases in January. The war had sucked up many doctors, leaving fewer at home. The relentless demands placed upon medical staff left at home took their toll.

**Continued**

*Flu Continued* - We don't know whether it was due to the war or if the limited staff of the Yellowstone Trail Association fell ill, but there was no published Association *Route Folder* for 1918. These annual *Route Folders* encouraged travel, providing much information about Trail towns and maps. The three fledgling Information Bureaus recently set up in major city hotels and designed to help travelers along the Trail were closed. Vacation travel was far from people's minds. The enormity of the consequences of the epidemic must have affected the 5,000 Trail Association members. Illness, death, fear of travel or lack of motivation must have taken their toll on travel and the Association membership. The Trail crossed 13 states. The 1918 autumn total of deaths in those 13 states was estimated to be well over 100,000, most occurring in October alone. While these figures cover whole states, not just the Yellowstone Trail corridor, a picture may be drawn, nonetheless.



An Emergency Hospital

The Association officers may have been aware of what was happening in member towns, if Trailmen were communicating with them. Also, even small town newspapers along the Trail published their local tragedies. The autumn of 1918 seemed the worst for Trail towns as for the nation at large. A few Trail town examples follow: Bozeman, Montana, and environs lost 87; 40 cases and two deaths were reported in little Marmarth, North Dakota, in October; tiny Ismay, Montana, declared two cases were in town, but gave no details other than a gloomy prognosis. The village of Baldwin, Wisconsin, not only listed its dead, but gave glowing obituaries of them. Eau Claire, Wisconsin, counted 44 deaths. McIntosh, South Dakota, on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, listed 18 deaths, two in one family.

The National Institutes of Health has said that "almost all cases of 'influenza A' worldwide at present have been caused by descendants of the 1918 virus." The pandemic virus, accompanied by pneumonia, continued to circulate seasonally worldwide for 38 years. The epidemics of 1957 and 1968 were somewhat different, being a human flu with a few genetic elements of bird flu. "This suggests that pandemics can form in more than one way," said researcher Jeffery Taubenberger of the Center for Disease Control. Today's flu shot may not cover all forms of flu, but it would, we hope, help ward off another "mother of all pandemics" and allow folks to travel the Yellowstone Trail.

This article was written well before the 2020 pandemic of Covid-19. When we reread it for publication preparation, we saw the awful similarities to that pandemic of 100 years ago. When governments try to cover up a health problem, no matter what the reason, be it a war or politics, the nation loses. Today, our CDC knows about viruses and the lingering threads they weave, apparently over 100 years. No vaccine has been found yet as we write this, and probably the "silver bullet" will never be found to protect us from future epidemics. Viruses are slippery creatures, morphing, combining into something different every year. The Spanish Flu produced its book of stories. Covid-19 will write another chapter. Ψ

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HELP SPREAD THE STORY OF THE TRAIL.**

Use this form and mail with a check OR Apply at [www.yellowstonetrail.org](http://www.yellowstonetrail.org) and use either the [online form with PayPal](#) or the [mail-in form with a check](#).

<p><b>APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____</p> <p>An e-mail address is required because the <i>Arrow</i> newsletter is sent via email. If you need yours printed we'll make special arrangements.</p> <p>e-mail address : _____</p> <p>Phone: _____ (Required if you do not use email.)</p> <p>If this membership is for a business or organization:</p> <p>Organization: _____</p> <p>Your Position: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: red; font-weight: bold;">VISIT <a href="http://WWW.YELLOWSTONETRAIL.ORG">WWW.YELLOWSTONETRAIL.ORG</a></p>	<p>Cut off and mail this form with your payment. OR apply online at <a href="http://www.yellowstonetrail.org">www.yellowstonetrail.org</a></p> <p>Send to: Treasurer Yellowstone Trail Association 340 Division Street North Stevens Point, WI 54481</p> <p><b>Membership category and annual dues:</b></p> <p>Check one: _____</p> <p>Regular (Individual or small business) ----- \$15</p> <p>Not for profit (museum, car club, historical) ----- \$25</p> <p>Tourism Promotion Agency ----- \$50 (C of C, CVB, Econ Development, similar)</p> <p>Corporate (Contact the Exec. Director for sponsorship details. <a href="mailto:mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org">mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org</a>) \$100</p> <p>Enter Amounts:</p> <p>Dues for 1 year (June -May) - \$ _____</p> <p>Gifts are tax deductible. Dues for 2nd year - \$ _____ Same rate, Optional.</p> <p>Additional contribution - \$ _____ We are a nonprofit 501c3 corporation.</p> <p>Total = \$ _____</p>
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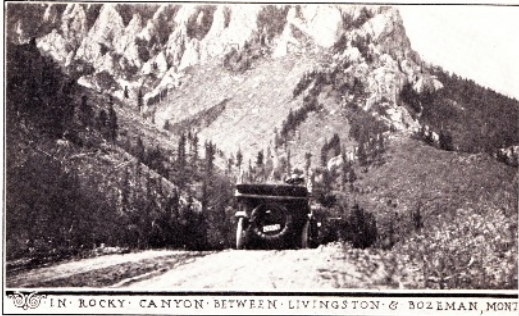
# Augmented Tour in Montana

By Dave Habura, Northwest Correspondent

We are going to take an "augmented 1920's virtual tour" of a fascinating section of the Yellowstone Trail between Butte and Livingston in Montana. As I write this, non-essential travel is forbidden, so what I am going to do is combine actual Yellowstone Trail material from about 100 years ago with 2019 Google Street Views (the virtual part) to travel our favorite road. I will add tidbits from 10 years ago when I traveled this section. Traveling the Yellowstone Trail is a bit like viewing a good movie. You anticipate it, perhaps even read about it, go see and enjoy it, then share with friends and family what you saw. So even if we can't go on the Trail right now, when we can get back on the Trail, a virtual tour beforehand will help us know what we want to look for. In the approximately 140 miles between Butte and Livingston, and in each, there is a wealth of fascinating Yellowstone Trail travel sites, but here we will focus mainly on hotels and garages from 100 years ago that still exist today.

AMERICAN MOTORIST

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I will use the following materials from my archives:

**1922 TIB Automobile Route Book Dakotas -Northwest Pacific Coast Edition.** Pg 337 Livingston to Butte Strip Map. (TIB)

**1926 Mohawk Hobbs Grade and Surface Guide; Yellowstone Trail edition** Pgs 8-10 Butte to Livingston. Profile and surface charts, maps, and descriptions (Hobbs)

**1918-1926 Automobile Blue Books, regional and Transcontinental editions** (ABB Vol. & Yr.) Ads

**Google Earth and Google Maps Street View**, screen shots. All were collected by Google in the Summer of 2019 (Google)

We will begin in Butte, headed eastbound. If you want to follow along set the little man in Google at the intersection of Main and Broadway, going east on Broadway. You are on the Yellowstone Trail!

When you look down Broadway, it is surprising how many of the buildings still exist, often repurposed, but often little changed from the day when they were serving travelers on our Trail. It doesn't take an exceptional imagination to place yourself 100 years in the past, standing where one of our Trail compatriots once stood or parked.



For example, compare the photo ad of the Leggat Hotel from the 1920 ABB with the 2019 picture from Google Street View (look up at about 62 W Broadway). Can you see that the "ghost sign" in the Google view is exactly the same one in the 1920 ABB!! And not incidentally, it is wise to look up in places like Butte,



Bozeman, and Livingston. These towns were built of brick, and adverting was painted on the sides of buildings, usually high and obvious. They are hard to reach and erase, so many of these old "ghost signs" still exist, with added value because of their age.

The population of Butte based on the 1920 census is 41,000, but they claim 85,000 in the 1920 ABB. Probably a big bite of local booster-ism. They say that Butte is the foremost mining center in the world. It certainly is one of the foremost. (My grandfather was a miner in Butte in the early 20th century, so I can attest to its mining history).

Coming into town we see the many boarding houses and apartments for miners who were often single. Past the Leggat, we see the mighty New Hotel Finlen on the right, finished in 1924 and towering above surrounding buildings. It stands out with its green copper clad roof.

**Continued**



Hotel Finlan - Butte, MT

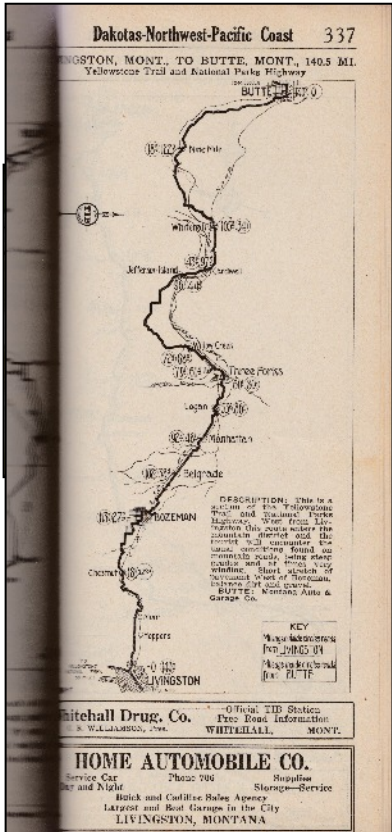
*Continued* - Imagine this. The tariff for a double with bath is \$4-5 in 1926 (equal to \$58-72 today) Dinner is \$1.25 (equal to \$18.00 today). We don't want to leave the car out, so we ask the desk clerk in the corner marble check in counter in the huge lobby, where we can park it under cover. The clerk tells us a block east is the Broadway Garage. Overnight storage is 50 cents (\$7.20). If you are following on Google, go east on Broadway half a block past the Finlen. (And by the way, across the street from the Finlen on the left take a look at the great old neon sign on the "New Tait.")

We settle in our room, and have dinner. I can't say for sure what our imaginary traveler ate, but perhaps either tenderloin of beef with bouillabaisse sauce, or Prime Rib, with creamed cauliflower or mashed potatoes. Perhaps a lettuce and cucumber salad. But no wine, this was during prohibition. If he had any, it certainly was not on the menu!! He might have enjoyed a piece of pie, perhaps apple, or plum pudding for desert. After a dinner our virtual traveler went down to the lobby to sit and read the newspaper or chat with others traveling on the Yellowstone Trail. The spectacular lobby is fitted with copper trim on marble based columns reminding us that Butte is the copper capital of the world.

The next day we head out across flat farmland at close to a mile high for the famous Harding Way and Pipestone Pass. If you want the exact maps of the Trail so you can follow along with Google Street View, go to [www.YellowstoneTrail.org](http://www.YellowstoneTrail.org) where John and Alice Ridge have posted the definitive set of Trail maps. In 1920 this road all the way to Livingston was dirt but by 1926 sections had been improved with gravel and occasionally have been macadamized. Abruptly we begin the climb to Pipestone Pass.

Conifers replace farmland quickly, and our car struggles at this altitude on the steep grade and hairpin turns as the carburetor gasps for oxygen from the thinned air to feed the combustion chambers. We climb in first and second gears and carry water because we overheat on long climbs and have to stop occasionally to cool the radiator, and refill it from our water bag or a creek.

At a couple of critical curves on the climb there are water troughs beside the road. Our Executive Director, Mark Mowbray tells me these were built by the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC), which would place them in the 1930's and therefore after the time of our virtual drive. In any event the stops for water, and to cool the radiator give us the opportunity to stretch our legs and enjoy the scenery. We look back toward Butte from our high vantage point.



As we near the summit on our imaginary 1920's trip we see a train disappear under the road! It is heading east and disappears beneath us. The Milwaukee Road crossed the Continental Divide here. (Today there is a pullout .2 miles before the pass on the west side and .3 mile beyond the pass on the east side where you can view the tunnel. But alas, the trains are no more!!!)

The Pipestone Tunnel is 2290 feet long and carried the electric, and therefore soot free locomotive and rail cars over the backbone of the continent here.

If we were here at the right time, we might have seen the Olympian or Columbian passenger trains cross beneath us. The Olympian was the Milwaukee Road express passenger train between Seattle and Chicago, leaving Seattle at 7:15 AM eastbound for the 70 hour trip to Chicago. The Colombian left Seattle around 5PM and made more stops and of course took longer. The road over the summit is gravel and dirt to Whitehall in 1926, where it turns to fair dirt. In the wet season past Whitehall for the next 35 miles, mud chains are advised. In Whitehall today there is a sign posted section of the Yellowstone Trail. The most interesting section is on the Yellowstone Trail / Burrel Lane just east of Whitehall at 45.874, -112.043, which is still dirt! You can put tire to Trail! :) *Continued*





**(Continued)** Whitehall, Jefferson Island, and Willow Creek are farm towns, where gas, lodging, and meals are available. Three Forks is a little bigger with 1000 population, and has the Sacajawea Hotel.

The Sacajawea (left) was originally built to house Milwaukee Road workers and passengers taking the railroad to Yellowstone. In the teens and 20's up until 1927 Three Forks was the stopping point for those going to Yellowstone. The entire third floor was a dormitory for railroad workers in the days when rail crews were changed in and out at designated places along the line.

The Sacajawea incorporates the former old Three Forks Hotel that was rolled on logs from Old Town Three Forks in two sections. ( In the Google Street View it is the section of the hotel on the right extending perpendicular to the main building. It now houses the kitchen and dining room). I spent a delightful night at the Sacajawea in 2010.

Driving on to the virtual Bozeman we stop for lunch at the Main Cafe which "...employs white help and serves good meals." (Sadly not an uncommon example of racism in 1920's travel and beyond). Down the street the Bozeman Hotel dominates the skyline.

The road between Bozeman and Livingston today is part of Interstate 90. Segments of the Trail are evident in places, but of limited interest here.



Sacajawea Hotel Lobby - today

Livingston is the main northern gateway to Yellowstone, and has fine accommodation for the traveler. The Grabow Hotel is among the best in the 1920's. We will end our more or less virtual story here, with a personal recollection about the Grabow.

Ten Years ago I was following the Yellowstone Trail and National Parks Highway through Montana and of course wanted to photograph the Grabow when I got to Livingston.



Grabow Lobby Today

I parked along the sidewalk and noted a woman coming out. Of course she inquired about my interest and I began to tell her the history of the Grabow, as I knew it. She seemed interested, for a minute or so, before she introduced herself as Patricia Grabow!

Patricia is the granddaughter of William and Elizabeth Grabow, the original owners of the Grabow. William died in the Spanish Flu pandemic in 1918, but Elizabeth ran a very successful hotel well into the 1930's

I was given a wonderful tour of the building with a real expert a guide! Only on the Yellowstone Trail!! Ψ

**Grabow Hotel**  
Cor. B and Callender Streets  
**Livingston, Montana**

EUROPEAN PLAN  
*Home Cooking a Specialty*  
Rooms \$1.00 Up. With Bath \$2.00 Up

**THANK YOU FOR READING THIS ISSUE OF THE ARROW.** Send in your news, events, or articles for the next one, coming the end of September. Stay safe, the Arrow Staff. Ψ