

78



# THE PERILS OF A VOYAGE DOWN THE GRAND CANYON

## The Thrilling Experiences of Charles Russell and E. R. Monett

The Journey Had Its Beginning at Green River, Utah, and Will End, if it End Happily, at the Needles.

Bright Angel, Grand Canyon, Ariz., Jan. 16.—(Special Correspondence of The Republican.)—Some where in the bottom of the Grand Canyon and below the foot of Bright Angel trail two men in one sixteen-foot rowboat are being hurled through the rapids of the Colorado river with their destination, the Needles, California, more than 200 miles distant and their starting point, Green river, Utah, more than 400 miles at their backs. In this one flimsy craft these two men are attempting to perform a feat which has been accomplished successfully only twice in history—and then by large, well equipped parties with much heavier and bigger boats.

Behind them up the river, five miles above here, lie the remains of one of their boats, wedged fast between two boulders at the foot of the famous Sockdolager rapids—where the river plunges down in a continuous series of cataracts for ten miles with a total drop of 210 feet. Two hundred fifty miles further north, just where neither man knows, is the third boat with which the little expedition started. Its occupant, the organizer of the trip, has disappeared. Whether a victim of the river which has claimed for its own almost every man who ever dared to conquer its fearful rapids or a deserter, traveling over land to the nearest habitation in southern Utah—the fate of this third man is as yet unknown to his quondam companions.

### The Expedition.

The two men who started down the river from here are Charles S. Russell of Prescott, Arizona, and E. R. Monett of Goldfield, Nevada. The third man was Albert Loper, a native of Louisiana, Mo. Russell is 21 years old and Monett only 23. Loper, whose enthusiasm over the expedition seemed to suffer a serious setback after the first

rough water of the trip, was the eldest of the trio, 38 years old.

When Monett's boat was smashed into fragments in the rapids only five miles above here the men at first thought they must abandon their attempt to make the entire 752 miles of their planned trip. Finding, however, that by sitting on the steel covered deck of the little boat still remaining, Monett could ride with his companion through all but the roughest water, the couple decided to continue their fight against the river.

Except for Major J. W. Powell's trip in 1869 in which he used four boats and ten men, and for Robert B. Stanton's expedition twenty years later, in which 16 men and six boats were engaged, every attempt to make the passage down the Colorado river has ended in disaster to the participants. Both Powell and Stanton found it impossible to duplicate their records when each, two years after his first trial, tried to cover the same distance a second time.

### Earlier Attempts.

In both these earlier attempts a definite object was in the minds of the explorers and both expeditions were backed by capitalists who saw to it that their proteges were thoroughly outfitted to withstand and overcome the perils of the journey. In the case of these latest adventures (they are both miners with no ideas of geology beyond that of the ordinary prospector) their only purpose in attempting the passage of the 750 miles of the wildest water known to man is to discover the possibilities of placer mining along the river bottom. It has taken nine years for these miners to make their preparations and perfect their plans to a point where they felt safe in starting. The money with which they bought their outfit and provisions

represent the combined savings of the men over a period of many months. They told of their scheme to no one. To no individual did they turn for help.

The plan originated in 1899 in the mind of Russell's fellow worker in a mine in Cripple Creek, Loper. In 1893 Loper had been attracted to the San Juan river, a tributary of the Colorado in southeastern Utah, by the excitement created by the discovery of placer mining there. He had never forgotten his experiences and confided to Russell in 1899 his belief that the larger Colorado offered proportionately greater chances of much richer placer mining. At least no prospector had ever gone over the ground—a statement true of very few localities in all this western country.

The two men planned to make their start in the spring of 1900. But the dangers and almost insurmountable difficulties of the task they had so lightly undertaken slowly appeared to them—and they decided to wait until they were properly equipped in point of money and information. At the outset they found they must get at least one more companion if they were to be successful—and four men were preferable to three. According to Russell their eight years' search disclosed no individual with the necessary qualifications who was willing to make the trip.

#### The Third Man Found.

It was consequently not until April of last year that their long laid plans began to materialize. Loper met Monett, a boy in appearance, not seemingly strong and unusually quiet as he did his day's work in the Mohawk mine in Goldfield. But that Monett was not young, in courage at least, and not as weak as a casual glance revealed was presently evidenced when the young man expressed not only a willingness to share the dangers of the trip with the two others but urged as proof of his strength his work in the mines—a daily physical test calling for no little endurance.

Loper notified Russell, then foreman of a mine near Prescott, that the third man was at last a reality and a meeting was arranged for Green river early in September. To this point the three sheet steel rowboats Russell and Loper had determined to pin their faith to and three months supply of provisions were shipped. As an indication of their own mental attitude as to the remarkable aspect of their undertaking the fact that they gave the boat company no intimation of the test to which they were to put them is illuminating.

The start was made down the Green river September 29. Four days later the trio had reached the junction of the Green and Grand rivers, the beginning of the Colorado, having covered the 120 miles in less than five days. From this point to Hite, a small town near the Arizona line, the first bad water was encountered in the 41 miles of Cataract Canyon. Loper's boat met with disaster here—dashing on a rock the other two had escaped and puncturing a long rent in its side. The party managed to reach Hite, however, towing the damaged boat, and there made the necessary repairs.

#### One Falls Out.

Loper had acted as photographer of the expedition and had the camera and plates in his boat when it was

filled with water. Examination showed the plates were ruined and the shutter badly rusted. It was therefore decided that Loper should remain behind at Hite and await the arrival of a new shutter for which he had written. It was agreed that he need not thus be delayed for more than two weeks and should be able to rejoin his companions at Lee's Ferry, 140 miles below Hite, within 41 days.

Accordingly Russell and Monett pushed ahead and put in many days prospecting along the shores of the river through Glen Canyon. After 42 days of waiting at Lee's Ferry, a Mormon settlement of three families, Russell and Monett determined their own safety, if they were to complete the trip before their now rapidly decreasing supply of provisions was exhausted, forced them to start on without Loper for whom they had waited more than twice as long as the time agreed on.

#### An Unlucky Day.

Friday, December 15, had no terrors for the intrepid pair and they started on down the river on the morning of that day with the 66 miles of Marble Canyon in front of them acting as an introduction to the 217 miles of the Grand Canyon below.

In dwelling on this stage of the journey Russell seemed to lose sight of the remarkable nerve both men showed in starting down through what is admittedly the wildest part of the river without the third companion who at the outset had seemed absolutely indispensable to the successful accomplishment of the trip. Instead he emphasized rather his belief that Loper had chosen not to face more dangers and had voluntarily staid behind at Hite—and that therefore he and his companion were not to be held up to blame for deserting their comrade. That they might be held so accountable seemed to concern him much more than that their daring might be condemned.

In seven days they had passed the length of the roaring stream in its descent through perpendicular walls of marble reaching up on an average to a height of 2000 feet, and had come through safely the worst rapids to that point of their entire trip—at one stage there being 57 falls of from 15 to 20 feet in a distance of 13 miles, according to Stanton's records in which an accurate count of all the rapids throughout the length of the Colorado was kept.

#### Entry of Grand Canyon.

They entered the Grand Canyon December 20. For the first fifteen miles below the entrance of the little Colorado and the beginning of the big canyon they found the water comparatively quiet. But from this point on to the beginning of the first granite gorge their way was threatened with the worst falls they had met thus far. The good luck which had attended them from the start, however, still prevailed and they managed to force their way without damage to either boat down over the almost continuous cataracts for five long days. Christmas found them only 15 miles above Bright Angel. In describing the manner of their celebrating the day Russell remarked casually that they certainly hung up their stockings—to dry. From beginning to end of their journey the adventurers have been obliged to depend for fuel entirely on such

drift wood as they could find lodged in eddies and on the rocky shores. More than one night they have spent in clothes soaked through with the icy water of the Colorado—with no fire to warm them. Their Christmas camp, however, was on a narrow strip of sand with a greater supply of drift wood at hand than they had found at any point along the river.

#### The "Sockdolager."

Beginning immediately below this camping place and continuing for the succeeding ten miles the river dashed madly through that stretch of foaming water called by Stanton—the Sockdolager. To make matters worse Russell found it impossible to follow his usual custom of "picking a trail" through these rapids. Ordinarily the elder man climbed along the precipitous sides of the canyon beside each cataract, leaving Monett above the rough water in charge of the two boats. From his vantage point Russell could pick out the most dangerous places and chart a course through the rapids accordingly. But throughout these ten miles the granite walls are sheer and smooth for the first fifteen hundred feet of their rise upwards. Russell could find no foothold—and the men for the first time faced the necessity of "shooting" unknown waters.

As always Russell led the way in his boat, swinging it into the boiling current stern first—his own method of taking each cataract, making his frail craft respond to his will when possible by a forward pull on one or the other of his oars. For half an hour both men were hurled down the seemingly never ending length of tossing waters. After the first minute the cockpit in each boat was filled to the gunwales with icy water in which the oarsmen sat covered to the armpits. Hundreds of times great waves totally submerged them, the little boats each time staggering out from under the terrific weight of the water only to plunge into another broken mountain-high wave.

#### The Disaster.

With less than a quarter of a mile still to be covered before the less vicious water below was reached and just as Russell was sweeping around the last great curve beyond which he could see the placid water—he heard his companion cry out in terror from behind. Before he could turn to see the cause of the cry he was driven round the curve.

Mooring his boat to the bank at the foot of the rapids as quickly as possible Russell half climbed, half waded, along the shore of the river and made his way back to the side of the rapids.

Monett, his boat wedged tightly between two jagged rocks, a foot below the surface of the sweeping water, was hanging desperately to the gunwale of the little craft—his body straightened out horizontal by the rush of the water about him. The boat was completely wrecked. But when Russell threw the rope to his comrade he was astounded to see the boy carefully work his way nearer the boat and begin to tie its contents securely to the only means of saving his own life. Against the roar of the rapids it was useless for Russell to yell to his companion to let the provisions go and save himself. Four times the boy let Russell haul sides of bacon and sacks of beans through the thirty feet of

death dealing waters between him and the shore before he finally caught the rope and let Russell drag him to safety. He had been in the water more than twenty minutes and was nearly exhausted when Russell lifted him to his feet.

#### The Explorers Undismayed.

The loss of the boat seemed at first to mark the end of their attempt to equal the record of their predecessors. But Monett insisted that they try the plan of his straddling the stern of the boat still remaining.

"If we strike to rough water I can always swim overboard," he urged. "And we've needed a drag that wouldn't get fouled in the rocks all along."

It was a magnificent exhibition of this young man's entire ignorance of the word fear.

Before proceeding further the men pitched camp at the foot of the rapids and made their first comprehensive investigation of the formation in the granite. Although neither man would divulge the nature of their discoveries it is interesting to note they spent ten days at this point.

It was noon, January 6, that the trail party from the hotel on the rim at Bright Angel, forty men and women eating their luncheon at the river shore, saw two men swing out of the rapids two hundred yards up the river and row leisurely toward them. In the thirty years that tourists have visited the bottom of the canyon at this point it is safe to assert that not one ever saw a sight like this.

Two horses were placed at the disposal of the miners—their clothes torn and soaking wet, their faces covered with an undisturbed growth of beard of 119 days' accumulation. While they had planned to climb out of the canyon here to mail and receive letters they had no intention of remaining. With all their provisions now confined to the limited quarters of one boat and with other incentives to make them push on with all speed possible it was with difficulty that they were persuaded to remain at the hotel three days.

During their stay they were feted and made the heroes of the hour by both the men and women guests. Through all they displayed an equanimity and unflinching good nature which surprised those who expected to find these rough looking adventurers taciturn rather than so entirely at ease.

#### The Last Stretch.

Yesterday the entire community, guests and employes of the hotel, accompanied the two men to the river edge and bade them an enthusiastic farewell as they pushed off into mid-stream and headed down river.

From now until they reach the Needles they will see no living human being. Not a house stands within twenty-five miles of the river bed throughout the whole 322 miles of the journey still before them.

According to both Powell and Stanton the most dangerous and unmanageable rapids of the river are about a mile below here. The walls of the canyon there are so precipitous that not a mountain sheep could find a foothold. Until the next four weeks are passed there will be no way of finding out if Russell and Monett succeeded in making the passage through this greatest fall. At the end of that time they may be expected to arrive

daily at the Needles, their supply of provisions being sufficient for only six weeks at the outside and their plan being to press on to the completion of their enterprise with all possible speed.  
HAYDEN TALBOT.

**APPOINTMENT OF ROAD OVERSEER.**—A contest for the position of road overseer in road district No. 22 in the Buckeye country, was settled yesterday by the board of supervisors by the appointment of C. M. Zander. Mr. Zander had been filling the position.

## ITCHING HUMOR ON LITTLE BOY

His Hands were a Solid Mass, and  
Disease Spread All Over His Body  
—In Four Days the Child was  
Entirely Cured—Mother Strongly

### RECOMMENDS CUTICURA SOAP AND OINTMENT

"One day we noticed that our little boy was all broken out with itching sores. We first noticed it on his little hands. His hands were not as bad then, and we didn't think anything serious would result. But the next day we heard of the Cuticura Remedies being so good for itching sores, etc., that I thought I would get them. By this time the disease had spread all over his body, and his hands were nothing but a solid mass of this itching disease. I went to the drug store and purchased a box of Cuticura Soap and one box of Cuticura Ointment, and that night I stripped my little boy and took the Cuticura Soap and lukewarm water and washed him well. Then I dried him with a soft bath towel, and took the Cuticura Ointment and rubbed him thoroughly with it. I did this every evening before I put him to bed and in three or four nights he was entirely cured. You have my permission to publish this because anybody who suffered as my baby did ought to know of the Cuticura Remedies. I will surely and gladly recommend the Cuticura Remedies, for they are a godsend to all suffering with skin diseases. Mrs. Frank Donahue, 208 Fremont St., Kokomo, Ind., Sept. 16, 1907."

## PIMPLES

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Cured by Cuticura.

Gently smear the face with Cuticura Ointment, the great Skin Cure, but do not rub. Wash off the Ointment in five minutes with Cuticura Soap and hot water and continue to bathe the face freely for some minutes. Repeat morning and evening. At other times use hot water and Cuticura Soap for bathing the face as often as agreeable.

Complete External and Internal Treatment for Every Humour of Infants, Children, and Adults consists of Cuticura Soap (25c.) to Cleanse the Skin, Cuticura Ointment (50c.) to Heal the Skin, and Cuticura Resolvent (50c.) to Purify the Blood. Sold throughout the world. Foster-Dyce & Co., Chem. Dept., Boston, Mass.

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