



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

**MARY BLANCHE POTTER (WELLS) PHOTOGRAPH ALBUM**  
1940-2003

**CATALOG NUMBER:** MSC 106

**VOLUME:** 0.2 LINEAR FEET

***HISTORY***

Mary Blanche Potter was born May 3, 1908, to Owen Dakota and Dulcie Mae (Elmore) Potter at their farm on Pataha Flats near Pomeroy, Washington. The family moved to a farm on Spokane Creek, about twelve miles east of Helena, Montana, in 1916. Mary attended high school in Helena and then enrolled in the nursing program at St. Peter's Hospital in Helena. Eventually, she became the head surgery nurse at the hospital. Sometime in the 1930s, she moved to Livingston, Montana, where she worked at both Lott's and Park Hospitals. The concession for medical services in Yellowstone National Park was at that time licensed to the Park Hospital, and in 1935, Mary spent the summer working at the Mammoth Hospital. Mary married Francis Justus Wells in Livingston, Montana, in 1937. Although Francis had worked as a cook at a Civilian Conservation Corps camp on Yellowstone Lake in 1935, the couple did not meet until Francis was recalled to work for the Northern Pacific Railway in Livingston. The couple had two children: Robert Allen and James Harve. After her children were in college, Mary resumed work as a nurse, starting in 1963 at Livingston Memorial Hospital and as a private duty nurse. Mary passed away on March 11, 2001, and Francis on November 27, 2003. Their ashes were scattered at the cemetery near Chico Hot Springs. The family has also dedicated a bench with a view of Emigrant Peak, one of the couple's favorite views.

***DESCRIPTION***

The collection consists of a photograph album of Mary Blanche Potter Well's time as a nurse working at the Mammoth Hospital in Yellowstone National Park in 1935. The album contains photographs of the park, members of the medical staff at the Mammoth Hospital, and other Yellowstone employees, including numerous images of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) enrollees. The album has some lengthy annotations in the beginning and then shorter, more humorous labels as it progresses. The album is of note for documenting the medical aspect of park operations.

***PROVENANCE***

Gift of Robert A. Wells and James H. Wells, 2013.

***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](mailto:yell_heritage_center@nps.gov)) for more information.