



Yellowstone National Park Archives  
P O Box 168  
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190-0168  
National Park Service  
U. S. Department of the Interior

## **FREDERICK A. TODD PAPERS**

***CATALOG NUMBER:*** MSC 156

***VOLUME:*** 0.5 LINEAR FEET

### ***HISTORY***

Frederick A. Todd was a scientist, inventor, publisher and photographer of the 1920s and 30s, based out of Los Angeles, California. He invented a new technique for the color process used in motion pictures. In 1926 he sued Universal Picture Corporation and others for \$2 million because their movie “The Phantom of the Opera” used his copyrighted process, and pirated features from his similar and concurrently playing movie, “Faust” (copyrighted in 1921, released by the Todd Film Company). Also among his inventions were a new camera and processing technique, “Tophotoscope”. This process didn’t use any plates or films. A flier put out by him advertises making an “easy \$50” per day by becoming a Tophotoscope operator, with no previous photographic experience necessary. Another of his fliers advertises “... that he will give the valuable services of his creative talent as a Scientist and Inventor, with the aid of his scientific psychological formula to increase the efficiency of business, or whatever is desired. Nothing is impossible.” Todd photographed movie stars, becoming the top still photo man of his time. He reportedly also was involved in the Los Angeles crime scene and made a great deal of money. He was a publisher of music, including “We’ll meet you out in Yellowstone Park”, a fox trot / waltz / march with ukulele arrangement. From 1928-1937 he traveled from national park to national park taking photographs and selling photos and postcards. A few photos in Yellowstone’s collection are printed “Todd Photo & Film Co. / Livingston, MT”

### ***DESCRIPTION***

The collection consists of negatives, photographs, and advertising ephemera by photographer Frederick A. Todd of Yellowstone National Park. The images include typical tourist views of geysers, landscapes, waterfalls, and wildlife. Notable in the collection is his 1917 view of a dog in the side car of an automobile near the Roosevelt Arch, which has been published often in more recent times.

### ***PROVENANCE***

Gift of Joan Jackson, 1995; Daniel Allen, 1999; and purchase from Robert Whalen, 2001.

### ***AVAILABILITY***

This is an unprocessed collection. Material is available for access. The materials include legacy media formats, which are currently unavailable to access. Please contact us well in advance of any planned research visit. Be advised that digitizing legacy media may take up to six months, depending on volume and format. Please contact the Heritage & Research Center ([yell\\_heritage\\_center@nps.gov](mailto:yell_heritage_center@nps.gov))

for more information.