



The Confluence

The Journal of Colorado Plateau River Guides

Number 25



More Pop's Poetry!

Herm Hoops: Editorial

Best Expedition: J.A. McCormick
on 'Hell To Pay', Music Temple, and a
Lees Ferry 'day' hike

The REAL Poop from Roy Webb
America Outdoors and YOU

More Bert Loper Testimony!

Or-how many times *dig* he pull
a boat upriver?

**Upcoming Spring Interp
Trips**

Guide Education Seminar

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.

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- \$ 20 per year
- \$100 for 6 years
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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.

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The opinions and statements made within the pages of *The Confluence* are those of the author(s) 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. I PUBLISH ANYTHING SUBMITTED, SO GO FOR IT!!

ed. Dave

Special Thanks To: Those who submitted articles for this issue!!

Issue/Numbering: In keeping with the new numbering system, this is now issue #25. **Thanks for financing this river trip!**

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

#22—David Brower on cover

#23—Dark Canyon Revisited

#24—Bert Loper on Cover

#25—This Issue

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THE PREZ SEZ

Hi all and welcome to a new Confluence. Also, greetings from Olympic Hell! Can someone please tell me how and why disapproval of the Olympics somehow became synonymous with lack of patriotism? It's not that I don't enjoy winter sports, I ski three times a week, whenever I am not in school or working on CPRG stuff. And it's not that I don't like Utah. I love Utah, born and raised here and I wouldn't change that for anything. I would just like to clarify that my lack of Olympic enthusiasm has nothing to do with my love of our country. I would just like to be able to park my car. Or alternately, I would like to turn left anywhere in the greater Salt Lake area. Does that make me a poor sport? Does this make me unpatriotic? Sorry, am I on a tangent here? I know that many of you winter here in Salt Lake and are probably feeling the same way right now. So I thought that I would throw that in as a little food for thought. Actually, truth be told, I am being a total hypocrite. I purchased Silver Olympic Hockey tickets. Transportation allowing, I plan on attending.

Far be it from me to pout about silly parking problems. Lets get psyched up for another great year on the river. The CPRG events are as follows:

Cataract Interpretive Trip: Sponsored By Western River Expeditions. CPRG coordinator is Dan Phillips. April 28th through May 1st.

Westwater Interpretive Trip: Sponsored by World Wide River Expeditions. CPRG coordinator is Annie Payne. May 8th through 10th (Launch 9th).

San Juan Interpretive Trip: Sponsored by Wild Rivers Expeditions. CPRG coordinator is John Weisheit. March 15th through 18th.

Yampa Interpretive Trip: Sponsored by Hatch River Expeditions. CPRG coordinators are Marty Shelp, Joe Keys, Darren Smith (Team AB). May 6th through 9th.

River Education Seminar: River Rescue. CPRG coordinators are Annie Payne and Molly Taylor @ Big Bend Campground and daily section of the Colorado river. April 19th through 21st.

Uintah Basin Seminar: May 28th in the Vernal area. CPRG coordinator is Herm Hoops. Time and place to be determined. Email Herm at <hoops@iwworks.com>.

General Membership meeting: TBA.

OK, so is this an all star line up or what? Not bad for a little non profit such as ourselves! If you have questions, or you would like to participate, contact CPRG at 435-259-3598 or by email <cprgutah@hotmail.com>, or contact your outfitter as they often times will pay your way! Space is limited so reserve your spot now! Or, if you have any CPRG related questions, feel free to email me at <anniet@lasal.net> or call 801-220-0350. I love hearing from you guys. Mostly, I am asking all of you, to please get involved. CPRG needs new faces.

THE VICE PREZ/EDITOR SEZ

I hope you enjoy the issue. The addition of Adobe PhotoShop 5.5 has made it easier and harder to put this together—any of you computer phobes will know that the more powerful the program, the harder it is to use (at first).

Don't hesitate to send in your articles, we hardly ever refuse anything—and only rarely edit the content. (Herm!) So send us your stuff and I won't have to type and scan so much original history stuff—although I get a kick out of doing it. Speaking of which, I would like to thank guide member Randy Larsen of Grand Junction for passing on a 1956 USGS Quadrangle 1:250,000 of Escalante, Utah. You will see portions of it all over the place this issue—notably on the cover and page 2. Its basically Glen Canyon before the reservoir.

Go on the interp trips—they are a blast!

By the way, many people ask how I am doing—I would like to say that I am doing pretty damn GREAT! Thanks for your concern—Lance Armstrong and I are going to live to be a hundred!

America Outdoors Convention

by Herm Hoops

The America Outdoors convention, a "Confluence" of 450 outfitters from around the country (37 states and 50 countries), was held in Denver this past December. Four days of seminars, meetings, parties, and river equipment exhibits highlighted this congregation of the educational, political action and marketing organization. River company owners and exhibitors are the predominate attendees.

Shane Edwards (Moki Mac River Expeditions—Green River) and I (River Runners—Vernal) attended Confluence thanks to the generosity of our employers. Shane and I agree this convention is a real eye-opener for river guides. Any guide who sits in on the agency permitting policies and fee program sessions would have a better insight into what our owners have to endure and how fragile their investments are.

There are a lot of sessions that would be valuable for guides to attend. Sessions on risk management, critical incidents (deaths & serious injuries), maintaining equipment, business management, political action, the regional meetings (UGO business meeting) and others help to keep us up-to-date on old and emerging river issues. The session on critical incidents was particularly valuable—have you ever imagined what happens if someone dies on one of your trips?

Some of the topics can be disturbing. In the emerging risk management session EMS folks explained that they are pressing for ever-higher medical qualifications (and associated costs!). The way it works is that a few companies establish a higher standard, and then others, in fear of lawsuits, follow suit.

There are vast networking possibilities, this is the place to find potential work, and to see what people are paying and requiring in other parts of the country and world. The sponsors hold several large parties which presents opportunity to meet and socialize with other river folk. There is a huge trade show with exhibitors like NRS, Highside, Chaco, and others including river clothing and the newest gear. Many of the purveyors offer significant discounts.

Unfortunately few guides attend the convention, probably because the cost to attend is high (around \$250), and the show is not marketed to the guiding community, though we are welcome participants. Perhaps this is something CPRG should look into, because there is definite value for those of us who earn our livelihood from river running. Next years convention (called Confluence) will be held in December at Biloxi, MS. For information you can contact America Outdoors at <www.americaoutdoors.org>.

UINTAH BASIN GUIDE SEMINAR

An Editorial by Herm Hoops

In 2001 CPRG sponsored the first river guide education seminar in the Uintah Basin. Over 50 guides attended the hugely successful day long event. The seminar was successful, largely because of support of companies like ADRIFT ADVENTURES (Dino), COBS, ADVENTURE BOUND and ARTA as well as local businesses like SMITH'S FOOD & DRUG and JUBILEE IGA FOOD & DRUG, and the VERNAL DISTRICT OF BLM.

The Uintah Basin doesn't have the luxury of widespread community, business and government agency support that Moab has. Indeed some employees of Dinosaur National Monument would rather CPRG not succeed in conducting the educational seminars.

One of the issues we needed to solve was efficient handling and accounting of donations and funds. This winter I attempted to work out

an agreement to cooperate with the Dinosaur Nature Association (DNA) to handle funds and help with the seminar. Part of DNA's mission is to become a recognized educational leader in the region. Our educational mission fits nicely with the educational mission of DNA, and they conduct a series of other educational seminars.

The DNA Board of Directors recently rejected our proposed spirit of cooperation. Association and NPS managers chose not to voice strong support for the cooperation. Thus the DNA Board's decision leaned heavily on the advice of their lawyer and officials from Dinosaur National Monument who said that it was not a good idea because blah, blah, blah.

That we produced a quality, valuable seminar is beyond reproach. It seems like the individuals who turn the wheels of education up here would rather spend thousands of dollars of donations on THEIR DNA/NPS seminar (last year drew ONE person) and exert total control of THEIR river trip (draws about 15) than cooperate with us to educate fifty or more. It seems they get more pleasure from letting a historic homestead deteriorate so that they can spend thousands of dollars for publicity to rejuvenate it, than from positive efforts.

Of course the Dinosaur Nature Association and Dinosaur National Monument has a response to these comments: BLAH, BLAH, BLAH.



Elmer Kane, James McCormick, John Jacobs, John Hislop
Harry McDonald, William Edwards, James Best, Albert Gregory, Luther Jewell

Note: Gregory was not on the river trip.

The Best Expedition of 1891

The following is an excerpt from an account of the Best Expedition by J.A. McCormick, the photographer of the river trip. I chose those events pertaining to "Hell to Pay" (the rapid formerly known as Capsize) as well as some Glen Canyon stuff and an "adventurous day hike" at Lee's Ferry. This is a typewritten manuscript with penciled in editorial additions by McCormick. The "Expedition" was organized by "The Colorado Grand Canon Mining and Improvement Company". The Company was formed to "acquire by purchase or otherwise, mines and mining properties, and to work, tunnel and develop the same, and to provide and erect necessary buildings, machinery and appliances therefor; also to construct, own and operate a toll road or toll roads in the Territories of Arizona and Utah, running into and out of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River; and to establish, acquire, own and operate a ferry across the Colorado River in said Territories, or either of them, and the necessary docks, landing places, boats and appliances therefor, and to charge and collect tolls from the public using said toll roads or ferry...erect and operate hotels...and when desirable sell same...acquire, maintain and operate irrigating canals...acquire and sell real estate...lay out, plat, and acquire town sites...carry a general mercantile business... and to engage in any business or enterprise that may seem best or desirable to its Board of Directors". Four of these men, Hislop, McDonald, Kane and Edwards, were with Robert Stanton in 1890. They launched July 10th, 1891 from Green River Station, Utah.

We landed on the east shore at the head of rapid No. 12 for the usual inspection and found that rapids 12-13-14 were so nearly continuous that there was no possible landing place indicated in the entire length. It was advised by both Hislop and McDonald that we camp here and study the channels carefully, watch the driftwood, and formulate a plan of running the entire distance in one run without the extra men. There was an ideal camping place across the river on a bar with a fine group of cottonwoods. There was nothing to prevent the extra men, the Chief and myself, from walking along the shore to the safe water below and I would have had an opportunity to get some sensational pictures of the boats in a really bad water condition. With the argument that we had made such fine progress that it was advisable to go as far as was possible and that it was still early in the day, the Chief insisted on our making the run. With such superficial inspection here was the making of a major tragedy, and it was, as far as equipment was concerned.

Peculiar as it may seem the water has all the appearance of piling up at the head of a rapid and it has this feel on the oars as one tries to get up speed for steering. While it is not difficult, from high on the shore to pick the exact place to enter a rapid with the assurance of escaping the obstructions, it is quite another thing to be able to find that spot from the basin above where one

cannot see over the brink, particularly if the inspection has been curtailed.

Lunch, observation and the arguments pro and con consumed much time so it was 3:15 when we took to the boats for the fateful run.

No. 1 with the Chief as passenger took the lead and it looked to us as though they were getting to far to the right which proved true. Their speed was so great that as they broke over the brink they were unable to swing over to the channel, and cut into the eddy which caught their bow and turned them toward shore and they were thrown well up on the rocks so that it was necessary to utilize the incoming waves and some effort to get back into the water, fortunately with no damage. We know nothing of this as we had not yet turned the brink of the rapid.

Boat No. 2 with me as passenger and Hislop steering, were well into the channel as we turned the crest but this brought us in sight of the other boat in apparent distress: Hislop swung his boat to the right to reach the other, which put him across the main current, and he immediately saw that he could not reach the eddy but would be carried onto a reef extending out from the west shore. He ordered the men to back water to escape this reef but the bow caught on the outer point and fortunately held until the current swung our boat through the opening between this reef point and a rock just below that looked as big as a cottage. This put us below and in the protection of the reef so we had no difficulty in making shore where we tied up intending to go back and help the other group. In one thousand attempts I doubt whether a boat could have reached this place safely, so it was mere good fortune.

Provision had been made for the two steersmen to have a consultation, in case of trouble, which was subscribed to by the Chief, but, in this case, when he saw that we were safe he ordered McDonald to get back into the main channel. Just as they seemed to be safely in the clear, a cross current caught them and before one could hardly bat an eye their boat was plastered across the face of the big rock that we had missed, the water poured into their boat, picked the four men up, dropped Best and McDonald on the top of the rock and carried Kane and Jewell down the river.

We boys on shore tried to follow the boys down the river but soon lost sight of them, and as the Colorado never had been known to give up it's dead we were convinced that they were lost, without hope of even finding their bodies.

We returned to our boat, got out a grappling hook, bent it to a light line and over taxed with excitement as we were, it took us an hour to get the line out to the boys on the rock. They fished up the bow line of the wrecked boat, we sent out our heavy emergency line which they spliced and with our two-one block and tackle we stretched the rope and the boys came ashore with an arm over the rope and their bodies dragging in the water.

After the boys were safe ashore we all lost our ambition and just sat there looking at the wreck and nobody had a word to say. The noise of the rapids

between these 3000 foot walls makes it necessary for us to get close and shout to be heard so we could not hear any unusual movement. Before we realized it the two lost men were back with us. Adventure certainly effects men in different ways for Kane got us together and without apparent excitement, told of his sensations while in the water and what happened. They were carried down river about a mile, bumping along the bottom with an occasional trip to the surface for air when the current released them for the moment. The current threw them into an eddy, fortunately on our side of the river, and as they were carried up stream they each succeeded in getting onto a rock fairly near shore. After coughing the water from their lungs Kane tried the water inshore, found it shallow and with no force so he waded ashore. Jewell did likewise and they came into camp. Jewell was so stunned that he had not a word to say. This put new life in the entire party and we got busy at once and established camp while Edwards got us a hearty meal. We retired early with high hopes of saving our boat in the morning.

The rock on which the boat was wrecked lay diagonally facing up stream and the opposite shore, with the bow of the boat away from us and pointing down stream. During breakfast after discussing the matter it was decided to send two men to the rock, pass them timbers from the drift, they to rig a 'jinnie', pass the heavy line over this so that we on shore could put a strain on this line while they pried the boat upstream, thus lifting the bow of the boat a little at a time until it was released from the force of the current. Theoretically, fine, but in practice we, with our combined effort could not overcome the power of the water but all that we accomplished was to pull the rivets loose and wreck the bow. It was evident that blasting the rock was our only hope, but how? Our powder was in the bow of the wreck. After trying other suggested methods without success, it was decided to send one man out to the nearest civilization for powder and as we had extra powder at Dandy Crossing that was the logical place. Hislop insisted that he was best suited for the trip so he started on the morning of the 25th [July] and returned on the 31st. Hislop also arranged to have some provisions brought up to the first trail into the Canyon from below.

As Hislop came into camp he noticed that the rope attached to the wreck was nearly worn through and on more careful examination it was deemed unsafe to attempt to get out to the rock. Higher water was another factor which made it unsafe, so we broke the rope and packed, prepared to leave in the morning.

As a matter of convenience we had, from the start of the Expedition, been living off of the rations in Boat No. 2 as Edwards was oarsman and carried the cook outfit with him, for the reason that he might reach a camp ahead of the other boat. This was an added misfortune, for we lost, in the wreck, more than half of our provisions. While Hislop was out after Powder we carefully rationed ourselves, but seven healthy men will consume much food and being almost entirely out, it was imperative that we make as fast time as possible to the provi-

sions that the Dandy Crossing boys were bringing in. It was decided that Hislop, Jacobs and Edwards should take the very much lighter boat through the rapids while the five of us walked along the shore.

Everything went fine until we reached Rapid No. 21 which was full of obstructions from shore to shore, with a huge rock in the main channel in the lower portion, making it impossible to pass the smaller obstructions and then swing free from this great barrier. The obstructions near shore made it inadvisable to try to line the boat down along shore so we unpacked and carried forward. We then took the boat out over skids to the safe water below. As it was now late in the day we soon camped for the night.

Near this camp one of the boys found a case of Cranberry preserves in the drift wood, which had been exposed to the weather for so long, that the glass was brittle and we had great difficulty in getting the bottles open. We were now down to just oatmeal with no sugar so we substituted these preserves for sugar and it made the entire party sick. A great spire of rock down stream inspired the name for this camp—Chimney Rock Bend.

Soon after leaving this camp the boys in the boat saw an inscription cut in a sheer wall (D. Julien 1836). We had found an inscription with a sailboat and a rising sun cut in a canyon wall about a hundred miles north of this point which was signed by this same D. Julien. We learned that members of a former Expedition had found another inscription by the same man in Marble Canyon, just below Lees Ferry, Arizona. We could not verify this as we left the river at that point. We concluded that he must have been a French-Canadian trapper who in some mysterious way had survived the Canyon dangers.

We reached our provisions soon after noon on this day and it was certainly a great treat after two days on plain oatmeal.

Having passed the worst of the rapids by now we made great progress. We five that were walking would stay on one shore until we would come to a straight wall, cross on the boat and continue until we were forced to return and in this way we reached Dark Canyon where we could all ride through.

We reached Dandy Crossing the afternoon on August 4th and sat down to a hearty meal that the boys had prepared after we came in sight. We enjoyed one days stay here very much but were unable to get a boat that was suitable: We learned that there was a boat at Good Hope bar that we could get and with some caulking and paint would find it usable.

On the morning of the 6th [August] we loaded our boat with all the extra provisions and supplies which had been brought overland and as there was no bad water immediately below, the eight of us got aboard and although this made the boat unwieldy we were able to keep the safe channel with no difficulty but lessened speed. It was during the trip to Good Hope and below that we made a pan test of the seven bars which we located and filed on. These were mid-river bars and in each case we got free colors from the surface gravel after clearing it of the surface sand. While the gold was very fine we got a

sufficient showing to have justified real excitement. At least we should have done the necessary assessment work to hold these claims and got the locations recorded while we were at a point in the Canyon where we could get out to the nearest land office. With eight men working together we could have done the work required in ten or twelve days. Our Chief said he would send men in to do the work after we got home.

I find from my notes, that some of these locations were well below the mouth of the San Juan River and would have required recording from Lees Ferry. Supplies and machinery could be easily floated down from Dandy Crossing with little effort.

At Good Hope we were able to secure a large flat bottomed boat that required a full days work to make it usable but it permitted the dividing of the load of both men and equipment and solved our boat problem for the moment.

From Dandy Crossing to a considerable distance down river the walls receded leaving wide benches of gravel carrying flour gold. At intervals, a bench is being worked in a more or less indifferent manner and usually a grub stake is assured.

Near the mouth of the San Juan river the Canyon walls close in and from there on Glen Canyon is one continuous picture.

The mouth of the San Juan river is a spot of unusual charm with high terraced Canyon walls trimmed with a nicely distributed tree and shrub growth dotted with large gray sage and backed by a straight box canyon from which the river flows in a rushing stream. A good showing of flour gold at the grass roots made it hard to pass this point but our party had developed a sliver complex and although we would have been within the intent of the plans and it was the proper thing to do, our Chief ruled that we make haste.

This same day, August 11th, we stopped at Crevice Canyon; a narrow gash in the wall which was little more than the span of a mans arms; the pools of water reached from wall to wall and we had to wade to reach the head of this short stream which opens up in to the most remarkable amphitheater with its overhanging roof. Leaving just a spot of sky visible. It is safe to say that 30,000 people could find shelter on the ledges under this roof. The acoustics were the most remarkable I have ever experienced. We carried on a conversation across and to the upper ledges without raising our voices and there was none of the usual reverberation found in such vast openings. Could it be that the break in the roof or the narrow inlet of Canyon accounted for this freedom from echo? If this is so it would be well for the Architects to introduce these features in their plans for Auditoriums. It would be worth a special expedition of specialists on acoustics to give this intensive study.

....We reached Lees Ferry on August 14th and camped in the old John D. Lee fort and this proved to be the end of our river trip. With but one boat fit to navigate the waters of Marble and the Grand Canyon, it was declared more practical to make the head of Bright Angel Canyon by pack horse.

Following is some exploration they did while at Lee's Ferry waiting for McDonald and Best to get back from Salina with pack stock, via a board meeting in Denver.

The Canyon wall just back of our camp was about 1700 feet high and this had to be scaled before we could explore the country to the west and north. We had found a place that we could climb, with care, a few hundred yards upriver.

One morning at early daylight, Jacobs and I climbed to the top and just as we reached the crest the sun peeped over the eastern horizon. This reflected on what appeared to be numerous water pockets well out in this apparent arid stretch of desert. Johnson, who had lived on a ranch at the mouth of Paria creek for sixteen years had cautioned us about going far from the Canyon rim, for he said that no game trails indicated no water.

We studied the land marks for a time to be sure of being able to retrace our steps and started to investigate these reflections. Presently we came to a small dry wash and with no idea of being able to cross it a few hundred yards to the right, we went to the left for a mile and headed it, coming back to keep our land marks in line.

As we got back to our starting point we found that we were just a little ways from where this stream, in flood, would pour into the main canyon, and it was easy of access. I went down stream and Jacobs went up the Canyon to see if water pockets were available, as we wanted to conserve our canteen supply. I found a large stand of fine clear water near the Canyon mouth and called to Jacobs. While waiting for his answer and after an astonishing length of time, my voice came back so clear and distinct that it was startling. Before I called again my call was repeated so often that I just stood too astonished to move. When Jacobs finally came down to me we spent a considerable time testing this echo.

The elapsed time was so great that I was able to sing two lines of Annie Rooney, which was the first song I thought of, before it would start to repeat, then repeating so many times distinctly before it began to overlap soon to become a mixture of sound.

If this echo is ever made available to the travelling public, it will become famous.

We continued along the line of our landmarks, soon coming to a group of dozens of water pockets, from deep cisterns to wide shallow pockets that would have been dry only for recent rains.

While skirting a high wall near these water pockets we found the first indications of Cliff Dwellings in the caves along the wall. These were almost totally obliterated, while in fact they should have been well preserved in the protected location where found.

This whetted our appetite for exploration so we climbed to the top of these cliffs and surveyed the surroundings for other prospects. This gave us a very extensive view of the same general formation described along the Green River. To the west at some distance we saw similar cliffs to the one we were on and after carefully studying all landmarks and laying out a definite route, we struck for the nearest prospect.

This proved to be a large hard sandrock cliff which had resisted the action of the elements, except for some soft strata which had been eroded by the winds into caves, some quite deep. Each cave had well defined indications of having been lived in without other building except for defensive walls of rock layed in a square, facing to the outside. Numerous mealing stones and hand pieces, much cactus hull, game bones and corn cob indicated long occupancy.

As we approached this cliff we had picked up many arrow heads of a material very much like the petrified trees along Paria Creek and near our camp. This indicated that these people were besieged, and it may have been a last stand, justifying the lack of buildings. We made a trip on top of this cliff which gave us a most extensive view, and found that walls were placed along the edges, without doubt as a defensive measure, behind which the able bodied fought while the women and older men chipped arrowheads and made arrows. This was indicated by a large mound of chips in the protected center of the cliff top.

Returning to the caves below we found one much deeper than the others with the walls better placed. In one wing of this cave there was a wide spread of ashes. As I had read at some time that these people spread ashes from their fires over their dead, and as we were carrying a shovel for any eventuality, we began to dig to see if this were true. Presently we broke the corner off of a slab of rock, ran an arm in to explore and brought forth some bone tools, fiber fabric, a few human bones and some fiber rope with a square knot tied in it; the same knot that we tie today.

We found some scraps of pottery but none intact. The arrow heads were small, beautifully formed and we brought many back to give to our friends for tie pins.

As we dug into the grave, the ashes would cave in and almost suffocate us, and as our water was low we decided to start for camp, hoping to get back here for farther investigation. We never had this opportunity for we proceeded with the expedition after this trip.

On our way in we came to a dry stream bed, followed it for a ways and came to a deep tank at the foot of what would be a considerable water fall in flood time, which contained some hundreds of gallons of water. Drinking our fill and refilling our canteens we were in no particular hurry to get to camp. We failed to find anything of interest but returned by way of the blind trail which required much careful study before we could get started right at the top so as to be sure to reach the bottom safe, as night was on us.

We reached camp late, had a hearty meal and after describing our days activities to the boys, retired with a feeling that we had really accomplished something definite.

....Getting to Bright Angel canyon, after leaving Lees Ferry on October 15th....

A party was made up at once to go down and visit the reported silver vein. They left with high hopes, were gone three days and returned with full realization that our expedition was a total failure as far as the silver vein

was concerned, and in much doubt as to how to turn failure into success.

Company goes into receivership, only thirty nine of several hundred photos developed at that time, photos go to receiver as asset, don't get developed for ten years and are ruined. Most of the rest of the considerable text are devoted to McCormick's geology theories.

There was a "silver vein" up Bright angel canyon seen by members of the Brown Stanton survey that started the whole expedition.

As much as I regret it, I must report that when we were well along on the Expedition our Chief became obsessed with the idea that if we failed to reach and secure the silver vein the Expedition would be a failure so he sacrificed everything to speed. This resulted in the loss of one of our boats in Cataract Canyon which caused much delay and resulted in slowing the field work so that it took nearly five months to reach the head of Bright Angel and the alleged silver vein which proved to be nothing more than Mica-schist. This left the Expedition at the end of the road with nothing of value but a few hundred photographic films of the scenery and this value made doubtful by the failure of the main adventure.

Editors note: *Even though the disclaimer on page 2 of the Confluence should cover me, I would like to emphasize that I in no way endorse carrying a shovel "for any eventuality" on dayhikes and using it to dig up Hisotsonam burial sites, nor do I endorse collecting arrowheads to make into tie clips for friends. However, carrying powder in the bow of one's boat has some possibilities! Dave*

A River Runnin' Black

by Pops Smith

I keep having these words hanging around in my head and I have to get them on paper before they go away. This poem is about the most unique trip I have ever experienced. Joe Keyes was the trip leader and I'll bet even with his wide experience it was an unusual one for him, too.

I guess I should have known,
At the beautiful Gates of Lodore.
When everything felt so different,
And my belly it was sore.

This would be an uncommon trip,
With memories to bring back.
Of when Coyote, the Trickster's blood,
Turned a mighty river black.

How can the Green River be mighty,
When running so little flow?
Around 750 per the scuttlebutt,
Now that is really low!

In an 18 foot self-bailing Demaree,
A rock magnet premier.
I'll be doing far more sticking,
Than floating the River I fear.

The crew this trip can't be topped,
Except by very damned few.
With Joe as the trip leader,
Guides Jeff, Beth and Crunch too.

And Pops in the sweep boat,
I'll be bringing up the rear.
To pick up all the pieces
And any left over gear.

Another clue of our demise,
Came the following morning.
Our vans with folks are running late,
Another dire warning.

Still feeling under the weather,
I really could back off.
Marcus can run the sweep boat,
And his driver's hat I'll doff.

But the last trip of my season,
And maybe of my career?
I may be leaving forever,
The cost would be severe.

If fate deems that I can't return,
I'd better be damned sure.
My reasons now are valid,
And I truly cannot endure.

And Beth, a good river friend,
Her sis and family here.
Good folks to meet and get to know,
I really must persevere.

This trip, it will be different,
An exciting sensation is strong.
If I don't belly up I'll regret it,
I'd better go along.

Look around you in awe,
And then, Pops, revel.
This river, this canyon is where
The Ancients often dwell.

What a waste it would be to miss it,
By looking inside miserably.
There's yet so much to see and feel,
Just look outward, lovingly.
Below the put-in, I'm all alone,

Most everyone chose a duckie.
At least I'll have some solitude,
Rowing in the back, so free.

Is this illness just the blues,
With this great year at an end?
Can it make you physically sick,
When feelings so low descend?

Lunch is set up right away,
So late did we get to start.
A quiet affair among strangers,
Guests still staying far apart.

The river soon will change that,
It's flowing low, but brisk!
Self rescue drills in the duckies,
Bring home that there is risk.

Two folks on my boat now,
Declining after the drill.
For the security of more rubber,
And less chance of a rapids spill.

Marge and Chelsea new to the river,
A lesson they have learned.
On the Green it's serious business,
Better cautious and not burned.

But mother Marge is feeling low,
To fail a seldom thing.
Usually up in front of the pack,
An injured arm she's favoring.

Do not fear a boring time,
There'll be plenty of kicks you see.
Just bask in His great glory,
Brahma will challenge relentlessly.

Disaster Falls is just ahead,
My adrenaline starts to rise.
Shallow rocks are already clawing,
That fact is no surprise.

Five big boats, identical,
Classy scene that's for sure,
But all five stuck on rocks!
Don't want that in the brochure.

I've been hard stuck before,
It's a part of rowing Lodore.
But never so often or so hard,
This is a son of a whore.

Why, when given a way out.
Why did I stay?
I'm nuts or perhaps delusional,
I truly cannot say.

Stuck I am, again and again,
Wild oars popping off'n the pin.
Settle down Pops, take small strokes,
Pulling shallow is not a sin.

Stuck once more in Lower Disaster!
Joe came on back to help.
Why so run down, so exhausted?
I'm weaker than a whelp!

The final straw is in the rapid,
Above little Zenobia Creek.
I'm so stuck and so is Jeff,
Oh! But it looks bleak!

Stuck again, this time for good,
I can't lift this damned boat free.
Ol' Coyote may have won,
But why with such obvious glee?

Onto us He brought great Thunderer,
Roaring loud and striking out.
Hitting high trees with lightning,
Starting fires all about.

A stinging hail, a driving rain,
And no protection, a dilemma!
Little Chelsea full of fear,
Marge yelling Enough drama!

A rigorous test from the Trickster,
Do I have the mettle to succeed?
Shape up Pops! Get that boat goin,
Camps around that yonder lead.

Get these people to safe haven,
And rain gear for to warm 'em.
To win the war will avenge this battle,
That'll be the ultimate gem!

As we approach the Pot Creek camp,
The violent elements recede.
Bright sun shines upon the sand,
Seemingly mocking our human need.

Six hours of rowing and just nine miles,
The toughest I've had to endure.
Then over a beer, comments Jeff,
Hardest I've ever worked I'm sure!

I quickly look inside myself,
Reassured I've not been alone.
In this feeling of exhaustion,
That has me nearly prone.

But I feel good! No longer sick!
Coyote, he started this war!
Now I'm ready for the rest,
He'd best bring more to the fore.

I stand and yell toward the heavens,
You're gonna need more next time!
Fist raised high in defiance,
I'm feeling closer to my prime.

Good food cooked for the folks,
To reward the day they've had.
750 flow is really really low,
And on this Green River it's bad.

Day two dawns with a promise,
It's gonna be dry and hot.
How will we down along the way,
Beat this strong and Ancient hotshot?

Boatman Prayer at the launch,
A good start I missed yesterday.
Triplet Falls then Hell's Half Mile,
We may really need to pray!

Stuck once more in Triplet,
My oar flew out again.
Calm down and keep 'em shallow,
You really want to win.

Beth nailed in Hell's Half Mile,
Boat wrapped 'round Lucifer.
Family high siding like old pros,
That made the difference for her.

She's off that rock, Coyote!
You've met your match this day!
When were done with this Half Mile,
You'll really have hell to pay.

I run fast and clean past Lucifer!
Trickster, you've shot your wad!
Better get more help today,
You're not a strong enough God.

Ol' Trickster must have laid back,
To lick hard every wound.
We've given him a bad day,
But he's figuring how were doomed.

Limestone camp, have we beaten him?
The sun is still shining full.
It's early and there's time to play,
But he'll sneak up; No bull!

A leisurely boatmen's meeting,
Talk of business and later a hike.
This is what guiding river trips
Is supposed to always be like.

Start the coals, the dutch oven,
Also soup, but be vigilant!
The Ancients live here everywhere,
And by now they're militant.

Is that a wisp of cloud,
Peeking over yon canyon wall?
I'll surely keep one eye upward,
But it seems so very small.

Cooking coals are nearly ready,
Is that a little wind I feel?
Where is the sun, it's getting dark?
Way too early, what's the deal?

We're in it again, a renewed attack!
Get a tarp and protect the coals!
Thunderer roaring, Windbird screaming,
Rainman opening in the sky, great holes.

Lightning crackling and reverberating,
Tumult, commotion, uproar and din!
Are words too mild and inadequate
To describe their desire to win.

On rages this noble battle,
Our guests jump into the fray.
Not another day like yesterday,
All feeling so much like prey.

So how do you beat 'em,
They're so powerful you say?
Just crack a beer and cope,
Make it fun, go on with your day.

For an hour they raged intensely,
And then for a half an hour more,
Till their anger was clearly spent,
Our affronts had left them sore.

Soup and beer were served in shifts,
Out from under the tarp.
And chicken grilled anyway,
No matter their thunderclaps sharp.

And later after they'd retreated,
A few drinks near my raft.
Some folks hiked up the canyon,
No more fear of these spirits' wrath.

Poems about these vengeful Gods,
And of the river seemed right.
As the end of the day faded gracefully,
Into a lovely moonlit night.

The theme of this is how unique
And how special is this trip.
Facing low water and wrathful Gods,
Unblinking as their ire lets rip.

And the sign they sent that we'd prevailed,
I was sorely taken aback!
In the bright full moon around midnight,
The Green River was flowing jet black.

I took that late walk to the rafts,
Five white tops in sharp relief.
Against velvet and obsidian ripples,
Flashing moonbeams, beyond belief.

Never in all the other times
I've run this Canyon so primitive.
Has it been so different, so unmatched,
So alive and intensely provocative.

Other ethereal things did happen,
Before we ended our stay.
Like on the hike up Jones Creek
After noon the following day.

A herd of bighorn ewes and lambs,
Were unusually calm and tame.
A mule deer doe and her new fawn,
So close to them we came.

The pictographs above the creek,
Defaced with a shotgun blast.
Sage ten feet tall along the trail,
A wonder that in my mind will last.

And the river still flowing black,
Though it's now late after noon.
You'd think Coyote, the Trickster,
Would stop his bleeding soon.

And down below the Compromise camp
The last day we were out.
Normally I see full curl rams,
They're usually all about.

But this time they're very scarce,
There don't seem to be any.
Why would they flee water?
Their absence seems uncanny!

I run clean in Moonshine rapid,
And especially through S.O.B!
Every other time they trashed my boat,
Regular as a ticking clock, you see!

And a noisy and violent rockfall,
Only the third seen in all these years.
Definitely a clue this trip has entered
Into other way-out spheres.

Then approaching Split Mountain takeout,
That powerful and eerie wind.
Driving boats against the wall,
I'm sure the Ancients grinned.

I feel it was a fond farewell,
And a warning for us to heed.
You got away this time great foes,
But hurry back, Godspeed.

And finally, as I write these words,
Far away in my home so dear.
I wonder if they're reaching out,
Somehow to interfere.

For three times my computer,
Has encountered a strange new glitch.
Off went the text into cyberspace,
To find it's own little niche.

I know how badly we beat 'em,
And now they have to eat crow.
It should be eaten soon, while hot,
Hard to choke down cold, I know.

If this was truly my last trip,
I've the privilege to look back.
To the time Coyote, the Trickster bled
And the mighty Green River flowed black.

Paul R. Pops Smith—2001

Colorado Plateau River Guides & Grand Canyon River Guides Joint Meeting Report

Colorado Plateau River Guides (CPRG) and Grand Canyon River Guides (GCRG) met jointly at Sand Island campground near Bluff on November 3 & 4. We had a great time getting to know one another, learned some great natural history and discussed Glen Canyon Dam. Thanks must be conveyed to the presidential organizers, Annie Tueller-Payne and Richard Quartaroli.

Over 60 organizations, including CPRG, have endorsed the campaign to drain the reservoir before Glen Canyon Dam. With this in mind we asked Grand Canyon River Guides to focus on decommissioning Glen Canyon Dam rather than focusing on the collaborative process of the Adaptive Management Working Group. We expressed that we believe the Program is flawed and that habitat restoration cannot be achieved until Glen Canyon Dam is decommissioned. We also appealed to GCRG to understand that as long as Glen Canyon Dam stands, the upper basin's reaches will continue to be impacted by accumulating sediment, which is already problematic on the San Juan River and soon to be on the Colorado River. We cited the recent closure of Pearce's Ferry on Lake Mead as an example.

Our appeal was welcomed by GCRG but was not readily endorsed. Previous to the Sand Island meeting, the board of Colorado Plateau River Guides approved a position paper on Adaptive Management in Grand Canyon. It is printed in the next column for all to review.

Simply stated, a wild and free Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park as soon as possible is what Colorado Plateau River Guides endorses.

John Weisheit

Colorado Plateau River Guides Statement on Adaptive Management

Colorado Plateau River Guides (CPRG) has been a leader within the river guiding community, in advocating for river protection and restoration. Guides have a special role to play in educating the public about the problems that rivers face and the urgent need for society to address these problems.

CPRG is the only river guides' group to date, that has called for the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam. We invite other guide groups to join us.

Glen Canyon Dam and its reservoir represent a major, continuing threat to the ecological integrity of the Colorado River besides the Grand Canyon. This includes the lower sections of the San Juan River, Escalante River and Cataract Canyon, and the entirety of Narrow Canyon and Glen Canyon. This also includes the Colorado River delta, which requires immediate instream flows to avoid total ecological collapse.

The U.S. government has recognized some of the dam's negative impacts, and has responded with an "adaptive management" program pursuant to passage, in 1992, of the Grand Canyon Protection Act and the subsequent 1996 Record of Decision on Glen Canyon Dam operations.

CPRG recognizes and appreciates the research and monitoring of Grand Canyon ecosystem conducted under the auspices of the Adaptive Management Program (AMP). We also recognize the contribution that Grand Canyon River Guides (GCRG) has made to promoting sound science within the AMP.

However, despite the good work and intentions of scientists and the GCRG, CPRG remains very concerned that adaptive management is functioning primarily as a delaying tactic that is diverting attention away from the fact that Glen Canyon Dam is responsible for most of the problems in the Grand Canyon. That the best way we know to address these problems is to eliminate their source, i.e. remove the dam.

Problems with the AMP

A collaborative/stakeholder group, known as the Adaptive Management Working Group (AMWG), is the primary decision-making body of the AMP. Its primary roles are to oversee and direct research and monitoring carried out by the Grand Canyon Monitoring & Research Center, and to make recommendations concerning dam re-operations to the Secretary of Interior.

The AMWG is a body of political appointees, including many of the very interests responsible for the dam's construction and for its continued operation. The AMWG

will never support decommissioning Glen Canyon Dam, nor will it support any serious study of the need for decommissioning.

Any adaptive management program focused on addressing the effects of Glen Canyon Dam on the Grand Canyon ecosystem will have major inherent limitations on its effectiveness if it does not study the relative benefits of decommissioning to other “re-operation” scenarios.

The AMWG does not even focus exclusively on mitigating environmental damage to the native ecosystem. Among the AMWG’s goals in its recently adopted “strategic plan” are the need to increase hydropower production at the dam, and to provide for maintenance of self-reproducing populations of trout, especially in the Lee’s Ferry reach below the dam.

CPRG Position on AMWG/AMP

The Adaptive Management Working Group is a political body, not a scientific body, and thus should not be in the position of directing scientific research and monitoring activities at the Grand Canyon Monitoring & Research Center. Scientists, not representatives of the water, power, and recreation industries (as constitute a significant portion of the AMWG membership) should decide the appropriate range and scope of work.

CPRG opposes participation by river guides, scientists, and environmental interests in the AMWG/AMP process, as such involvement tends to communicate support for the process.

We call on all those who support restoration of the Colorado River to join us in opposing the AMWG/AMP. We call on our colleagues in the Grand Canyon River Guides (GCRG) to withdraw their formal membership/representation in the AMWG, and to publicly join us in supporting decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam.

We emphasize that we support the need for scientific research on restoring the native ecosystem of the Grand Canyon, free of political interference and manipulation by the water, power, and recreational industries. As CPRG is a part of the recreational industry above Glen Canyon Dam, we feel that it is also important to state that CPRG does not believe there will be any negative impact on the recreational boating community in Grand Canyon when Glen Canyon Dam is decommissioned, for we in the upper basin already operate a full season without it. We enjoy the relatively free-flowing characteristics of the Colorado, Green and San Juan rivers above Glen Canyon Dam and the challenges of seasonal river flows. We also look forward to the day when we will have more miles of natural river ecosystems to enjoy and will not have to deal more and more with the negative impacts of the progressive sediment load building in the reservoir behind Glen Canyon Dam.

THE CHANGING RAPIDS OF THE COLORADO RIVER

Brown Betty Rapid (Rapid 1)

By Jayne Belnap, Bob Webb
and John Weisheit

There were many strange aspects to what Frank M. Brown planned for his expedition down the Colorado River in 1889. First, the premise: he was planning the construction of a water-level railroad from Grand Junction, Colorado, to Yuma, California. Second: Brown had a bipolar crew of friends and hired surveyors, and none of them had significant river experience. Third: he was either cheap, or financially strapped, and brought equipment unsuited for the expedition. Finally: he allowed his chief engineer, Robert Brewster Stanton, to bring his family’s personal servants, H.C. Richards and G.W. Gibson, who had the titles of “Steward” and “Cook” (Smith and Crampton, 1987). Was this a serious business trip or a cheap outing by wealthy westerners?

In part because they were black, and possibly because they were servants, Richards and Gibson were given their own boat, which had an interesting history. Brown hired a second engineer, Frank Kendrick, to survey the railroad route from Grand Junction to the Confluence (Stiles, 1964). Kendrick and his crew portaged Westwater Canyon (by wagon and road), but they rowed an open dory made of oak down to the Confluence and upstream to Green River, Utah, where they gave it to Stanton. This boat, named the *Brown Betty* after a favorite desert of the time, became the cook boat. Because Brown and Stanton hadn’t accounted for the voluminous baggage in the other boats, the kitchen—packed in water-proof compartments that were removed from the other boats—was towed as a “float” behind the *Brown Betty*.

The water level was high—40,000 ft³/s is our estimate from the photographs taken on the trip—and the float made the *Brown Betty* difficult to maneuver. When the group reached Rapid 1, they were on the left side of the river, where the railroad line was supposed to be. Brown ordered the crew to cross the river, possibly to begin a portage and surely not to camp since the better camp is on river left at this point. As Richards and Gibson reached midstream, they knew their float would drag them into the rapid and potentially to their deaths. They cut the rope, saving themselves but losing valuable provisions.

Because of this boating accident, river historian Dock Marston decided that Rapid 1 should be called Brown Betty Rapid. This is highly ironic, because the *Brown Betty* survived the accident and was destroyed downstream in Rapid 6. Like Capsize Rock in Rapid 15 (Hell to Pay), which is not the rock that the Best Expedition wrapped on, the name of Brown Betty Rapid does not coincide with where the boat sank. Perhaps Rapid 1



Figure 1. Rapid 1 from River Left. (files s2908-1889.tif and s2908-1994.tif)

A. (May 31, 1889). While Stanton surveyed and Brown ordered the boats carried around rapids, Franklin Nims photographed Cataract Canyon. This downstream view shows Rapid 1 at about 40,000 ft³/s. Shortly after this photograph was taken, the raft attached to the *Brown Betty* was cut loose and swept into the rapid (Nims 40, courtesy of the National Archives).

should be renamed “Richards’ and Gibson’s Float Rapid” (we’re kidding). A better renaming would be to call Rapid 6 “Disaster Falls,” since Powell flipped there (in 1869) and Brown-Stanton wrecked the *Brown Betty* there (in 1889).

Few river trips, other than the Brown-Stanton expedition, have had problems in Brown Betty Rapid. Most of the early expeditions seemed to run the rapid without troubles. Despite the fact that a debris flow has entered the upper right side of the rapid, little appears to have changed in its hydraulics. The little, thrashing hole that appears at right center at low water (5,000 to 10,000 ft³/s) appears in several early photographs, the few rocks have been moved from the river banks. So, other than a strange and inappropriate name, why would anyone be interested in Brown Betty Rapid?

Rapid 1 is the beginning of the longest sustained drop in the profile of the Colorado River downstream from Grand Junction. Upstream from this point, debris flows—if they occur at all—are small and don’t significantly affect the channel. Downstream from this point, all the way to Dark Canyon, debris flows dump significant

amounts of rock into the river, creating all those wonderful rapids. If you look high up in the cliffs above Rapid 1, you will see a reddish brown ledge of soft rock that isn’t visible in the strata upstream. This rock, the first outcrop of Halgaito Shale, is one of the primary reasons why Cataract Canyon exists as a whitewater run. Mix 1 part Halgaito Shale with 10 parts sand to boulders and 2 parts water, dump it off a cliff, and voila! debris flows result. The red-stained gullies that scour the slopes just downstream from Rapids 1 and 2 and mute testament to the influence of Halgaito Shale on Cataract Canyon. In that sense, Rapid 1 is perhaps more a testament to the influence of debris flows in bedrock canyons than a reminder of a trivial incident in river history.

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- Smith, D.L., and Crampton, C.G., 1987, *The Colorado River survey*: Salt Lake City, Howe Brothers Books, 305 p.
- Stiles, H.J., 1964, *Down the Colorado in 1889: The Colorado Magazine*, v. 41, p. 225-246.



B. (March 28, 1994). Despite the water-level differences, the beach below Rapid 1 is larger now, and tamarisk lines the bank. A debris flow from river right has slightly changed the head of the rapid (Steve Tharnstrom, Stake 2908).

CPRG's Fiscal Sponsorship A Board Meeting Report

The board of Colorado Plateau River Guides met on February 10th with Brad Wallis, the executive director of CANYONLANDS NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION (CHNA). CPRG is fiscally sponsored by CHNA, which is strictly an educational non-profit organization.

CPRG has established itself as an educational organization by publishing articles in THE CONFLUENCE and providing various programs for river guides. CPRG is dedicated to continue this line of educational programming. However, CPRG is changing by becoming more involved with river protection issues and has sponsored or organized environmental advocacy programs, such as the

campaign to decommission Glen Canyon Dam and the campaign to mitigate the Atlas tailings pile. The CPRG board feels it is very important to walk the talk.

The board felt that CPRG should endeavor to establish autonomy and obtain its own 501(c)(3). As such a step takes time and money, the board decided to accomplish this by Dec. 31, 2004. In the meantime, LIVING RIVERS, a non-profit advocacy organization based in Moab, has offered CPRG temporary fiscal sponsorship. The CPRG board accepted the proposal with the blessing of CNHA. All involved in the discussion felt it was a logical step to make. The action goes into effect on May 1, 2002.

John Weisheit
CPRG Secretary



Figure 2. Rapid 1 from river left (files s3575-1909.tif and s3575-1994.tif)

A. (October 18, 1909). The little hole at right center of Brown Betty Rapid is crashing in this view. (Cogswell 485, courtesy of the Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley).

This article is a result of investigative work that began in 1992 and completed in 2001. Look forward to more such articles appearing in **THE CONFLUENCE**. The work will be published as a book entitled, Cataract Canyon: A Human and Environmental History of the Rivers of Canyonlands National Park.



B. (March 30, 1998). The water level is much higher, drowning out the beach. A debris flow has swept into the right side of the rapid, scouring the talus cones and depositing a few new boulders in the river. (Dominic Oldershaw, Stake 3575).

“Gone to the NEEDLES”

by Jim Knipmeyer

In June of 1989 my good friend Mike Ford and I had jeeped down the old Horsethief Trail to the Green River and then proceeded south along the White Rim road to the short spur leading westward to Fort Bottom. Down on the flat below the ancient Moqui watchtower sat the slowly dilapidating remains of what showed on the USGS map as Wild Bench Cabin. According to local folklore a hideout of Butch Cassidy's "Wild Bunch," it was actually built by Moab cattlemen shortly after the turn of the century (the 20th!). On its rough-hewn log walls are carved and written many names and dates, most of relatively recent river runners and overland visitors. One in particular, however, caught my eye.

Painted, or perhaps printed with a lead pencil, to the right of the doorway was the following inscription:

A. J. Tadge
Moving Pictures
Oct. 11 – 1914
Gone to the NEEDLES.

Somehow this simple, now-fading signature gave me pause. Just *who* would have been down in the Green River's Labyrinth Canyon three-quarters of a century earlier taking *movies*? And his last statement, "Gone to the NEEDLES," evoked a kind of wonder. The Needles district of Canyonlands were, indeed, visible from the narrow neck of rock leading from the end of the jeep road out to the prehistoric Anasazi ruin. But in 1914, The Needles were an unknown, little-visited region, except to a few cowboys from the nearby Indian Creek Cattle Company. Did Tadge reach that mysterious land of graben valleys, hidden arches, and rock spires?

After returning home to Missouri a search through my library of southern Utah materials answered my questions for me. Though the notion of an early trip to the rock-pinnacled Needles was summarily dispelled, a no less interesting chapter in Green-Colorado River boating was brought to my attention.

August J. Tadge, of Salt Lake City, Utah, was the cameraman on a voyage through the canyons of the Green and Colorado rivers for the purpose of making a commercial motion picture film. The brain-child of Charles S. Russell, who in 1907 had descended the same canyon streams from the town of Green River, Utah, to below the last canyon on the Colorado, he now wanted to make a motion picture record of a similar voyage to show to paying audiences. After a futile attempt earlier in the year, in the early fall of 1914 Russell contacted Tadge, who at that time was working at the Utah Photo Studio in Salt Lake City. Arrangements were soon made for Tadge to serve as cameraman, and on October 8 the pair, plus William Reeder as a second boatman, departed the Utah railroad town of Green River.

Years later, in 1947, Colorado River historian Otis R. "Dock" Marston contacted Mr. Tadge, still residing in Salt Lake City, and urged him to write up a narrative of his 1914-1915 venture. The resulting account, now on deposit with the Marston Papers at The Huntington Library in San Marino, California, provided the facts for

this article.

"We had a boat called the *Ross Wheeler*. ...Towards evening [of the first day] we reached a sort of island in the river and some friends of Mr. Reeder hailed us and wanted to know where we were going. "Going downstream, of course. We are going down through the Grand Canyon." The trio's ultimate destination, however, was the town of Needles, California, on the west bank of the Colorado. Thus Tadge's statement in his inscription on the old log cabin at Fort Bottom. They were going to Needles, California, *not* The Needles of southeastern Utah!

In his 1947 narrative Tadge does not mention stopping at the cabin at Fort Bottom, but he did describe Stillwater Canyon of the Green just a few miles below. "...the water was rather quiet and we had to work rather hard on the oars, even going downstream. The interesting part here was that the sides of the canyon were rather perpendicular and many feet in height, of a crimson color, of which we found more of the same structure as we went downstream."

Reaching the confluence of the then Grand and Green rivers, the *Ross Wheeler* and its three passengers started down Cataract Canyon on October 14. In what Dock Marston identified as Rapid No. 5, the boat struck a rock, throwing the men into the water. However, they managed to pull the craft to shore. Tadge later stated that he put his name near this point on the left (east) side of the river. [Author's note: To my knowledge this inscription, if still visible, has not been noted in modern times.]

Here the three adventurers reclaimed the boat that had been abandoned during Russell's aborted voyage earlier in the year. Now proceeding in two vessels, Russell promptly sunk the newly acquired craft after "he had encountered an object in the stream that....ripped his boat in two...." Now near Dark Canyon, the trio went on in the original *Ross Wheeler*, arriving at Hite in Glen Canyon on October 23.

In his 1947 account Tadge states that, "We didn't line any rapids in the Cataracts but shot them all." This notwithstanding their two "encounters" with "objects" along the way! Tadge also later stated to Dock Marston that he had painted his name in black at least five times in Cataract Canyon at different places along the canyon's walls. But again, none of these have been reported in recent times.

After reaching Hite there was a respite of several weeks from the river voyage. Reeder quit at this point, and while Russell remained at the river Tadge went back to Salt Lake City to arrange for a new boat to be built and to get another boatman. He expresses his great disappointment when the new craft was ready. "It was altogether the wrong construction....It was built perfectly flat instead of stern or bow being raised somewhat from the water level. It made it extremely difficult to manipulate this boat in the water." Perhaps prophetically, the new vessel was christened *Titanic II*.

The new boatman was Goddard Quist, Tadge's wife's brother-in-law. Leaving Hite about December 6, the pair of boats headed down through the calm waters of Glen Canyon. In his narrative Tadge describes Hall's Crossing, the Hole-in-the-Rock, and the junction with the San Juan River. Though it is not mentioned, they must also have stopped at the mouth of the Escalante River, as

before being drowned by the rising waters of Lake Powell reservoir, immediately upstream was still to be clearly seen the painted inscription:

A. J. TADJE
M. Pictures
Dec. 10 1914.

Arriving at Lee's Ferry, Arizona, two days later, after several days they started on down Marble Canyon. But at Soap Creek they quit the river on account of cold weather and much ice on the water. By the end of February or beginning of March, 1915, the trio began again, after they "had to cut [one of] the boats out of the ice as it was frozen in." Tadge describes stopping at Vasey's Paradise, Redwall Cavern, and the mouth of the Little Colorado. Though he does not mention it in his narrative, Tadge later told Marston that he had also painted his name in Marble Canyon. Once more, it has not been noted in modern times.

Upon reaching Bright Angel Creek the trio climbed up to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, where they remained three or four weeks. Here Quist had to leave the party, and here also the expedition began to disintegrate. Tadge persuaded an acquaintance of his, a Mr. Jake Jeffs, to come out from Los Angeles to take Quist's place. No sooner had they shoved off than Jeffs was thrown out of his boat in rough water. An inexperienced boatman, he became so frightened and hysterical that he immediately quit.

The party was thus further detained while Tadge prevailed upon yet another friend, Mr. Clement Clemens, also from the Salt Lake City photo studio, to join them. But before they even started this time, the *Titanic II* was lost while attempting to move it to a more sheltered mooring. Another month's delay was endured while yet another new boat ordered and shipped to the South Rim. However, upon reaching the river in the latter part of November, it was found that a falling rock had punctured a hole in the *Ross Wheeler*, necessitating yet another delay while repairs were arranged and made.

Finally starting once more, they "hadn't gone but two or three rapids when [the] boat we had just added....was lodged in the river." Again they climbed back up to the rim to get help in freeing the pinned boat. But it was ultimately abandoned and the trio proceeded on in the old reliable *Ross Wheeler*. Upon arriving at the Bass cable crossing they rowed to shore in a "rather heavy rain." While huddled in their small tent, in the cold of December, the decision was made to give up the expedition altogether.

The *Ross Wheeler* was pulled "some one to two hundred feet from the river, and it is there to this day to my knowledge." Tadge was correct in this assumption, the metal boat still to be seen near river Mile-108 in the depths of the Grand Canyon. What had begun as a rather successful voyage as far as Bright Angel Creek had now rapidly fallen apart and been terminated. Practically all of their original 20,000 feet of movie film and 150 to 200 still-picture films had been lost in their various capsizings and sinkings. And August J. Tadge, "Moving Pictures" cameraman, never did reach "the Needles."

Bert Loper's Testimony from the Colorado River Case

Continued from Bert's testimony as published in THE CONFLUENCE, Number 24, Fall 2001. Editorial comments are in brackets.

Q: On one occasion when you were on this trip was it necessary for you to bring some supplies a short distance by boat?

A: We had a pack train meet us at certain points along the river; the last place the pack train was due to meet us was at the mouth of Piute Canyon, twenty-one miles from the junction; the pack train always beat its time about a day, until this time it was four days late; we was running out of grub; and one night about sun down we heard a shot fired, and here came the packer on horseback, but no packs: he came down and he told us the big rains had made part of the trail up the big cliff up Piute canyon slip off, and he couldn't get his packs out.

So Mr. Trimble came to me and asked me what we had better do.

I says, "Have him come into Spencer canyon; that was where the pack train had met us the last time, three weeks before."

We had to take the boat back up the river and get those supplies.

Q: How did you get the boat up the river?

A: We drug the boat up the river the next morning; they gave me the bulk of the grub they had left, and I stripped down to my BVD's and was preparing to go up and take the boat up the river; when I got up to where the boat was, Mr. Hugh Miser, the geologist in our company, was up there, also in his BVD's, if it hadn't been for Mr. Miser, I don't know how many days it would have taken me to get up.

That is what you call a heart breaking trip.

Q: How many miles was it?

A: It was seventeen, and it took us two days of the hardest work I ever done, to get that boat up there.

Q: Through that seventeen miles were there any rapids?

A: No sir

Q: What stage was the water?

A: It was very low, there was reefs across there that wasn't four inches deep, because Mr. Miser was a big man, and I wasn't so little it took about all we had to go up there in two days, seventeen miles. ...The supply train arrived about an hour after they had gotten the boat up the river.

Q: And then did you and Mr. Miser start down stream?

A: Not until the next morning; it was late then, and we had had two very strenuous days.

Q: In going down stream, did you find enough water so you could row?

A: It took the two of us a whole day to make seventeen miles.

Q: The question is , did you find enough water so you could row?

A: No sir.

Q: What did you do?

A: We pulled that boat a good part of the way, got out, went down the same as we went up; although there was places we could ride, and lots of places we couldn't. That place I told you there was a bar across there, that wasn't over four inches deep; we just ended the boat around; we could pick this end up and pack it around until we got it across that reef or sandbar.

Q: Mr. Loper, in spots or at various places along the river on this trip was there no deep water from one side of the river to the other?

A: There was places that there was water that we could ride over, but the shorter the bend is, you will find--you are more able to find a channel for a short distance until the river straightens, or commences to make the reverse curve, then you have a crossing--many times you have a crossing from one bend to the other, you have no channel, your channel spreads out the same as the sand does.

Q: Could we sum up this way, generally, throughout these trips you had trouble with sandbars?

A: Sure, yes sir.

[Discussion clarifying "crossing bars" and "crossing channels." He did not see any boats on the San Juan River during the year 1921 while he was there. There was no ferry boat at Mexican Hat.]

A: ...finishing trip and going to Lee's Ferry and back up with a 26' stern wheel boat--having to push it on occasion over sand bars.

[The following are excerpts from the Charles Russell and Ed Monette mining trip. Bert did some placer mining in Glen Canyon, first entering there in 1907 when he went on a prospecting trip, starting from Greenriver, Utah, September 19th, 1907, and from there he went to Hite in Glen Canyon. Besides himself, Charles Russell and Ed

Monette were members of the party.

The party was equipped with three steel boats made by the Michigan Steel Boat Company. They were launch hulls, sixteen feet long, about eighteen inches deep, forty-eight inch beam, with no motors, although they

were made for motors. He and his companions made compartments for the boats and decked them over. They were keel boats.

When they left Greenriver the water was quite low because when they started each morning it was a guess to see who would get out and get wet first and sometimes they would all get wet by getting out. On that trip immediately below Greenriver, they hit a riffle]

A: ...where the iron divides the channel, and I believe we struck the gravel just below the harbor, and then, as I remember, we had no more trouble until we got below the mouth of the San Rafael, when we began to encounter the sand."

[In Labyrinth and Stillwater canyons trouble was encountered a nearly every channel crossing.]

A: ...one or the other, or all of us would run aground.

[A channel crossing is a place where the channel leaves one side of the river bed and crosses over to the opposite side of the river bed. On a loop the channel is naturally expected to be on the outside and if the river starts to make a reverse curve the channel has to change over from the outside of the first loop across the river to the outside of the next loop, so in this crossing the channel spreads out. It is in these places where you have trouble navigating these rivers because there is no channel, it spreads out evenly over the shifting channel.

Difficulties with channel crossings and sand bars occurred daily and sometimes several times a day.]

Q: Is it more difficult to take a keel boat off a sand bar than a flat boat?

A: A great deal more difficult; you just draw the width of your keel more than you will a flat bottom boat.

Q: How did you and Mr. Monette and Mr. Russell get through Cataract Canyon?

A: We struck numerous rocks in the rapids, but we only portaged one rapid, boats and loads and everything.

Q: And do you recall which rapid that was?

A: If I am not mistaken, it is No. 55 in the book there; I think it is 55, what used to be locally known as the sixteenth cataract, which is a bad one in Cataract Canyon; we got over that nicely; I struck a rock, my boat went completely under the water, but it was made so it came right up and went on; no trouble at all.

[The members of the party wore life preservers and did not run a rapid without having them on. Many times they would not be taken off between rapids.]

A: if we was starting out of smooth water, probably wouldn't put them on until we got to the first rapid. The life preservers were not worn on the Green River.

[On the trip in 1907 the party camped at "Mill Creek Bend" (Mille Crag Bend) at the end of Cataract Canyon, where Narrow Canyon begins which is six or seven miles long, very narrow, and the water is still so that a person, in order to make time in a boat at all, has to work



hard. It had rained that night, the party was wet, the boats were wet. From the end of Cataract Canyon the party proceeded on down past the mouth of the Dirty Devil to Hite, there they stayed several days.

The water in the narrow part of lower Cataract Canyon is not over one hundred feet wide and is very still and deep. The water is quiet in Narrow Canyon too, because it is very deep.]

A: Frank Bennett and I made a trip through there; we had a pole about sixteen feet long; we pushed it down in several places, clear to the end, lots of places never touched bottom.

[From the Fremont or Dirty Devil down to Hite they had the same "old conditions again." At the mouth of North Wash they had a crossing bar, and naturally the channel crossed also.]

A: The channel across the gravel reef of this crossing is always very narrow; there is just one little channel through there, and there is one place in particular in Glen canyon where that channel has been there ever since, I think, and is still there; we made a trip through it this month, the same place.

[He went to Hite and Glen Canyon in 1907, and stayed there until 1915. He went back again in 1916, and then came out again in the same year. He made one trip out in 1914, but went back again.]

A: I had my place there all the time.

[He was there for about eight years. At that time he, Mr. Monette and Mr. Russell went down to the old Stanton dredge, which is located about forty-two miles below North Wash, and after taking out a little gold that was placer mined they went back to Hite. At Hite they were 125 miles from a railroad, so the provisions and supplies that he had sent for had to come by freight team. He then went down to Lee's Ferry, where he was supposed to meet Mr. Russell and Mr. Monette, but on arrival discovered that they had gone down the Grand Canyon with an Arizona engineer. He pulled his boat back up the river from the Stanton dredge back to Hite. This was in November 1907.]

A: It took me—must have taken me five days, because I didn't know how to rope a boat then like I got to learn afterwards; I couldn't make the time.

[When he started down the river from Hite he went direct to Lees Ferry; that was the beginning of the next year (1908); the first day of the new year. It took him five days to make that trip, from Hite to Lee's Ferry. During the trip he grounded numerous times and ran on to rocks in several places. "...but the most serious one was in Shock Rapid," which is about one hundred miles above Lees Ferry.

He knows of a rock ledge that runs across the Colorado River in Glen Canyon, and he recalls crossing that ledge on this trip. This ledge is located just below the mouth of the Lake Canyon. He did not have much trouble in getting down over the ledge, but just before he got in it he ran on to some gravel, and as he went over the ledge, "I drug my oar, seemed to be smooth." He was still using the steel boat. When he got to Lee's Ferry he obtained enough supplies to take him back to Hite. The journey back upstream from Lee's Ferry to Hite was

an awful trip.

A: I was wet to the waist for about 24 days in February; started in January, and one thing that caused that trip, probably, to be so hard, was the mental condition along with the other, because things were looking pretty blue.

There were times during the trip that he did not know that he had any feet under him. In towing the boat up the stream he had a line about one hundred twenty feet long attached to the bow and then a round to the stern.

A: I would get up there to where I would quarter my boat like that and walk up the river, and the action of the water on this side of the boat will keep it out in the river to a certain extent. While you can walk along there on those turns in Glen Canyon there is always places there you have got to get out and wade in order to get your boat around the point of sand on the turn of a sand bar. That is where I would always get wet.

When you come to a rapid you coil your rope up and put it in the boat and get the nose of your boat and get out in the river to go up over the rapid.

[That is what is called nosing the boat. He made this trip alone. After returning to Hite he spent that summer all by himself placering on the Olympia Bar, about 35 miles below Hite.

A: By the way, in making this trip up the river I was pretty badly run down, took me all summer to get over that; I was pretty badly shot. I made the same trip afterwards and didn't hurt me near so bad, because I had different conditions.

[His nearest neighbor at that time was about three and a half miles away, and about fifteen miles away lived Cass Hite. After that summer he located at Red Canyon. He saw no other placer miners at that time, Mr. Adams being on his place in Red Canyon but not mining. When he went back up the river in the summer of 1908 some people were mining where he, Russell and Monette had done some placer mining. They mined for a while and then left by wagon from the old Stanton dredge. There was no one else there after they had left. After high water, he went up the river to Red Canyon with Mr. Adams. During the time he was there placer mining he obtained food by wagon from Hanksville or Greenriver, the supplies being brought to the river at Hite.]

Q: Then how would you go to Hite to get them?

A: Dragged my boat up the river

Q: Mr. Loper, just describe Hite, Utah as you saw it there in 1907.

A: Hite, the post office at Hite consisting of two log cabins is at the head of a bar approximately two miles long, not very wide; some places, maybe a quarter of a mile wide; other places, not so wide; and Trachyte Creek comes down to the river in the middle of that two miles. There is where Hite and Gibbons had their little farm, but their cabin was a mile up the bar.

There was cultivated and irrigated land on both sides of Trachyte Creek, there being probably twenty acres under cultivation. The fields were on a bar on the side of the river. There were willows along the river but no trees. The walls of the canyon on the right hand side was pushed back away from the river itself at that particular place, but the walls on the left hand bank was approximately quite close; just a talus slope down to the

river.

[Red Canyon was on a high bar, 195 feet above the river. On the lower bar or bottom land there was a little ranch of about seven to nine acres under cultivation where horse feed, fruit and grapes were raised. There was a chicken yard, wagon, mower and things like that.]

Q: I suppose that is all irrigable from the river, isn't it?

A: No sir. From Red Canyon there is springs, four miles up; Red Canyon flows quite a little stream, there is a point of land runs down here, a ditch comes around like that (indicating).

[He left Red Canyon to make a trip through the cataracts in 1914, and then he went back there in 1914, and then was up and down the river. Between 1907 and 1914 he had an opportunity to study the river, and he did study the river.]

A: I lived with that river so much, it pretty near became a part of me; I would sit on the banks and watch it; I would boat it; I would do everything, about the only companion I had.

[During those seven years he was living there alone and up to that time traveled on the river from Greenriver, Utah to Lee's Ferry. During that time he also made numerous trips to the (Stanton) dredge; other trips to the Olympia Bar, and a trip or two to the California Bar; short trips like that.]

A: I never counted them trips.

[During the seven years that he was there he had an opportunity to observe, and he did observe, the conditions of the channels, sand bars, and so forth, at the various stages of the river.]

Q: At what different stages of the river did you note changes in the channel?

A: At all stages except high water, then your channel is in one place; extreme high water there is only one place for the channel, that is on the outside of the (bend of the) river.

Q: What about the sand bars, did you always find those in the same location in the river?

A: Sand bars left by high water is invariably on the inside bend of the river; but when the river starts to go down, and the summer rains start, they begin to cut under bars left in high water, and, in other words, the high water cleans the river; it has a house-cleaning every spring.

Immediately after that the summer floods come along, and undoes the work of the high water, fills the channel full of sand again that the high water has cleaned out.

[Questions and answers about channels not being reliable.]

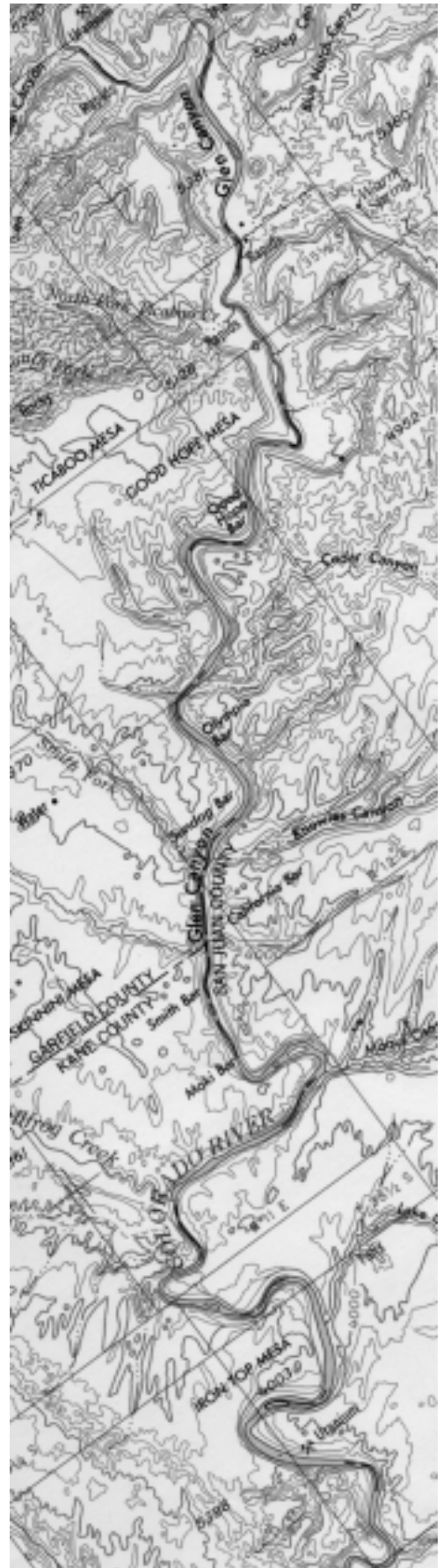
Q: Now, then, why is it that a person coming down the river at a stage other than high water would not be warned to look out beyond those curves for that condition you describe [river turning back on itself at bends and the channel disappearing].

A: They are warned.

Q: If they know the river, that is?

A: All the years I have spent on the river I never learned where to go over the crossings; that is, there is places there, we will say there is places through that crossing that is two feet deep, but I can't find it until I run on to the bar and get out and wade around. ...At Red Canyon I have had the whole channel right in front of my cabin; didn't belong there; belonged on the other side; but I have had it there. And maybe before the night was over it would be back where it belonged. I have seen that.

[In December, 1911 he made a trip from Hite to Lee's Ferry with a man named (Bert) Seaboldt and George Meiss. He used an eighteen foot boat, fifty two inch beam, flared sides and flat bottom, which drew about six inches of water. The object of that trip to Lee's Ferry was for Mr. Seaboldt to obtain information and data on the way regarding placer mining. The boat was not equipped with a motor.]



The Poo Song

by Roy Webb

Groover. Porto. Banyo. Shittoon. The Unit. Portable Outdoor Waste Management System. For all the joys of river running, for all the exhilaration of that big rapid successfully run, the subtle glories of the morning canyon light, there is still that one thing that hangs over every river trip, if you're a commercial guide or private boatman: the toilet. It's just one of those things you have to learn to deal with. Everyone who's ever had to has some kind of horror story, like the Scatmaster machine at Lake Mead that supposedly exploded onto the faces of some startled river runners; or cans that weren't properly sealed spilling in a boat, or one tipping over when that fat complainer sat on it (Although you also have to admit that is one of the finer things of boating: finding just that right spot for the groover, screened by tammies, access to a little beach, a beautiful view...) I rowed all the way through the Grand Canyon with two full (and I mean full) rocket box toilets strapped under my front frame, and was grateful for the weight in Lava Falls, but when we got to the lower canyon and it started getting hot one of the cans started to burp gas occasionally; I was hard pressed to get passengers in my boat. I remember a guy on another trip who was tough and mean, muscles rippling on his chest and arms, a college wrestler who liked to hurt people; but when faced with squeezing the air out of the tripled plastic bags (back when we used to do that) he quailed, retched, and ran away sobbing. Another time on one of those glorious Grand Canyon mornings, in the days of the notorious tides caused by releases from the dam, awakening to a swirling noise; the water had come up drastically in the night and I could see one of the boatman standing on shore, his hands on his hips in a characteristic pose, watching an expensive custom portable toilet serenely circling in an eddy that had been a high sandbar the night before. Once I was in a warehouse in Kanab with two of the really old timers of the river, pioneer outfitters with decades of river running experience between them, and they talked for three hours straight about portable toilets. It's just a fact of river running life, and no one wants a return to the bad old days of toilet paper everywhere and cat holes in every beach.

The "Poo Song," below, came about as a result of a private San Juan trip that my two daughters and I were on last summer. I was a last minute add-on to the permit, because they needed an extra boat, so to help out I agreed to rent one of the portos and some other gear from the University of Utah outdoor program. It was one of those two-rocket-box systems, with connections for flushing into a holding tank. In the fullness of time on the trip we used it and indeed filled it up, so at the end of the trip I had to get it emptied and cleaned out so I could return it to the outdoor program office. That sounds easy enough save for two things: I'd never actually done that before, and I had no vehicle. Oh, I'd helped commercial guides set them up, take them down, empty them out at the end of the trip; I figure as a historian if you are going to document the river running experience you might as well see it all, but I'd always just done what the boatmen told me to do, and not paid attention to the fine points of the technique. And my SUV was in the body shop, a result of a traffic accident before the trip.

Since I had a bunch of other stuff including a rolled up raft and paddles to return, using my wife's little station wagon was out of the question, much to her relief. The guy at the body shop, though, knowing he had been dawdling on the repairs, offered me his girlfriend's Nissan Pathfinder. Desperate by this point, I said yes, and drove to her house to get it. It turned out to be one of those nice ones, fancy paint job, leather seats, CD changer, all tricked out for cruising State Street in Salt Lake, but not like my own abused Trooper, which has seen more than its share of mud, river sand, dirt, salt, snow, spilled chocolate shakes, and dog hair. I neglected to tell the girlfriend just what errand I needed to run, and with my two daughters, 8 year old Sarah and 13 year old Rachel, we set off. The younger of the two girls viewed the whole thing with equanimity throughout, but my teenager is of a sensitive bent and was, in a word that doesn't begin to describe her expression, disgusted to be sitting close to a can full of human waste.

Edging as far away as she could get from the cans, she would say, as if I didn't know, "Daddy, there's POO in this can!!" As I turned a corner and the cans bumped together, she would repeat in a stricken voice, to remind me as if I had forgotten, "DADDY! THERE IS POO IN THIS CAN!!" I had heard about a local car wash on 33rd South that had a waste dump, so we went there first, but there was no one around. As I was wondering what to do, along came a man in a big RV on the same errand. He called around on his cell phone and found that you could use the dump tank at a local RV dealership, so we set off there and learned, to my vast relief, that you could indeed dump such cans for a \$5 fee. By this point I would have paid ten times that to be rid of this albatross, so I forked over my fiver and asked the guy if there was anyone to show me how the hoses hooked up. Jerking a dismissive thumb toward the door he said, in effect, you'll figure it out and if you don't just hose yourself off. After that, the events transpired pretty much as described in the song. Rachel got out to help me, although she mostly stood waaaaay off and screamed whenever something went wrong; Sarah I made stay in the car behind glass. I didn't want to have to tell my wife I had doused either child with... you know. I had a hard time figuring out the connections, and the lid did pop off at one point, revealing a hideous sight; I then tried to hose it out by standing it on end and squirting water in, which was not a good idea; and once I did get the hose connections on straight it turned out there were indeed holes in the hoses and the waste was squirting out in the parking lot. You all know how after any river trip your hands are in sad shape with cuts and abrasions (especially word processor hands like mine), and I looked at each little squirt and then to the big cut on my thumb, just imagining the deadly germs crawling into my veins. I considered writing a letter to the health department about it but finally figured that such negligence usually brings its own rewards, although I haven't heard about employees of a local RV dealership being felled with typhoid fever, more's the pity.

Writing an email to my family about the whole trip, the experience with the rocket boxes was so vivid that the words just flowed, so to speak, and we called this the Poo Song. We tried to do it with a sort of bluegrass rhythm, but just about any melody will do.

THE POO SONG

The Solution

by Dave Focardi

Well, I'm drivin' down the road, with a can full of Poo;
Don't know where to go, and I don't know what to do.
We filled that can up on the ole San Juan,
and now I can't rest until that Poo is gone.
I'm drivin' down the road, with a can full of Poo,
feelin' so forlorn 'cause I don't know what to do
in the back there's a blonde who's sayin "Daddy Quick!
if we don't ditch this Poo I'm a-gonna be sick!"

So we're driving down the road with a can full of Poo,
ask the guy at the car wash "what should I do?"
He tells me "Son, there's a place nearby I know,
to get rid of Poo to Motor Sports Land you should go!

So we drive down the road with that can full of Poo,
get to the Promised Land and ask "What should I do?"
The guy at the desk takes my Fiver and scoffs,
"if you spill it on yourself, then just hose yourself off!"

So I'm ready to deal with this big can of Poo,
I hook up all the hoses, still not knowin' what to do,
When I start squirtin' water, O! man what a fright,
that lid falls off and we can see right inside!

Little Sarah wants nothin' to do with that Poo,
so she's waiting in the car, just I told her too,
I said, "Sarah watch out, and stay behind that glass,
If I do this wrong that Poo will go splash!"

Then Rachel she screams "O! Daddy look out!
that Poo is about to come a-sloshin' out!"
But I grab the right hose and get that water goin',
and pretty soon to the tank that ole Poo is a-flowin'.

The hoses they are full from that big can of Poo,
they're a-flushing and a-gushin',
just like they're s'posed to do
then the blonde she screams and says with a shout,
"there's a hole in the hose and the Poo is squirtin' out!"

But finally o're that Poo we at last do prevail,
and that really is the end of this here Poo-tale,
Even though it was gross and yucky and it stank,
that Poo is now safely poo-red into that tank.

So now I'm driving down the road with no Poo
in the can, a smile on my face,
the kids clappin' their hands.

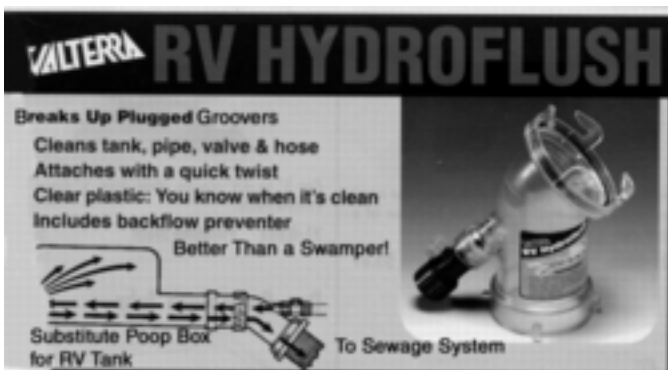
We successfully dealt with that big can of Poo,
and next time this happens I'll know just what to do.

If you don't want your own "poo" story, then pay attention. The following solution I got from T-Berry after a 30 day private Grand trip last year where we had 5 groovers that had not had ANY water added at all; they were washed 5 days after getting back to town, too. This is also one of the cheapest "groover systems" out there.

You'll need a rocket box (20 mm ammo can) or anything else with a good sealable lid. Rocket boxes work well because of their modularity. This works for privates as well as outfitters. You'll need to modify a lid by putting a 3" male RV outlet on it. Take the lid and remove the corrugated metal piece inside, and cut a hole in the lid at one end a few inches from the edge. Be careful to make the hole as close to 3" as possible without exceeding the square profile of the 3" male piece, otherwise more cut and pasting of unsatisfactory materials will result. Drill ___ inch holes aligning with the holes in the 3" piece in the lid and use a good silicone caulk to seal the 3" piece and ___ inch bolts to hold it on the Rocket box lid. This lid will receive the Valterra™ hydroflush thingy for cleaning out the groover. A cap can be put on the 3" male piece on the lid if the lid MUST be used while the groover is in service due to lack of rocket box pieces, but be sure not to load stuff on top of the capped lid as this will weaken the seal and we all know what that means! You'll also need the 3" hose with the RV attachment on the end to direct the copious flow into the sewage hole. One without holes will be better than what Roy had. See if you can get clear 3" hose for that magical touch. The hydroflush will work on Magic Groover™ as well, but you can go back to bare bone plain jane rocket boxes again and recapture that lost space and save a couple C's.

After your trip, when you get back to town, use the lid with the 3" piece, hook up the Hydroflush and a standard garden hose and Voila! ANY groover becomes clean. There is no "**donking**" noise from groovers ready to blow because the hose pressure is outside of the groover. The garden hose creates a swirling vortex of cleaning water pressure churning up the most stubborn logs created by the most dehydrated passenger. Plus, the Hydroflush is CLEAR, so you get to SEE the whole process in action! The boatmun will be fighting for the opportunity to clean the groover—except it will clean out so fast that the TL will know who is a slacker when they don't come back in 10 minutes! No more time for a smoke or that surreptitious nap while the rest of the gang busts out the de-rig!

If I wax poetical, it's because THIS THING WORKS! Five groovers cleaned in less than 25 minutes, no mess, and no fuss. The only caveat is that the Valterra Hydroflush is plastic and is prone to breaking if you run over it with your rig, and it is so desirable that it is prone to theft.



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Bert Loper in 1948