

**SERIES 1 - TRAVEL  
JOURNAL ENTRIES,**

**BOX 1 FOLDER 21**

**“COLORADO:  
MESA VERDE  
NATIONAL PARK”  
1925**

1925. Colorado: Mesa Verde Nat'l Park. 77

Aug. 12. Called on Grace this afternoon. She looks forward to a second romance! Looked at maps to-day!

Aug. 13. With mamma's "companion's" room to get ready, a boy here all day to clean up both yards, and kindling to pack, I did not get more done than the carpets gone over. Grace came over to see the "Addition" this evening.

Aug. 14. Worked hard all day with many interruptions. Cleaned up the house and "closed up." Paints here all day. Edward must have a bath card for before he can leave the city.

Aug. 15. Helped the boy finish getting the kindling in this morning. Wrote some after lunch to get my hair shingled and all odd shopping for my trip done. A nice letter from Sarah! They are in Va. What a fine trip they will have! Will we, too?

Aug. 16. Sunday: From six o'clock to ten or eight the day before one starts on a long motor trip is a long day. I have slipped so many slips! I am so tired.

Aug. 17. I did not think the "Way of days" could ever come within a mile - perhaps I was too tired, too disappointed from over-much planning! We left about seven o'clock going west as far as Fairmont, then south on the highway to the Kansas line, where we had our noon day lunch at Chester - recalling a trip to Concordia once - and all the afternoon west on the Ocean to Ocean. This all sounds commonplace but not more commonplace than the day has seemed, or more commonplace than is Kansas.

Evening: Camp No. 1. at a Kansas School-house, clean and open. We will sleep with only a sheet over us. So we begin the trip, the long trail to Yucca Verde National Park - long planned.

Aug. 18. En route.

The corn of western Kansas is trampled, miles of ruined fields. It grows brilly and treeless as we motor westward. And it is hot-bubbling hot! We "wet up" Bide's back occasionally, he suffers so with the heat and over-fatigue.

Latitude: Over the Kansas line and Colorado line yes! We had a big shower late in the afternoon, a few miles of Kansas mud, then sanded roads of Colorado, until camp time. We have come to the blue sage, to buffalo grass, and open spaces. Camp No. 2. on the oil skirts of a flat, treeless, western village looks out to steel stilches.

Aug. 19. Evening in "Camp Manitou".

Off for Colorado Springs this morning. The dark range coming into view, the Colorado "foul" in the air! At one o'clock we arrived. We spent a gay afternoon in the tourist town window-shopping, buying supplies, getting sorted for Yucca.

Verde, the car oiled up and filled for the long ramble, and late in the afternoon set out for Yañitón. A mountain storm was coming over the range, black clouds rolling over the great wall of peaks that enclose the little village of Yañitón - - - (God, that hundreds should spend their lives busy in the corn fields!) We hurried along up the winding road that leads by the "Garden of the Gods", hoping to camp at an old camp site and found it only in time to draw a tarp over the car when the storm broke. And as the rain fell in torrents I sat and listened to the down pour under the same trees that sheltered our little camp in 1915 - and I thought a bit of all that has happened since then: I wonder where the young woman is who told us the awful "war story", perhaps in seven years she has sacrificed her bright youth to the cause of truck gardening. And the dog that stole our bacon, does he still roam about, hungry?

And now in Camp (No. 3.) to night it still sprinkles and clouds drift about the peaks, while Steve tries his hand at making peaches. Better!

Aug. 20. En route.

Yañitón - Colorado Springs - Pueblo.

Visited the village of Yañitón this morning. Steve could not leave without drinking some of its sizzling water. Then there was fast of cards to boys and tourists to laugh at! We would have gone on a mountain trip if the day had not been so rainy.

We had an early dinner at Colorado Springs and left soon afterwards for Pueblo. It was raining when we left Colorado Springs and continued to spit most of the way to Pueblo, but the sun was shining when we arrived at "Little Bitterburg". We stopped a couple of hours and learned that we did not live in the little mining village. Then on our way again - sun shine and drifting clouds, the purple range

to our right, the green foothills near, and wide stretches of blue sage and patches of yellow whistle. We made camp (No 4.) in a waste stretch off the highway, feeling that we had little right to expect to be either robbed or murdered, since one is more likely to meet such a fate at home on Park Avenue.

Aug. 21. En route.

We have come to camp (No. 5.) rather early to night for there would be little chance of casting in the Rio Grande. It is a pleasant camp site, a bridge beyond, the range about. We have been in the mountains much of the day. Made La Vela Pass (9,250 ft.) this morning, lovely views at a fairly easy grade, then sliding down into the San Luis Valley in the afternoon. A long stop at Alamosa to get a tire fixed and a level stretch which took us back into the mountains. The Continental divide comes to narrow! The Fisherman casting in the swift stream adds to a picturesque

scene, but somehow I feel we are going to have earned salmon for supper!

Aug. 22. En route.

Views are long in the mountains! And when one climbs the Continental Divide to an elevation of 10,550 ft., following a narrow road, with sharp curves and constant use of the horn, it is a long day. We reached Wolf Creek Pass over high ledges about noon, stopped for our noon day lunch soon after, and had only just started the long coast down when we were delayed more than two hours by blasting on the highway. We sat and watched the steam shovel work, its giant teeth and strong scoop clawing away the rock. At last we started down the long slide, the great peaks about, a mist of rain, a perfect rain bow against a rock wall of mountain. I was glad to get down to the sunlit valley below. We followed a some what mud.

parted trail to Basoga Springs, climbed a wicked hill just out of town, and made a wet camp (No. 6) just off the high way.

Aug. 23. Sunday: En route.

I am afraid of mud sticky roads on the level and in the mountains!!! Well, I have leaned to the safe side of the road so long to-day that my body is perhaps permanently crooked.

For miles we have been winding thru the foot hills, crawling pasty grades, slipping down hills, creeping around curves, the scenery must have been beautiful — glimpses told me of the lovely panorama of wooded hills and trails of smoky clouds along the peaks — but I have kept my eyes glued to the road. Not until the middle of the afternoon have we come to dry road. The weed chains begin to rattle on dry ground, but "Red Bellie" is mud-splashed. - - - -

3. P. M. Wunango! The town looks like it might become a city some day. Wunango surrounded by mountains,

that I fancied lay in the midst of vast sage stretches! - - - - We have waded on our dryer roads but still in the mountains. We have taken off the chains and begin to feel gay! We will camp on the very edge of Yusa Verde to-night.

Later: Camp No. 7. An irrigation ditch close by. It rains and we wish we had reached the Park.

Aug. 24. A late start this morning but it was only a mile to Yancon. We got supplies here. We are off into Yusa Verde National Park! We again rejoice in the chill that comes when one is about to see a new national park! - - - -

For 31 miles we wound and wound, round and round, up and up: first the Switchback Road with its sharp grade curves, then the Knife Edge Stige way following around the base of Lone Cone to the north face of the Yusa, a mile and a half



along a ledge at an elevation of 1,500 to 1,600 feet above Montezuma Valley. We looked down upon the barren crests of peaks. Such when we reached level spaces, a bit of straight highway, and Mesa Verde!!! There it was: a high mesa, scrubby little piñon trees, canyons, and Spur Tree House and there it full sight — altogether different than we expected! We registered, left Bride in the car and me off to visit our first cliff-dwelling ruin. We climbed down into the canyon to Spur Tree. I was glad I had read up a little. Spur Tree is 216 ft. long, 114 rooms, 6 ceremonial chambers or kivas. It was in some places three-story high. It is believed that 400 persons occupied this pueblo. High in the sides of the canyon, an over-hanging sand stone roof, here is a secure place from enemies. So strange it all seemed! ----- We made camp at "Spur Tree Camp" on the edge of a canyon, and it began to rain again. -----

After supper we went up to the hotel, and into some twenty other tourists gathered about an open fire, listened to a lecture on this ancient civilization of a prehistoric people. And afterwards a muddy, dark road back to camp.

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Of all the many ruins of prehistoric dwellings in the Southwestern U. S. A. those in Mesa Verde are said to be the most remarkable, so remarkable that Congress has set aside 46,966 acres for their preservation. The mesa is 15 miles long and 6 miles wide and derives its name from the juniper and piñon trees that grow upon it. The plateau is scarred by intervals by high-walled canyons and high in the sides of these sand stone cliffs are the cliff-dwelling or pueblo ruins. Mesa Verde has an elevation of 5,576 feet. It is a land of weird beauty. One is inclined to think of the Grand Canyon, but it is different just as one place is never like another: canyons, and cliffs and caves and ruins.



Aug. 25. Seeing Mesa Verde.

Such days as one lives seeing a bit of a national park on schedule time: We took both the morning and afternoon hiking trip, but Edward was not well and had to remain behind. He would sit high on a cliff while the rest of the party descended into the canyon, and from his high perch he would listen to the guide lecture as we examined the ruins. We first visited "Square Tower House" and "Little Long House". In climbing out of this canyon we had to scale a 20 foot cliff on a rope, and here as has happened before, my women companions deserted and left me with the men! We then visited "Sun Temple". This was still more interesting. It is elaborate and seems to be unfinished. It was not entered until 1915. The inhabitants of Mancos Canyon were Sun Worshipers. (But at that time we were as far along in the same as we are, perhaps!) "Sun Temple" concluded the morning.

In the afternoon we first visited the marvelous "Cliff Palace" hanging several hundred feet above the bottom of Cliff Canyon. It is 200 feet long and contained 200 rooms and ceremonial kivas. Its interesting architectural masonry, including round and square towers, makes it an inspiring spectacle. So people these ruins with the bustle and hum of human life, to see women weaving and quidding yarn in the open courts, men returning from the hunt, children at play, smoke rising from the open fire, and over it all the same warm sun shine of the Mesa — how wonderful! But how impossible to sense it all handicapped with our own civilization! How we must ever remain creatures of our hour! Blind, Blind. — — — Next came "Balcony House", the most picturesque of the accessible ruins. Situated on a cliff it occupies a perfect position for defense. One entrance is reached on hands and knees. This

concluded the afternoon hike. Back to camp tired and sore. But it had been a good day and the usual number of fat women who can neither walk nor climb had furnished a share of the fun of the day. So I forbid that we should puff under forty! (Why over?)

Aug. 26. On route out of Mesa Verde.

Brighter skies this morning when we were turning our faces to the trail back, laden with unnecessary navajos, moccasins, and souvenir spoons as usual! The long slide down over the "Knife Edge" and the Switchback, 31 miles to Manitou was a bit more enjoyable than going up. It was a lovely panorama of pinon covered hills; and the mesa, hundreds of feet below, lying like a vast, motionless sea, in various shades of pink and blue, and gold and gray, colors delicate and indistinguishable. Rounding the narrow curves of the Knife Edge one looks straight down upon the bare peaks like gray

with a thousand feet below. Then one slips down to the lower foothills about Manitou. We had our noon day lunch by the irrigation ditch again and were off back-trailing to Manitou. There at 3:00 clock we set out for Montrose, and a long mountain trail ahead. We came to camp (No 9.) a bit fogged, a rainy camp it was, just off the highway, gigantic peaks rising directly on all sides. We had followed a narrow mountain road, rounding sharp curves, climbing to an altitude of 9,500 feet, and looked over the edge into nothingness so long, that any sort of a camp on the level looked good, especially when night was coming and it was raining. And here by our camp door some one has carved his initials on a giant tree, these letters cut out with a cruel axe, encircling the whole trunk, the tree has bled the sap running down in beads - the tree is disfigured, scared for life!

And we are supposed to love our fellow men!

Aug. 27. Silver Town - Ouray.

A day in the heart of the Rockies: gigantic peaks - purple walls - washed of red and gold - bits of green valley, cascades far away on the mountain side, deep gorges with turbulent streams - long climbs up and long coasts down, sharp curves with chills that come on the high ledges, - a long winding road through a showery day; the changing panorama of a day's motoring in the mountains, and at the close - Ouray! Alpine village sheltered on every side by mountain wall. And this, all this, is to cloth nature's supreme glory in the deepest garb of woods.

Ouray Camp. No. 10.

Aug. 28. En route away from Ouray.

Ouray was lovely this morning with sunshine on the red granite walls, especially beautiful as we climbed

to Box Canyon and viewed the town from above: a wee village set in a titanic bowl, a great amphitheatre of mountains rising from every side. Box Canyon repaid our climb: a deep black gorge and a madly fighting torrent rushing thru its chasm walls. We were in no hurry to leave Ouray. We even ate our dinner at eleven o'clock prolonging our stay, a little. Evening in Camp. No. 11.

A Camp in the sage on the Gunnison River! How different! From Montrose we have climbed and wound thru the sage covered hills, treeless, bleak, glimpses of the Gunnison rushing along in its narrow black gorge. - - - - - The "National Geographic" says: "Best trout fishing stream in the U.S.A." - Hence we camped early and had trout for supper. How I wish I had time to really fish here! But we are rushing along and watching at good things and leaving the rest.

Aug. 29. On route. Along the Gunnison,  
Monarch Pass, Out of Salida.

So get up at 5:30 and dress by  
a crackling sage fire, as the sun  
comes over the ridge - to be off  
in a sunshiny morning following  
the dark walls of the Gunnison  
where the Fishman occasionally  
tries his luck - this is to live  
and forget things that matter not.  
Along the way: Monarch Pass with  
an altitude of 11,200 feet, is  
thickly wooded and contrasts pleasantly  
with the sage covered barren peaks  
out of which one rises and again  
retires. It is not a spectacular  
pass like Ngiltine or Wolf Creek,  
but still one feels he climbs  
to airy heights and looks off into  
blue space. We slide down into  
Salida by four o'clock. - - - -

Evening: Camp 12.

Out of Salida we followed the  
Arkansas River along a canyon  
and at this pleasant spot just far  
enough off the highway not to be  
seen, we decided to set camp. Perhaps

this is our last camp in the  
mountains. (We begin to feel we  
are nearly home!) The hills  
surround us here. The river rushes  
along a few feet below our camp  
site. This is the Royal Gorge  
country which we have followed  
more than once on the train.

Aug. 30. Sunday: For 60 miles this  
morning we followed the Royal Gorge  
Canyon along the Arkansas, winding  
along the rushing river, peaks towering  
on each side, lovely vistas of crumbled  
rocks and high cliffs. We little  
expected to ever make this  
region, where we have sat out on  
the observation car, spell bound at  
the changing panorama of wooded  
peaks and mountain torrents. - - - -  
We found the drive of 50 miles  
from Canyon City to Colorado Springs a  
bit like some, the long winding  
grades get on a fellow's nerves  
when he is hungry. We have  
always had a feeling we would not  
care to live in the mountains. - - -

It is 2 P.M. We are starting back home! Leaving Colorado Springs all oiled up, full of gas, and food, and gifts for the family!

Aug. 31. Bounding along all day: Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska highway. A long day since we left our Colorado camp in a wide stretch of open prairie to our last camp at "Morning View" school house out of Oxford. Good roads all morning. Dinner at Galby, Kansas, where we ran on to Mr. Ward. Then off the highway a while this afternoon and losing time. At Norton took the cut off to Oxford to get on the W. L. W., and more or less difficult road delayed our camp, but we did not mind with a big full moon. Camp. No. 14.

Sept. 1. En route.

W. L. W. Stone ward. Delighted to find so much sanded road. Stopped for dinner at Starling. Then the last hundred miles, wondering what happened at home this time! It