

# Yellow Sulphur Springs Hotel Collection 1887-1895 Ms.1940.033

Yellow Sulphur Springs Hotel Collection  
1886-1910, 1915-1920, 1926-1930, n.d.



## Title Statement

Yellow Sulphur Springs Hotel Collection 1887-1895 Ms.1940.033

**Author:** John M. Jackson; Kat Zinn

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specref@vt.edu  
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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

Ms.1940.033

### Unit Date

1886-1910, 1915-1920, 1926-1930, n.d.

### Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

### Abstract

The Yellow Sulphur Springs Hotel Collection is made up of materials related to the Yellow Sulphur Springs resort located near Blacksburg, Virginia. It contains ledgers and guest lists, correspondence with patrons and employees, and personal correspondence related to W.E. Hazlewood, owner and proprietor of the resort from 1915 to about 1923.

### Extent

3 Cubic Feet 6 boxes

## **Repository**

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

# **Administrative Information**

## **Conditions Governing Access**

Collection is open to research.

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## **Source of Acquisition**

A portion of the Yellow Sulphur Springs Hotel Collection was informally donated to Newman Library in 1940. The rest of the collection was donated to Special Collections and University Archives in 2016.

## **Processing Information**

The processing, arrangement and description of the Yellow Sulphur Springs Hotel Collection commenced and was completed in April 2004. Further processing, arrangement, and description was completed in November 2024.

## **Preferred Citation**

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Yellow Sulphur Springs Hotel Collection, Ms1940-033, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

# **Historical Note**

The Yellow Sulphur Springs resort, located between the towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, Virginia, commenced operation as a health spa in 1810, when David and Nancy Robinson hired Charles Taylor to construct cabins and a sixty-room hotel on their family's property. Known initially as Yellow Springs, the resort benefited from a popular belief in the restorative powers of mineral waters and catered to a new leisure class seeking healthy and entertaining diversions. In doing so, the resort joined such other nearby establishments as the Greenbrier White, Old Sweet, and Montgomery White Sulphur Springs.

The resort passed through a series of owners (Charles Taylor, 1812; Armistead Forrest, 1842; Foulkes, Gardner and Edmundson, 1853; John and James Wade, 1871) throughout the nineteenth century. In 1852, the resort's name was changed to Yellow Sulphur Springs. The Yellow closed during the Civil War, but re-opened in 1868 to heightened popularity. A second, larger hotel was built in 1871, but was destroyed by fire in 1873. In 1886, Ridgeway Holt acquired the property; he rebuilt the second hotel in 1888.

Easy access to the nearby Virginia-Tennessee Railroad ensured the springs' success. Though not one of the larger spas, the resort could house as many as 400 guests in its hotel and adjacent cottages. Offering such amenities as a ballroom, a billiard room, a bowling alley, and a gazebo, the resort attracted visitors from throughout the United States and several foreign countries. Former Confederate generals Jubal Early and P. G. T. Beauregard each had rooms permanently reserved for their stays. The hotel became a favorite place for students at Virginia Agricultural and Mechanics College (later Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University) after the college's founding in 1872.

With the advent of the automobile and scientific skepticism of the value of spring baths, however, the popularity of such resorts began to decline by the early twentieth century. The economic panic of 1893 hastened the resort's decline. In 1914, the resort was bought by W.S. Carroll of Lynchburg, who sold it again to W.E. Hazlewood in 1915. Hazlewood owned and operated the resort until about 1923. Many histories report this as the year the resort closed for good, but the property was purchased by a group of African American businessmen from Roanoke, VA in 1926. They reopened the resort the same year and operated it until about 1929. The resort property was reportedly sold by auction in 1929. They operated under the name "Yellow Sulphur Springs, Inc." or "Yellow Sulphur Springs Company." In 1929, after purchasing the property, Charles A. Crumpacker sold much of the personal belongings on the grounds, such as furniture and art. During the Great Depression, the Virginia Transit Bureau leased the resort as a camp for transients, who engaged in restoring the buildings and grounds. In 1943, Charlsie Crumpacker inherited the resort, working

on restoring it for 50 years until her death in 1994.

The original hotel and several other buildings remain standing today (2004), having been placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. The buildings have been partially restored, and a guest house and healing arts studio now operate there.

## Scope and Contents

The Yellow Sulphur Springs Hotel Collection is made up of materials related to the Yellow Sulphur Springs resort located near Blacksburg, Virginia. It contains ledgers and guest lists, correspondence with patrons and employees, and personal correspondence related to W.E. Hazlewood, owner and proprietor of the resort from 1915 to about 1923. The collection is separated into two series.

Series I: Bound Books, 1886-1930. This series contains all bound materials, including guest registers and ledgers, which include the names of guests, their place of residence, the time of their arrival, and their room numbers. While the resort played host to guests from all areas of the United States--and a few from foreign countries--a number of guests were local residents. Some register pages feature advertisements for a variety of businesses in Lynchburg, Virginia. The registers span multiple hotel owners and operators, including records from 1886 through 1910, 1915 through 1918, and 1926 through 1930.

Series II: Loose Materials, 1917-1920. This series consists of paper-based materials that have not been bound. All materials in this series are connected to W.E. Hazlewood's time as owner and proprietor of the resort. These papers are largely made up of guest correspondence. Guests would write to the hotel after seeing ads in local newspapers to enquire about rates or reserve a room or cottage. They also include business correspondence such as order forms for supplies or correspondence with potential employees. Also included in the loose materials is personal correspondence between family members.

## Keywords

Montgomery County (Va.)

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South

## Existence and Location of Copies

Images available online.

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