

The Confluence

The Journal of Colorado Plateau River Guides

Number 23



Black George (expanded!)

Interpretive Trip Reports

Jim Knipmeyer on James

Black

Articles from the Board

Willie Taylor's demise

Pop's Smith

Dark Canyon and Lower

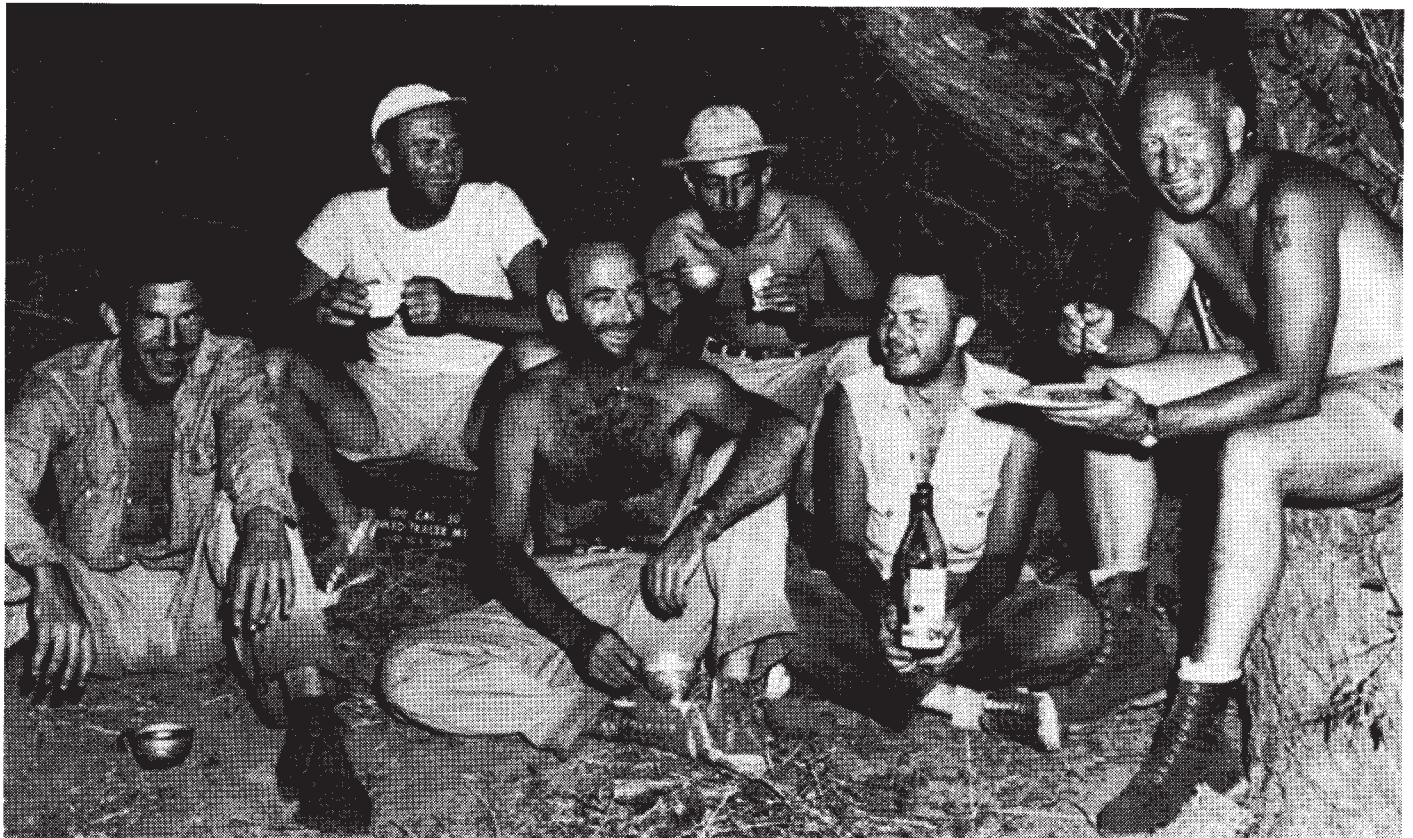
Cataract Revisited in

Photo and Story

Early Commercial Brochures

Bert Lopers last words

David Yeamans



USGS 1956 Cataract Expedition: L-R: Hank Dyer, Frank Mckeown, George Simmons, Dick Rezak, Russ Campbell, Dick Lewis
White Canyon, Utah, July 29.

The Confluence

...wants to be the quarterly journal of Colorado Plateau River Guides, Inc. Colorado Plateau River Guides is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to:

- * Protecting the rivers of the Colorado Plateau.
- * Setting the highest standards for the river profession.
- * Providing the best possible river experience.
- * Celebrating the unique spirit of the river community.

Guide Membership is open to anyone who works or has worked in the river industry of the Colorado Plateau.

General Membership is open to those who love the rivers of the Colorado Plateau.

Membership dues:

- \$ 20 per year
- \$100 for 6 years
- \$195 for life
- \$295 Benefactor

General Meetings and Board of Directors
Meetings will be announced.

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We need articles, artwork, poetry, photos, stories, and opinions. This journal is composed with Microsoft Word on an IBM PC. If you use a word processor, we can translate most programs. Otherwise, please send your text double-spaced. Please include useful photos, charts, diagrams and artwork. There really is no deadline, but the beginning of each quarter works best.

Managing editor: John Weisheit

Editor this issue: Dave Focardi

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Party!

Boatman Bash

Saturday, June 30th, 7:30 p.m.

Tex's Riverways

DISCLAIMER

The opinions and statements made within the pages of The Confluence are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the position of the guide membership, the board of Colorado Plateau River Guides, nor Canyon Country Volunteers. If you have an opposing or supporting viewpoint please send your comments to CPRG.

Special Thanks To:

Brad Dimock for a Benefactor membership
Tim Payne for a 6 year membership

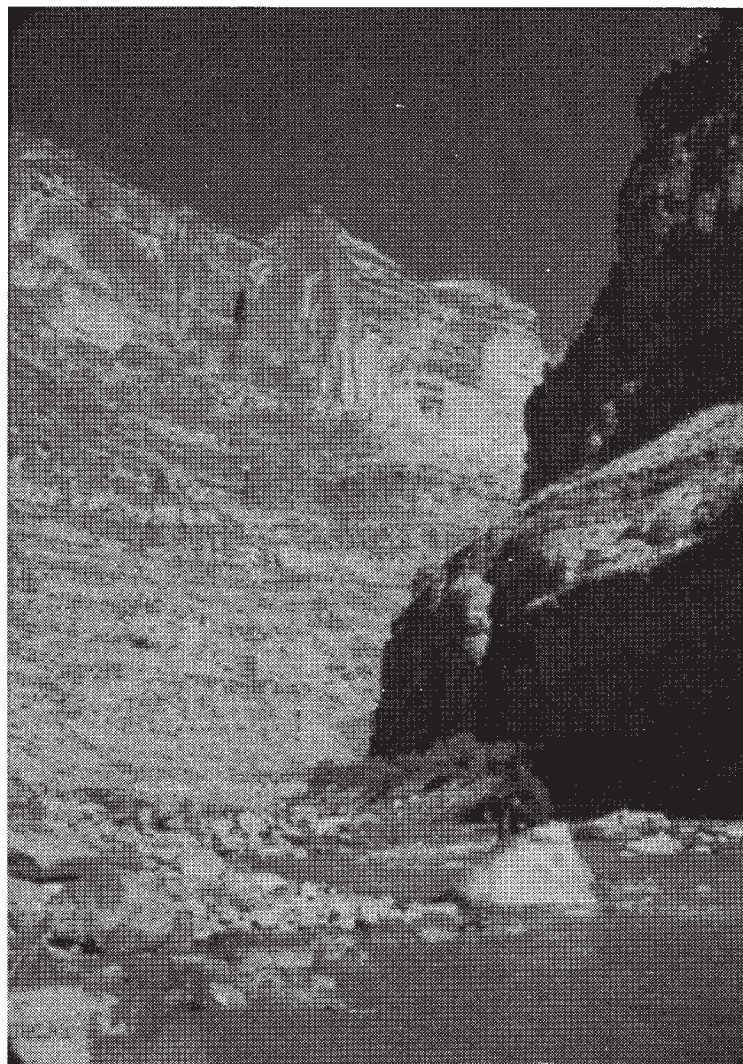
Issue/Numbering: In keeping with the new numbering system, this is now issue #23.
Thanks for financing this river trip!

#20—Volume 7, Number 1, Spring 2000, Prop in a rock

#21—Volume 7, Number 3, Fall 2000, CNP vertebrate survey

#22—David Brower on cover

#23— This issue



Black George, mouth of Clearwater Canyon, 1952

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Hello From the President

Anyone else been creamed by the wind yet this spring? My lands if it hasn't been a windy one this year. I have no advice on that, just don't get blown away!

I would just like to recap the CPRG events that have taken place this year. I also want to let you know what is in the works for the fall so you can all have it on your back burners for now. I think that the interpretive trips were a smashing hit. Big thanks to Jake Burnett for coordinating the Desolation Canyon trip, also to Shane Edwards for coordinating the Cataract trip, and Dave Focardi who put together the San Juan trip. Thank you for pulling it all together. Also a big thanks to all those who participated in this year's Guide Education Seminar. I think the event was another CPRG success. I especially would like to thank Eric Trenbeath for putting the T shirt together and generally making things happen!

The big news around town is rapid number 15 in CAT, the artist formally known as Capsize. According to the old timers, Richard Jones, Dee Holiday, Kent Frost, John Weisheit and T Berry (not that John or T Berry are old timers yet) rapid number 15 (top of mile long) is actually called Hell To Pay. We all know the Best inscription there and hike there frequently. The "Capsize" inscription, however, is river left, one rapid down or at what we have always called Marty's Hole. We did not decide the name fate of rapid 16. Call it what you like, Marty's, Bobby's, Capsize, that really fun thing below Hell to Pay, you decide. We decided and voted unanimously to call rapid number 15, Hell to Pay (not Capsize).

So, upcoming events: I am aiming for a CPRG general meeting the last weekend of October or the first weekend of November. Any preferences out there? Let me know. The Utah Guides and outfitters will be meeting in Moab (Moab Valley Inn), October 11 through 13. I will try to make sure that there are good "guide" topics and clinics for all to attend. CPRG members are all cordially invited. I also would like to organize a CPRG fun (no agenda) flat water trip in the fall. What do you guys think? Is there any interest in it? Lastly, Richard Quartaroli from the Grand Canyon River Guides would like to join their guides with us (CPRG) for our annual fall meetings. I don't know what to think about this. I

thought I would throw it out there and see what you guys think. He was envisioning an overnight meet in Bluff. Let me know. Call, write or e-mail me anniet@lasal.net, PO box 344 Moab Utah 84532.

So that's all from me,
Flowers and Smiles
Annie T Payne

An addendum to the above as we go to press: Life as we currently know it---We are going to do a CPRG board meeting in conjunction with the UGO meeting, and do the guide general membership meeting at Sand Island the end of October/November, probably with the GCRG membership if it all works out. Many fun activities will occur, even though we have no idea yet what they may be. That's the trip itinerary right now. Remember, though, wind, rain, animals and the elements can change anything at any time, so be flexible! Dave Focardi CPRG VP (don't you love all those initials! I live for them.)

2001 Desolation/Grey Canyon Interpretive Trip

What do you do if you are representing the CPRG organization on an Interpretive trip and no Interpretive people show up? Jake Burnett was faced with this recently when a dozen or so guides from six companies showed up at Sand Wash. To my surprise and disappointment, we were it!

Don't get me wrong, the local "BLM Program Manager" showed up the morning we were to launch and let us know he and his folks were the "Boss-ers" and we were the "Boss-ees." To be fair, he did express willingness to do everything within reason to keep any conflicts we may have away from our customers and expressed other areas we could cooperate, since they got 3% of the permit fee gross. Apparently doing some interpretive work down river wasn't one of them, because he soon waved "bye-bye" and headed up the hill.

Back when I was a corporate executive in private industry, I sometimes used to do these "pep" talks. I called them my "I'm from Headquarters, I'm here to help" talks.

Also the bear guy from the Division of Wildlife showed up to tell us about how to keep

him from having to put down any more bears and gave out some cards on how to react when confronted with a bear. He was sincere in his concern. I wondered as I waved "bye-bye" to him if he had any knowledge of the Deso/Grey area from an interpretive standpoint.

I subsequently heard through the grapevine that some of the "problem" bears from one of the National Parks, Yellowstone I think, had been transplanted to the our area above the river. I don't know if this is factual or not, but I sure am going to be asking the question about these pre-trained camp robbers, if I ever see him again.

Oh! Another thing! When asked, the "BLM Program Manager" told us about all the progress made recently in talks with the Ute's about visiting their lands on river left. We still are not supposed to, but apparently they have agreed to a quarter mile from the river easement they will maintain as "wild and scenic" from now on. Shucks! No chance for an oil rig or a casino -- or is there? Also, it is now officially authorized for us to allow our customers to gaze towards river left as we progress down the river. We can even look ourselves! To my surprise I found that my eyes were trespassing all these years. We weren't supposed to be looking that way prior to these recent "breakthroughs."

A bit of a disclaimer here. None of the above has expressed by Jake or any of the others I was with on the trip and I didn't discuss it myself with any of them. This was my attitude, however, when I found out we were to be abandoned to our own devices on this so called "Interpretive Trip". Pretty sour, huh? The previous interpretive trip I had attended was loaded with people. Guides, interpretive folks, geologists, botanists, star guys, river rangers, company owners, the concession people. I guess the Yampa is a more desirable trip, so it is supported. It was a good deal and I expected this one to be as well backed by our public servants. Was it thin because it was a weekend? You know these government workers!

Anyway, enough sour grapes and back to the original theme. What was Jake to do?

First he sat us all down in a circle after a summons from his "conch" shell. We all tried to learn how to blow it over the week. He told us the plan was for us to operate as a tribe of Fremonts. He described in some detail how a tribe operates on a consensus basis and shares knowledge with each other.

He then asked us to introduce ourselves in depth, talking about our history as well as plans, hopes and aspirations. This would speed up the

process of getting to know each other. He then went in to an in depth discussion about himself along those lines. Kevin from Tag-a-Long went next and in the spirit of what Jake had proposed, talked extensively about himself, making a few personal disclosures. That set the stage for all to be quite detailed. I thought it was a great introduction and "icebreaker" and it proved to be so.

Jake brought with him an extensive library in a couple of rocket boxes. He had to have spent a lot of time in a couple of libraries to get all of the books that supplemented his personal stuff. There were books on ranchers and families who had settled the area; the Indians who preceded them, as well as succeeded them; myths and rituals, crafts and skills related to tool making and other aspects of living as a Fremont and on and on. He also had books on geology and other aspects of the canyons we might be interested in. Each of us were to read and study these every day and report to the rest of the tribe about our findings in the evening. He even had a drum along that proved to be a good move, even though I personally was apprehensive at first. What a great stress reliever and an instigator of a group dynamic, dancing. The introduction process and these subsequent interactions fostered a desire in me to share what I know and am, that permeated the whole week. Apparently it had the same effect on the others. People broke into their personal libraries for stuff they used with their customers. They hiked and showed places along the river that only they and a few in their company know about.

Jake himself is good on plants and flower identification and the hikes were leisurely and informative.

A sweat lodge on day three, with further in depth personal disclosures, nearly prayers, seemed to pull the group further into a tribal mode and by the end of the week I drew the following conclusion. It would not be possible to match with an interpretive plan what happened spontaneously on this trip related to all aspects of Desolation and Grey Canyons.

Realistically, as time goes on the relationships forged will weaken and the strength of the emotions I have about the experience will wane. I will always remember this tribe and it's members with warmth. What will remain strongest because of them, is my commitment to each of the companies represented, that if there is ever a problem, ever anything going on that requires me to step up and be counted, I'll be

there. That is my big take away because of the classy people with whom I spent these few days.

It strikes me this feeling is right in line with CPRG's dedication to "Celebrating the unique spirit of the river community." This is what it is all about. One of those life experiences, I guess.

By: Paul R. "Pops" Smith

San Juan Interpretive Trip

I just got off the San Juan Interpretive trip yesterday, so I am writing this while all is still fresh in my mind. We took 5 days to go from Bluff to Mexican Hat, with a layover day at Eight foot rapid to do a Swiftwater Rescue course with Ken and Jen McCarthy, courtesy of High Desert Adventure. HDA was formerly Sleight Expeditions, and they were the most excellent sponsoring outfitter. Along with Dan Murphy as the chief interpreter/raconteur, we also had Chris Carlson as the archeologist and Eric Jones (in his own Aire ducky) courtesy of the Moab BLM office as geologist. The other aspects of Eric and Chris' life that were of importance to the trip are that they play Mandolin/Guitar and Fiddle/Banjo respectively, which dovetails nicely with my 5String Banjo picking- especially since we all played together here in Moab with the band Keltika before Chris moved to Albuquerque.

The trip was excellent. The weather was perfect, the guides were great, and Dan Murphy knew more stuff than we had time to even touch. Here is a general rundown of the trip-

Day 1) Launch around 10am, float down a short way to just above the (erroneously known) Kachina panel- better known as the Butler Panel- to view Peregrines in their nest. Rick Boretti, one of the BLM river rangers, has done extensive raptor studies on the Juan and published previously in the Confluence (Vol 6 #2 Fall 1999). He set up a spotting scope on a tripod and we all took turns viewing the female in the nest while we talked about peregrines and other bird issues. A private on a single boat trip joined in to listen and learn with the rest of us.

Then we went down to the Butler Panel and AJ and Geoff of HDA set up lunch while Dan and Chris talked about the Butler panel. Nancy and Dano of Oars were there with their guests and we all listened in. The large figures are Basketmaker (100BC to 700AD-more or less, depending on who you talk to), and recall the Kachina cults didn't start until about the 14th century. So calling the panel the "Kachina"

Panel is not entirely correct, if not wildly misleading.

We then went down to the camp opposite River House on the right, letting OARS have the corral camp (aka Cottonwood). We hiked up to River House with Dan and Chris and got more information than can be repeated here. We then hiked down the bench to some surface sites and then to the Barton trading post and water wheel.

Day 2) To have plenty of time day 2, we hiked up San Juan hill before breakfast (but after coffee) and did some geology with Eric and myself, then hiked up Chinle wash to the Hillerman Alcove where Dan Murphy showed Tony the place where the New York Times bestseller "Thief of Time" was born. Dan has known Tony Hillerman since he was a reporter in Sante Fe.

We then proceeded down to Eight foot rapid where we shared camp with OARS, since we were going to be laying over to do a Swiftwater rescue component on Day 3.

Day 3) Dan and Eric talked about Bioherms and oil production as breakfast settled and we waited for the sun to warm us up before the Swiftwater class. Eric is a petroleum engineer and is familiar with the Aneth field and the Big Flat & Bartlett fields which produce out of the Paradox formation. The Paradox has anywhere from 29 to 40 (or more) cycles of transgression to regression- depending on which argumentative geologist you heard from last. The Aneth field was discovered as a result of Don Baars research on the Bioherms found nicely exposed at Eight foot rapid. The Kane creek zone (cycle 21) is a fractured carbonaceous shale. It produces out of vertical fractures, and best when drilled with expensive horizontal technology. Those are the ones in the Island in the Sky area (up there- not actually in the national Park) and one over north of Lisbon - an anomalous vertical well that has been producing for close to 30 years, as well as the Frank Shafer #1 1925 blowout along the river.

The Swiftwater class involved everyone and all our ropes, pulleys and gear- more by design than sheer love of gear. Of course, any Swiftwater class provides knowledge, not experience, and the instructors emphasized the need to practice. We shared camp with a private that came by rather late in the day hoping to camp there. They showed us how to party with their Hawaii Luau night and outlasted all but the most hardened guides (not me!).

Day 4)The next morning we hiked up the perched meander at Eight foot and saw plenty of fossils and wild flowers, and continued down to the “fossil stop” for lunch and a look at a 6’ long crinoid stem. We then went to the camp across from the Hat where many of us took the early time into camp to surf, converse, or nap(all three in many cases). We had a local Navajo young man join us for the evening and next morning , providing us some entertainment with insights into cultural differences.

Day5) We took off from camp and reached the takeout at 10:15- fifteen minutes late from the approved itinerary- the first time we were late for any of our scheduled activities.

The participants were: from High Desert Adventures- Nute Davis, Doug Deutschlander, Dave Huff, Barb King, Geoff Muhelstein, A.J. Reeves, Matt Royden, and Randy Tucker, from OARS Steve Dillon and Chelse Decker, from Desert Whitewater (the outfitting arm of Canyon REO) Justin Loxley and Matt Wencel; Brock Disanti from Outward Bound. Interpreters were: Dan Murphy-history, geology, archaeology, humor, Rick Boretti-Raptors/BLM, Eric Jones-geology/guitar/vocals, Chris Carlson-archaeology and fiddle/vocals; Ken and Jen McCarthy-swiftwater rescue, and Dave Focardi-nominal TL, geology, banjo.

All in all, the relaxed 5 day schedule provided ample time for interpretation, plenty of time for ALL questions to be answered at any stop before we left, plenty of time to see many things, no need to rush at any meal, and plenty of time for music in the evenings. We are all in awe of Dan Murphy’s knowledge and story telling skills, and of his ability to start teaching us to become the interpreter he is.

NEWS FROM THE UINTA BASIN from Herm Hoops

COLORADO OUTWARD BOUND purchased a bunch of new duckies for the coming season and ADRIFT purchased new Hyside boats. RIVER RUNNERS TRANSPORT opened RIVER RUNNER, a retail river store in Vernal. CENTENNIAL CANOE OUTFITTERS has purchased the Buggy Whip operation in Steamboat Springs.

DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT has widened the Split Mountain boat ramp by 3 times its size, funded by concession fees. Lines have been painted on the ramp in order that rangers will be able to accurately measure it! The Yampa River is cutting into the Deerlodge access road and the Monument is building a detour road

around the threatened area. The Quarry entrance road has been repaved.

VERNAL BLM is continuing to work on access problems on the White River at Cowboy Canyon and Bonanza. Preliminary plans are for development of a new access above Bonanza. A new access, complete with block outhouse, was completed at the Enron takeout last year. Consideration is being made to introduce a fee program on the White River. Uinta County has paved the Glen Bench access road from the Bonanza Highway to Mountain Fuels Bridge.

UTE TRIBE takeout on the White River at Mountain Fuels Bridge has almost been completely washed out, using it is almost impossible. The White River access at Orray is being taken over by trees and shrubs.

US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE is looking for a boatmin to work on the Endangered Fish Recovery Project; contact Mark Fuller at MARK_H_FULLLER@fws.gov as soon as possible. The FWS will again be conducting a catfish reduction program on the Yampa during low water, and are looking for "fishing" volunteers!

CPRG will be conducting a river guide training seminar in Jensen on May 29, 2001.

Book Review

River Flowing from the Sunrise An Environmental History of the Lower San Juan

James M. Aton and Robert S. McPherson
Foreword by Donald Worster

"Imagine a river trip down the San Juan with a boat-load of old-timers:Navajo, Ute, Mormon pioneer, scientist, miner, artist--all regaling us with stories filled with personality, emotion, and opinion. Add two historians to place every story in environmental context, gently filling in the cultural and political background, fitting the San Juan into the fabric of American history.

"River Flowing From the Sunrise takes us on that enviable trip. In doing so, Jim Aton and Bob McPherson meet the challenge laid down in their own concluding chapter: they capture 'the river landscape's power ... armed with science, local intelligence, and imagination,' and 'meld the secular with the sacred, and imagine a new yet old way to live in this very difficult landscape.

Stephen Trimble, author of [The People: Indians of the American Southwest](#) and coeditor of [Testimony: Writers of the West Speak on Behalf of Utah Wilderness](#).

"River Flowing from the Sunrise is an outstanding environmental history of a western river, smoothly and sensitively written, even handed, and thoughtful. It provides an excellent case study of an important western river and the environmental history of its corridor and surrounding region."

Mark Harvey, author of [A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement](#)

The authors recount twelve millennia of history along the lower San Juan River, much of it the story of mostly unsuccessful human attempts to make a living from river's arid and fickle environment. From the Anasazi to government dam builders, from Navajo to Mormon herders and farmers, from scientific explorers to busted miners, the San Juan has attracted more attention and fueled more hopes than such a remote, unpromising, and muddy stream would see to merit.

Title: River Flowing from the Sunrise An Environmental History of the Lower San Juan
Authors: James M. Aton and Robert S. McPherson
Trim size: 8 1/2 x 11 inches
Number of pages: 232 pages
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Contact: Brooke Bigelow Marketing Manager
Utah State University Press
1-800-239-9974 fax (435) 797-0313 e-mail: bbigelow@upress.usu.edu

Flipped Out on the Colorado

Want to be part of really cool project? We're looking for the best, wildest, most unbelievable whitewater boating mayhem photos from the Colorado and its tributaries! We want to put a collection of these shots into a classic picture book devoted entirely to boating bloopers. From Grand Canyon, Cataract, Westwater, Desolation/Gray, and Lodore, to the Dolores and the San Juan, were looking for flips, "almost" flips, gnarly boat wrecks, wraps, rescues, rides that went wrong-or almost went wrong-you

name it. We want the best whitewater bedlam shots of what "Big Red" and its feeders can dish out! We're offering a fee and a copy of the book for photos used (not huge \$ but better than a paddle in your eye). We've already got a great start, and would like to have all photos by 9/1/01 (please retain a duplicate of your photos just in case the post office goes postal). Please contact

Tom at Puma Press, P.O. Box 30998, Flagstaff, Arizona 86003,

and mark your envelope, "photo enclosed." Or send your inquiries or your photo for consideration to Pumapress@aol.com. Muchas gracias.

River Ranger JOB Westwater!!!

The Bureau of Land Management, Moab Field Office has an opening for a seasonal GS-4 Recreation Technician/River Ranger. Recreation Technician will work in the Moab Field Office Area along the Colorado River between Grand Junction, Colorado, and Moab, Utah.

Duties include; conducting check-ins of boaters at Westwater Ranger Station to ensure users have necessary resource protection and safety equipment, accompany river patrols of Westwater Canyon of the Colorado River (Class III and IV whitewater) to clean campsites and check boater compliance, perform light maintenance of camping and launch area facilities.

Requirements; valid driver's license; ability to get along with people, and must be able to and have experience rowing class III and IV whitewater. Must have personal transportation to and from Westwater.

Apply on-line using Quickhire:

www.nc.blm.gov/jobs/

we recommend that you also submit a resume to Utah Department of Workforce Services in Moab, 1165 S. Hwy 191 Suite 2, Moab, Utah 84532 (435)259-3700.

For more information contact; Marilyn Peterson at 435-259-2119 Bureau of Land Management Moab Field Office 82 East Dogwood Moab, Utah 84532

THE STORY OF JAMES W. BLACK

By Jim Knipmeyer

Many old, historic inscriptions in Glen Canyon of the Colorado River were, unfortunately, drowned by the waters of Lake Powell reservoir. Such has been the fate of two signatures carved by early prospector and stockman James W. Black. Happily, however, a third was written high enough on the canyon wall that it has escaped inundation - barely!

About a half-mile upcanyon from the mouth of the Escalante River, at what would have been about Mile-89, right bank, on the old Colorado, is one of the large, shallow alcoves characteristic of the contact between the Kayenta bench and the Navajo cliffs. On the back wall, painted in what may have been a combination of charcoal and cooking grease, is "J. W. BLACK FEB 2 1896," still plainly visible today. It was first noted by Utah historian and writer Charles Kelly on September 30, 1938, while on a river trip with the so-called Stone-Frazier expedition.

James W. Black remains a little known and somewhat mysterious character of the Glen Canyon area. Where he was born or where he came from is not known. Early Escalante, Utah, resident Jess Barker told Colorado River historian Otis R. "Dock" Marston in 1955 that Black "came from Colorado." A statement by William H. Switzer in the collections of the Pioneers' Historical Society in Flagstaff, Arizona, says that he "came from Durango, Colorado." However, the La Plata County Historical Society in Durango has only one record of a James W. Black in that area, and his date of death would seem to preclude his being the James W. Black in question. What is known about Black comes from two prepared statements that he gave in Flagstaff on July 10 and 11, 1930, and a few scattered pieces of information collected by Dock Marston in the 1950s. The 1930 statements would seem to be the most valuable sources of information, but even they must be tempered by the realization that not only were they written some thirty years after the fact, but that they were prepared at the request of author Gladwell "Toney" Richardson as background material for his various books and magazine articles. Richardson, member of a long-time trading family in the western Navajo country, wrote a tremendous amount of both fiction and non-fiction, sometimes blurring the line between the two. He was a perfect example of the old axiom, "Never let the facts stand in the way of a good story."

Be that as it may, the first we hear of James W. Black is as a drover, hired by John W. Young to assist in driving a herd of horses from southern Utah, by way of Lee's Ferry, to the slopes of the San Francisco Peaks in northern Arizona. Black, in one of his 1930 statements, says that this was in August of 1880. By 1883 he was working as a cowhand with Young's Mormon Church-owned A-1 cattle outfit in Fort Valley, several miles northwest of Flagstaff. When attempting to track down information about Black, Dock Marston was informed that he was not related to the prominent Black family of Flagstaff in the 1880s and afterwards.

In a letter to Dock in 1957, Muriel Pope said that her father and uncle, George and Arthur Spencer, remembered a man named Black being around the San Juan River in 1883-84. Also, that her dad recalled a Jim Black, an "A-1 cowpuncher," who did a lot of prospecting at times and who made the observation that the scenery where the San Juan and Colorado met would make a "good tourist attraction"! James Black himself stated that he went up to the San Juan River to prospect for gold in 1889, after he "had just come out of the Navajo Mountain country to Flagstaff."

Writing many years later, Black probably meant 1892, as he mentions the gold discoveries of trader Jonathan P. Williams and the resulting "San Juan excitement," which took place in late 1892 and early 1893. He goes on to describe prospecting along the San Juan River that year but then moving on downstream and up the Colorado to Hite, just as many another disappointed San Juan prospector did.

This adjusting of dates would also reconcile the brief item about Black that appeared in The Coconino Sun, a Flagstaff newspaper on June 30, 1892. If he had, in fact, "just come out of the Navajo Mountain country to Flagstaff" before heading up to the "San Juan excitement," it would had to have been sometime during the summer, and that agrees exactly with the news item. "...James W. Black returned this week from a trip to the country northeast of here [Navajo Mountain]..in search of the 'Lost Spanish Mine' [the Merrick-Mitchell, or Pish-la-ki silver mine]. But after searching for the lost mine two weeks through the rocky canyons..[he was] forced to abandon [his] search.."

According to Black's 1930 statements, he and two companions returned to Navajo Mountain in January 1892 [again, his year date may be wrong]. It was on this trip that they first saw Rainbow Natural Bridge from near the top of the



mountain. In a 1956 letter to Dock Marston, a Preston M. Mercer told of visiting with an old-timer in Flagstaff by the name of Emmett Kellam. In the 1930s, Kellam had worked in a supervisory capacity for the U.S. Indian Service and had spent a lot of time in the Navajo Mountain country. In fact, he had camped all one winter along the north side of the mountain, building trails into the canyon country [probably the government-sponsored CCC construction work of the early and mid-'30s]. Kellam said that he had found a "chunk of old log" along an old trail north of Navajo Mountain with Black's name carved on it and also a date that was in the "1800s." He went on to say that he also saw Black's name carved on trees in more than one other place on Navajo Mountain. These statements by Kellam are intriguing because they can be substantiated, at least in part, by others. When geologist Herbert E. Gregory visited the top of Navajo Mountain in the summer of 1913, his field note entry for June 18 states, "Navajo Mt. Highest point..mark on tip top stake..Jas Black Jan (?) 1903." In a story very similar sounding in some respects to both the Kellam and Gregory accounts, author Elmer E. Davis, in an article for the July 1926 issue of *Progressive Arizona* says, "...[at] the summit [of Navajo Mountain]..a piece of wood, a portion of the limb of a tree, had..carved on it, ..'Jas Black,

1903.'" Black himself tells of returning to Navajo Mountain again after 1897, but again he may have been a few years off in his 1930 recollections.

Black stated that his view from Navajo Mountain of what is today known as Bridge Canyon "intrigued me," so the next year, 1893, he got another man to go back in with him. He indicated that they went by way of what he called the "East trail" past "Glass Mountain." This would be the trail on the north side of Navajo Mountain which crosses today's Bald Rock Canyon-Nasja Creek region. [Shades of Emmett Kellam's story!] This is also the area of slickrock domes that Western author Zane Grey referred to as the "Glass Mountains" after his pack trip of 1913. In 1930, of course, Black could easily have been aware of this name. Black continues on saying that they went down Oak Canyon and camped in a "kind of basin" where the Colorado River made a bend. Crossing over into what is now Forbidding Canyon, they prospected for two months. Black added that the two of them found "Indian ruins in cliffs, but no gold." Therefore, they called the gorge "Aztec Canyon," a name that today is applied only to the creek.

One problem that modern historians and researchers have had with Black's 1930 statements is the following: Black said that he

and his companion swam their horses over the Colorado and went up the Escalante River to the small Mormon town of the same name. Because of the meandering course of the Colorado, the often times sheer cliffs, and the blocking gorges of deep tributary canyons, it would have been next to impossible for a person to travel by horseback the some twenty river-miles separating the mouth of Forbidding Canyon from that of the Escalante upstream. However, Black and his fellow prospector may have crossed from the delta at the mouth of Oak Canyon and angled downstream, not more than a quarter-mile, to the almost opposite delta of what is shown on the modern USGS map of the area as Navajo Valley, the old Glen Canyon river runners' Twilight Canyon. This drainage did provide a difficult, but passable route up onto the Escalante Desert at the end of the Kaiparowits Plateau and an open way on northwest to the town of Escalante.

The two prospectors may have stayed around Escalante, for Black says that during the winter of 1894-95, in order to get another grubstake for prospecting, he and his same companion from 1893 agreed to winter two hundred head of horses for some people at Escalante. They swam the stock across the Colorado and put them into the basin in the river bend between Oak and Forbidding canyons that Black modestly related was afterwards called "Jim Black's Basin."

Writing more than thirty-five years after the fact, Black was probably not completely clear in his remembering. More than likely, Jim Black Basin was not on the Colorado itself, but a short distance up Oak Canyon. In pre-dam/lake days, the Colorado here did, in fact, make a large bend from south to west, but this caused the river to flow right next to the almost vertical canyon wall, leaving no room even for a trail, much less a "basin." Oak Canyon, too, made a large sweeping turn from its mouth back toward the west, nearly encircling a tall rock mass that remains as an island today in Lake Powell. Before looping back south once again, this bend of Oak Canyon nearly cut its way back to the Colorado, a thin blade of sandstone wall just a score of yards wide separating the two streams. The comparatively low area fanning out to the southeast from this meander of Oak Canyon most likely was the basin described and is still indicated today by the semi-circular part of Lake Powell known as Oak Canyon Bay. What was Oak Canyon is now known to lake boaters as Secret Canyon. From this area the two men prospected out from the basin and even made a trail over the canyon wall into "Aztec Canyon"

near the mouth, where there were "some cliff ruins." Black said that they cleaned out one room where they then camped and did their cooking. While in Aztec that winter they both went to the "natural bridge" [Rainbow Bridge?] several times. Somewhat surprisingly, there is some corroborating evidence for this winter excursion. There was, in fact, an old trail, identified as "prehistoric," by members of the Lake Powell Research Project in the mid-1970s. Before the filling of Lake Powell reservoir, it ascended by way of some pecked steps from the floor of Oak Canyon, across the sandstone slickrock for not more than a third of a mile, and then down to the mouth of Forbidding Canyon. This very well could have been the trail that Black said they "made" in 1894-95. They probably simply improved upon the old Anasazi route.

In a large alcove just inside the mouth of Forbidden Canyon were, before flooding, four enigmatic, dry-laid stone "walls," probably prehistoric but possibly also modified by Glen Canyon prospectors in the 1880s and '90s. This very well could have been one of the "cliff ruins" described by Black and in which they camped. In fact, on the alcove wall just to the right of the last structure was carved an inscription, "Jas Black, Feb." Unfortunately, no year date was ever reported for the inscription, though in 1955 river runner Gus Scott did give a year date of 1909. However, immediately below the Black inscription was one reading "Don Beauregard, 1909." Both had been partially obscured by a large, white painted site number from the University of California's Rainbow Bridge-Monument Valley expedition of the 1930s. Perhaps Scott thus misinterpreted the defaced inscriptions and mistakenly read the 1909 from the Beauregard signature as a part of the Black.

Further supporting testimony comes from an account given by one Dan Leroy, an old Idaho shepherd, to Utah physician and river runner Dr. Russell G. Frazier in 1937 while on a voyage down the Salmon River. Many years earlier Leroy said that he was a prospector on the Colorado River in Glen Canyon and knew Jim Black. He further stated that Rainbow Bridge was first seen by Black in 1894, "while exploring the flat mesa above." A similar-sounding story came from an old Escalante cowhand named Harry Ogden. In the mid-1950s he told Utah historian and writer Charles Kelly that Black had ridden up Oak Creek, got out on top, and saw Rainbow Bridge "from above."

While these two stories do seem to compliment Black's 1930 statement, there is yet

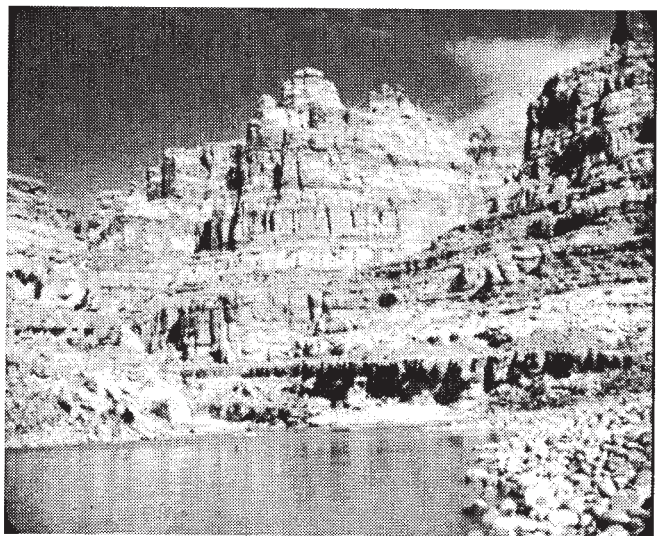
even one more piece of supporting evidence. On two of his Colorado River trips in 1938 and 1942, Charles Kelly and his fellow river runners camped at the mouth of Oak Canyon. Though he does not mention it in either of his two diaries from those voyages, on at least one of them he must have explored up the canyon a ways. In a letter to Dock Marston in 1952, he states that there was a Black inscription "a mile or two up Oak Canyon." Intriguingly enough, this would have been very close to the point where the prehistoric Anasazi "trail" led up out of Oak Canyon and over to the mouth of Forbidding Canyon.

After the 1894-95 trip, little is known about the activities of James W. Black. Besides the "Feb 2 1896" inscription above the mouth of the Escalante, there is another that has been found high up in a room of a small cliff ruin in the Escalante River canyon about a mile below the mouth of Twenty-five Mile Wash. It was discovered by southern Utah guide and packer Ken Sleight in 1964 and reads, "J. W. BLACK, SEPT. 2, 97." It was written in charcoal and in 1964 was beginning to fade. Sleight indicated that the year date could have been "92." Black himself, in his 1930 statements, mentions only one other occurrence with which he supplies a date during this time period, a summer 1897 prospecting trip with two other men from Flagstaff to the Kaibito Plateau area of northern Arizona. Interestingly, the two Black inscriptions on the Escalante side of the Colorado River are both signed "J. W. BLACK" and are done in charcoal. All of the ones found on the Navajo Mountain side of the river, however, which are quoted exactly, read "Jas. Black" and have all been carved. This leads to the distinct possibility that the inscriptions may have been done by two different individuals. Those west of the Colorado seem to be associated with an old stock trail leading from the Escalante northwest to Halls Creek. Canyon hiker and author Steve Allen states in a 1997 book, with no source cited, that this so-called "Black Trail" was constructed in part by a John Black, an early-day Escalante cattleman.

The inscription at the summit of Navajo Mountain would indicate that James Black was still very much active even after the turn of the 20th century, and he obviously was still in the Flagstaff area of northern Arizona in July of 1930. But there are no records of his death or burial to be found in Flagstaff, and what ultimately happened to James W. Black,

prospector, stockman, and possible discoverer of Rainbow Natural Bridge, remains a mystery.

Mille Crag Bend 1952 George Simmons photo



How To Organize a Science Trip- The Old Way edited by Dave Focardi

The following is a result of a New Years Eve conversation with Black George. He had some data he wanted to get scanned into digital format before it deteriorated any further, and I was looking for material for Confluence articles.

Previously the diary of Black George's 1952 USGS trip down Cataract Canyon was published in the "Canyon Legacy-Spring 98 Volume 32", the Dan O'Laurie Museum publication. The material he wanted digitized was the correspondence he used in developing that trip. A lot of the correspondence represents the very first commercial outfitters on the Colorado Plateau. I found it great reading, I hope you do too- these are selected items from the material I had.

P.O. Box 360
Grand Junction, Colorado
February 6, 1956

Otis Marston
2555 Vine Street
Berkeley, Calif.

Dear Dock,

Richard Q. Lewis, U.S.G.S., Denver Federal Center, has asked me to contact all who might be able to furnish boats and/or boatmen for a trip which he plans through Cataract Canyon sometime this year. Dick's mapping areas include some of this river section which he is unable to reach easily by climbing over the top, etc.

I have written to the people listed below, but am sure there are lots of others who might be able to help. Dick would much appreciate any further additions which you would make to this list and forward to him.

Harry Alson	Elvyn Blake
Perky Brooks	Mouly Pulmer
Dave Gaskill	Don Harris
Bus Hatch	Pat Reilly
A.K. Reynolds (aHallecy)	Bob Swift
George White	Frank Wright (& Rigg)

HaveN't made any definite plans for running this summer. Perky Brooks and I had planned on a Salmon or Snake trip, but his Black Monster is hung up at Bright Angel....so maybe we'll stick closer to home at Dinosaur. We are planning to try the Grand again in the summer of '57...but I don't know if I can stand to wait that long to get back to the Little Colorado for pictures. (I ruined the entire roll which I shot there last summer.)

George G. Simmons

Copy: R.Q. Lewis

This letter to Otis "Dock" Marston is typical of the letters George sent out to the people listed. The exchange of letters is typical of Dock Marston's indefatigable quest for river lore. His collection is at the Huntington Library in California. The replies I chose to print are interesting for various reasons. It's obvious that river trips have changed very little in some respects- people are still looking to go down the river as often and as cheaply as possible, commercial outfitters are still trying to get business, and Science trips are still the phat trips of choice. I hope you enjoy reading these as much as I did, and a HUGE thanks to George for allowing us to publish these historical documents.

U.S.G.S. Slick Rock Camp
% Egnar, Colorado
June 27, 1936

Dear Dick

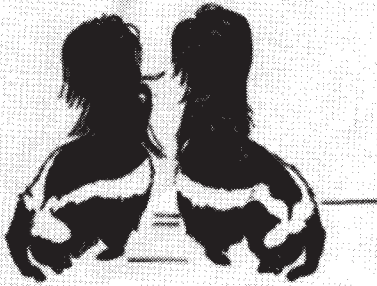
Hope you are having a summer full of interesting boating activities. It looks as if the season will be a good one from this end of the line.

There is a little more news about the proposed U.S.G.S. mapping party through the Cataracts which might be of interest to you. In your last letter you mentioned that there were some things which you would like to have looked up. Well, you can dig out the questions for the trip originally planned for July 1st will be made later, toward the end of the same month.

You may have been informed previously, but I'll repeat it here. Three 10-man neoprene boats have been secured for the voyage. The party will consist of six men. Two of the men, Dick Lewis and Frank McKeeen are in charge of mapping projects which include parts of Cataract Canyon. Dick Lewis has organized the trip, and most of the planning has been under his direction. Russ Campbell, geologist and assistant to Dick Lewis will also do some mapping in the canyon. The other three members of the party will be a U.S.G.S. paleontologist (I can't recall his name) whose chief function will be to keep the weight of fossil specimens at a minimum, a ranger with the U.S. Forest Service from Monticello (I can't recall his name either), and my self. I have been loaned from the mapping project in the Slick Rock district to advise the boating group in things waterwise, and will be the only one in the group with white-water experience. It may sound peculiar to have three boats and one boatman, but from what I have seen and heard of the others I expect to be the weakling of the party.

Made two short trips on the Dolores River last month and am including three pages from my note book and one color slide, all of which I would like returned when you are through with them. The earlier of the two trips was made near maximum runoff which is the best time for boating on the Dolores. The trip was a very enjoyable one both from the point of view of scenery and boating. The only incident was a broken aluminum oar which was repaired by the good whittling of my companion, Bob Gant. The two rapids to which we applied names received their titles from what happened at their locales. The later trip though only two weeks later was in rather low water. The prevailing southwesterlies pushed us well all day until the river took a bend which made the last two miles a two hour experience. We also garnered two holes in the bottom canvass when the bottom canvas became sandwiched between rocks and a water proof metal ammunition case. Two portages were made on the second trip: one for a fence line, and the other for a large jack pine which in falling had completely blocked the river. At one other point the river was over lain by a pine, but by hard upstream rowing were able to ease into the tree and work through the branches.

Many of 'us river-rats' appreciate all of your efforts on behalf of things conservation's are supporting.



OTIS MARSTON
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Ashberry 3-6160
COLORADO RIVER CHRONICLES

July
4
1956

Canyoneer Sim

Many thanks for the information in yours of June 27th.

I had not heard about progress on the USGS mapping party in Cat. It isn't too novel to have three boats and one boatman. The Chenoweth party which surveyed the Canyon in 1921 had three boats and one boatman: Ellsworth Kolb. Ellsworth ran the three boats thru nearly all the rapids. There were others who could handle a boat but the survey tended to keep them rather busy.

If you get a chance near the Junction, please go over to the left bank of the Colorado. The Stanton survey of 1889 came down from Grand Junction and they marked a point there on a boulder. The surveyors went from there up to Green-River. It was in Greenriver that Stanton took charge of the actual survey. The boats cruised down to the Junction and Stanton picked up his line from there. I think you ought to be able to find this point with references marked on a boulder. I also think the Kolb brothers left a marking there. I don't have any record that anyone has looked for these things.

At Mile 213, there is an open flat on the right bank. If you have the chance, look for the horse trail up out of this flat. There are big stones laid so a horse can go up or down. You will recall that a message was brot in here to the Eddy party in 1927. There are names cut along this horse trail. Please note the names and dates and take a picture or two.

There is a side canyon opening on the left right at the Mile 213 point. I would like to get a photo of this side canyon. If you should have the time, I would like to know the nature of the bed of this side canyon.

At Mile 204, right bank, there are a number of inscriptions on the racks. Please note and photo these inscriptions and photo the River off the bank here.

At Mile 212 7/8, in a gully on the right bank is a large rock slab. There are many fossils in this gully. You will find a note about the POWELL painted on the rock. Please photo and note the marking.

There is a vague report of a D. Julien inscription near the head of Cat. It seems to me this would be in the side canyon at LB at Mile 213 if it is anywhere.

At about Mile 197 on the left bank, two men brot horses to the River about 25 years ago. The did not come down Gypsum Canyon. This crude trail should be checked.

I have a vague reference to a Julien inscription near the several inscriptions at Mile 204. I feel quite sure this is an error.

Below Dark Canyon is reported a new and sizable rapid due to a new fall of rock. Please rate this rapid and take a picture of the area. It is 3/4 miles below Dark Canyon.

You did not say how you were going to get to the head of Cat. Please let me know on that and your date of start. I may be able to get some other stuff to you for checking.

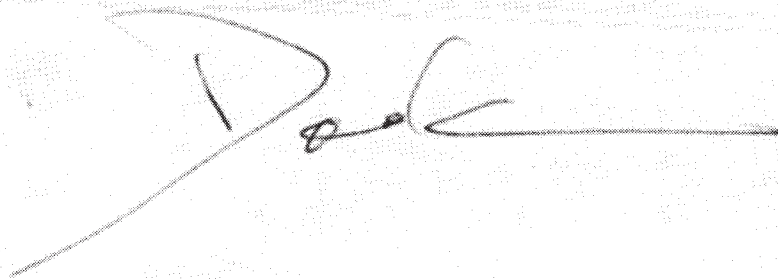
I have copied the notes on the two Dolores runs. I am having a print made from the slide and will enclose the slide with this letter as soon as it comes back.

True enough - you need water in the Dolores. Pres Walker ran it several times but finally lost his boat and the party had to walk out.

We had a wonderful run of the Grand Canyon even tho we buried one of the crew who died from a bad heart. Fortunately we had a doctor with us who did everything possible. The other event of the trip was the capsizing of one boat in Vulcan (Lava Falls). The pilot took on some of the heaviest water and caught a side wave and over they went just that easy. They floated five miles before they were picked up on the bottom side of the boat.

The 60,000 feet of water made fine running with the only rapid that was up to a 10 rating being Vulcan. The two 30HP engines gave us a fine balance on the 18' boats and we could make just under 20 miles when cruising at top speed.

Cheerio

A large, stylized handwritten signature that appears to be "Dick" with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Shortly after lunch Willie developed agonizing pains. We landed in Redwall Cavern to let him rest.

Vaseys was running only a trickle. Redwall was half undercut by River.

Bootoo cruised on to Harding with Willie - the other two boats following in 5 minutes - land 5:40 PM. There was no beach below Loper's boat & only a small beach at Harding.

Harding proved a fair mooring and a good camp. Willie's severe pain continues. Josh diagnoses the situation as a heart condition and feels no other fits the symptoms. He did what he could to quiet Willie and arranged to sleep next to him.

June 6-Up at 5. Willie had slept fairly well but had wakened Josh during the night due to great pain. Josh advised getting him to Phantom as soon as possible, but not to put any strain on him. We photographed Harding & finally cleared. Harding would rate a 3-4.

We pulled in at Mile 44 $\frac{1}{2}$ on L to await other boats. They arrived after a half hour. Willie was suffering severely so we carried him up in the shade. He insisted he was going to die. His color was very grey. At 11 AM Josh told me Willie had passed on. A gathering of all present agreed without dissent that Willie should be buried in the Canyon. We selected a site in a side alcove & buried him there. Frank Masland said a prayer. We marked his name & date on the rock wall above.

Mile 44 $\frac{1}{2}$ on the L bank.

Willie had his wish that should he die in the Canyon, he should remain there.

We cruised to Nancoweap & had lunch at 1:30 PM. Moved on - looked at Kwagunt - Rate it a 4-5.

Cruised into the blue lagoon at Little Colo at 4 PM after I had crippled a steering gear at 60 Mile. All swam. Josh said the water was OK for drinking & drank some to prove it.

Left Little Colo at 5. The island was not more than 2' out of water. Plenty of whirls down to Lava Creek. We took Lava Creek on the run with a cut to the left. Big waves and would rate a 6-7.

We pulled in L to camp at Mile 66 - fine beach but sight cut off from Desert View by a bluff back of the beach. Good camping & plenty of wood.

Garth reported that Willie had a severe attack just after we left Harding.

June 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ - The pulleys at the stern quarter were blocked up which brot them much more into line, but we kept the tension high. We cleared about 9:30 & cruised to the left bank just above the cliff at Unkar. Bill Beer, Ballard, Garth & I took off for the top to look for the ruin. We swung toward right but Ballard pointed out that line-up of background showed we were too close.

The above is a transcription of Dock Marston's diary for the 1956 trip on the day that Willson Taylor (of Willie's Necktie fame from the 1950 Ed Hudson trip) died of a heart attack. (Courtesy John Weisheit)

U.S.G.S. Slick Rock Camp
% Egnar, Colorado
September 25, 1936

Dear Deck

For some unknown reason your letter of July 4 did not reach me until after the conclusion of the USGS Cataract Canyon trip, and I am unable to supply the information you wished. However, there are a few minor items which might be of interest to you:

(1) The open flat on the right bank at Mile 215 is known as Spanish Bottom. This is but one of quite a few names appearing on the new U.S.G.S. topography sheets covering the area.

(2) In regard to the side canyon on the left bank at Mile 215: I do not know what the boys decided about the formation in this canyon. A previous worker, mapping from an opposite rim(right bank) identified an exposure of the Paradox formation(probably gypsum bearing) in this vicinity. After checking the exposure, and I am not sure whether or not they checked it in the canyon, the boys were undecided, and wanted to wait until they looked at the exposures in Gypsum Canyon before making up their minds.

(3) From the looks of droppings in Gypsum Canyon it appears that at least one horse wintered there last year. It is impossible for a horse to get down the main drainage of Gypsum Canyon as there is a deep sheer fall about four miles up. None of the side canyons to Gypsum Canyon which were checked revealed possible routes. There are a few places near Mile 197 where a man could climb over the rim without great difficulty, but I did not see a horse route.

(4) I made a log of the activities, and as soon as I can get a few copies typed I will send you one. I tried to keep accurate notes on the rapids, particularly those over Class 4, and am disturbed to find that I have no reference to the new rapid which you mention 3/4 mile below Dark Canyon. There is a large fresh landslide scar about that distance up Dark Canyon which is visible from the river above Dark Canyon, but I can recall nothing of the sort along the river itself.

Could you tell me whether or not the Julien who made the several canyon inscriptions was a native Frenchman, and if so whether or not much is known about him. I have a sister-in-law(French) who is presently in France, and I thought I would ask her to do a bit of detective work for me if there seemed a likelihood of turning up something.

In the notes which I sent to you last June I made a mistake in listing the McPhee Ranch as one of our starting points. The McPhee

Ranch is farther upstream, near Dolores, and the ranch near which we started is the McDonald Ranch.

Glad to hear of your fine Grand Canyon trip. Looks like I'll have no more trips this year, at least water wise, but I did get in a nice climbing trip to Colorado's Needle Mountains, and I hope to get in one more climbing trip before the snow flies.



OTIS MARSTON
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Ashberry 3-6160
COLORADO RIVER CHRONICLES

October
25
1956

Canyoneer Sim

That was tough about the late arrival of my letter but your comments help a great deal.

I have just returned from a trek around the Southwest and went down that side canyon opposite SPANISH BOTTOMS. It is impossible for a horse to come down the main canyon at that point but the walking involves no danger.

I know the open flat is known as SPANISH BOTTOMS. I can add a simple question to that and ask "why?" I wrote to A. A. Baker, USGS asking why he used the name on his maps of that section and his reply was that it was generally known by that name. That leaves my question unanswered.

I think that side canyon was gyp for about a mile from the River. There is an uplift that tilted the strata up toward the River. I will be interested in the observations of the Survey crew.

About a mile from the River there is a drop-off of about 500 feet but it is not difficult to get up and down at several places on the right side of the drop. Further on there is a drop of 30 feet and this is easy to by-pass on the left. A little beyond this drop, the drainage swings into the graben to the south.

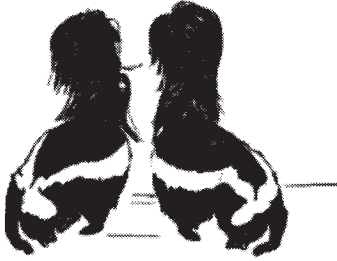
The horse angle at Gypsum is pertinent. There is a way to the River by a trail above Gypsum Canyon. We also found horses had been in the side canyon we traveled and Kent Frost (who was with me) knows of the man who had his horses down there.

I am guessing there is a route to the River from that group of side Canyons on the left about 2-3 miles below Spanish Bottoms. We walked down to a point between the first and second rapids and could see some sign of trails in these canyons.

I look forward to the opportunity to study your notes. I would also like to borrow slides which you might have made so I might get prints showing your operations, crew and equipment.

The best answer on Denis Julien is to send the enclosed copy of Kelly's article in the Utah SHQ. Did you get anything on Julien during the Cat run? What were you looking for in reference to him?

Cheerio



OTIS MARSTON
2331 VINE STREET - BERKELEY 8, CALIFORNIA
Ashberry 3-6160
COLORADO RIVER CHRONICLES

December
10
19 56

Canyoneer Sim

Golly, that's a swell job you did on the Cat run and I thank you for the copy of the record.

What does Dick Lewis do out at Kigalia? We have been out in that section in 1955 and this year.

You didn't break any oars so they must have been OK. Where did you get them?

I don't think your signing the release in event of accident would be any good. In case there was neglect, you would have a good right of action even tho you signed. Other than that, you undertook what you knew to be a trip involving some danger.

Are the particular mapping projects some secret? I am much interested in the maps of that area and particularly on the left side of the River.

I hadn't heard of the prospector being stranded near the Junction.

Kent Frost and I must have walked by your ~~stop~~ stop at Mile 213 when we were out there October 2nd. We came down the side canyon opposite Spanish Bottom and walked down the shore past the first rapid. The water was almost clear and I would have rated the first rapid about a 1. I might have given the second rapid a 1½. I think the stage was around 3000cfs.

We noted two stone monuments near the mouth of the side canyon called Red Lake Canyon on the 1921 maps. They indicated age. Did you note others on down the Canyon on the left bank?

What was the particular interest at Cross Canyon? Where did you pick up that name?

And speaking of names, did you ever ask anyone why that is called Spanish Bottom?

Did you have much trouble with the Exacta? Bill Belknap has been using one and has told me I should take one on but has now changed his mind saying it is too delicate.

Where did you get the information that USGS lost a boat at 202 in 1921? Best lost a boat at 204 in 1891. USGS pinned their boats at Dark Canyon in 1921 but did not lose them. In October of 1948, Harold W. Chase of the USGS left a sadiron pinned to a rock just below the Big Drop. I think this must be the boat you mean.

Let me in on the Cape May yakking. I spent some cold weeks down there in December and January of 1917 and 1918 living in the old amusement building at the end of the board walk.

That spring at Dark Canyon is near the small ledge that runs out to the edge of the River below the Rapid. It is hidden in among some redbud. I think Randall Henderson built a cairn there.

You did a swell job of rapids rating. This little system is beginning to do some real good.

I had intended for you to keep the Julien item. I'll send it back if you wish. I agree that Kelly isn't justified in his guess that he was in a boat. Kelly made the Glen Canyon traverse in 1932 and again in 1938. He did a lot of looking for inscriptions. So have many others. None have reported to me any Julien inscriptions altho Kelly tells me he has heard there is one up on the Paria.

I look forward to seeing your slides and want to get prints from some of them. I have a lot of pix in Cat which I have not been able to identify so yours will undoubtedly help in this.

I will be in Seattle around Christmas and in Los Angeles right after the New Year for about 10 days so please don't send them when I am away. I will be home from December 26th to New Years Day and will get home again about the middle of January.

Cheerio

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doak". The signature is written in black ink on a white background. The letter "D" is large and loops around the "o", and the "k" has a long horizontal tail.

§ U. S. G. S. - P. O. Box 360
Grand Junction, Colorado
April 15, 1957

Dear Doc,

I have been waiting to write until the Cataract Canyon Slide Set was assembled. This has taken somewhat longer than anticipated, but has now been done. The slides are making the rounds of several interested people, and there is one ahead of you in the list who may have a few duplicates made. It is hard to predict just when they will reach you, but if it is longer than four weeks, drop me a card and I will prod the delinquents. The slides will reach you from Charles D. Campbell, Geology Department, The State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington. After you are through with the slides would you please forward them along with the short commentary to Richard Resak, Paleontology and Stratigraphy Branch, U. S. Geological Survey, Denver Federal Center, Denver 2, Colorado.

You will note that some of the slides are duplicates. As duplicates made from duplicates seem to suffer as much as duplicates made from originals, this cumulative effect can be avoided by using only originals to make duplicates. So if you would like to secure the originals for some of the slides I will be glad to run down the source.

In response to your long unanswered questions:

- (1) Uncle Sam has done a lot of mapping on the Colorado Plateau as a result of the uranium quest and financing by the AEC. Dick Lewis has mapped six or seven 7½ minute quadrangles about Elk Ridge, Dark Canyon, etc. Dick's location at Rigalia is due to his own preference of camp sites for convenience and comfort.
- (2) I do not know whether or not the 7½ minute topography sheets are yet available beyond the the advance sheets issued to mapping parties. You can probably find this out by contacting a Federal outlet for maps in your area. The origin of the names used can be something of a mystery. Usually the names are applied after all of the old-timers have been talked with. In this case there are only a few ranchers on the south side to whom reference can be made. To hazard a guess I would say that the names used were made up by the local cowpokes, and that the few names which have been passed down by mouth will largely remain a mystery.
- (3) I do not believe that the stranded prospector got any publicity. If memory serves correctly he was hung up at the junction from one to two weeks. He apparently conserved both his food supply and energy very well for he seemed to be in pretty good shape.

(4) We did not note the two stone monuments near the mouth of Red Lake Canyon nor did we see others which indicated age.

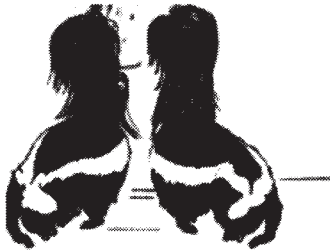
(5) The interest at Cross Canyon as in several others was to determine whether or not the Paradox member of the Hermosa formation was exposed.

(6) About Exaktas; this could take a small volume. I think that they are the best all-around camera made. Unfortunately, the Exakta is a precision instrument, and like many precision instruments has to be treated carefully. Under such rigors as river trips the Exakta does not stand up as well as some other camera types, and I would expect that a Leica would better fit the bill. Specifically, beach sand seems to get into the shutter winding and cocking mechanism in spite of plastic bags and air tight containers. Also, on all but the most recent models there is the danger of the winding cogs stripping out the film perforations and an entire sequence of pictures lost due to the film not winding (this is not unique to river trips).

(7) Cape May... (ugh)... Your winter of 1917-18 sounds much like the one I spent there in 1944-45. If you were in Cape May for the same kind of reason that I was this would make you about 60 or 61 years old which though not old in these days is still a respectable age for such active interest in the Colorado River.

I am currently preparing "Nicholas Needlefoot" for some new adventures. Uncle Sam is transferring me to Brazil for a two year stint of mapping iron deposits (July 1). There are some canyons in the highlands near Belo Horizonte where we will be living, and I hope to find some white water on the headwaters of the Parana, the River of Old Women, and some others whose names I cannot recall or pronounce.

Regards



OTIS MARSTON
2133 VINE STREET - BERKELEY 8, CALIFORNIA
ASberry 3-6160
COLORADO RIVER CHRONICLES

May
30
1957

*Richard Rozak
USGS
Denver*

Canyoneer Sim

Copy to C. D. Campbell

The slides are on their way ~~back~~ to you and thank you for the loan. I took off prints from 41 of them - that figure is 41.

I have gathered a number of prints from the Stanton and Best parties of 1889 and 1891 and your pix will do a lot in helping me to tie down the locations.

I'll be willing to bet that I will wish I had prints from them all. The cost angle does some controlling. I take prints rather than dupe transparencies.

Note that Holmstrom had two m's in his name.

Burg, Johnson and Holmstrom were together. 1938 after Nevills.

I think you had a little less water at Dark Canyon than did the USGS party on September 27 and 28 in 1921. The rx in center were just being covered and they hung the boats on them.

Your photo is the first I have seen of the sulphur spring. There are several of them thru there and on both sides of the River.

I find there was a geologist looking down into Cross Canyon in 1926

Your 210 $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile action ties with Dave's shot of you 10 27 52.

I have a lot of work to do on the pix of Cat. Stanton had pix taken as he ran his traverse in 1889 so they will be set as soon as I can work out his traverse figures.

I suggest you throw away the self-portrait as you might wake up some morning and take a look and just quit right there.

Again my thanks. I should write at greater length but I leave tomorrow for Flag to get a Grand Canyon trip rolling for June 10th - high water seems a fine prospect.

Cheerio

So ends the exchange between Dock — an indefatigable data collector and hoarder- and George. I found their exchanges to be the most informative on general history matters, and the process involved in fact finding.

DON HARRIS
2300 East 48 St.
Phone ~~823-1133~~
Crestwood
7-2193

JACK BRENNAN
~~1800 Blanche~~
~~232-0300~~

HARRIS - BRENNAN RIVER EXPEDITIONS

Scheduled and Charter Trips on Scenic Western Rivers
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

March
5
19 56

George C. Simmons
P. O. Box 360
Grand Junction, Colo

Dear Sim-

Thanks greatly for your letter of February 6, 1956. It arrived while I was assigned to the Boise District, from which I just recently returned, thus the lengthy delay in reply.

I was glad to know that another member of the most extraordinary fraternity of River Rats is keeping in touch with the River. Marble and Grand Canyons are very interesting, and some of the rapids are a real challenge to the adventurers who tackle them. I have run the Grand 4 times now and have enjoyed every trip. We did not run Grand last year, but did run the Cataracts again - for Sinclair Oil this time - my 10th. trip through Cataract Canyon.

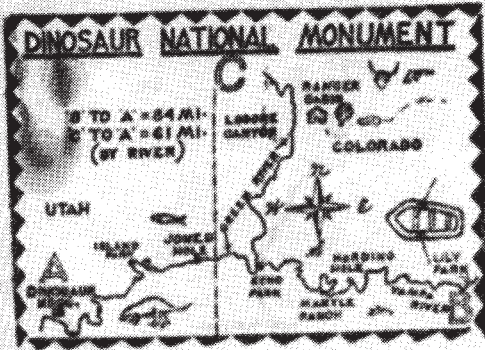
I am currently writing Dick Lewis, and offering our services for his planned trip in the Cataract Canyon area, or if he prefers to make it 'on his own' we will try to locate some 10-man rubber rafts for him if that type of craft will be suitable for his purpose.

Jack Brennan, Fred Speyer and I are still quite active on the river every summer. We have guided a number of 'Dude' trips in the past 2 or 3 years. Last year we ran around 1100 miles - all river runs combined. This year we already have tentative plans for several short week-end trips and a weeks trip through Grand Canyon in early June, then through Hells Canyon on the Snake River during July. Of course it is still too early to know whether any or all of the trips will materialize.

If in Salt Lake drop in at Room 503 in the Fed. Bldg. and we might bore a few listeners by hashing over a bit of river gab.

Sincerely,

Don
Don Harris



Hatch River Expeditions

411 EAST SECOND NORTH • VERNAL • UTAH

• Licensed Concessioner

Feb 11, 1956

Mr. Richard Q. Lewis
U. S. Geological Survey
Denver Federal Center,
Denver, Colo.

Dear Mr. Lewis:

At the request of Geo. C. Simmons of Grand Junction, Colo. we are pleased to contact you in regards to your planned trip for mapping in Cataract Canyon.

We have boats, boatmen and equipment and would like to quote you prices for whatever you might need.

Respectfully

Paul Hotel
Hatch River Expeditions

Copy George C. Simmons

Thank you Sim - Glad you liked the pictures in Steiner's book - Good luck on your planned Idaho trip - We had 5 boats on the Middle Fork of the Salmon last year - Hell I didn't get to go - Boatmen were + Son Dan, 2. Simms all 3. + son Frank - 4. Shepard - 5. Dan Allen - Old Dan had to stay home + run Yampa + Green - Best of luck. Dan

Our Annual GROUP SPECIALS for 1956

(In addition to our regular runs)

I. Yampa and Green

Starting

May 15, May 22, May 29, June 6

(Lily Park to Dinosaur Headquarters—5 days)

\$55.00 per person

II. Grand Canyon—15 days

Starting June 8

\$400.00 per person

(Food included)

III. Middle Fork of the Salmon—7 days

Starting July 24

\$220.00 per person

(Food included)

Hatch River Expeditions

VERNAL, UTAH

IN REPLY REFER TO:

GEOLOGIC DIVISION

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
FEDERAL CENTER, DENVER, COLORADO
Building 25

February 15, 1956

Mr. George C. Simmons
U. S. Geological Survey
Box 360
Grand Junction, Colorado

Dear George:

I certainly appreciate your help in contacting your numerous friends concerning our proposed boat trip. I have received replies from Dave Gaskill, George White, and Bus Hatch. Both Hatch and White say they have plenty of equipment and would be glad to make the trip. However, I fear it would be quite expensive.

I have made arrangements here through Geologic Division for three 6-man rubber boats, life jackets and waterproof duffel bags. I feel that we could make the trip with our own equipment much cheaper, and at low water it shouldn't be too dangerous. I figure that we could have two men to a boat and with 3 boats we could carry 6 people. This would allow room for Russ, Frank, myself, and three boatmen.

I would appreciate your comments as to your ideas. Do you think it is feasible to make the trip in rubber boats? Would two men to a boat be okay? Would you be able to go? Do you think of any other gear that we might need?

I fully realize that the larger wooden boats would be more comfortable and probably somewhat safer. However, when I weigh the expected cost at \$1600.[±] against \$300.[±] I wonder if it is worth the great difference. I think that we can make the trip at low water with the rubber boats. Another factor, of course, is the time element. We would like to take plenty of time and probably stop several places and do geology for a day or so. This means we would be paying boatmen \$20. to \$25. per day while they waited for the geologists. Hence, we would pay for a two-week trip and probably only spend about half that time on the river.

Well, anyway, I thought I would let you know my plans and see what you thought. I will probably be over to Grand Junction this month and will see you then.

Best regards,

Rick

SHARE THE HIVERSK RIVER TRIPS

Catacombs - Grand Canyon of the Colorado - Hell's Canyon of Snake -
Middle fork and River of No Return of Salmon.

Time is running out on some of these trips as the new dams are now in progress.

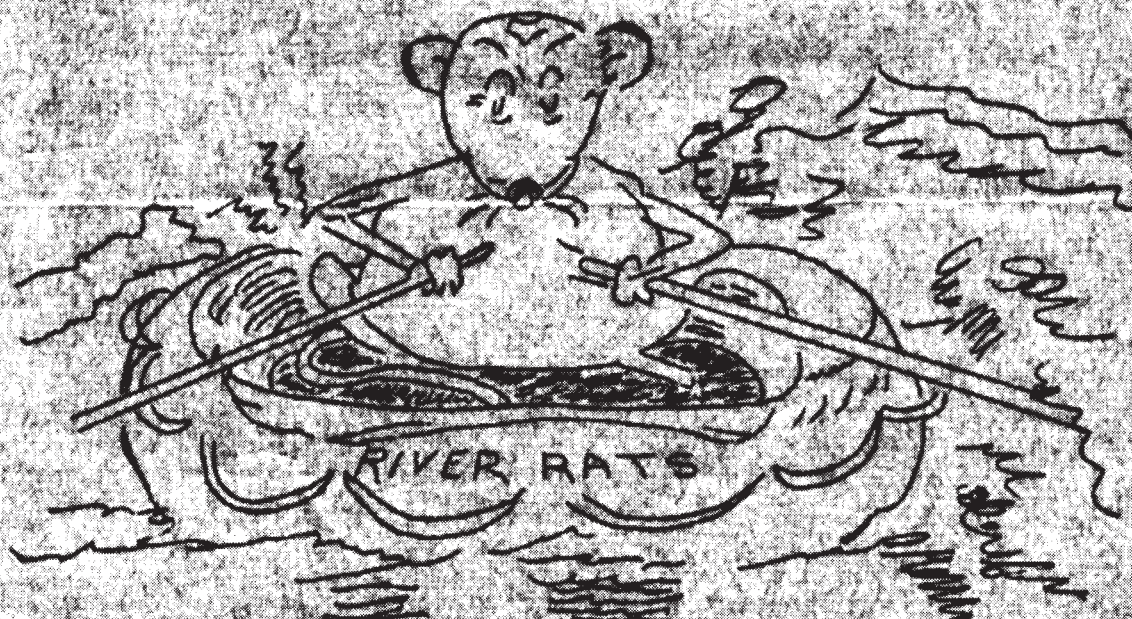
If you are looking for a complete rest, away from the hustle and bustle of the average day in most of our city lives, then by all means consider a river trip.

You may relax to the tune of smooth waters, wonderful campsites, scenic wonderlands which are a photographers paradise, or thrill to the adventures of swift uproarious waters, rapids beyond comparison, sheer canyon walls, and breath taking beauty in a never to be forgotten wonderland which has no equal.

Good food is the order of the day. Worries, jangled nerves, and small irritations become things of the past as you absorb the peace, beauty, pure air and sunshine of this unspoiled spectacular section of the country.

Single persons are as much at home on these trips as married couples. You are never alone. All trips are mixed groups and you are one of the group from the time the trip starts.

JOIN THE HIVER RATS - - - - - A ROYAL ORGANIZATION



Call or Write:

GEORGE WHITE
435 West Lashie Blvd.
Los Angeles 1, California

TELEPHONES:
Plymouth 6-3126
Plymouth 6-1959

SHARE THE EXPENSE PLAN - RIVER TRIPS
1957 SCHEDULE

THE MIGHTY GRAND CANYON - Make reservations early on this one.

1st Week - 6 days Leaving Navajo Bridge on Highway 89-Arizona	Next 12 days Leaving Phantom Ranch of Grand Canyon.	Landing Boulder City, Nevada.
May 20 June 17 July 8	May 27 June 24 July 15	June 8 July 6 July 27

CATARACT TRIP - ONE TRIP ONLY - 5 days on river and 1 day overland.

June 10 thru June 16. Trip starts and ends at Green River, Utah.

THE MIDDLE FORK OF THE SALMON RIVER, IDAHO - One trip only.

Leave McCall, Idaho, August 5, 1957

Landing Salmon City, Idaho, August 10, 1957.

RIVER OF NO RETURN - BIG SALMON - one trip only.

This is a continuation of the Middle Fork trip - above.

Meet at Salmon City, Idaho, August 10, 1957

Landing Riggs, Idaho, August 16, 1957.

HELL'S CANYON OF THE SNAKE - OREGON - IDAHO.

Leave Hometown, Oregon, August 19, 1957.

Landing Lewiston, Idaho, August 25, 1957.

All fares are \$100.00 per person for each trip except THE GRAND CANYON which is \$125.00 for 1 week - \$200.00 for 2 weeks and \$300.00 for full 19 day trip.

Special rates for large groups such as Scouts, Clubs, Churches.

Make a reservation
now.

Georgie White
435 West Laconia Blvd.
Los Angeles 61, Calif.

Telephones:
Plymouth 5-3188
Plymouth 5-1259

PLEASE READ AND OBSERVE IF TAKING A TRIP

BOATS: We use 30 ft and 10 man neoprene rubber boats which have proven to be virtually non-sinkable and comfortable. Passengers may try their hand at rowing the boat. We use Navy kapok life jackets with collars for G RAND CANYON trip and Johnson outboard motors on large boats.

GO LIGHT: Shorts or bathing suit (suggest Nylon boxer type for men and bloomer type for women.) Sun helmets must fit securely or tie on. Sun glasses, sun tan oil and baby oil, 2 pair canvas shoes - ankle length - 2 pair nylon socks, light weight long sleeve shirt, sturdy loose legged jeans or nylon coveralls, scarf, essential toilet articles light weight rain jacket or poncho (can use as a ground cloth) sweater (on trips before June) camera bags that are waterproof, and extra film. If you wear glasses they should have safety strings attached and an extra pair gives added security. Light ground cloth if no poncho, air mattress, light sleeping bag. Please bring a waterproof duffle bag that all this personal equipment will fit into.
25 POUNDS IS THE LIMIT.

TRANSPORTATION:

Special instructions are sent to all people when deposit is received.

A deposit of \$25.00 on all trips and \$100.00 on the GRAND CANYON TRIP is required. The balance is due on the day of departure. Deposits will be refunded if passage is cancelled 30 days before departure.



FOR RESERVATIONS WRITE TO:
Georgie White
435 West Laconia Blvd.
Los Angeles 61, California

Telephones:
Plymouth 5-3125
Plymouth 5-1259

16 MM ALL COLORED MOTION PICTURES SHOWN TO GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS AT ANY TIME

December 11, 1956

Dear Sim:

Thanks a million for letting me have access to the diaries of your Grand Canyon and Cataract runs. My wife, who is home recuperating from an operation, read them and said she like your style the better of the two.

Am keeping the one on the Cataract trip. If you need it please let me know. I've never been thru that Canyon and may never, but live in hopes of it.

Looks like river running is getting to be a thing of the past with so many dams in prospect. Understand the San Juan and Glen Canyons are closed and 1957 may be the last year for unrestricted flow thru the Grand.

Will make my fourth run thru the Grand next June with Pat Reilly and his two boats. Not sure whether I wrote you we made the trip last summer or not. Started on 38,300 and lost most of it during the 18 days in the Canyon. No mechanical difficulties, with the exception of one broken oar pin on the Flavell and minor patches to the Susie-R and Flavell on two different occasions. Ran all but Lava Falls. Some rapids were easier and some tougher than the preceeding summer. Some were covered over and some new ones made their appearance. This is natural with different flows of water.

Ratings of rapids cannot be constant. Most vary with the stage of water. A six rapid may rate three or eight at different flows.

Believe I sent you a copy of my 1955 diary, if not let me know. Have not copied my minutes taken during the 1956 run.

We ran a lot of rapids wide open as we call it - not stopping to look them over. Only ones we stopped to examine were Badger, Soap, North Canyon, Tanner Wash, Kwagunt, 75 Mile, Hance, Sock, Grapevine, Horn, Granite, Hermit, Bedrock, Dubendorff, Upset, Lava and 205 Mile.

Incidentally, I went thru the big hole in Upset. To say the least it was a rough ride.

Hope you like your next assignment.

Best regards,

Moulty

Feb. 19. 1956

Dear Sim:

Glad to hear from you and also to hear that you finally made it thru the Canyon. I suppose you were in Georgie's mob. That trip is so good that it would be difficult to spoil. tho a mob would come close as far as I am concerned.

I finally got a letter off to your friend Dick Lewis, and I enclose a copy.

As I tell him, I had it in mind to run Marble-Grand again, but am not set. I don't run commercially but try to make my trips pay for themselves. There is also wear and tear on equipment.

If I took it on I would probably run on down thru Glen, Marble and Grand, anyway. Would you be available for at least the part thru Cat?

I can handle six, including two boatmen, with ease, and maintain a safety factor in the roughest water. I never pack in extra supplies on my Marble-Grand runs.

I don't know if Moulty is going to run this year or not. He is planning a trip to Hawaii soon and may settle for a dude vacation. I'll probably do the same when I get tired running rivers.

It was nice hearing from you, and I hope to meet you sometime whether the Cat deal jells or not.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat Kelly". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Reynolds Canyon Expeditions

RED CANYON LODGE

Formerly Greens' Lakes Lodge

Postoffice Address—P. O. Box 592, GREEN RIVER, WYOMING
Phones -- 010F33, Vernal, Utah, or, 71 and 422 Green River

White Water Vacations in the
Famous Canyons of the Green,
Yampa and Colorado Rivers

March 20, 1956

Hunting and Fishing Lodges in
Utah Mountains -- Vacations
on the Rim of Red Canyon

Dear George,

Sure was glad to hear from you again. Now that you're back in the river running country, maybe we can get together again. I have really gotten my hands into the tourist business now. I've been running the H--- out of the upper canyons the last several seasons since they started the argument over Dinosaur Nat'l Monument. A year ago last fall we took over the resort & Greens' Lake north of Vernal. It works in good with the river.

Hated to see them pass the Upper Colorado Project. It is going to ruin a lot of good river running. Glad that I have been able to see as much of the canyons as I have. Keeping busy up here, I haven't been able to get too far away. We ran the Grand in 1953, but would like to do it again one of these years. The darn old snow just doesn't hold up so we have enough water to do all that we would like. It does look better this year than it has.

Sorry that we can't get together this spring on that Cataract Canyon trip. Let's hope that something works out for this fall. We could have a good time out of it, as I enjoy working with surveyors. At times, they even remind me of people.

Drop me a line from time to time.



(A.K. Reynolds)

The following 3 pages are from Harry Aleson. His involvement with the river is worth several books. The first and third pages are from Black George correspondence, the middle page being from the Aleson collection (courtesy John Weisheit). River buffs have all heard that Bert Loper knew he had a bad heart when he left for his 80th birthday trip on the Grand, the middle page is from the diary he started on that trip. Harry Aleson brought out Bert's stuff. Bert had a typewriter in his boat he was using for the diary.

Richfield Utah
February 14, 1956

Richard C. Lewis
USGS Federal Center
Denver Colorado

Refer to:
George C. Simon's letter
of February 6, 1956

Dear Mr. Lewis:

George C. Simon's letter of February 6 came in here on the 9th. It is very nice to receive it.

Larabee and Aleson would be very happy to be able to assist you on a special mapping trip down thru Cataract Canyon.

In July 1947, I piloted a One-boat party from Green River, Utah down to the confluence with the Colorado River - to Rapid No 1 in Cataract, thence up to the Hoab bridge on outboard.

In late October, early November 1947, we again launched one boat - a 7-man Neoprene - and made the run to Hite. For safety, we portaged and lined the more rugged spots.

In August-September 1951, one of my boatmen and I left Green River, Wyoming in two 10-man Neoprenes, rigged as rowboats, and ran every inch of water down to Hite, Utah, - including, of course, Hells Half Mile and the 55 rapids and riffles in Cataract. A month earlier, in July-August, with a three boat outfit, all 10 man Neoprenes, we ran all the water excepting three rapids of the Marble-brand section. That gave us 1,063 miles in one season, or rather, continuous on the Green-Colorado from Wyoming to Nevada.

Your proposed Cataract Run can be made safely with one 10-man, - or as many additional as required. We have available two 10-man Neoprenes, plenty of camp and kitchen duffel, power wagon for all transportation, etc. We never pass sleepingbags from one guest to the next, therefore, each supplies his own, and air mat.

For protection of films, cameras, instruments, and other we loan you the U S Army WSP bags - 9" x 12" x 18", inside. Generally, all equipment is carried in these waterproof bags.

To a certain extent, I could assist in mapping, as I have had experience in chaining, roding, recording, the transit and plane-table.

As of this time, the best available time for me would be from about April 15 to May 15, - and all of October. If you suggest an approximate time, or number of days, number of members in your party, weight of instrument equipment and personals, we can better arrive at a day by day cost, and/or contract price if desired.

o George Simons.

Sincerely yours,

HARRY ALESON

July-6-1949.

Our Colo. River Expedition left Salt Lake about 9-30 a.m. and it fell to me to haul my boat to Richfield with my car and in as much as my car can do nothing but to boil the trip was a very unsatisfactory one for about all the Dam Motor did was to BOIL and I used 7 gallons of water from S Lake and that is not what we call pleasant motoring but we in time reached Richfield where we transferred to Don's Trailer and Motor so from there we continued on to Jacob's Lake where we holed up for the night which we passed very nicely—July-7—we were up in good time and we loaded up and had breakfast at Marble Canyon Lodge - after which we went on to Lee's Ferry and after doing plenty in loading we returned to the Marble Canyon Lodge for our mid day lunch. It was here that there was about the first adverse feelings—between Don Harris and I—I would like to explain that there have been 4 Doctors told me that I would come down on the Colo. River and never return on account of a bad heart so on that account I hesitated on coming on any further but there were several persuaded me to finish the day and it was a hard day considering the condition of my heart—v but I was the first to pull out and after kissing Don's Wife Good-by I pushed off and in 8 miles we Passed under the Navajo Bridge on our way toward Lake and another 3 miles we came to and passed Badger Rapids with out looking them over and another 5 miles brought us to the notorious Soap Creek rapid where we all ran it successfully and made camp on the first sand bar below Soap Creek Rapid is a bad one and there is much history connected with this rapid—We are camped to-night on a nice spit of sand where I have spread my overalls out on the sand to dry and while I am writing this the Boys are very busy getting something to eat so as this is our first after-noon I will wait it a day—later—

We left the ferry with 51,000 second feet of water and we found some very angry water—there would be two back eddys one on each side and we could see nothing to cause them and on running Badger rapid it was sure a rough one and it was nothing like it was years ago-- The personnel of the party is composed of the following

Ralph Badger who is a paid passenger next is Howard Welty who will accompany us as far as Bright Angle—Then we have two in a rubber boat—Harty Aleson who is the navigator and a lady whose name is Mrs. Lou Fetzer and Don Harris—super boatman—Jack Brennan also super Wayne Nichols who is a friend of Don's and yours truly—Bert Loper who is taking this opportunity of celebrating his 80th year of my birth—having been born in the year of 1869—ran every rapid of this turbulent stream the year I was 70 and at that time it was suggested that we do it in 49 and as I said before in my 80th year—I expect to finish about 10 days before my birthday but it is still the 80th year—We are camped about ½ mile below Badger There will be no mail sent out before we get to Bright Angle. I see that I have called this Soap Creek Rapid but it seems as though it is still Badger but we will straighten it all out in our next write up so much for this sheet

(The above solid paragraph was copied from the one-page diary, typed by Bert Loper on the evening of July 7, 1949, in our camp on the Right Bank of the Colorado River, about one half mile below Badger Creek Rapid. It was typed verbatim, from the original typing by Bert Loper, and quite accurately includes the minor errors due to 80-year-old fingers and eyesight. On the afternoon of July 8, 1949, we lost Bert after his boat capsized. No one will ever know, but it is my belief that he drowned in the lower portion of Mile 24½ Rapid.) Typed at Richfield, Utah, July 5, 1950. Harry Aleson.)

Harry Aleson was on the trip where Bert died, and brought out his stuff. (From the Aleson collection, courtesy John Weisheit.)

CONTACT

Contact with you men and women has come about through many sources. One hundred twenty-seven of you may recall the 1945 "TO YE RIVER RATS" invitation to see colored motion pictures in Los Angeles, given by COLORADO UP RIVER EXPEDITION. That invitation was printed in war days, on galley proof sheets.

With the approximately 600 of you men and women listed in this booklet, we have, for 15 years, enjoyed "Grand Vacation Experiences of a Lifetime." During the years we have learned that you, all of you, "Are the Grandest People on Earth."

You have known our little "get-out-of-work outfit" by 3 names—COLORADO UP RIVER EXPEDITION; LARABEE AND ALESON WESTERN RIVER TOURS; and as CANYON SURVEYS. These originated respectively in the years 1939, 1948 and 1952. All still exist, and are constantly searching for ways "to get out of work."

To all of you who know our "quaint fancy," you will understand the why of publishing a list of logs, diaries, journals, "certain writings," title of motion pictures, etc.

To all of you "asterisked" people, this sign (*) indicates that you appeared in our 16 mm. Kodachromes somewhere from 1941 to 1954. We thank you for your physiognomy.

To those of "you" who are indicated with three stars (***), you have won your battle over The Four Horsemen, and have gallantly crossed the River Styx.
We salute you all.

—2—

ROSTER

* Roy Aiken	Los Angeles, California
* Ruth Aiken	Los Angeles, California
* Agnes Albert	San Mateo, California
* Adolph Aleson***	Los Angeles, California
* Andrea Aleson	Los Angeles, California
* Earl Allen***	Redmond, Utah
* Jennings Allen	Escalante, Utah
* Arthur Alvey	Boulder, Utah
* Emma Jane Alvey	Boulder, Utah
* Jack Ambritz	Cardiff, California
* John Ambary	Long Beach, California
* Dean Anderson	Provo, Utah
* Gordon Anderson	Boulder City, Nevada
* Harlan Anderson	Los Angeles, California
* Marvin Anderson	Richfield, Utah
* Mona Anderson	Provo, Utah
* Stanley Amnin	Huntington Park, California
* Ernie Appling	Kanab, Utah
* J. D. Armstrong	Ash Flat, Arizona
* Hal Atwood	Las Vegas, Nevada
* Enid Badertscher	Dinuba, California
* Ralph A. Badger	Salt Lake City, Utah
* Mrs. Ralph A. Badger	Salt Lake City, Utah
* Carlisle Baker	Fremont, Utah
* Jack Baker	Marble Canyon Lodge, Arizona
* Joe Baker	Green River, Utah
* Linda Lou Baker	Cliff Dwellers Ldg., Arizona
* Lloyd Baker	Green River, Utah
* Mildred Baker	Encinitas, California
* Pearl Baker	Green River, Utah
* Ruth Baker	Cliff Dwellers Ldg., Arizona
* Vernon Baker	Cliff Dwellers Ldg., Arizona
* Gerhardt Bakker	Huntington Park, California
* Alvin Baldwin	Green River, Utah
* Dr. Gordon Baldwin	Boulder City, Nevada
* J. W. Ballew	Skull Valley, Arizona
* Del Ballard	Boulder City, Nevada
* Billie Barker	Escalante, Utah
* Vince Barnett	Hollywood, California
* William G. Bass	Wickenburg, Arizona
* George O. Bauwens	Glendale, Utah
* Floyd Baxter	Ray, Ohio
* Armand T. Beauwgard	Webster Groves, Missouri

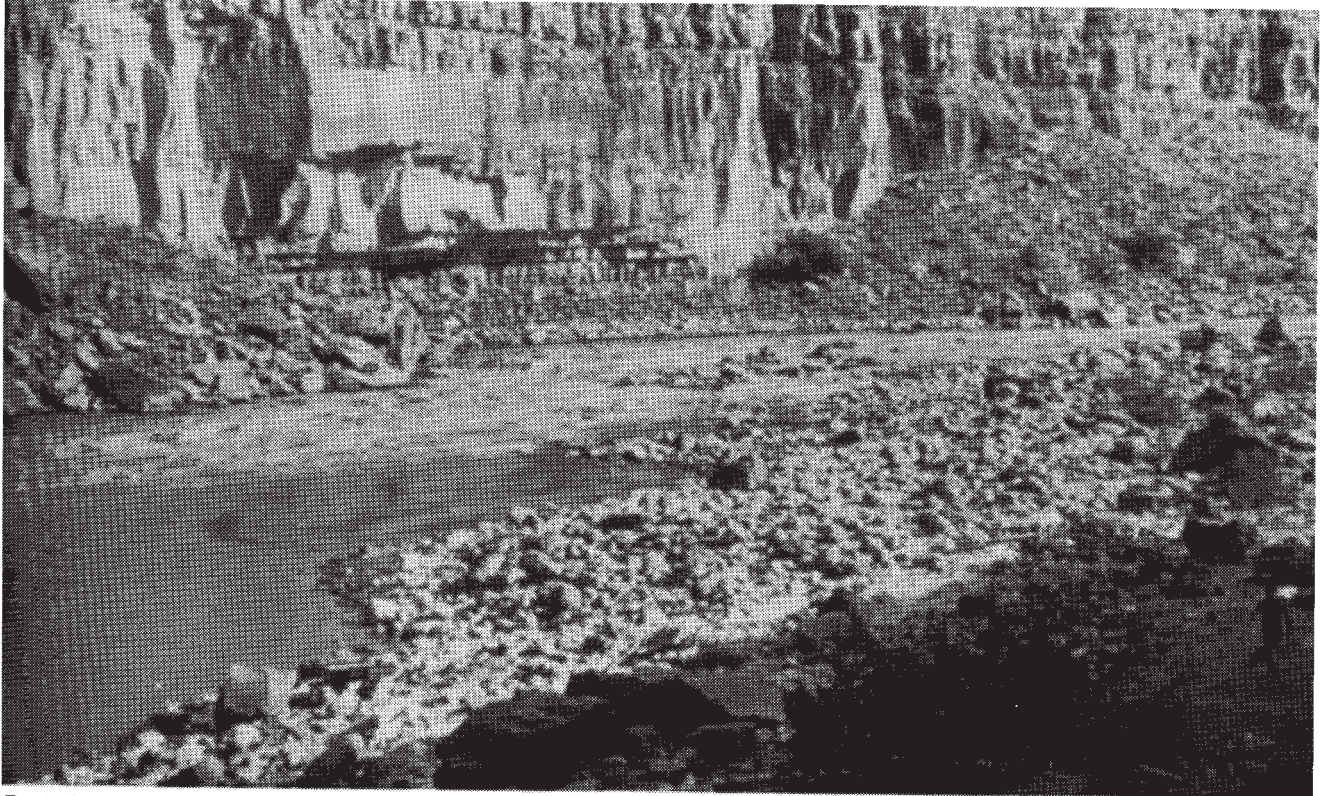
—3—

Harry Aleson's brochure proceeds to list his previous passengers. The list has all the names you'd expect. This is just the first of many pages of names. Order the CD from CPRG and you can see the rest!

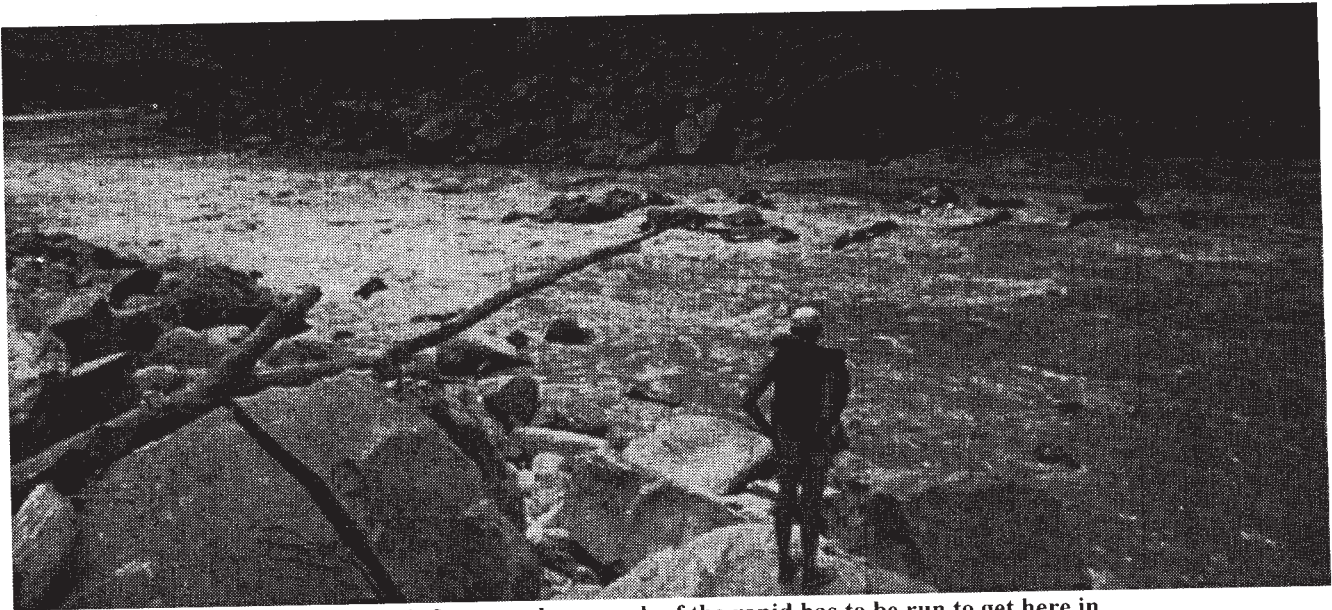
Here are more photos of that trip and some stories of running the canyon.



Bowdie Canyon Rapid, 1956



Dark Canyon overview, 1956. Note the Clearwater of Dark mixing with the Colorado.



Scouting Dark Canyon Rapid, 1956. Compare how much of the rapid has to be run to get here in previous photo.

Black George, aka George Simmons is a remarkable and fun individual as many of you know, and I encourage anyone who doesn't know him to make his acquaintance. At an evening soiree before the new millenium started, George and I were talking and he was looking for a way to get some documents scanned onto discs before they deteriorated further. One thing led to another, and I found myself in temporary possession of a large number of documents and slides, comprising the bulk of this issues' contents. There is just too much cool stuff to fit in The Confluence without publishing a book. I am not ready to put out a book just yet! However- if any of you devoted readers are interested, for a nominal donation to CPRG of \$15, I will burn a copy of these photos for you (including the 50 or so not shown here, and the Georgie White brochure and Aleson [contact list](#)) onto a CD, and mail it to you.

Of course, all the photos (slides) are actually in color. They were scanned in at mostly 800 dpi, and some choice ones like the ones you see here were scanned in at 2400dpi, into TIFF files. The 2400dpi files are 20 megabytes, so a CD ROM is really the only media useable in any practical sense. I will leave the commentary on the photos to a minimum, and let the views speak for themselves. I also was able to reach Clyde Deal and Bob Quist by phone, and here are their memories of the canyon.

Clyde remembers running it in late summer of '72 and ran it in low water.

Clyde: I don't remember Dark Canyon as being anything much.

I power boated it going up. Up to somewhere fishing, trying to get up before the lake covered it. Clearwater had some kicker waves. It was low- under 10,000 for sure. (try Ken Sleight for high water runs- or Verle Green.) The mouth of Clearwater was gorgeous. There was a nice overhang to camp under that collapsed when the lake got up to it. Phenomenal camp. There was no need to think of Camps- they were everywhere.

Bowdie was super, too, especially as the lake got up. A nice ramp went up the canyon when the water got up- even though it was a scorpion camp. You'd wake up in the morning with four or five Scorpions in your bag. Both had nice benches. There were little rapids at the mouth of every canyon. In low water there was nothing big. The flow slowed down past Bowdie. There weren't a lot of ruins that I recall. Ruins were solid up the San Juan arm- not so much on the Colorado. All the side canyons, once you got up on the benches had some ruins. 5 miles below Bull Frog towards Black Mesa was a canyon with benches that was loaded. Navajo Mt up to the San Juan was filled with stuff like Chinle Wash is today. The section of Hite up to Cataract was pretty slim for ruins compared to the rest of the country. There were granaries here and there, kind of like outposts along the travel routes in and out of the canyon.



Entering Dark Canyon Rapid, 1956

I talked to Bob Quist on the phone on April 28th, and this is what he had to say.

Bob: Gypsum was as big as the big drops. Below 10 cent, you go into Imperial, and everything from there on down just kept cooking. Like the 2 rapids below 3 are now, and everything just swept down to Gypsum which was a big honking rapid. It had rocks and holes and BIG tail waves, as big or bigger than the tailwaves in 2 in big water. There was nothing to speak of from there down to Dark. Dark was a big rapid, with a long tail wave train. Dark was a good camp, it was a good beach.

One time my brother and I ran it when it was big. We had the A-frame tail dragger rigs on two 28 foot

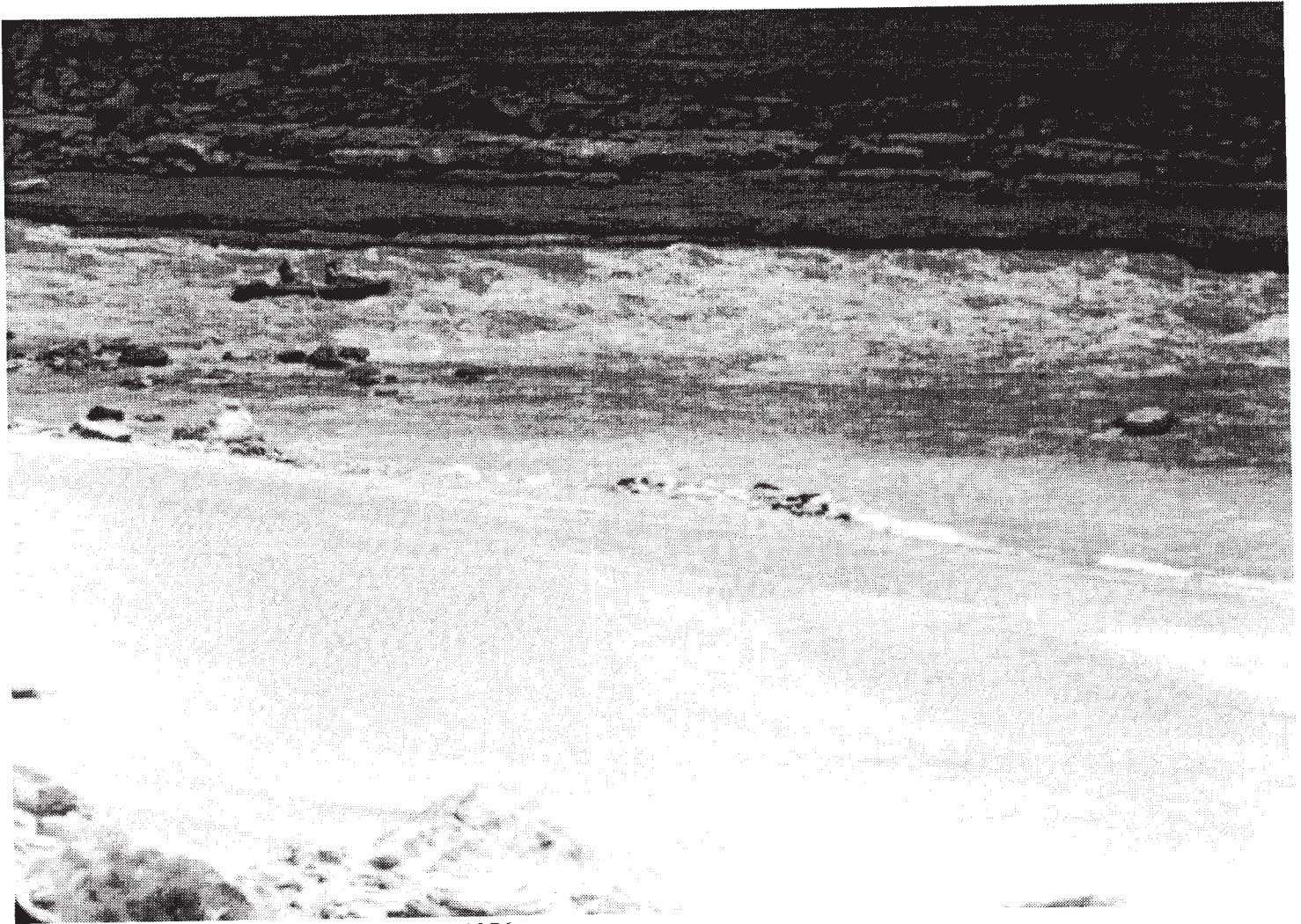


pontoons that were tied together with two 10 HP motors on each boat. Going through the tail waves the motors were flipping up and slamming down in the tail waves so hard one broke off and sank. Clair says it was my fault but of course it was his.

At sheep canyon there wasn't much of anything of any size at all. For the size of the canyon you would have thought there would be more there.

Dark at really low water, I don't think I ever ran it low. It was a spring run. Gypsum came in and out as the lake was rising, so we had that to deal with for a long time.

Mostly I remember Dark at high water, for the most part definitely over 20K. Probably up into the 40's a lot. I can't remember- it was a long looong time ago- I was a teenager. Our schedule was to run down into the Canyon, camp above the Big Drops and the next day shoot for Dark. It wasn't too hard, there was still a river there. It wasn't too hard unless you had trouble in the upper rapids. We dreaded Dark. It was as big as the Big Drops. Dark was the atypical huge side canyon rapid. You had those vertical walls and all this debris always coming in there. You know how much it flashes up there. I think there were some granaries up there, I don't remember any specific granaries, but there were artifacts around.



Clearwater rapid and Beach, 1956

Clearwater rapid was not anything really. Nice as canyon as it was, it wasn't really a stop for us, because we were beating it to Dark, which was THE camp. We weren't competing with anyone for camps. There was no one else down there then. I mean, other people were running that section, but not like today. I don't ever recall seeing another party down there at the same time as us back then. It was "THE GRAVEYARD OF THE COLORADO". Only fools ran down there. My brother and I were teenagers back then. We

worked with Ken Sleight a bunch. He had ten-mans and we had bigger boats. We would run together. Whenever either of us had clients and there was some reason for us to run together we would. One time we had Ken's ten mans running as a triple rig with a motor on the middle boat and we portaged Big Drop 2. It was running 80 or 90,000- it was huge. I argued with him for two hours about that and – I wanted to run and he didn't. We had already pancaked in Mile long and barely got to shore with me trying to hold the pancaked boat up. We portaged the Drops and it took us a day and a half. We didn't want to run without the people in the boat because we were afraid we wouldn't ever get the boats back to shore. That was the biggest argument we ever had. There was no one else down there- when you ran, you ran and that was it.

Big Drop 3, 1956 for water level comparison. My guess- 4900cfs. What do you think?



When my brother and I first took over the company, we would do any trip we could. For awhile we would find any excuse to take people and go down the river. Back then, the logistics were incredible. In order to get to the takeout at Hite you had to cross the creek bottom in North Wash at least fifty times in fifty miles. It was great fun when there was rain in the area.

The trips were low dollar trips in terms of profit. Quite often there would be people attuned to river running that wanted to do it. (Clair and Richard are Bob's brothers). Clair and I were doing most of the trips. When we were down there before the water started inundating Cat we were teens. I was 17 in '62 when they first closed the dam. Boy I remember, the section from Mile long to Gypsum was ON your toes. Water hole rapid came back out in the 70's when the lake got low for a while and I watched it turn over one of my 18 footer row rigs no problem. There were some big ass waves there. The higher the volume the bigger the waves. Just like it is now in what's left. Draining the lake, I would do it all at once, not in stages. Move all that silt down to the delta where it belongs. I say hold out both hands, you get wishes in one and shit in the other- see which one fills up first.

Editorial note(Dave Focardi): I always thought it was whiny old boatman who complained about the lake, but the more time you spend on rivers, the more you hate the lake. Look at all that river that is underwater. After 10 cent you'd just be getting warmed up. Do a few more scouts, camp at Bowdie or Clearwater, do some hikes, run to Dark, scout, get scared, run, hike, and go camp on one of the endless beaches. If thinking about that after seeing these pictures and hearing the stories doesn't make you want to drain the lake, you need a reality check. That is just the selfish reason for draining the lake. And that's only Cataract Canyon! We're not even going down to Glen Canyon yet. Some of the REAL reasons to drain the lake: the delta wetland habitat is disappearing, the riparian environment is a manmade fiasco, the lakes are filling with silt and the dams will be useless. If you don't get involved with the Glen Canyon Action Network, don't talk to me.

Boatmen Can See In The Dark

He led two boys up the bajada, gliding purposefully through calf-deep cheat grass, following a path that had been pounded out by footfalls of the summer's tourists. He felt the feathery seed heads brush against the sides of his sinewy boatman's legs; his toes probed through the open fronts of his beat up shoes. The line of trampled cheat went up the plain beyond the cooling shade of riverside box elders and onward toward the creek. It was joined by other campsite trails, some of which ended at the creek or at clearings signifying picnic areas in the trees. He knew without looking whether the next step would put him in the creek, over a rock, or at the boats.

He sensed the trail only to confirm his memory of it and so he was able to turn around and teach while traveling. The boys were parts of vacationing families spending their last night on the river. They soaked up every bit of the boatman's display and, when they could, even affected the mannerisms. The folded arms and cocked hip when stopped; the air of casual anarchy or vague contempt; the hidden marshmallow heart yearning to be discovered; the twitch of the hand poised to grab pliers from the holster although they had neither belt nor pliers. This was how teenage boys learned to become teenage men ready to join the pride of boatmen that worked the canyons.

This is *Latrodectus mactans*, the black widow spider. Learn from it and don't let your women eat you. He also told them other sayings: this is the way the ancients made fish traps; and yet again, row the boat exactly like this; and step here, run there, stop! Look under here before cutting the *Rhus trilobata* for an arrow shaft. Look! What is it?

"A black widow spider?" one guessed.

"Scientific name?"

"Mujer que me come?" quipped the other in Spanish*.

"Excellent, my boy. Welcome to the pride."

Back at the boats others from the pride stretched to reenergize their torpid muscles for the night's feeding. There was the meat. There was the salad, the chocolate milk, the soup, the vegetables, and the dessert to prepare for 36 dudes. There would be the cleaning up and putting away and the attempts to communicate with the people from another planet – an enervating evening leaving the pride members exhausted until the night called them out to tell stories, court Venus's daughters or lead young men along new paths to enlightenment.

The ritual of getting drunk and the story telling did not appeal this night so I busied myself setting out our buckets of dish water to drown some of the overabundance of mice that bred on spilled dinners in the days before skunks fed on mice or badgers fattened on skunks. It was a simple time when Venus was close at hand and the bedroom was a bag laid down at the edge of the kitchen clearing.

I could not hear them and could not know that they were leaving the faint but useful starlight. They were moving fast, having learned the trail that afternoon. They learned that they could see enough of the trail to navigate without flashlights out in the open but tonight the lesson was about the utter darkness that broods underneath the heavy forest canopy that blocks even the astral light which, while pale, is as daylight for accustomed eyes. They advanced but the boys were surprised and wondered, "How can you see?"

"Follow my voice. Boatmen can see in the dark," he whispered as he continued to feel his way in the blackness. He felt the grass get thin and the trail widen. He knew that with another step he would be in the clearing and he would then veer just so to miss the picnic table. By now I could hear them approaching, though seeing was out of the question.

"Where are we?" they whined.

"Follow my voice," he insisted.

HUUUHHNNCKKKH!!! I exploded as my best friend's foot and 183 pounds landed on my belly and he climbed over as though my supine body were a log. "What a dumb shit," I thought. "But I can't blow the cover now. This is too hilarious for words."

"What was that?"

"It was nothing. Come on. Follow my voice."

HUUGUCHHH! I wheezed as the cub stepped on me and went through the night to join his guide.

"Where are you? Guys? How can you see where you're going?" pled the last boy, needing reassurance.

"Boatmen can see in the dark," said the cub. "Follow my voice."

I oozed out a pathetic hhhhuuuuhhhh as the third one walked over me and they careened off into the night.

As I nursed my sore diaphragm, hurt as much from stifling my laughter as from being stomped, I chortled over the irony of belonging to a self-deluding species.

* pronounced 'moo-HAIR kay may COE-may', meaning "woman that eats me."

Colorado Plateau River Guides

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River Despair

As the years fly by every river guide must face,
This great life won't allow a perpetual race.
Eventually all of us give way to mortality,
Time plus wear at some point equals finality.

A chance step off the boat to the slick rivers edge,
A quick slip, intense pain, I can't climb this small ledge.
Walk it out says my mind as I continue to try,
I can't be hurt with two days yet of river to ply.

The pain persists as the minutes pass,
Worsening, not improving as I stretch in the grass.
How bad am I hurt? Can I even row?
The worst of the rapids are still down below.

I remember the shame as I told the trip leader,
I can't pull my load, not the normal procedure.
I sat in my boat watching the other guides work,
I should have been helping, I felt like a jerk.

Suddenly I realized, I may be hurt badly,
I gazed at the canyon and our customers, sadly.
My anguish was living and breathing - acute,
As I thought - No more river? My despair was absolute.

It's not accepted that men need to cry,
But on came the tears leaking out of each eye.
Was this my last trip down these rivers I love?
I prayed that it wasn't to my God up above.

Now I'm back on the river, recovery complete,
But I'll never forget that sick feeling of defeat.
Facing the alternative as I did last year,
Enhances each moment in this desert so dear.

So colleagues, when difficult customers reign,
Just smile and be helpful, they're the ones in pain.
You're here with your senses tuned in to glean,
The God given beauty of the enchanting river scene.

When will I be done with my white-water career?
When it comes I'll be ready and I'll persevere.
For by having faced the Tiger, I live each river day,
With this calm and insight that shows me the way,
That for this guide it really is, all of it, play.