High Wide And Handsome

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Green River,
June 16 to July 5, 1947
Grand Canyon,
July 10 to August 5, 1947

By 1947, Nevills Expedition river trips had taken on a modern form, with a length and style that commercial outfitters still follow. Nevills’ San Juan trips were a week long, and by this time, cost $200 for the trip. The longer trips on the Green and Colorado were about two to three weeks. The 1940 trip was just too long; as noted by David Lavender, Doris and Barry Goldwater argued that “three thousand dollars for a summer of working like a dog and broiling like a weenie” was not likely to attract very many guests. Nevills admitted that a lengthy, two-month trip was just too much, not only for the passengers but for the crew and equipment. River running is hard work; downtime is needed to repair equipment damaged during the trip and recruit crews worn out by not only running the boats and doing all the camp chores, but babysitting the passengers. All of the passengers on the 1940 trip, as well as Doris in her published account, complained of the length of the voyage. In 1946, when Nevills went to Idaho after a full season on the San Juan, he wrote, tellingly, that he had had “too much river.” In response to a request for a trip that went from the source of the Green to the Gulf of California, Nevills wrote: “I do not recommend taking the whole run of the Green River and the Colorado River in one shot. Its too long a trip, and is much more enjoyed and appreciated when its done a section at a time. It’s far better to do a few weeks of it, and end the trip with your appetite whetted for more, than to do it all, become tired of the long grind, and not have anything to look forward to the next year.” In his Grand journal for 1947—again after a full season on the San Juan—Nevills wrote: “I feel glad to rest after the rugged series of unbroken river miles of the last two months.”

So for the 1947 season, he decided to go back and revisit the Green River, which he had not been on since 1940, but only to float the scenic reach from Green River, Wyoming, to Jensen, Utah. As always, Nevills chose the high water season; the river peaked that year on July 13 at 17,100 cfs, which made for exciting rides. Unfortunately for the crew and passengers, the falling water also meant it was the peak of the mosquito season. Some things hadn’t changed: the ranches, the mosquitoes, and the cold weather. But what was noticeably different was Nevills’s confidence in
his abilities and his boats. The 1947 Grand Canyon trip was also the first time he had been there since the start of World War II, save for a quick run down to Badger Rapid in 1944 for an article that appeared in Life magazine. So despite his weariness, Nevills was eager to get back to the Grand Canyon, even then recognized as the ne plus ultra of western whitewater boating.

Again, it was great water by his standards, with the river at 38,300 cfs on the day they launched. By this time Nevills was charging over $2,000 for a three-week trip, a price that would be considered standard by the 1990s but was quite a sum at the time. His clients, therefore, were usually from the upper end of the social scale—the wealthy and adventurous—or else those who were in a position to provide publicity, such as Randall Henderson, the editor and publisher of Desert Magazine.

But Nevills had a new passion on which to expend his bountiful energies: flying. Throughout his journals he records sightings of airplanes, and it’s obvious that he was attracted to the glamour of flight. During the war he gave in to his urge to soar and learned to fly at Drapela Flying Service in Grand Junction, Colorado. His reason was that the roads around Mexican Hat were so atrocious—all but impassable after even a brief rain—and he needed a better way to get around for his trips and in case of emergency. But one can’t help but glean from his writing that the little-boy thrill of soaring and flying close to the ground, performing perilous flights under bridges, and what he always called “flitting” was an equally powerful motivator. Just after the Idaho trip Nevills bought a Piper J3, a small agile taildragger, and began work on his own airstrip north of Mexican Hat, which he finished by the end of 1946. From this time on, as revealed in his journals and correspondence, flying is obviously just as important to him as river running. And Nevills—that most cautious of boatmen who would study a rapid for hours and even then sometimes decide to line—turned out to be a daredevil pilot. From the first, he was known for buzzing close to the ground to impress his passengers, for flying under Navajo Bridge near Lees Ferry, and for making landings and takeoffs at primitive, remote airstrips all around the canyon country.

By the summer of 1947, he had already had one wreck, when he tried to land his airplane on a flat patch of ground east of Mexican Hat, with the wife of a local prospector as his passenger. As he told it, while in the air he was struck by a desperate need to urinate, and since he had the passenger along couldn’t just go through a hole in the floor of the airplane as he usually did, so he tried to land. In doing so he stood the Piper up on its nose, destroying the propeller. After a frantic search by Eddie Drapela and Pres Walker, he was found. A new prop was flown in, repairs made, and he flew out unharmed.

Not content with the small engine in the original Piper J3, that year he had it “souped up” with a change to a more powerful 115 hp engine, a ram air scoop, and a variable-pitch propeller. He commented in several letters that it now flew like a “Spitfire.” He had finished his airstrip at Mexican Hat, built a hanger and other shop buildings, and registered the plane with the FAA and other flying agencies. The Piper was a great convenience for the Nevills family, since Mexican Hat was so isolated and the roads so poor (the roads into the area weren’t paved until the late 1950s). But his family and friends were concerned by his daring style in the air,
and by the fact that he spent so much time in his airplane that he even neglected old friends. In February 1948, Pres Walker commented in a letter to Otis Marston: “Norm was up last week end . . . I don’t know whether he is sore or just so wrapped up in that damned airplane that he hasn’t time for anything else. Frankly, if he keeps flying and souping it up, I think he is going to be wrapped up permanently in it.”

It was to prove a fateful prophecy.

June 16
Leave Mexican Hat around 1:00 PM. Kent Frost and Dave Morris go ahead to Monticello in the Recon car pulling the JOAN and the MH. Doris, Rosalind Johnson, our daughter Joan and I are in the station wagon pulling the WEN. We all get into Moab on the lateish side and stay there.

June 17
All arrive in Price, Utah fairly early. We find that the generator on the recon car is burned out. This all takes time. Elect to go on to Salt Lake to get a generator, and anyhow, going up through Vernal to Green River, Wyoming doesn’t seem practical as there is pavement all the way this other route. We run into a place in Salt Lake—Feltes Auto Parts, that exchanges a generator—we eat dinner and take off. Soon run into heavy showers. Try several places along the line to get cabins or hotel rooms but no luck. Finally, at Evanston, Wyoming, I arrange for Kent and Dave to sleep in a corridor of the city bastille. The girls and I drive on another 69 miles to LITTLE AMERICA, and there by rare good fortune, at 1:00 AM find one unoccupied cabin! One double bed, so Ros and Joan sleep in their bags on the floor. We all sleep soundly! Up fairly early, yet Kent and Dave arrive before we have breakfast.

Green River,
June 18 to July 5, 1947

June 18
We are in Green River, Wyoming by 9:30 AM. Check on our hotel rooms, then go down and put the boats in the river at Expedition Island. I see my old friend Adrian Reynolds, and his son A.K. Reynolds. Back and have lunch, then we drive over to Rock Springs, where I rent a plane and take off for a hop.

June 19
Everyone has arrived. Doris, Kent, and I, with Ros, go over to Rock Springs, and I take them all flying. Doris and I fly over to Green River and land on a strip on top of the bluff overlooking the boats. Storms heavily in afternoon. This evening we decide that if it’s raining heavily in the morning to postpone our takeoff. I am a guest at the Lion’s Club.
**June 20**

We are at the boats in the rain about 9:30 AM. Large group from town on hand. I announce that we will postpone takeoff for one day—but that we will sail rain or storm or what have you the next day.

**June 21**

Getting much local interest in trip, also outside papers are carrying stories. This is my second trip from right here, the last being June 20, 1940. 10:00 AM. It’s drizzling—but we embark. Good sized crowd. We get toots of whistles, waves, sirens, etc. Cold.

WEN: Norman D. Nevills, Joan Nevills, Rosalind Johnson, Al Milotte

MH: Kent Frost, Maradel Marston, Loel Marston, Willie Taylor

JOAN: Doc Marston, Shirley Marston, Garth Marston, Adrian Reynolds

Last night, or rather this morning, I separated further dealings with Dave Morris my other boatman. He was to have stayed and watched the boats for an hour last night, but took off and left them. Prowlers got a carton of cigarettes. This morning I hire Garth to come in at Lees Ferry to take over the new boat: SANDRA.

Elevation here at takeoff is 6060. We will drop down to 4720 at Jensen, losing 1340’ in our 205 miles ahead.

MILE 381. HARSHA RANCH. Up to here we were suffering very acutely from the cold rain. Looking for a place to get shelter we spotted this ranch. Landing on right we wander back across a muddy field and discover a small far from neat, children filled house. But it’s warm and out of the rain. We ferry the boats a bit further downstream so as to be closer to the house. Eat lunch here and keep a sharp eye on the weather. Middle afternoon shows a little let-up, and we are only too eager to get from out of our cramped quarters.

MILE 377. LOGAN RANCH. We glide right on by. My memories of this terribly rundown, filthy appearing ranch is borne out, and it would be desperate straits that would compel a stop here!

MILE 372. Island on right. CAMP. We land here cold, wet, hungry and tired. Everything is wet, but one of those miracles of the out of doors is performed—a fire is made, bed spots located, and dinner soon cooking. It rains very lightly a few times during the night, but we all get a good nights’ sleep. Thanks to a big signal tarp brought [for] me by Ros Johnson, Joan and I have a dry bed.

**June 22**

Skies are a bit clearer, but it’s quite cold.

MILE 366. It’s very cold and we’re all uncomfortable.

MILE 365½. Land right. We pull in here to build a fire. Kent sees a buck, promptly wings it, so its brought to the fire, skinned, quartered and loaded into the boats. Fresh meat! We are jubilant. Skies are clearing a bit more and looks like it won’t be so cold now. The fire has warmed us through.
MILE 357. Kent shoots two Canadian geese with the .22 rifle. Gets them right through the head.

MILE 351. HOLMES RANCH. Stopped here in ‘40. Mrs. Holmes takes a keen interest in all the river parties. Mr. Holmes has died since we were here last, but Mrs. Holmes carries on alone, with occasional help from nephews etc. We bring in our lunch. After lunch, Doc has decided to go back to Green River in order to look for his camera which he believes he left at the Harsha Ranch. This he will do by catching the stage tomorrow morning downstream a ways and just back from river on right. He will then stage it down to Manila, thence through Linwood and to river where we’ll camp tomorrow. All ride a horse, principally Joan. I get a mean cut on my left palm from baling wire on reins! Generally enjoy ourselves loaﬁ ng around. Have the [deer] with dressing, cooked by Mrs. Holmes, for dinner. Al and I sleep in the bunkhouse on the bed, Willie, Doc, and Adrian on the floor. Adrian will go as far as Sheep Creek or possibly Hideout Flat, where his folks will come get him.

JUNE 23
After breakfast, Mrs. Holmes gets out a decrepit Model A Ford, we push it a ways, then drive Doc the odd mile to where a hand cable car crosses the river. I ferry Doc across the river. Garth and Adrian try out a boat that Mrs. Holmes has tied up here, and they have a fearful time getting back and forth across the river. On way back to ranch I note a wonderful landing ﬁ eld in a horse pasture. It is about ¼mile south and east of the main house. Soon collect our equipment, thank Mrs. Holmes for her grand hospitality, and take off with the best looking weather we’ve seen so far.

We can see much snow on the mountains ahead! Much of it is fresh. The river is much higher than normal for this time of year, and it seems to be rising as a result of these heavy, unseasonable rains.

MILE 350¼. Cable crossing is here that Mrs. Holmes uses.
MILE 349. See two deer on island just below here.
MILE 346. See a doe and buck swimming in river. Quite a sight. Al gets pics.
MILE 343. Make out old abandoned ranch on right.
MILE 341. DEER.
MILE 341. Old house on left.
MILE 339. Old house on right.
MILE 338. FERRY CROSSING.
MILE 337. Buildings on left. UPPER MARSH CREEK.
MILE 335. Ferry crossing indicated here on map, but there very definitely is absolutely no sign of a ferry, approach road or anything else. We check this very closely.

LUNCH left. Sheep camp is back upstream on this same side a ways. No shade here, but its grassy and looks to be tick free. Really beautiful day. River really booming. Garth is running the JOAN.
MILE 321½. UTAH-WYOMING STATE LINE! It’s hard to tell just where the line is here, but Al and I do some trick calculating, sighting, etc., and establish to our own satisfaction the crossing point.

MILE 319. SMITH FERRY. MOSQUITOES!!! Up to now we haven’t been bothered by mosquitoes, but here they are! In droves! River is swollen with floods, and recent rains seem to have brought out the mosquitoes. There’s a USGS measuring cable here and we all ride back and forth. A car with people from Linwood drives in to visit. We scatter far and wide rustling up firewood. A fence post or so helps out. Dinner is barely being served when the Doc drives in with a truck. He joins us. No sign of his camera at Harsha Ranch. Roads all washed out. He has Adrian, later on boat down to the island at Mile 365½ where he thinks he may have left the camera. (Incidentally, upon arrival at Vernal we find the camera still in the station wagon where it was left when unloading it at GREEN RIVER, WYOMING!) Have a delicious steak dinner from the venison. It is marvelously tender. After sundown mosquitoes drift off, and we all have a grand night’s sleep.

JUNE 24

Very clear this morning. Not a cloud as yet to be seen. River may be falling a bit.

MILE 318. ENTRANCE TO FLAMING GORGE. No wind this time as in 1940!

MILE 315. Rapid here leveled over by the high water. We are all terribly impressed by the unusual beauty of this, Horseshoe Canyon. Not alone is the change so great from the barren canyons above here, but this canyon is outstanding.

MILE 309. SHEEP CREEK. We intended to camp here originally but it looks most uninviting. Mosquitoes are thick, and Sheep Creek is running high with a muddy red water. Adrian leaves his bed roll here, expecting his folks in later in day. Later tomorrow we return to find that someone, probably in a jeep, has driven to here and stolen his bedroll! We leave here deciding to go to the camp ground below. It’s clouding up again. More rain in the offing!

MILE 308. Our first rapid, opposite BEEHIVE POINT. It’s mild.

MILE 307. HIDEOUT FLAT CAMP GROUND, on the right. Road down Sheep Creek ends here. There are camp stoves, hydrants (that don’t work), etc. Also quite a few mosquitoes. The river is dropping a bit. It’s trying to rain. After lunch we walk up the road a ways. Find tree across road which we try to burn up so as to clear the road. Not too successful. Returning back towards camp Adrian recalls that a trail leaves here, goes downriver 3½ miles to EAGLE CREEK, thence another 3½ miles up to GREEN LAKES. We decide upon this walk, hiring a car to get us the 35 miles by road back to here tomorrow. At 2:30 PM, Joan, Willie, Doc, Adrian and I set out. It’s a beautiful hike and well worth the effort. We arrive at Green Lakes Lodge.
about dark, tired, cool and hungry. A big trout dinner, and good bed makes the venture worthwhile. It snowed up here at the lodge two days ago, so no wonder it’s cold. Country is all soaked up with water.

**JUNE 25**

Breakfast not too early. We arrange for one of the owners here, for $10 to drive us down this afternoon in his weapons carrier to the boats. Wash, wander around, and otherwise spend a pleasant morning. We eat a very hearty lunch. I HAVE SOME HAMBURGER STEAK.¹⁷

Roads are terribly muddy, but away we go. Find Adrian’s mother, brother, and brother-in-law in the ditch a ways up from the river in Sheep Creek. Adrian leaves us to ride back to his folks with the weapons carrier.

A good dinner—to bed. River has dropped considerably.

**JUNE 26**

River has dropped still more during the night. Game of charades played last night.

I don’t feel any too wonderful this morning, stomach seems a bit upset.

**MILE 305. CARTER CREEK.** Al and Doc get out here to walk on downstream a ways in order to get a picture of the boats coming down the canyon. We give them lots of time to get set.

**MILE 304. EAGLE CREEK.** Pick up Al and Doc. Trail here to top.

**MILE 298. SKULL CANYON AND CREEK.** Latter has water, but no place to camp. Mouth of canyon dismal sort of place loaded with mosquitoes. We are making camp as we are right on schedule to here.

**MILE 298. ISLAND.** No mosquitoes here, but lots of ants. Not much in way of shelter, but we want to get where the mosquitoes won’t eat us up. I feel kind of lousy. So does Joan and Doc. (We later learn that Adrian gets sick on way home too.) I eat lunch against my better judgement—including SALMON—and get a couple of really rough vomiting sessions. Later a sort of diarrhea. Try to sleep rest of afternoon. Don’t eat dinner, and when night comes Al loans me his air mattress. Joan and Doc feel a bit better.

**JUNE 27**

I feel pretty rocky this morning and decide against eating.

**MILE 294½.** Kent shoots baby deer, but too small to eat. It looked to be larger than it was, and everyone, including Kent, is sorry.

**MILE 292. ASHLEY FALLS.** At first glance this looks to be a roughy for everything including lining. We see where the USGS party lined and portaged on the LEFT, also, DON HARRIS tried to run on the left and UPSET.¹⁸ He didn’t hold onto his boat, but let it go, and they didn’t recover it until an eddy clear down at Mile 272—OLD BRIDGEPORT. He lost all three oars and had to go back to Rock Springs with a rancher to get oars. Kent and I go across the river in the WEN to look it over. Left side is no
good. I have trouble getting around as am rather weak and not sure footed. Easy lining job, and Kent and I slip right down, then boom right across to left side below. Then Kent, Garth, Doc and I return with the MH2 and the JOAN. Garth and Kent line more or less alright, but after taking off Kent gets sucked into a hole that gives he and Garth quite an experience. I feel too miserable to line, doesn’t look too tough to run, so with the Doctor on deck, I run the JOAN right on through ASHLEY FALLS! Nothing to it.

MILE 291. Mining outfit on right. Saw this too in ’40.
MILE 290. All rapids but ASHLEY FALLS, to here very simple to run.
MILE 288½. Big stream of clear water coming in on right.
MILE 282. LITTLE DAVENPORT CREEK. As we approach here we see a man, wife and two children and a horse on the bank. We pull in and find they have been spending the day fishing. The young fellow has a ranch up the canyon about a half mile, and since the war has been developing the place. He proves to be the brother of the young chap, who, with his father, Mr. Burton, met us in 1940 a ways below here. We visit, make camp. They eat with us. Mosquitoes are very bad. I feel better and eat some dinner. Some of us go up to the ranch, and are barely settled when Mr. Burton and one of his sons come in! They left their truck five miles out and walked in to here. Quite a coincidence. These folks address: Mr. and Mrs. Earl Burton, Linwood, Utah. The father is Orson Burton. Back to camp, where we all have a grand nights sleep.

June 28
River is still dropping, and shows a two foot drop from recent flood.
MILE 278. RED CREEK RAPID. Quite a toughy in a way. Has a rather complicated channel, which we climb hill above to better study. I pick a rocky, complicated channel, which requires some lightening of passengers to run. Must watch this one—the waves actually look bigger and the water much rougher than it is when viewing from up on the hill. WEN off, with Ros and Joan Nevills as passengers. MH2 with LOEL and WILLIE, JOAN with Garth and Shirley as passengers.
MILE 275. A small boulder-constructed diversion dam, with takeoff on the left.
MILE 274. ALLEN RANCH (formerly Jarvie’s). Number of people here on left bank, and we go up to the ranch house where Mrs. William Allen and her three children, 6,9, and 11 greet us. She wants data on the Calvert School. (Doris sends it to her later.) Mrs. Allen presents us with 4 doz. eggs, and a lot of radishes. Have a nice visit.
MILE 272. LUNCH. No shade, but it’s cloudy and the wind is blowing a bit. We stopped first across the river at Old Bridgeport but the mosquitoes were too thick for us. My stomach still touchy, but I put away some lunch.
MILE 270. LEFT. TAYLOR RANCH. We get a somewhat lukewarm reception here. Same as ’40. The elder Mr. Taylor, who lived across the river
below here died last year, Mrs. Taylor moved to Rock Springs. This younger
couple a queer sort of silent customers. Mr. Taylor is going in his pickup
to oil town of Clay Basin, and I wangle a ride for Doc, Willie, Garth and
Shirley. Rest of us loaf around the ranch until bored to distraction, then
decide to take off and camp over at the other Taylor place across the river.
We get permission to move into the smaller house.

MILE 268. CAMP Right. TAYLOR RANCH. Raining. Quite a walk over
to the ranch house and the mosquitoes are really tough. Shelter behind
screens is most welcome. At 6:00 pm, Doc and rest come in the JOAN. Have
a good dinner, then make beds around the house on the floor. A cable
crossing is here.

JUNE 29
SHOVE OFF. Still plenty of clouds around, though beautiful morning.
MILE 266. Entering SWALLOW CANYON.

Wonderful action on part of the swallows. Get many good pics. This is
a really great sight.

MILE 261. COLORADO STATE LINE.

MILE 260. Rickety, high suspension bridge that could handle cars if
one wanted a thrill.21 (On way home I talked with Al Christensen at Hole
in Rock eating place, and he told me that when he was with CCC he drove
across this bridge a number of times.) Just below here on left Al gets some
swell pics of the swallows in action again.

11:00 AM. Mile 256½. Wind is blowing hard. Downstream and cold. At
least it’s blowing the right direction for us, though where it blows towards a
bank it’s hard work to keep the boats from being driven ashore.

MILE 253. LUNCH. And it’s really blowing. It makes serving lunch
hard to say the least, but we make out.

MILE 248. CAMP. We spot the schoolhouse22 back from the river,
but the trees and sloughs between us and mainland make for a very
difficult landing. We finally pull in and tie up, Kent and I going to search
out a trail. We find one, and, combating the thickets [sic] hordes of
mosquitoes we’ve seen yet we walk some half mile to the schoolhouse
and the adjacent building that must have served as the teachers
headquarters. We decide upon camping here, and equipment, beds, etc.
are all brought up—including water. We cook in the small building, but
sleep on the well polished hardwood floor of the school house. After
dinner we put on an impromptu entertainment and all have a fine time.
Storm holds off, and evening finds the mosquitoes all gone, so a fine
nights rest is had by all.

JUNE 30
Day dawns clear. I seem to have an upset stomach again so I pass up breakfast.
We get to boats as fast as possible and thus miss some of the mosquitoes.

MILE 243. Entrance to LODORE CANYON.
MILE 238¼. Am keeping close check on position through here so as to not go booming over DISASTER FALLS by mistake. We want pics of the run.

MILE 237. UPPER DISASTER FALLS. Land on left and work over the course. Not too tricky a channel, but distance to run requires a lot of channel to memorize. Cameras set, and we are running with the other two boats following right behind me. WEN, Joan Nevills, MH₂, Maradel Marston, JOAN, Shirley Marston. I go through in the WEN right on the button where I picked the channel. Doc gets sucked in on main channel and overtakes and passes me. MH₂ picks up water in first drop, lands, bails out, and then comes on through.

MILE 236½. HEAD OF LOWER DISASTER FALLS. This is obviously an easy one to run at this stage so we’ll take it on with all passengers aboard. Stomach not so good so am passing up lunch too. Feel a bit weak, but we’re making camp down at foot of Triplet Falls, and I’ll hang on that long alright.

MILE 236. FOOT of LOWER DISASTER FALLS. All boats through OK.

MILE 234. Glance over this one, then decide for Garth to try it. WEN with Joan and Ros. Kent with one passenger, Garth with Willie. WEN lands at bottom OK, but Kent and Garth can’t make pull to shore so go on to land below on right. I end up with 5 passengers aboard and have a good ride to below where we join rest.

MILE 233. I run this one with Rosalind as passenger; Kent and Garth come through solo. They do fairly well, though aren’t right on beam.
MILE 232½. TRIPLET FALLS. Really rough on top. I announce no passengers, and that the other two boats are to follow me through. Am missing the fun I should be having as am so tired and weak I can hardly pull an oar. Am substituting skill for strength. Going up to boats I find Joan waiting there, so I load her into the WEN, and off we all go. Both Kent and Garth are solo.

MILE 232. CAMP. Foot of TRIPLET FALLS on left. A beautiful camp which we rig up in style from many drift planks laying around. Everyone goes in swimming. I feel much better after eating. Spend a very pleasant evening, most of gang playing charades, I catch up on a mystery novel I found along the way.

JULY 1
Beautiful day. River raised and lowered 4’ during the night. Old boat is still here that was wrecked a good many years ago.24

MILE 231. HELLS HALF MILE RAPID. A first class tough deal. The water at no place is unrunnable, but we’re sure to ship some water on the first drop, and that would mean trouble in dodging the many rocks below. It can be done alright, but is not practical. Government party of Don Harris stupidly portaged the hard way across river on left. It is easy to portage here for 70 yards. At 8:30 AM a Cessna with JACK TURNER of Vernal and ELMA MILOTTE circles and circles overhead. At first I think it’s Mandy Campbell.25

We start portage by pulling WEN out, unloading, and then carrying the WEN on a partially build [sic] up and cleared trail for 70 yards. It’s not too hard a job, but when all three boats and their equipment is at river’s edge again we’re very glad.26 We eat lunch, then with Joan with me in the WEN, I shove off and run on right to foot of rapid in cove below. I lightly tap one rock enroute. Other boats hit a bit more and often, but we all get there alright. Upon landing, as an experiment for a place to loaf on, I take three of the air inflated belt type preservers and rig up an air mattress. It proves most comfortable to my surprise and I decide upon this type of bed from now on.

MILE 231. Everyone at the bottom of HELLS HALF MILE and SHOVE OFF.

MILE 228. ALCOVE BROOK. Land here and find that there’s fine water just a ways up the canyon. At mouth, and for 100 yards or so in canyon water disappears under the gravel. It’s a beautiful camp. Kent spotted two deer just above camp, and he and Joan go stalking them. Return much later, but no luck. Have a swell dinner, and my stomach is back to normal. This has been our second perfectly clear and beautifully warm day of the trip. Looks like the weather man finally has taken pity on us. THIS IS A CAMP SITE TO REMEMBER.

JULY 2
A very clear morning.
MILE 225¼. On right chase two fawns and a doe in order to try to get them to swim river for pictures. Much beating of brush, and get land shots of them, but they don’t take to water.

MILE 225. YAMPA RIVER.

MILE 224. PAT’S HOLE. This is where I spent evening talking with Buzz Holmstrom in ’40. Floating up here we spy Mr. Chew and son downstream a ways fishing. They come up and take us over to Mrs. Chew and children where they are about to mow hay. We visit there a while, then Mrs. Chew drives us all up in the truck to their modernized comfortable ranch. Two miles to ranch. We visit wind cave on way back. Have a very fine dinner as guests of Chews. Mr. Chew and I make a trade! After getting home I mail him my 30-30 Savage, which in turn he sends me a brand new 30-30 Winchester Model ’94 carbine. Repairing back to the river, Mr. and Mrs. Chew take the MH2 and two of their girls and go for a ride. First time they have ever been in a boat together! Chew pulls a mighty good oar. We wave goodbye and take off.

MILE 218. JONES HOLE CREEK. This is where we should have made camp as the fishing is unusually fine here. NEXT TRIP STOP HERE.

MILE 217. SAGE CREEK. Good camp here, also water, but no fishing. We see a beaver at work across the river. Some old mine tunnels here, so after dinner we go up and prowl around in them. They are not very extensive, but we have a lot of fun. Beautiful night and we all sleep well.

JULY 3

Al makes pictures of the Twins getting dressed and other similar shots. Al is indefatigable in shooting pictures.

MILE 212. RUPLE RANCH. (Joel Evans). What a thrill! Sticking out from the right bank is a stick with a flag on it, so like 1940. We spot Joel Evans too, also Elma Milotte. It’s grand to see Joel, and we’re all pleased to see Elma. We go over to the ranch house and Joel gets horse saddled for everyone to ride. Joan is in her glory. Yesterday she rode clear from Chew’s ranch back to the river. She is really developing into quite a rider. Joel makes up a batch of sourdough bread, and do we eat! And watermelon. It’s a grand visit. We hate to leave, but we want to get some miles under us yet today.

SHOVE OFF. Elma comes over into the WEN, and will ride from here on to JENSEN with us. Rosalind goes into the MH2, Willie Taylor goes to JOAN.

MILE 207. We’re entering SPLIT MOUNTAIN CANYON—it’s trying to rain—and I’m rarin’ to run rapids!

MILE 201. We’ve been pouring on the coal!!

MILE 199. WE'RE THROUGH SPLIT MOUNTAIN! See a man, his wife and two children at camping spot by cave on right, so we pull in to say hello and warm up by their fire. Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Rueter, Western Springs, Illinois. We visit a while, then decide to drop on down to the ranch
of the brother of Mr. Ruple up at Pat’s Hole. We want to get to Dinosaur Monument early tomorrow.

**MILE 197. CUB CREEK (CHEW RANCH)** Left. Stormy and not too inviting here. We go up to ranch house and find young Chew and his wife at home, but about to drive to Jensen. I think it wise to go on to Jensen then Vernal in order to get the cars and trailers ready to pick up the boats tomorrow in order to save time. So, Joan, Shirley, Garth and I go into town. Chews take us to Vernal and we take them to dinner. Joan and I use Elma’s room, Shirley and Garth get fixed up. We check with Mrs. Bus Hatch who has taken care of our cars, and thence to bed!

**JULY 4**
Up to an early start. Joan and I in the station wagon, Shirley and Garth in the recon car. On edge of town I see an airfield, so girls stay with recon [car] on highway, and Garth and I rent an Aeronca, and away we go! We boom up the river, locate the boats at MILE 196, and take three first rate passes at them.

We land at Vernal, then drive to Jensen where we park the recon car and the trailers, thence on to Dinosaur Monument where our party has already arrived.

**MILE 188. DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT.** We are given a most hospitable welcome here and shown a very interesting trip. It’s a highlight of the trip. Kent’s wife shows up with her brother. Violet rides on to Jensen with us.

**SHOVE OFF from Dinosaur Monument.** Joan and Al go overland in the station wagon with Al, who is going to get shore shots. They will join us below.

Pres and Becky, flown by Jimmie Rigg, buzz us in a Super Cruiser.

**12:45 PM MILE 182. THIS IS IT! JENSEN, UTAH.** Quite a crowd is on bank and bridge to welcome us. Pres and Becky are there. Ethel Rae Zuefelt. Many others. Pics are taken, and we then grab off lunch at a little lunch stand. Then to loading boats—it’s hot!

Finally accomplished and we all go into Vernal. Directly though it’s 4:00 PM, and we go out to see Pres, Becky and Jimmie take off. Back to Vernal again and first thing we know it’s time to eat.

Most farewells are said this evening as we’re getting an early start.

**JULY 5**
Up for a really early start. Doc, Ros, Joan, Garth and I in the station wagon. Kent and Violet in the recon car.

Kent, Violet, Doc, and Garth stay overnight in Monticello.

Rosalind, Joan and I drive on through to Mexican Hat, arriving about 11:00 PM. We’re tired—but terribly pleased with having most successfully completed a trip that was made under most trying conditions. It was a grand group, and certainly equivalent to anything that would arise.
Grand Canyon,
July 10 to August 5, 1947

July 10
Most all details being caught up with at Mexican Hat, boats all loaded, food and supplies assembled and checked, start is made from Mexican Hat. Doris, Sandra, Dock and I lead off with the station wagon trailing the trailer carrying the JOAN and the WEN. We are followed by Ros and Garth in a Chevrolet sedan with a trailer carrying the new cataract boat the SANDRA. Kent and his wife drive the army recon car pulling the MEXICAN HAT II.

Uneventful and trouble free passage is made to Marble Canyon. Our plans to unload the boats that same day are thrown out of gear by a plea of Al Milotte for pictures the next morning of the boats being trailered down to Lees Ferry proper. It rather spoils our plans but we accede.

July 11
Up early and accompanied by movie shots we eventually get the boats down to the boat “landing” at Lees Ferry. Load one trailer on another, and hustle back to Marble Canyon. Doris, in the car with El and Al Millotte and Sandra shift over to the recon car. We rendezvous at Cameron, finding they don’t serve lunches! Al and El go on. Doris and Sandra shift over to the recon car. We make the South Rim about 1:30 pm. Get a brief look from the Hopi Tower, then contact Lem Garrison, asst. supt. Meet other of the Park Service personnel, including Perry Brown. Hasty arrangements are made for storing of the trailer, recon car, and food supplies. Dock and Ros are met at Bright Angel Lodge. All of us together arrange with Scotty for a flight from the Rim back to Marble Canyon. I am much annoyed to put it mildly at this rushing and haste, where we had planned on a bit of visiting with friends. Arriving at the airport, driven out by Mr Wright, manager of Bright Angel Lodge, we form quite a company to fill up the ancient but amazingly sturdy and reliable old Ford Trimotor. Captain Wolf, our pilot introduces his wife—who proves to be the former Jean Conrath, veteran of a San Juan river trip back in 1940. The flight is one I will never forget. It gave an unforgettable picture of Grand and Marble Canyon, culminating in a perfect landing at Marble Canyon—largest plane ever to land there. Greeting us upon landing were our whole party, supplemented by Dr. and Mrs. Harold Bryant of the South Rim. Fairly early to bed as the next day would see us embarked.

July 12
An assortment of cars got us all to Lees Ferry. The WEN, MEXICAN HAT II and JOAN were already in the water tied up, leaving the SANDRA yet to be christened and launched. With cameras ready, we halted, anticipating the arrival of Barry Goldwater, who had just flown over in his new Navion.
With Barry’s arrival we persuaded and after substituting a bottle supplied by Marjory Farquhar for an unbreakable bottle, got the SANDRA duly christened and in the water. Stowing of luggage went ahead smoothly and with good dispatch. Our scheduled start for 10:00 AM was abandoned in favor of taking off when ready—sooooo—we’re off! My trip #5.33

SHOVE OFF. River had held up rather high. This is highest stage I’ve ever left on.


I am terribly eager to feel out Soap Creek and Badger to get a picture of what this stage of water will mean to us.

WEN Norman D. Nevills, Doris Nevills, Al Milotte, Randall Henderson.34
MEXICAN HAT II Kent Frost, boatman, Pauline Saylor, Barry Goldwater.
SANDRA Garth Marston, boatman, Elma Millotte, Marjory Farquhar
JOAN Dock Marston, boatman, Margaret Marston, Francis Farquhar.35

Quite a crowd upon the [Navajo] bridge.
Pause briefly on right for Barry and I to touch off a drift fire.
BADGER CREEK RAPID Mile 8. I look Badger over briefly and find it’s an open clear channel presenting almost no problems. I shove off in the WEN with Barry Goldwater as a passenger. We have a fast wonderful ride. To insure Barry getting soaked, near the foot I dip up a bailing can and let him have it! Kent comes through in the MEXICAN HAT II solo. I go back and bring Doris through in the SANDRA. Then Garth brings the JOAN through with Pauline Saylor as a passenger.

Bill Soffley came to here with the passengers in the SANDRA. We also run into two fishermen, one a former newspaperman. Doris, Barry and Bill say farewell and start the trek up the trail to the rim above. We set about having lunch. Water temperature is 72°, and the air-shade is 96°. We are now ready to settle down to the regular and serious routine of regular traveling for the descent of the canyon. The first day is always a hard one.

SOAP CREEK RAPID. MILE 11. Soap Creek is rough but not difficult. Good ride by slipping just a shade on the right side of the tongue. WEN off with Randall as passenger. Others OK, though no passengers aboard. Dock can’t pull out of the main current and lands below. We all have a fine ride and the ice is broken for relaxing and running the river.

CAMP. On left at MILE 12. Nice spot. Randall leaves note in cairn on ledge just down from little canyon. It’s been a full exciting day, so we aren’t long in getting settled for a good night’s sleep.
July 13
At 6:00 am it’s overcast, and temperature is 84°. The usual heat of the canyon is absent which we’re grateful for, though absence of the sun is serious for pics.

MILE 14. SHEER WALL RAPID. Very easy to run.

MILE 17. HOUSE ROCK RAPID. Very easy to run, and we drop right through. The water is turbulent and full of whirls at bottom of all these rapids. I expect more of a rapid at this stage, but the high water has leveled it over.

MILE 20. NORTH CANYON RAPID. This is a meany. The first drop is very easy to handle, but below the river piles into the right wall, and to get over to the left is hard to do. WEN off with Margaret at 9:40 AM. Perfect. Kent in MEXICAN HAT II gets thrown out of control and has a zippy ride. Garth and Dock come through very well. It’s a very tough overland walk but all make it OK.

MILE 25. TWENTY FIVE MILE RAPID. This is a touchy one at any stage of water. At this high stage the big trouble lies at the bottom where there’s a peculiar mixup of turbulent water. I don’t like its looks at the bottom. This will be a solo run all the way through. [All boats] OK. We elect having lunch here. It’s still overcast and the temperature is 96°.

MILE 32. VASEY’S PARADISE. CAMP. The last seven miles into here have had very violent and turbulent water at the foot of all the rapids and even the riffles. Eddies, boils and whirlpools. This high stage of water makes camp right at waterfalls impossible, so we pull into cove just above falls. There’s a small freshwater spring here, but an overland rope maneuvering expedition is formed to fill canteens out of the big flow. Dock is first let down on a rope, then Francis. Much fun and amusement out of this excursion—plus plenty of fresh water.

Garth lies down as a tooth that appears to be ulcerated is giving him plenty of fun. This is a swell camp. After dinner, Marjory, Pauline, Ros, Al, Kent, and I go up to explore the big cave where I found the Stanton note in 1940. We have a lot of fun exploring, crawling around and poking into odd corners. I leave a note typed by Randall, pinned to the wall in the same place with the same stick as the Stanton note. At the mouth of the cave we find Garth’s flashlight which he left there when 16 years old on the 1942 trip. Back to camp, to bed, well pleased with a day marked by much fun, thrills and excitement.

July 14
High fleecy clouds this morning. Looks to be a beautiful day. Garth takes off and climbs up to check on cave mouth above, but finds no tunnels leading off. They have probably caved in. Kent, Dock, Al, Elma, Ros, Marjory and Francis go up to just above Paradise Canyon to see the skeleton of a man we found in ’40. Rest of us just loaf. I feel glad to rest after the rugged series of unbroken river miles of the last two months.
MILE 33. REDWALL CAVERN. LUNCH. A beautiful and impressive cave. We find a rattlesnake (sidewinder) and get many pics. The snake is left unharmed to pursue his lonely life in the cave.

MILE 43. PRESIDENT HARDING RAPID. Land left. I in WEN with Rosalind as passenger slip down the left side for easy run. MEXICAN HAT II, JOAN with Garth as boatman, then Francis brings through the SANDRA, all OK. Not hard to run, but requires a bit of finessing.

MILE 52. NANCOWEEP. CAMP. Same old spot just downstream from mouth of main Nancoweep. Evidence of ‘42 camp at catclaw tree. Showered a couple of times on us this afternoon up around the Bridge of Sighs section. Arrive with heavy overcast which clears at 9:00 pm. Clouds up a bit and get weak shower during the night. As camp is being prepared we amuse ourselves diverting the flow of Nancoweep creek in direction of camp. Evening is ended up with a game of charades. Garth pulls a song title out of the bag with 17 words in title!

**July 15**

Day starts out a bit overcast, but clears by 9:00 am. Most of party take off and climb up to the cliff ruins back of camp. I employ myself in rigging a shelter for both possible rains and certain sun. River seems to be at about the same stage. We all just loaf around, sleep, read, talk, walk, etc. In the evening it’s pleasantly cool, and touch off a great drift pile upstream aways.

**July 17**

SHOVE OFF. Temperature 74°. Marjory and Francis are both riding with the Dock today, so Margaret goes over with Garth.
MILE 56. KWAGUNT CREEK RAPID. Incidentally the water here is very good to drink. The rapid is very rough, can be fun without looking over, though the takeoff is a bit confusing. I take Marjory in the WEN, the others come through solo, with Garth running the JOAN and Francis the SANDRA.

MILE 61. LITTLE COLORADO RIVER. Barely landed to go around corner and look at Little Colorado when Pauline jumped a 3' rattlesnake. As vicious a snake as I’ve ever seen. Lots of fight in him. Finally killed him. Surprise! On all previous trips the Little Colorado has had a dirty, murky red water flowing in it, but this time there was a good 100 second-feet of BRIGHT BLUE! The water was a bluer blue than the famed Havasu. Very hot here and no shade to be found. So I elect to drop on downstream for lunch and shade.

MILE 65. LAVA CANYON RAPID—TANNER MINE. LUNCH AND CAMP. We eat lunch under a tree at Joe’s Tanner’s old camp. 102° in the shade. Some of us went back in the old Tanner mine. I find it has caved quite a bit since 1942. Kent and I got the old caps from the mine, took 15 sticks of powder from a box lying nearby and with a brush fire sent up quite an explosion. This we followed by setting off the whole remaining box. It really boomed! Powder was dated: June 1925. Everyone hunted and found shade for rest of afternoon. Pauline and I stayed in entrance of mine tunnel. Between 1:20 PM and 7:20 PM river drops 3" in about a 100 yard section. Build a small signal fire at night. We exchange light blinks with Hopi Watchtower, but as usual, neither party seems to interpret the message sent by the other!

JULY 17
River drops another 1" during the night. Dock catches three catfish which he has for breakfast. We decide upon rowing across the river to explore another mine tunnel that we see over there.

MILE 65. OLD MINE TUNNEL just above LAVA CANYON. Upon entering we find dynamite (Oct. 1928), magazines (1928), miscellaneous tools, pack equipment, some food, much medical supplies. I take some of these, together with two cow bells. Women fuss about setting off the dynamite, so we leave that for a future trip. Passengers are now back to their original seats. At 8:50 AM there were beautiful clouds and a few drops of rain.

MILE 68. TANNER TRAIL. Mildly warm, gradually getting very hot. Rig up a good camp, improvise shelters. At night we build a great “C” shaped drift fire to signal the Rim. Usual blinkings of light are exchanged with many wild guesses at their possible meanings! Two heavy gripes are expressed in the afternoon at this layover. It is obvious that this leg of the trip should be done in six days instead of the present seven. A trip like this more than brings out the full characteristics in people. I leave a cache of food here for next year. It is under conglomerate ledge, 100’ downstream from a dark red sandstone ledge. Cache [is]: 1 can matches, 1# coffee, 2
cans milk, 1 can cooked rice, 1 can hash, 2 cans spaghetti and meat balls, 1 can ravioli, 3 string beans, 3 pork and beans, 2 soup, 3 salmon, 3 TREAT.

**JULY 18**
Everyone up early and rarin’ to go in anticipation of the thrilling ride in store of us this last 21 miles into Bright Angel. Days dawns clear and bright. Sun not quite over rim.

MILE 72. UNKAR CREEK. Back at Mile 71 we saw a buck deer on the left shore. We land here and find Unkar at this stage not too tough. We touch off a great drift pile here, then all clamber on board and off! Run on right.

MILE 75 RAPID. Easy to run, just land to check for sure on the tongue takeoff.

MILE 76. HANCE RAPID. Very rough and tricky. Requires some fast maneuvering. WEN off with Elma as passenger, run on left. Just after we shoved off I advised El again on just how rugged a run this was. She said “Maybe I had better not go!” This as the current really grabbed us! But she really enjoyed the ride, and we went thru right on the button. Kent got off beam a bit, picked up 6” of water and nearly upset. Garth in SANDRA fine. Dock too far into main current and had to land quite a ways below. It was a real rapid and lots of fun.

MILE 78. SOCKDOLOGER RAPID. We land as usual on left, and I am surprised to find this stage of water the smoothest for Sockdologer that I have yet seen. We want to leave Al behind for pictures, so I take Elma in with me. All come through right on the button with a swell time had by all!

MILE 81. GRAPEVINE RAPID. Much tougher takeoff than Sockdologer, and generally rougher all the way thru. All at bottom at good shape.

CLEAR CREEK. Very heavy water here and is a lively rapid.
Zoroaster Rapid just another rapid.
BRIGHT ANGEL. DORIS AND JOAN NEVILLS meet us on the beach, followed by Mr. Eden (NPS) and others. We waste little time at the boats, get some pics, then head up to Phantom Ranch. Mr. and Mrs Malone welcome us to the ranch. Clean up, and then a good dinner!

**JULY 19**
Loaded food in the boats. Checked over the equipment. Pauline and Rosalind went up the trail. We were sorry to see them go. 42 Rest of day relaxing.

**JULY 20**
Farquhars took off up the North Rim trail. Also the Garrisons for the South Rim. Went over to Pipe Spring with Doris and Joan and saw them off on their mules at 11:00 AM. I repaired back to my cabin and spent rest of day
writing out postcards. Late afternoon, Joe Desloge Sr., Joe Jr., Anne and Zoe Desloge, and Marie Saalfrank arrived. Swell to see them. Talked over final details, phoned Doris and talked to Sandra. To bed a bit lateish.

**July 21**

A good breakfast. Malones loaded us with fresh peaches, also went down to see us off. I borrowed a pencil from the relieving USGS engineer, Clifford T. Jenkins, to be mailed to him at end of trip. He was most helpful in getting us river dope, also letting us cache supplies at the govt. cabin. River has been up and down, and this morning found us leaving on 24,250 second feet.

**SHOVE OFF.**

**WEN**—Nevills-Henderson-Milotte.

**MEXICAN HAT II**—Frost, Joe Desloge Jr., Marie Saalfrank

**SANDRA**—Garth Marston-Anne and Zoe Desloge

**JOAN**—Dock Marston, Margaret Marston, Joe Desloge Sr.

**MILE 90**. **HORN CREEK.** About as usual. Not hard, but requires sharp timing. Run on left of big center hole. WEN off, Zoe as passenger. Then MEXICAN HAT II, SANDRA, JOAN all without passengers. Good fun and makes good pictures.

**MILE 93**. **GRANITE FALLS.** (Monument Creek). No rough stuff from Horn Creek to here—but damn me if the main channel with the big waves against the walls aren’t tough! I study and study, study and restudy, but finally give up running my usual channel. I elect to run down the middle, skirting a few holes. It is a very tricky but good course. Requires high water to run here. We all go thru solo, and all make a good run. This has been a painfully long delay, but I wanted to make sure that there wasn’t a way to run the big waves for the picture. The water directly below the big waves is a treacherous a bunch of boils, eddies, etc. as we were to see on the trip.

**MILE 95**. **HERMIT FALLS.** LUNCH. CAMP. We first set about having lunch, which had been long postponed as a result of the long stop at Granite Falls. At 4:00 PM brought MEXICAN HAT II to head, unloaded, and lined to bottom of first drop. Ran on down and hauled up on rocks because of the bad shore surge. At 5:00 PM we had JOAN unloaded, and suddenly I decided to run, ably urged on my Joe, Sr., so Joe and I shoved off. SOME RIDE! We dropped off the tongue to the left, but still got held in on the big waves a bit. They were 12 to 15 feet high. Made it fine though. I was deadly tired after we made shore. Then Garth brought the SANDRA thru in fine style, with me then returning and running the WEN through. At 6:05 PM all boats were at bottom equipment carried down, boats well up out of water—and TIRED! So at last we ran Hermit in high water! To bed and glad of it. An exchange of signals went on with the rim again!
JULY 22
MILE 96. BOUCHER RAPID. A soft touch, and we take off with all hands for a fine splashy ride. At first I had this one confused with another rapid that is tricky.

Zoe and Anne are swimming, as we come down on CRYSTAL RAPIDS, Anne comes over into the WEN, Zoe goes into the MEXICAN HAT II, JoJo into the SANDRA.

MILE 98. CRYSTAL RAPIDS. Wide open!
MILE 106. SERPENTINE RAPID. Rough and a fine ride. Wide open!
MILE 108. BASS CABLE. Been a marvelous, wet ride to here. We land on the left side directly under the cable and go up for an inspection tour. The “A” frames are in bad shape and it would not be safe to go out on the cable. The pulling mechanism is all shot to pieces. A cross could be affected by hand over hand with some degree of safety. We pass up any thoughts of a ride!

Mile 108½. SHINUMO CREEK right. We have lunch in the little shallow cave, then Dock goes out to check on trout. Fishing for over two miles discloses no trout. Water is not too cold, and if there are trout in this stream they must be up towards the North Rim. Everyone goes swimming but me. I picked up a sinus headache from swimming at Phantom Ranch, so go to sleep and soak up heat. River turns a bright red in the afternoon but doesn’t seem to raise any. Skies almost clear. Dock reports 4” suckers and 2” minnows at a point up to 2½ miles from the river. Tries to rain late at night, but doesn’t make it.

JULY 23
MILE 110. CABLE CROSSING. A high thin dangerous, worn out looking outfit.

MILE 112. WALTHENBERG RAPID. Very rough and turbulent water. Al goes over into MEXICAN HAT II for pics, Joe Jr. into WEN. A good rough, but successful ride.

MILE 116. ELVES CHASM. LUNCH. We sign the register back up under the cliff then have a good lunch. From here Al is with Dock, Joe Jr., on the oars of the WEN until real rough water.

MILE 125. FOSSIL RAPIDS. Norm back on oars. Entering granite.

MILE 128. 128 MILE RAPID. At foot here eddy slaps us into wall on the left and its touch and go. “Cheating” the rough water is born out as a good idea in this baby!

MILE 129. SPECTER RAPID. These have been very rough to here, though not too tricky to run.

MILE 130. BEDROCK RAPID. As usual a toughy in high water. We walk all the passengers, and it is a miserable walk. All boats through in good shape, though eddy at bottom is mean. Big barge lost by Bureau of Reclamation is resting on big rock in middle of river. It has a few planks and oil drums that have kept it afloat to here. End is clear stove in.
MILE 131. Arrive DEUBENDORF RAPID. Very rough, bit late for pics, but looks like a good ride. Decide to run a couple of boats through yet today. I take Margaret with me in the WEN and shove off. A *wonderful* ride. Back to head of rapid. I bring the MEXICAN HAT II thru then, with Kent in the bow, and JoJo on deck. Another wingding!

We make camp at bottom just below the good water coming in from Stone Creek. We want to do a good job here as token to Julius Stone who is reported near death.

**July 24**

**JOJO SWIMS THRU DEUBENDORF!**

Then Garth in the SANDRA, with Zoe and Anne.

*THENNN* Joe Jr. and Dock with no preservers, Zoe with a preserver, Garth on an airmattress, swim through the main channel! Conditions are ideal in all respects, and in very easily changed circumstances could be most dangerous.

All boats at bottom, loaded, and off.

MILE 133. Waves very rough, and got hit just right to take 6” water.

MILE 133 ¾. TAPEATS CREEK. Dock takes right off to fish. Rest rig up shelters, have lunch. Hot disagreeable wind blows all afternoon. We all sleep, read, swim, etc. Dinner is lateish, and Dock comes in at last minute with a swell catch of about a dozen fine rainbow trout. They are most delicious. This is a poor camp to spend a full day as shade is too hard to find. Fishing is best early morning or late afternoon. Best luck is really almost to mouth of creek where it dumps into the river. They bite on anything.

**July 25**

MILE 136. DEER CREEK FALLS. Landing, we found no light for pictures so decided to wait a while. I initiated the idea of getting under the falls. It’s hard punching, icy like water. Garth, JoJo, Joe Sr. and the Dock went under. At last minute I backed out, remembering two days ago with my sinus. Dock was first out. Kent and I led off to explore the top of the falls by working up the left side which is easy. Garth followed, then Dock. The falls comes about an eighth of a mile thru a fifty foot, narrow, crevasse like gorge, which in turn lets out from an amazing, fairly level tree filled valley. In the gorge a very narrow trail, at one place laid up with rocks by cliff dwellers, gives access from the valley to the river. I believe this place will be a good shot on another trip to lay over a day to explore. Light showed little promise for being good for at least another hour, so on we go.

MILE 137. Cliff ruins on left.

MILE 138. Just a riffle, but in ‘40 Doris thrown from boat here.

MILE 139. FISHTAIL CANYON. Not much more than riffle. Cheat on right.

MILE 143. KANAB CREEK. LUNCH. Just up canyon right we get some anemic shade under a tamarisk tree. Water in creek murky, muddy
and foul. Run the rapid on left tongue, bearing back to middle. Nice long splashy ride. Don’t eat lunch here again. GO DOWN TO MILE 147.

MILE 147. WATER. Nice flow from cliff on right. Beautiful spot, good place to eat lunch.

MILE 149. UPSET RAPID. Well! A roughy, and almost impossible to walk around. So we run. Bad hole half way down. Try to get right. Margaret into WEN, Al into JOAN so as to be the last for pics. We hardly get splashed. MEXICAN HAT II gets a hard blow from water in hole. SANDRA medium. JOAN thru fairly dry. Swell ride.

MILE 156. HAVASU CANYON. CAMP. Tricky to get in. Stay close to left wall on approach then duck in quick at mouth of canyon. We arrive too late for pictures. Row right on up canyon to foot of first falls, about \( \frac{1}{8} \) mile. We anchor boats on right, then ferry across to left where camp is made. Nice spot. Margaret rode on to here from Upset Rapid. Have some rainbows that Dock caught this morning before leaving Tapeats. They’re really good. To bed.

**JULY 26**

Up early, but are hanging around for light. In meantime we find a place to jump the canyon at mouth of river so get some pics there. It’s about 40’ from cliff to water. JoJo makes a trick jump from near here into shallow water and I’ll bet his arches still hurt!

SHOVE OFF. The Doc is behind as he’s still getting pictures.

MILE 162. No sign of the Doc.

MILE 164 CANYON. Wide open. Easy steal to right. Joe Jr. has been on oars from foot of Havasu Rapid to head of this one. All thru OK.

MILE 166. CATARACT CANYON. LUNCH. A fair place to eat, tho no water here. JOE. JR. Takes on oars again from here.

MILE 171. GATEWAY RAPIDS. Few rocks, bit rough, easy to run.

MILE 174. RED SLIDE CANYON. JOE JR. On oars to here.

MILE 179. LAVA FALLS. CAMP. Left. Very hot when we first land so sit around in what shade can be found and speculate on possible arrival of John Riffey, ranger from the TUWEEP STATION of the Grand Canyon National Monument. Zoe and I row across the river to get shade. Dinner is called. We row back and start eating. JOHN RIFFEY IS SPOTTED! He’s walking downstream on other side. I hasten across and get him. We provide another plate. He gives Al and I messages from our wives. Doris and children made it safely to Santa Cruz, so I breathe a sigh of relief. Have looked over the rapid enough to decide on a lining job. Portaging is impractical. Bad current into wall at bottom makes running far too dangerous. The “experts” have a channel picked, but certain features not apparent to untrained eyes make this still a lining job!

**JULY 27**

Start lining. John Riffey and Kent on the upstream bow rope, JoJo near me ready to assist, Garth on the stern line. It’s damn hard work. Equipment is
carried to foot of big drop, then loaded in and ferried down below to cove. We make fast time, tho held up a bit for light for pictures. Lining proceeds very smoothly, and at 11:20 AM all boats are in cove at MILE 179½.

LUNCH. All equipment loaded back in, but we’re tired, so coffee and lunch hit the spot. Leaving here I take John Riffey aboard in bow of WEN. All and Randall on deck. We boom off, get caught in reverse wave or hole in rapid against wall just below, and fill clear up to gun’ls with water! Try to bail out, but my foot is in the bailing bucket. We make a precarious way over to the right shore, bail out, none the worse for wear. This has happened but once before to me, and that in 1940 up at Mile 138. We send mail and messages out with John Riffey, and say farewells. We plan on a get together this fall and a raft ride from here to WHITMORE WASH.

ON FROM MILE 180. Our last of the biggest rapids is behind us. At Lava Falls sent definite word out confirming that we would arrive on head of Lake Mead right on schedule.

MILE 187. I spot a green boat with orange trim on the right shore and think it is the Rohmer one man life boat. Upon inspection it proves to be a not too well weathered rowboat evidently left there by fishermen who have probably come down Whitmore Wash.

MILE 188. WHITMORE WASH. CAMP. No water here. [But the wash has grown up with trees and bushes since ’42, making passageway up the canyon really tough]. We camp just up from mouth of wash—makes a good camp. [Some of us work up the canyon searching out better shade]. Clouds up, and a few drops of rain fall just at bedtime, but it lasts but a few minutes.

JULY 28
SHOVE OFF. Joe Jr. moves in with the Doctor to take over the oars, and Joe Sr. gets over into the MEXICAN HAT II.

MILE 191. Camped here in ’41.

MILE 198. PARASHONT WASH. Here, as at Whitmore, there’s a good trail in from the back country. We stop to look at the old cache under the ledge, but see no sign of anyone having been here in a long time. Left note in can under ledge.

SPRING CANYON. CAMP. Current been slow to here, so have been dabling the oars a bit to make a bit of time. Day has been clear, but remarkably cool out on the water. We eat lunch in “shade” of tamarisk trees, then prowl around for shade. THIS is the canyon overgrown with bushes etc. since ’42. Its a good night camp, but very poor to spend day at. Plenty of good water here.

JULY 29
SHOVE OFF.

MILE 205. 205 MILE RAPID. Joe Jr. still with Doc. And this is a surprise here. Tho I just look over from boat and run wide open, this rapid has some really heavy water, and is quite an eye opener to start day with.
MILE 209. GRANITE PARK. Mildly rough but easy channel. Doesn’t look so hot for landing a plane here. Back at SPRING CANYON it looked much better, or even WHITMORE.

MILE 209. A crude shelter is seen on the right bank.

MILE 213 LEFT. A cove and willow tree make this out to be a very wonderful camping spot. No water, but could fill canteens above at Spring Canyon.

MILE 215. Doc’s boat saw mother mountain lion and cub on left here.

MILE 215. THREE SPRINGS CANYON. No sign of water, or even mouth of canyon here. Looks like there might have been a slide, as I remember seeing water from the boat here on one of the trips. Could land above and walk into the springs, but I don’t see much point in it.

MILE 217. TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN MILE RAPID. This is a rough and a bit tricky piece of water. I have selected it as a trial horse for “dub” day, tho with some misgivings as at this stage there is some really mean water piling into the wall if a fellow miscalculates his pull out off the tongue to the left. I take Joe Sr. as passenger, then JOAN, piloted by JoJo, OK. SANDRA, piloted by Randall, very perfect run. I expected him to
have trouble, but instead he came thru with unbelievably perfect timing! MEXICAN HAT II, piloted by AL, OK. THIS IS ENTRANCE TO LOWER GRANITE GORGE.

LUNCH. Bottom of 217 on left. Nice cove with lots of shade. However the shade is only good at this time of year up to about 1:00 PM.

MILE 225. DIAMOND CREEK. CAMP. Well, this is trip 5 to here. Barely are landed than we go up to perform the solemn rites of the initiatory degree into the ROYAL ORDER OF COLORADO RIVER RATS. Where it is some ways looks like a mild touch of horseplay, it really has a most significant meaning. There are but four initiates, as there are but four who have made the full run from Lees Ferry. In order of initiation: ALL MILOTTE—RANDALL HENDERSON—MARGARET MARSTON—KENT FROST. Shortly after a terrific wind comes up that whips water off the river up to 75' on the adjacent cliffs! Showers a bit too. This all quiets down by dinnertime. After dinner we play charades. VERY COLD drinking water can be gotten upstream a ways from the springs bubbling out of the bank about 200 yards above Diamond Creek. About where we usually tie the boats. NO flies. We have seen few if any pests, flies or insects. I associate this fact with the fact that we have seen no sheep, burros, etc. Usually this camp is a fright for flies.

JULY 30
OUR LAST DAY ON THE RIVER. You get a funny feeling on this morning—at least I do. The accomplishment of having run the Grand Canyon is assured. We are about to check that fact up, so behind me lies one of my really outstanding adventures. I don’t want to think that I will never be doing this again, so right here and now I secretly set my next trip! This has been a very swell party—each trip gets smoother and smoother. This will never be a “milk run,” it will always be a trip filled with unexpected thrills, surprises, some hardships, and above all, a feeling of having pitted oneself against dangerous and trying conditions—and winning out.50 I feel relieved to almost be there—and sorry—the worry and responsibility of keeping the boats and personnel out of real danger is quite a job.

SHOVE OFF. Cloudy and pleasantly cool this morning. River is brightish red.

MILE 230. TRAVERTINE FALLS. No rough or tricky rapids to here. Just a lot of fun in nice splashy rapids.

MILE 231. MILDLY ROUGH.

MILE 232. 232 MILE RAPID. Watch this one—VICIOUS!

MILE 236. GNEISS CANYON. LAKE MEAD! Funny, I always feel the lake under me. This is it. We’re off the Colorado River.

MILE 238. Old survey camp on left. Cable overhead. One we ate at in ‘42.

MILE 239. SEPARATION CANYON. Good current to here. We go up for group pictures at the plaque. It’s hot. Thence up Separation a few hundred yards on right to get shade under some trees to eat lunch. Not a
good spot to loaf during day or hunt shade in. Floor of canyon is regular quagmire. Although my original itinerary called for staying overnight here, I want to slip on down to Spencer Canyon so as to have a better start on the meeting of the big tow boat tomorrow.

MILE 243. It has cooled off and gotten cloudy. I have been rowing to supplement the current. Al now takes over the oars.

MILE 246. SPENCER CANYON. Al on oars to here. We pull in but it being cool etc., I am talked into going on down the lake a ways, so on we go. I take over the oars again.

MILE 248. SURPRISE CANYON. Randall and Al rigged a sail, so I steered with the oars and we’ve really batted right along.

MILE 252. REFERENCE POINT CREEK. THIS IS AS FAR AS MY MAP GOES. The lake is still very shallow, and it becomes increasingly clear that the big boats can’t get up this far. Lake is muddy, and there’s still around a three mile current. On we go!

We row in 30 minute heats. I figure we average 5 MPH.

POINT UNKNOWN. Camp on right. Have to row across lake for wood. But it’s a swell camp. I can’t cease to be amazed at the great bars covered with tamarisks that are all over the lake. The lake appears to be 20–25 feet below high level mark. Garth and JOJO swim across lake and back.
JULY 31
I think that this is about Mile 260. We hope to find Emery Falls around any corner now.

We are getting fed up with rowing. Just now we spot a trail leading up to some caves.

We determine that across in cove on the left is Emory Falls. I feel that the distance in doesn’t justify going there and head for shade below. Right here is where we lose the last of the river current. We go on a bit further and it becomes clear that to spend several hours waiting we should have plenty of shade and water, so we signal other boats in and we turn back.

EMORY FALLS. The lake is raised and cove cleaned out so a big boat even can go right up under the falls. We prepare lunch, keeping an alert ear for the sound of approaching motors. Then a siesta. By 1:00 PM, however, both Kent and I are getting tired of this waiting around, so we decide to go on down the lake and maybe hustle the boats up. We advise the others, and further leave word that they are to wait no longer than 4:00 PM, and if by then that no boats have shown up they are to start out.

Kent on oars, we leave Emery Falls.

I take over the oars—a heavy tail wind comes up and Kent holds up a tarp for sail—AND WE MAKE TIME!

Can see PIERCES FERRY—and we cross into the clear water.

We pull into cove just down lake from landing by mistake. We go up to look around, and almost by accident see occupied dwelling over in the next cove. Arriving there afoot we meet one BILL GREEN, who works for Bureau of Reclamation, Weather Bureau, etc., in collecting data at this point. He greets us grandly, and has us in to dinner. Then we drive up to overlook the lake, and rounding the point comes our fleet of boats! Returning to the dock, Bill and I set out in a rowboat with an outboard motor to meet our party. Kent in the meantime ferries the WEN around the point into the main landing cove. We tow our party in—they too did quite a bit of sailing to here.

Landing, we repair to Bill’s, and dinner ensues. Hearing a motor, Bill and I go down to meet a private cruiser that has newsman and photographer aboard that came to see us. They told us that the Park boat went on to Emory Falls to spend the night, and the Tours boat was last seen down the lake, and probably would spend the night way below. Get lots of pics, then the newsman took off in Bill Green’s car to drive into Boulder City to get the story and pics out. We finally all rolled out on the beach—to bed!

AUGUST 1
We have learned that Mountain Standard Time now prevails in all of Arizona, and that at HOOVER DAM we change, on Nevada side, to PST.

Up at daylight, and the three fellows from the cruiser—JAY PORTER, BILL RUSSELL, RAY PAYNE—join us in breakfast. Bill Green got back at around daylight. Then Garth, Joe Sr., Kent and I climb aboard the cruiser
and run the seven miles over to Emery Falls and find the Park Service _et al_ just getting up. They are most surprised to see us! They don’t look for us _until_ today! The message received from Lava Falls said we would be 24 hours late!

I am pleased to meet my old friend Ray Poyser, also Bill Belknap.\(^5\)

Also aboard are:

- Gordon Baldwin, Park Naturalist
- Don Ashbaugh, reporter, _Las Vegas Review Journal_
- Mavin Carter, reporter, _Boulder City News_
- Paul McDermitt, president of Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce.
- Harry Meyers, official photographer, Region III, National Park Service.

The thothead [sic] prevails that the Tours boat, “BETTY D,” has broken down and is laying below by the Grand Wash Cliffs. We go on to Pierces Ferry. Arriving there, we are soon treated to a Republic Seabee\(^5\) coming in. They pick up pics and soon take off again. The fast cruiser leaves. Garth goes down in the fast cruiser with Jay Porter and his friends. Rest of river party elects to stay with the boats.

Farewells are said to the hospitable Bill Green and with the boats in tow, away we go. Next to Park Boat #1, in order of two is SANDRA, JOAN, MEXICAN HAT II, WEN, and then the emergency rowboat of the Park Service.

No sign is seen of the Tours boat. We then accept the fact that it may have gone by up the lake while we were all at Pierces Ferry and watching the amphibian.

At noon we pull into a sandy beach at Greggs Basin and eat and swim.

Nice cool trip down lake and the time passes pleasantly. I was handed a letter from Doris which was good to get.

ARRIVE boat docks! Greeted there by friends and relatives. The recon car and trailers are there—I go up to Lake Mead lodge to get the station wagon. I have to take one trailer clear into Boulder City to get air in the tires. By fast works of Garth, JOJO, Kent and myself we are all loaded and up to Lake Mead Lodge by 7:00 pm PST. All have dinner together—grand time.

After dinner, until late I talk with Mr. D.E. Morrison of TOURS, Inc. First, tho, our dinner is hurried so we can make a deadline of 8:30 p.m. for a special tour of Hoover Dam. Then over to the ball park where we are introduced at a sort of outdoor benefit, ballgame etc., going on. Then back to Lodge, where my late conversation with Mr. Morrison takes place.

**AUGUST 2**

Desloges are awaiting plane confirmations for South Rim. Randall takes off. I say goodbye to the Milottes. Margaret and Garth and Doc have gone to see
Garth off on plane for Calif.

We go into Boulder City and gas up. We’re off! I lead the way in the station wagon pulling the WEN and JOAN. Kent and his wife follow in recon car pulling the SANDRA and MH2nd.

LUNCH at Kingman. Been really cool all morning.

During afternoon run thru several showers. One, as hard a rain as I’ve ever seen. A reflection of the widely scattered showers is seen by the Desloges passing us in a chartered station wagon, storms evidently grounding flights.

Outside of Kingman, I am intrigued by the countless rows of parked army planes, so, at a close by private field I rent an Aeronca and fly myself over and around the planes. It’s an impressive sight.54

We eat dinner at Seligman, then on to Williams. Just where the road turns off into the south rim we pull to one side and lay out our beds for the night.

AUGUST 3
Eat breakfast at a little place up the road. Stop in to see the Bill Browns who used to run the MARBLE CANYON LODGE.

Arrive at South Rim. Short visit with the Desloges just before they leave on their way to California.

Nice visit with Lem Garrison, Mr. and Mrs. Bryant. I get to see and borrow a copy of the August issue of National Geographic which has the story in first section of my San Juan River trip.55

Visit and see Emery Kolbs show.

Dinner or lunch at Bright Angel Lodge.

Arrive Cameron about 3:00 PM. Recon car has developed a bad engine knock. I decide it will make Mexican Hat if driver never goes over 20 MPH! And what shape the roads are in! You can hardly drive over 10–15 MPH on the roads anywhere anyhow.

At 10:00 PM, just past Kayenta, we pull in and go to sleep.

AUGUST 4
Up bright and early, make coffee and eat some brown bread. Arrive Mexican Hat about 9:30 AM. Boats are unloaded, equipment stowed away. Kent and his wife leave. I prepare and pack for my start in the morning.

AUGUST 5
Rained terrifically during night—all washes are running. I leave Mexican Hat enroute for Santa Cruz, California. It takes me exactly 8 hours to make the 27 miles to Bluff!56

And so ends another trip through the Grand Canyon. And begins plans for the next trip.