



Yellowstone National Park Archives
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National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior

GRINDLE-HECOX-MERRICK-KNIGHT FAMILY PAPERS

CATALOG NUMBER: MSC 220

VOLUME: 0.25 LINEAR FEET

HISTORY

Betty Knight grew up in and near Yellowstone and started her career by working at the Lake Hamilton Store in 1966 and 1967 before joining the NPS as a seasonal employee in the fall of 1967 as a naturalist in Mammoth. She returned to Yellowstone in 1988 as South District Naturalist, witnessing the 1988 Fires, continuing until 1991. Her NPS career then continued with posts at other parks, including Lassen Volcanic National Park. Knight's parents were Grace Story and Merrell Knight. Merrill worked as the South District electrician, seasonally from March to November, from 1965 to 1972. Grace worked at the Fishing Bridge and Lake Post Offices. Grace's grandmother was Mary Susan Grindle. The daughter of a ship's captain, she learned to keep a journal as part of her travels with her family. Mary married William H. Merrick. Their daughter Alice Merrick Moore is the one who first transcribed the journals. Grace Grindle Hecox was Knight's maternal great aunt. Her husband was an early aviator and stagecoach driver for Yellowstone. The couple later lived in Belgrade, Montana.

DESCRIPTION

Grindle-Hecox-Merrick-Knight Family papers document the relationship of multiple generations of a family with Yellowstone National Park. The material includes several travel diaries of trips to the park in the early 20th century as well as photographs of the 1988 fires. All of the diaries are transcribed from the original, probably by Alice Merrick Moore in the mid-20th century. The earliest diary dates to 1903 and documents a trip taken by Grace Grindle Hecox by horse and wagon (known colloquially as "sagebrushing" or camping in the sagebrush). The second diary is from 1908 and documents the trip by William H. and Mary Susan Grindle Merrick from Belgrade, Montana, by train and stagecoach (the sort of trip taken by "dudes" and "dudettes"). The final diary is from 1918 and records a trip by automobile starting in Belgrade, Montana, and traveling through the north entrance in Gardiner, Montana, through the park, and exiting through the west entrance to return home. Members of the party included Grace Hecox, her son Laurence, and Mary Merrick. The photographs include four sets of images, all documenting aspects of the 1988 Fires and the fight to protect the park from the then unprecedented scale of wildfire.

PROVENANCE

Gift of Betty Knight, 2004 and 2020.

AVAILABILITY

This is an unprocessed collection. Material is available for access. Please contact us well advance of any planned research visit so we may prepare the material for access. Please contact the Heritage & Research Center (yell_heritage_center@nps.gov) for more information.