

Road Trip 1940

In the summer of 1940, four UW-Madison geology students headed west. The goal was Yellowstone where one of the four—Ray Wilcox (PhB '33, PhM '37, PhD '41)—was finishing his PhD dissertation research. Bob Gates (BA '41, MA '41, PhD '49) had also assisted him the summer before. They were joined by Dan Turner (PhB '40, PhM '42, PhD '48) and Ted Townsend (PhB '41)

These photos were taken by Dan Turner, who found them recently and passed them to Bob Gates, who passed them on to us.

John Fournelle



Ray's Dodge sedan, with the trailer built by Reggie Comer (BS '37)—Bob Gates, Ray Wicox, Ted Townsend, Dan Turner.



Moat, Wilcox, Gates, Townsend—Bill Moat (left) was the discoverer of the Stillwater chromite deposit. His cabin was located in the valley below his chromite claims in the layered Stillwater igneous complex. He was then in a long drawn out fight against the mining companies. Chromite was hot then, just before U.S. entered WW2, and many years passed before the associated platinum deposits made Stillwater famous. When our four intrepid travelers arrived at his home, his first question was "Are you guys from Princeton?" Their reply to the negative was the key to his hospitality. (Seems that students from the Princeton Field Camp nearby Red Lodge, MT, had worn out their welcome previously.)

"In those days, we could do a whole summer's field work on a \$100 budget. For a quarter, you could get a shower and wash your clothes. And in Park City, later the site of our UW field camp, we could get a five or six course dinner for 75 cents."

—Bob Gates—



Ray Wilcox takes a break at Yellowstone, June 1940.



Dan Turner surveys the rocks at the Tetons (August 1940).



Wilcox, Townsend and Gates ford a stream at Yellowstone, June 1940.



Coming back to Madison, they stopped in the Black Hills for a look-see. (Wilcox, Gates, Townsend)