Since 1872, Yellowstone National Park has operated in three distinct capacities: a stagecoach destination, a tourist camp, and a national park. The history of the park is a testament to the evolution of tourism and its impact on American culture and national parks. The Wylie Camping Company played an important role in the establishment of Yellowstone as a legendary tourist destination and in the creation of a model of touring that set a precedent for camping and touring operations in other national parks around the West. Today, Xanterra Parks and Resorts operates hotel and camping concessions in the park on behalf of the National Park Service.

This thesis examines the influences of tourism upon the American West and its relationship with Yellowstone National Park in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In addition, this inquiry investigates the development and evolution of the Wylie Camping Company in Yellowstone and the company’s connection with the advancement of tourism to the American West. Furthermore, within the context of changing ideas of work and leisure time in the past two centuries, this study explores the advancement of the idea of nature appreciation in America, and the interaction of Yellowstone’s tourists with the natural environment. Through a cultural lens, this examination aims to illuminate an understanding of tourists’ complex emotional, physical, and ideological encounters with the mythic West and the equally fabled Yellowstone. With an eye on the middle-class ideals of the time, this study provides insight into the stagecoach-era tourists’ experience of Yellowstone with the Wylie Camping Company. Finally, drawing on archival documents, published literature, and unpublished photo collections, this thesis demonstrates that the Wylie Camping Company played an important role in the establishment of Yellowstone as a legendary tourist destination and in the creation of a model of touring that set a precedent for camping and touring operations in other national parks around the West. To date, there is no existing study of the Wylie Camping Co. in Yellowstone National Park.
once a day. Besides geysers, erupting boiling-hot water, there are beauties and landscapes of Rocky Mountains, variety of flora and fauna in Yellowstone National Park. One can see black bears, bison, deer in Hayden Valley. The last herd of bison lives in Yellowstone park. The successor to the Wylie company, the Yellowstone Park Camping Company, built the park’s first and smallest lodge at Camp Roosevelt in 1919. The lodges were built to accommodate the increasing number of visitors arriving in their own automobiles who wanted something more than a tent but less expensive and formal than the park’s hotels. During the 1920s and 1930s, the old hotels often stood empty while the new lodges overflowed with visitors. At Camp Roosevelt, the concessioners wanted to create the atmosphere of a dude ranch, and Superintendent Horace Albright described it as “a place visito