

The field men, including my older brother, Elmer, returned to camp about six o'clock and there was a great deal of talking and rushing around as they got ready for supper, which Rhoda had waiting. Elmer, who had joined the surveying organization the year before, was then one of the Engineer Chiefs of Party. After supper was over my brother arranged sleeping quarters for me in a tent with him and two other boys, Sam Hutton from Iowa, and Barney Packard from Lovel, Wyoming. So here was where I spent my first night in a survey camp, serenaded by the lonely coyotes, barking, yapping, and howling in every direction. In those days each person must furnish his own bedding, which he carried from one job to the next. He also supplied his own face towel, toilet soap, and such other toilet articles as he required. The amount of personal baggage being limited, the watch words were 'travel light'. Absolute necessities were carried in a canvas bag or seamless sack called a 'warbag', and all suitcases and trunks were stored in town. The principal objection to a warbag was that it seemed everything you wanted to get out of it was always in the bottom. For instance, if in need of a clean pair of socks, I would ram my arm down in the bag, feeling around for the socks, but encountering instead, such items as gloves, underwear, a shirt, or a piece of mosquito netting, and after yanking up a few of the wrong things by mistake, give up and empty the whole lot out on the bed. I threatened to make an opening in the bottom to save time! As a fore-runner of the fancy toilet cases I used an empty two-pound Union Leader tobacco tin, in which I kept my Arbuckle Brand razor, shaving stick, shaving brush, hand mirror, needles and thread, and a teaspoon of ^x flaxseed my thoughtful mother had given me for use in case I got a grain of sand or some chaff in my eye!

*x Still have it in 1970
WZB*

A camp bedroll usually included a sagan (padded quilt), a double wool blanket, a light cotton blanket, and a small pillow, all surrounded by a tarp (heavy canvas) as a protection from dust, rain and snow. At night the beds were rolled out on the hard, bare ground, which was surprisingly comfortable after the first few nights.

The surveying organization I had joined was operated by Mr. Sam W. Brunt, better known as the Colonel, and by his son, Arthur. The Colonel, a land surveyor of long experience, had held contracts in California before coming to Wyoming. He was an elderly man with gray whiskers and a twinkle in his eyes, and blessed with a jovial disposition. He kept the morale of the party high by showing his friendly interest in each of his employees by entering into small personal conversations as to the general welfare of their home folks, and by approving remarks and expressions. The Colonel had a personal saddle horse, coal black, with a white star in its forehead, called Tamarack, that had a distinctive running walk gait. It was easy to identify the Colonel, even at a distance, as he rode old Tamarack across the hills, visiting first one party then another. Arthur, his son, who sported sandy-red whiskers, was of a more serious turn, and handled the finances of the firm. Their home town was Sigourney, Iowa, where they owned the Keokuk County State Bank. I am greatly indebted to these two fine men for the inspiration and training I received while working with them in my youth.

My first day on line was with Wilford Utterback's crew, working in the desert northwest of Garland. The day started with breakfast in camp at six o'clock, after which each man prepared his own lunch, which he wrapped in a handkerchief and tied to his belt, where also he carried a quart canteen filled with drinking water. Walking, I soon discovered, was an important

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part of a surveyor's job. The crew usually walked two or three miles to the starting corner, then continue to walk as they surveyed five or six miles of section lines, stopping to dig holes and set marked corner stones every half mile, after which they must walk back to camp. My job was to find suitable corner stones at each corner point, chisel on the appropriate markings, and set the stone in the ground. Accessories, consisting of either two or four pits, 18 inches square, dug 12 inches deep, or a mound of stone, must also be constructed at every corner. However, the other crew members usually assisted me in that chore.

Going all day in midsummer on one quart of drinking water was a disagreeable part of the job. Until a newcomer got used to conserving his water, he usually suffered from thirst in the afternoons. Experienced hands would try to refrain from drinking until noon, thus still having a full canteen to sip on while eating lunch, and for a few swallows along in the after noon when their mouth got dry. When extremely thirsty I was not choosy about the kind of water I would drink. I have greedily drunk from stagnant pools with a heavy green scum, and dead bugs and grasshoppers floating on the surface. This was accomplished by blowing back the scum and quickly dunking my face in the murky water below the scum and drinking my fill. No ill effects were suffered from drinking such water unless it had built up an unusually heavy concentrate of alkali. Strong alkali water standing in pools having muddy banks could be identified by being crystal clear. Standing murky or clouded water is usually safe to drink.