

Haynes' Window Transparencies

F. Jay Haynes, or "Professor" Haynes as he was frequently referred to by his 19th century contemporaries, is remembered today by historians as the Yellowstone Park photographic concessionaire who extensively chronicled "Wonderland" in the period between 1881 and World War I.¹ While recognizing Haynes as a valuable documentary photographer, these same historians seldom credit him with artistic products. Notwithstanding this legacy, Haynes' hand colored window transparencies may be the one exception to their assessment.

Frank Jay Haynes was born in Saline, Michigan, in 1853, the fourth of Levi and Caroline Haynes' eight children.² During his formative working years, F. Jay stayed with his family, assisting in their mercantile business, until it closed in 1874 due to the financial panic that gripped the nation in 1873. Forced to seek employment elsewhere, Haynes embarked on a series of short term employments with local firms through which he was introduced to photography and the business around that expanding technology. It was through his last employer "Doctor" William H. Lockwood of Ripon, Wisconsin that F. Jay met his future wife, Lily Snyder, another employee of Lockwood's and sister of Lockwood's wife. Haynes was terminated from that job in the summer of 1876, the cause most likely being conflicts over wages and the amount of attention Haynes was giving to Lily.³

In September 1876, Haynes accepted his sister Ella's invitation to move to Moorhead, Minnesota where, with Ella's and her husband's financial help, he opened his first studio in the fall of that year. Fortune smiled on the young Haynes as the Northern Pacific Railroad, which was looking for a local photographer to make images of the land in the region, quickly hired him for that promotional effort. The railroad's business, along with the pent up demand for portrait views among the region's pioneer families, secured Haynes' place in the community for that year and for years to come.⁴

By 1878, Haynes' prospects had improved to the point that he was able to marry Lily. Together they managed the business, with F. Jay travelling the countryside taking photographs while she managed the Fargo store. The business continued to expand and, in response, the couple opened an even larger studio in the twin city of Fargo in 1879. They were to stay in Fargo, periodically enlarging that studio, until 1889 when they moved their operations to St. Paul.⁵

Haynes' vision to open a branch store in Yellowstone came to him on his first visit to the park in 1881.⁶ In that same year he applied for a government lease, only to be turned down in 1882, as was the case with his 1882 application which was rejected in February 1883.⁷ His next application was finally approved in March 1884, enabling him to open his first park studio on the Mammoth parade grounds by June 5, 1885.⁸ This new branch store offered four photographic products to the 5000 park visitors that year: stereo views, imperial views, mammoth views and the pocket-sized *National Park Souvenir Album*.⁹ These black and white products were all popular photographic products during this period and thus well received. The product that was missing from the 1885 lineup was the cabinet card, introduced in 1884, whose small size (4"x6") did not lend itself to landscape views and was therefore discontinued.¹⁰

Two years after opening his Mammoth Studio, Haynes expanded his park studio offerings in 1887 to include another popular, albeit higher end product, the window transparency.¹¹ The window transparency, a positive image deposited on the backside of sheet glass, backed by another clear or frosted pane of the same size, was designed to be installed in locations (windows, doors, etc.) that permitted ambient light to shine through the panes, highlighting the image on the glass. Haynes was not the first photographer to use this technique to display western landscapes. John K. Hillers and William H. Jackson, photographers who worked for the Department of Interior during the 1870's, are known to have leveraged this technique to showcase their particular works as early as the 1876 Centennial Exposition¹². In fact, Jackson's transparencies of Yellowstone were included in this early exhibit, pre-dating Haynes' use of transparencies by eleven years.¹³ Hillers continued to use this technique throughout his career, most notably in five of the follow-on expositions that were conducted in the United States and Europe during the next twenty years.¹⁴ In addition, Hillers is known to have been commissioned by individuals to create transparencies for their private residences. A remaining example, and possibly the only extant example, can be seen in the Riordan Mansion, the home of the Riordan brothers in Flagstaff, Arizona. Now a state historical park, the mansion houses 14 restored, black and white transparencies made for the brothers at the turn of the 19th century.¹⁵

When first introduced in 1887, Haynes' transparencies were 10"x12" black and white images "made from any Imperial negative" and offered at the cost of \$2.50 each, or \$63.50 in today's dollars. Although the number of transparencies and their subject matter sold that year is not known, it is known that Haynes offered 175 different views in the imperial size.¹⁶ Two extant examples of this 1887 transparency product are known. They reside in Helena, Montana at the Montana Historical Society which acquired the pieces from Isabel Haynes, F. Jay Haynes' daughter-in-law.¹⁷ While the feature is not noted in Haynes' 1887 catalogue, these transparencies are framed in metal.

The transparencies of 1887 must have sold well as Haynes advertised black and white transparencies again in

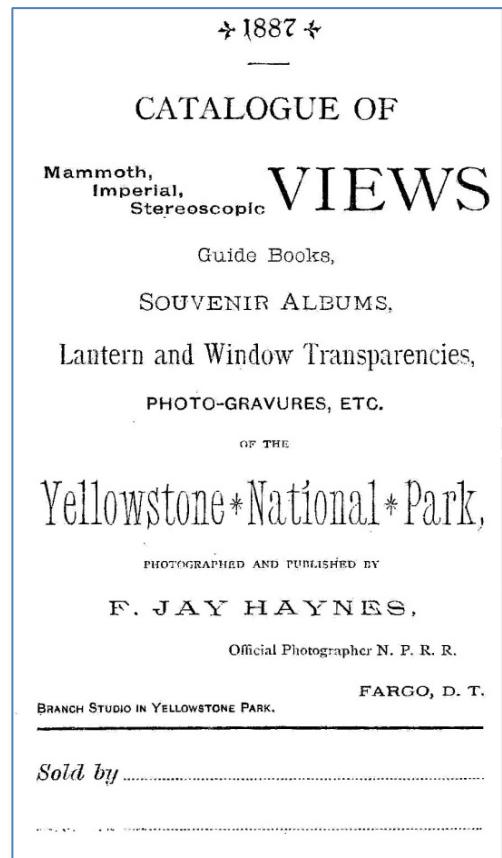


Figure 1: Haynes 1887 catalogue cover promoting his new window transparencies. Image courtesy of the Lancaster YNP Collection



Figure 2: 1904 Hillers window transparencies (restored) in Riordan Mansion State Historical Park, Flagstaff, AZ. Image courtesy of the Riordan State Park.

1888, but this time “from any boudoir negative,” the boudoir being the Haynes replacement product for imperial views. Corresponding to the change in negative size, the transparencies for 1888 were reduced to 7”x9” glass sheets, while the choice of views remained high at 160.¹⁸ Given Haynes was producing boudoirs that year made from images taken during his 1883 coverage of President Arthur’s Yellowstone trip, one may assume he also created transparencies from the images of that event, although no transparency featuring Arthurs’ outing has been reported.

The year 1890 saw the continuation of Haynes’ effort to market the boudoir-based transparencies; the only change being the product was offered “in a neat frame” with 9”x11” as the overall dimensions. There are no surviving details describing the product for 1890 but it is likely the size of the glass remained at 7”x9” and the “neat frame” of unknown material was 1” on a side, providing the 9”x11” overall advertised dimensions.¹⁹

The colorful 1892 Haynes’ catalogue supplies somewhat more information on that year’s offering. Still offering views based on “any boudoir” and keeping the price at \$2.50, the catalogue shows the souvenir as being sold in a “nickel frame”, with reduced overall dimensions of 8”x10”. The smaller metal frame size would account for the reduced overall advertised dimension.²⁰

For the next 24 years, there was little change in the transparencies offered by Haynes; the standard fare was an 8”x10” black and white image framed in nickel. However, other transparencies were, in fact, being made by him. The June 15, 1910 issue of the Salt Lake City newspaper, *The Herald-Republican*, featured the following article, in part:

“ ... In a few days the windows of the Yellowstone depot will be decorated with twelve 2x4 colored transparent photographs of scenes in the park. The pictures are the work of F. J. Haynes, the official Yellowstone park (sic) photographer, and were presented to the passenger department of the Oregon Short Line. They were wonderful photographic work and the coloring is said to be as near perfect as art can make them. The transparencies show the gysers (sic) active and inactive, the punch bowl, a coaching party in the park, the crater Gatto (sic),



Figure 3: 1887 10’x12” Haynes transparency in metal frame. Golden Gate. Image courtesy of Montana Historical Society



Figure 4: S.B. Smith image showing Haynes transparencies hanging in the O.S.L. Depot. Image courtesy of the Lancaster YNP Collection

Mammoth Hot springs (sic), moonlight scene on the Yellowstone lake (sic), Yellowstone falls (sic) and rapids and the Great falls (sic). “

These images must have provided splendid and inspiring views for the incoming railroad patrons, particularly the image of the coaching party traversing the park. (Unfortunately the whereabouts of these images remains a modern mystery).

Then in 1912, Haynes began offering tourists his transparencies enhanced with hand-coloring, and “from any of our subjects”.²¹ At first introduction, the coloring was executed in water colors and oils. However by 1920, the coloring was restricted to translucent permanent oils, manufactured by unknown companies in the early years but documented to be by Windsor and Newton in the 1950’s.²²

The year 1913 brought more changes. For the first time, Haynes created for public sale a set of transparencies made from images he had captured in the past using his mammoth camera. These extra-large images, 16”x21”, were posited on a 19”x24” plate and backed with a frosted pane of the same size. It is not known if Haynes sold these pieces framed, but the only known extant piece (Pulpit Terraces) is without frame. In 1914, the price for the black and white version was \$10 (\$250 in today’s money) and \$25 (\$625 in today’s money) for the hand colored version.²³ After 1915, this product size was discontinued, most likely due to cost of product and breakage in shipping.



Figure 5: Circa 1913 19"x 24" Haynes b/w glass window transparency without frame. Pulpit Terrace. Image courtesy of the Lancaster YNP Collection

Upon assuming control of his father's business in 1916, Jack Haynes continued the sale of transparencies, but under a different business model. His 1920 Catalogue shows an offering of only one size, 12"x17", and only five choices of views. Furthermore, the product came only in a hand colored version, framed in less expensive black wood.²⁴ By 1926, Jack Haynes had slightly improved the number of view choices to six, while adding the additional and smaller format of 7"x10".²⁵



Figure 6: 1920-style 12"x17" Haynes hand-colored transparency in black wood frame. Morning Glory Pool. Image courtesy of Lancaster YNP Collection.

Jack took a renewed interest in his transparency products in 1928. In his catalogue of that year, he not only listed the two standard formats (12"x17", 7"x10"), but took catalogue space to list nine other sizes that could be special ordered, ranging from 5"x7" to 24"x36". He also commented:

" Art magazines are showing the transparency as an important window decoration. On special orders we furnish them in illuminated cabinets, but usually framed in dead black for window use... they are supplied only in color..."²⁶

By 1937, Jack's interest in transparencies once again waned. His catalogue of 1937 does not mention the individual subjects, limits the number of standard formats to three (12"x17", 7"x10", 5"x7") and contains only a brief mention of the other sizes available by special order. It was also in this year that he changed the frames from black painted wood to "gold-plated frames and chains".²⁷

For the next thirty years of operation, the Haynes' Studio transparency offerings changed little. The selection established in 1937 remained the proffered selection: three standard sizes, all in color, and all with metal frames. The one notable exception was the introduction in 1947 of a view of Norris Geyser Basin (Haynes # 15043) on glass measuring 10"x43".²⁸ No known surviving examples of this transparency are reported and likely do not exist due to the fragility of such a long, narrow piece of glass, even if backed by a



Figure 8: 1937-style 5"x7" Haynes hand-colored window transparency in gold-plated frame. Old Faithful Geyser. Image courtesy of the Lancaster YNP Collection

second glass pane. By 1958, the Haynes catalogue of that year indicated the only remaining sizes for sale were the 12"x17" formats and they were in short supply.²⁹ Clearly by then, the organization was in the process of selling off the remaining new old stock in inventory. In 1967, the year the organization was sold to the Hamilton family, few 12"x17" sizes remained in inventory and those remaining had been reduced in price from \$20 to \$15 in an effort to clear them out.³⁰

Time has been both hard and not-so-hard on the transparencies. While their fragility has caused their numbers to decrease due to breakage, the images created with the permanent translucent oils, protected by glass on both sides, have retained their original beauty. Fortunate indeed is the person today whose home is adorned with one of these surviving examples. When viewed in front of the window, capturing light from the sun, they still inspire.

¹Freeman Tilden, *Following the Frontier* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), 5. While not having a conferred degree, Haynes' advanced understanding of the new photographic technology of the day warranted the title of "professor" in the eyes of the frontier citizenry.

² Correspondence from Bill Haynes to author, March 5, 2018. Bill Haynes' great uncle was F. Jay Haynes.

³ *F. Jay Haynes Photographer* (Montana: Montana Historical Society Press, 1981), 6-7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷ Frank H. Goodrich III, *A President in Yellowstone* (Norman OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), 9.

⁸ "The Conductor's Excursion," *The Livingston Enterprise*, June 6, 1885, 1.

⁹ F. Jay Haynes, *1885-1886 Catalogue of National Park Views* (Fargo D.T.: F. Jay Haynes, 1885), 15.

¹⁰ F. Jay Haynes, *Catalogue Northern Pacific and National Park Views* (St. Paul: Pioneer Press Company, 1884), 40.

¹¹ F. Jay Haynes, *1887 Catalogue of Mammoth, Imperial Stereoscopic Views, Guide Books, Souvenir Albums, Lantern and Window Transparencies, Photo-gravures, Etc. of the Yellowstone National Park* (Fargo, D.T.: F. Jay Haynes, 1887), 16.

¹² Don D. Fowler, *The Western Photographs of John K. Hillers – Myself in the Water* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 79.

¹³ J. S. Ingram, *The Centennial Exposition* (Philadelphia, PA: Hubbard Bros, 1876), 149.

¹⁴ Don D. Fowler, *The Western Photographs of John K. Hillers – Myself in the Water*, 156

¹⁵ "Riordan Mansion State Historical Park," <https://azstateparks.com/riordan-mansion/about-the-mansion/riordan-mansion>, accessed June 18, 2018.

¹⁶ Haynes, *1887 Catalogue*, 3-7.

¹⁷ Correspondence from Jennifer Bottomly-Olooney, Montana Historical Society, to author, March 29, 2018.

¹⁸ F. Jay Haynes, *Catalogue 1888 Northern Pacific and Yellowstone National Park View, Albums, Transparencies, Etc.* (Fargo, Dakota: F Jay Haynes, 1888), 23.

¹⁹ F. Jay Haynes and Bro., *Catalogue of Photographic Views, Guide Books, Lantern and Window Transparencies, Photogravure, Photo-etching, and Souvenir Albums of Yellowstone National Park* (St. Paul: Pioneer Press, 1890), 15.

²⁰ F. Jay Haynes, *1892 Catalogue Yellowstone Park, Northern Pacific, Pacific Coast and Alaska Views* (St. Paul, Minn.: F. Jay Haynes, 1892), 14.

²¹ F. Jay Haynes, *Haynes Publications of Yellowstone Park Photographs Lantern Slides Souvenir Post Cards, etc.* (St. Paul Minnesota: F. Jay Haynes, 1920), 31.

²² *1958 Price Book* (Yellowstone Park WY. and Bozeman MT.: Haynes Inc., 1958), 24.

²³ "St. Paul Inventory June 8---- 1913", Montana State University, Special Collections, 1913, [1]. Unattributed Haynes organization inventory sheet.

²⁴ J. E. Haynes, *Catalog 20* (St. Paul, Minn.: J. E. Haynes, 1920), 15.

²⁵ J. E. Haynes, "Wholesale Condensed Price List for 1926," Montana State University, Special Collections, 1926, 14.

²⁶ *1928 Complete Price List* (Yellowstone National and Saint Paul Minnesota: Haynes Picture Shop Inc., 1928) ,10.

²⁷ *Reference List of Haynes Pictures* (Yellowstone National Park: Haynes Inc.,1937),6.

²⁸ J.E.H[aynes],“Retail and Wholesale Price Book”, Montana State University, Special Collections, 1947, 24.

²⁹ *1958 Price Book*,24.

³⁰ “Haynes Prices Book 1967”