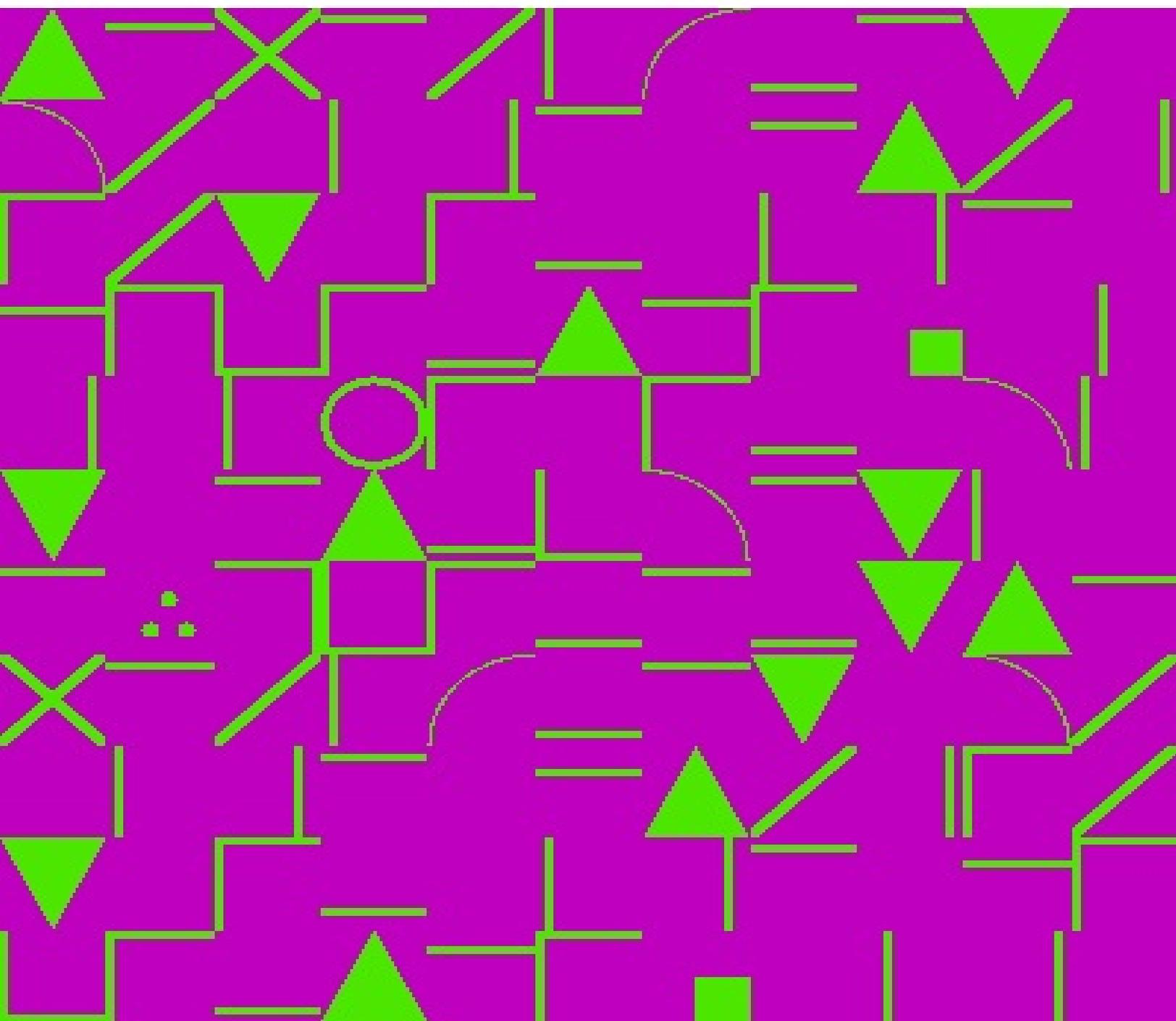


Adventures in the Canyons of the Colorado, by Two of Its Earliest Explorers

William Wallace Bass



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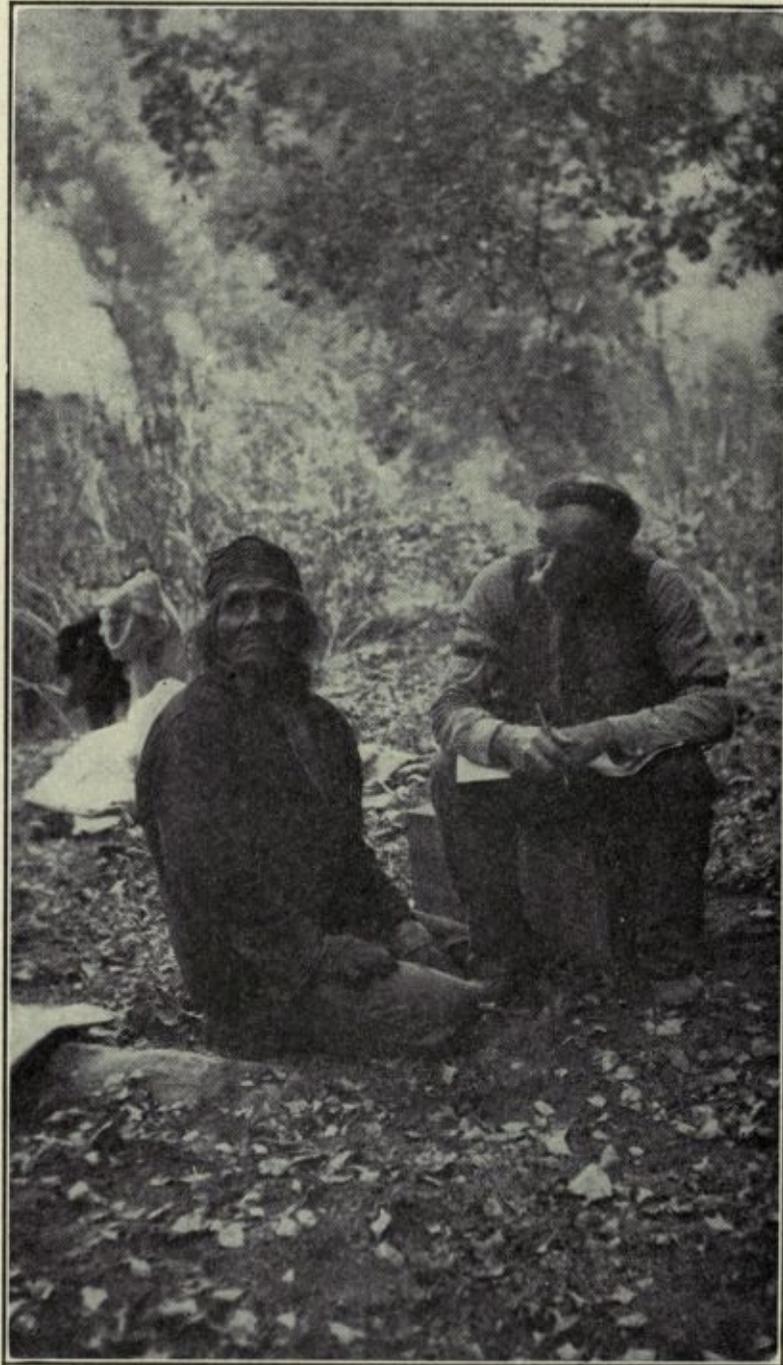
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*** START OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ADVENTURES IN CANYONS OF COLORADO ***

Produced by Al Haines and Chris Lindberg



Mr. W. W. Bass with his old indian friend.
Mr. Bass has written the tradition and history of the Havasupai
Indians and taught them our language.

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Adventures

in the Canyons of the Colorado

By two of its earliest explorers,
James White and W. W. Hawkins

with introduction and notes
by

WILLIAM WALLACE BASS

The Grand Canyon Guide

1920

Published at Grand Canyon, Arizona
by the Authors

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by
WILLIAM WALLACE BASS
Grand Canyon, Ariz.

FOREWORD

BY GEORGE WHARTON JAMES

Author of "In and Around the Grand Canyon," "Arizona the Wonderland," "The Grand Canyon of Arizona," "New Mexico, the Land of the Delightmakers," etc., etc.

The more the people of the United States know of their scenic wonderlands the more interest will there be aroused as to "who first saw" this or the other of them. The arousement of this especial interest in

regard to the Grand Canyon and its tributaries is growingly apparent. A hundred thousand Americans see the Grand Canyon today where one saw it at the time of my first visit, nearly forty years ago.

Among the hordes of people attracted to the Grand Canyon by curiosity, scenic allurements, business, pleasure or what not, but two have gained any fame as *guides* to its wondrous depths and rim revelations. These two are John Hance and William Wallace Bass. I knew Hance long before he had dreamed that the Canyon would help make him famous; I ate venison stew with him when he was but a cowboy in the employ of the proprietor of the Hull ranch; I wrote the first account of those peculiar and exaggerated yarns of his that gained him his fame as the "Munchausen of the West." It was on these yarns alone that his fame reposed. He was never a guide. He knew nothing of the Canyon, east or west, twenty miles from the trail that unfortunately was named after him. He never read a line of its history, and never cared to know who first discovered it. He got lost years after the Canyon was being visited by great numbers of whites, when he attempted to guide a party to the home of the Havasupai Indians, whose ancestors made the trail which he discovered and claimed as his own.

On the other hand, William Wallace Bass, who came to the Canyon some years ahead of Hance, felt its peculiar allurements from the first moment he saw it. There is no man living who has been more deeply interested in studying its geological history, in searching the tomes of the past for stories of its discovery, and in promoting the intelligent interests of literary men, artists, photographers, poets, geologists, students and tourists who have come to visit it than has he. His library upon the subject is exhaustive and complete, and he is so well versed in some features of its local geology, that he has changed many a scientist's opinions as to the secret of its formation and development. John C. Van Dyke wrote truly of him when he said in his recent book on the Grand Canyon, he "has been 'the guide, philosopher and friend' of almost every geologist at the Canyon. Unquestionably he knows the geology of the region."

Born in Shelbyville, Indiana, in 1848, he came to Arizona, by way of an hospital for incurables in New York, to die. Life in the open gave him a new hope, and at 72 he is still hale, hearty, vigorous and capable of more work than many a city-bred youth of 25. His life in Arizona has been a romance throughout, and in much of it I have either shared or been an interested spectator. My first meeting with Mr. Bass was at Flagstaff in 1888, under the following circumstances:

I had gone out to the Canyon, from Flagstaff, with the Rev. Stewart Conrad Wright, a Methodist minister, and several women. The Methodist church at Flagstaff had just been built, and on my return the minister invited me to give a lecture on what I had seen. At the close of the talk—which undoubtedly was a pretty crude though enthusiastic attempt—Mr. T. G. Norris, a lawyer with whom I had become acquainted, brought up to me a man dressed in typical cowboy fashion, evidently just off from a roundup, and introduced him as Mr. W. W. Bass, who wished to talk to me about the Canyon. He expressed his opinion of my knowledge of the great abyss in no qualified terms, and wound up by extending to me an invitation to go with him as his guest to the Havasupai Indian village, in company with a special representative, S. M. McGowan, sent out to investigate the condition of these Indians. Afterwards he would take me to another, and he claimed more wonderful and scenic portion of the Canyon. Gladly the invitation was accepted, and the following week saw me at Williams, starting out in a wagon driven by Mr. Bass, with Mr. McGowan as my vis-a-vis.

This trip was my introduction to the Havasupai Indians and the wonders of their romantically located home. But of greater importance than this was the fact that this trip firmly established a friendship with Mr. Bass that nothing has ever even momentarily shaken, and the years have rendered but more firm and

secure. Mr. Bass and I are both very human, have many of the frailties and weaknesses common to mankind, but regardless of them all, or of their magnification by officious meddlers and mischief-makers, we still preserve that unbroken serenity and confidence of friendship vouchsafed but to the most favored of men. We differ on a thousand subjects; we argue about men, measures and history; we read geology, ethnology and archaeology from different standpoints; he is aggressively argumentative, I am conciliatory acquiescent, yet in one thing we are steadily united, viz., in our devotion and love to the great canyon in or near which he has spent so great a part of his life.

This devotion on his part has led to the following of many faint clues that suggested the possibility of adding something of value to its history. The results of his investigations in two cases are herein recorded. Their value is unquestionable. The narrative of Mr. Hawkins bears throughout the stamp of truth, and while I was one of the first to express disbelief in the story of James White, I am now free to confess that the evidence of his truthfulness is growing powerfully within me.

Mr. Bass has done good service to those who are interested in Canyon history by securing these stories and I am confident they will meet with a cordial reception.

GEORGE WHARTON JAMES.

Pasadena, Calif., April, 1920.

INTRODUCTION

BY W. W. BASS

My interest in the Grand Canyon dates from soon after my arrival, in July, 1883, at Williams, Arizona. I had come West for my health on the still uncompleted line of the Santa Fe route, then known as the "Atlantic & Pacific." Williams was a railroad construction town and vied with Kingman in its "wild and woolly" reputation, but I located there and soon began to improve in health. In one of my exploring trips (the story of which is fully told in my life history, soon to be published), I found it necessary to refer to the available maps in order to secure what information was possible as to water locations and the general contour of the country I desired to explore. I succeeded in securing a Government map, and, as it was one with the name of J. W. Powell as Director of the Geological Survey, I supposed it was correct and reliable. But, to my dismay, after four days' journey following the dry washes and valleys I found myself farther away from the walls of the Grand Canyon than when I started. The water-holes and tanks were a myth and my animals nearly famished before I could retrace my steps to where I knew I could save them. In a word, the drainage system as shown on his map was a delusion and a snare and nearly resulted in my disaster.

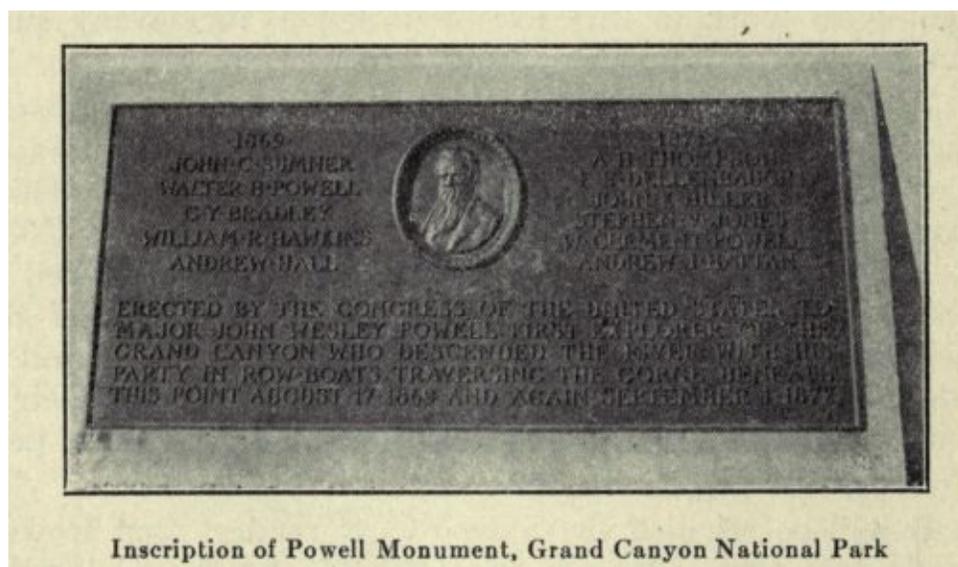
Naturally, this incident made me suspicious ever after of anything Powell claimed to have done in this particular region, but it remained for me to have some very positive evidence as to the reliability of his claims in another direction. Up to this time I had never met him and when in 1887 he employed me as guide in some triangulation work on the Bill Williams Mountain I was thoroughly convinced as to the

doubtful character of certain statements he made to me regarding other work of the same nature he claimed to have done some years previous. One in particular was as to a station he said I would find on "Red Butte," which lies about forty-five miles northeast of Williams and is a prominent feature on the landscape, as it is the only one to be seen anywhere along the south wall of the Grand Canyon for a distance of over fifty miles. It lies in the plain about twelve miles from the Canyon wall. As I had spent considerable time there only a few days previous in looking for a silver prospect reported to be there, I knew there was no such pile of rocks as he described and never had been within the knowledge of the oldest inhabitant in this region. I could not find enough rocks on the top of that mountain to build a respectable mining location. I also knew of others who had been there on the same mission and they can verify this statement. In addition to this the later geological work in this section failed to locate any such station as was claimed by him to me.

These incidents will explain, in great measure, my suspicions and questions as to anything related by Major Powell. Accordingly, when I secured a copy of the Government publication entitled: "Exploration of the Colorado River of the West and its Tributaries, Explored in 1869, 1870, 1871 and 1872, under the Direction of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution," and found it was written by Powell, it did not have the same weight with me that it would have done had I not had these personal experiences with him.

It will be recalled by many of my readers that Powell made two trips through the Canyons of the Colorado. Yet in this Government-published volume he makes scant reference to the second trip, and utterly fails to do credit to the members of his party. Why he should have failed to include his experiences and record the names of the men who constituted his force on this second trip has always been a mystery to various explorers of the Canyon, and especially to the members of the party, one of whom was F. S. Dellenbaugh. In his account of this trip in his book, "The Romance of the Colorado River," published in 1906, he states that perhaps this omission was for the sake of dramatic unity. Be this as it may, it has always seemed as if for some reason Powell did not care to do full justice to the brave men who accompanied him on this trip.

When, therefore, a monument was erected to Powell on the south rim of the Grand Canyon, with money appropriated by the Congress of the United States, and a full list of the men who accompanied him on *both* expeditions was presumably given on the bronze tablet placed on that monument, it was with considerable astonishment that I noted that the names of three men who accompanied the first expedition were omitted.



Inscription of Powell Monument, Grand Canyon National Park

Inscription of Powell Monument, Grand Canyon National Park

These men were O. G. Rowland, Seneca Rowland and William Dunn.

In seeking to find the cause for this strange omission, I turned to Powell's own report. On page 96, under date of August 27, he tells of the great difficulties they were beset with:

This morning the river takes a more southerly direction. The dip of the rocks is to the north, and we are rapidly running into lower formations. Unless our course changes, we shall very soon run again into the granite. This gives us some anxiety. Now and then the river turns to the west and excites hope that are soon destroyed by another turn to the south. About nine o'clock we come to the dreaded rock. It is with no little misgiving that we see the river enter these black, hard walls. At its very entrance we have to make a portage; then we have to let down with lines past some ugly rocks. Then we run a mile or two farther, and then the rapids below can be seen.

At eleven o'clock we come to a place in the river where it seems much worse than any we have yet met in all its course. A little creek comes down from the left. We land first on the right, and clamber up over the granite pinnacles for a mile or two, but can see no way by which we can let down, and to run it would be sure destruction.

After another page devoted to discussing the dangers and difficulties ahead of them, Powell continues, on page 98:

After supper Captain (O. G.) Rowland asked to have a talk with me. We walk up the little creek a short distance, and I soon find that his object is to remonstrate against my determination to proceed. He thinks that we had better abandon the river here. Talking with him, I learn that his brother, William Dunn, and himself have determined to go no farther in the boats. So we return to camp. Nothing is said to the other men.

For the last two days our course has not been plotted. I sit down and do this now, As soon as I determined all this, I spread my plot on the sand, and wake Rowland, who is sleeping down by the river, and show him where I suppose we are and where several Mormon settlements are situated.

We have another short talk about the morrow and he lies down again; but for me there is no sleep. All night long I pace up and down a little path, on a few yards of sand beach, along the river. Is it wise to go on? For years I have been contemplating this trip. To leave the exploration unfinished, to say that there is a part of the canyon which I cannot explore, having already almost accomplished it, is more than I am willing to acknowledge, and I determine to go on.

I wake my brother and tell him of Rowland's determination, and he promises to stay with me; then I call up Hawkins, the cook, and he makes a like promise; then Sumner, and Bradley, and Hall, and they all agree to go on.

August 28. At last daylight comes, and we have breakfast, without a word being said as to the future. The meal is as solemn as a funeral. After breakfast, I ask the three men if they still think it best to leave us. The elder Howland thinks it is, and Dunn agrees with him. The younger Howland tries to persuade them to go on with the party, failing in which, he decides to go with his brother.... Two rifles and a shotgun are given to the men who are going out. I ask them to help themselves to the rations, and take what they think to be a fair share. This they refuse to do, saying they have no fear but that they can get something to eat, but Billy, the cook, has a pan of biscuits prepared for dinner, and these he leaves on a rock.

.... The last thing before leaving, I write a letter to my wife, and give it to Howland. Sumner gives him his watch, directing that it be sent to his sister should he not be heard from again. The records of the expedition have been kept in duplicate. One set of these is given to Howland, and now we are ready. For the last time they entreat us not to go on, and tell us that it is madness to set out in this place; that we can never go safely through it; and, further, that the river turns again to the south into the granite, and a few miles of such rapids and falls will exhaust our entire stock of rations and then it will be too late to climb out. Some tears are shed; it is rather a solemn parting; each party thinks the other is taking the dangerous course.

Thus they part; Powell and the men who had determined to remain with him to go on and finally leave the exploration incomplete at a point a little further down. The three men who left the party—the two Rowlands and Dunn—were never seen again alive. On the following expedition Powell spent some time with the Shivwit Indians, in company with Jacob Hamblin, a Mormon pioneer and missionary. From them he learned of the death of the men who left him. On pages 130-131, he thus recounts the story. After he had talked with the Indians, one of them made a reply, and in his speech said:

Last year we killed three white men. Bad men said they were our enemies. They told great lies. We thought them true. We were mad; it make us big fools. We are very sorry.

After the council had broken up, so Powell says:

Mr. Hamblin fell into conversation with one of the Indians and held him until the others had left, and then learned more particulars of the death of the three men. They came upon the Indian village almost starved and exhausted with fatigue. They were supplied with food, and put on their way to the [Mormon] settlements. Shortly after they had left, an Indian from the east side of the Colorado arrived at the village and told them about a number of miners having killed a squaw in a drunken brawl, and no doubt these were the men. No person had ever come down the Canyon; that was impossible; they were trying to hide their guilt. In this way he worked them into a great rage. They followed, surrounded the men in ambush, and filled them full of arrows.

This is practically the whole story as told by Powell. For years it has been accepted as the truth. Science is Truth focalized, and there is no real science without truth. I have always wondered whether this narrative gave us the whole truth, and when I saw the Powell Monument and noted the omission of the three names of the two Rowlands and Dunn, I wondered still more. Why should the names of these three men be left off after having traveled over four hundred miles on the maiden trip, and thus having proven their valor and courage?



W. W. HAWKINS

W. W. HAWKINS

But now comes another witness on the scene. Some time ago I learned that William W. Hawkins, the cook referred to by Powell, was still alive. Powell died in 1902 at the age of 69 years. Hawkins was then living, and thus became the sole survivor (I believe) of the first Powell trip. After the expedition he settled in Pine Valley, Utah, but later moved to Gila Valley, Arizona, and thence to Graham County, where he resided for thirty-five years. He was Justice of the Peace for many years and resided at Eden in that county. He also was a prominent rancher and at his death had six sons living, two of whom reside near Mesa, Arizona. He was highly respected by all who knew him and no one of his large circle of friends and acquaintances will question the truth of this account as given to me for publication. He died in September, 1919, at the St. Joseph's Hospital, Phoenix, Arizona. The following account was written by him, in his own handwriting, a few months before his death, at my solicitation, with the understanding that I was to publish it, if it was deemed desirable. Hence I now give it to the world. The following is Hawkins' own brief introduction to his narrative:

1
I will write this as it comes to me and you
can then take what portion you see fit. I will
state just as it happened at the time that it
did happen. It seems that you have the two
Expeditions that Powell made down the Colorado
with somewhat mixed now in order to state in
this matter. It will be necessary for me to
give you a brief account of our first Expedition
from start to finish then you will have
a clear eye of the matter. and I can give you
a better understanding by commencing at
the first of course this will be some of it
that has already been published by Powell
himself. and some that happen in it was
not well to be put in to Powell's report, and
some of this I would not like for you to publish
as though it is true but as I am the only one that
remains of the first Expedition I could not
forget. I will how things were, and how they
happened.

Fac-simile of Page 1 of W. W. Hawkins manuscript account of the
First Powell Expedition.

Fac-simile of Page 1 of W. W. Hawkins manuscript account of the First Powell Expedition.

Indians of the Kanon with their
 worn no place worn or could
 with when we first come down
 Powell's second trip, you have
 mixed with the first trip, the second
 trip, he may left the party at Lees Ferry,
 and wait to Kanon for the mail then
 returned to the party at Handi-wah
 from Kanon. reliefment, that was long
 Dan, as he knew all about the country then
 But not at first. he never left the party
 until we are got thru to get to at
 the mouth of the Virgin then he and his
 brother was taken out to the railroad
 or stop by the Mormons, who lived
 on the money, Sumner Brody Hall and
 myself continued on down to river lake
 and my self stopped at them one summer
 and Brody went on to pursue the
 summer went to Denver Colorado Brody
 went to sandage col and died this
 summer died at Krumelutok Lake
 was killed news of lakes Powell and
 his brother died in the East, somewhere
 and I am here 9 miles below them.

Fac-simile of Page 3 of W. W. Hawkins manuscript account of the First Powell Expedition.

Fac-simile of Page 3 of W. W. Hawkins manuscript account of the First Powell Expedition.

in the fall of 1868. Myself J. C. Sumner,
 William Dunn, O. G. Rowland, Seneca Rowland
 were camped at the hot springs in middle
 park Colorado, about 100 miles west
 of Denver, Colo. trapping and prospecting
 both in that section and on White River
 some 75 miles further west. While our party
 J. C. Sumner in charge was in camp at
 this place, Major Powell and party pulled
 in with their pack animals 25 animals
 and 12 or 18 men. After they stopped and unpacked
 we all went over to see what they were
 going to do in the wild country, and they all
 seemed to be equally interested in our party.
 Our mode of dress was somewhat different
 to what they had been used to seeing, as we
 were all dressed in buckskin, and our hair
 came down on our shoulders. I was the
 youngest one in the crowd. We soon found
 out each other's business. Powell told us
 that he intended to make his

Fac-simile of last page of W. W. Hawkins manuscript account of the
 First Powell Expedition.

Fac-simile of last page of W. W. Hawkins manuscript account of the First Powell Expedition.

INTRODUCTION

I will write this as it comes to me and you can then take what portion you may see fit. I will state it just as it happened, at the time it did happen. It seems that you have the two expeditions mixed that Powell made down the Colorado River, and in order to straighten this out it will be necessary for me to give you a brief account of our first expedition from start to finish, then you will have a clear idea of the matter and I can give you a better understanding by commencing at the first. Of course this will be some that has already been published by Powell himself, and some that happened that was not well to put into Powell's report, but they are true. But as I am the only one that remains of the first expedition I could not prove just how things were and how they happened.

In the fall of 1868, myself, J. C. Sumner, William Dunn, O. G. Rowland and Seneca Rowland, brothers, were camped at the Hot Springs in middle park, Colorado, about one hundred miles west of Denver, Colorado. We were trapping and prospecting, both in that section and on White River, some seventy-five miles further west. While our party, J. C. Sumner in charge, was in camp at this place, Major Powell and party pulled in with their pack animals, twenty-five animals and twelve or eighteen men. After they stopped and unpacked we all went over to see what they were going to do in this wild country, and they all seemed to be equally interested in our party. Our mode of dress was somewhat different to what they had been used to seeing, as we were all dressed in buckskin, and our hair came down on our shoulders. I was the youngest one in the crowd. We soon found out each other's business. Powell told us

he intended to make his winter camp over on White River and in the spring he was going to explore the Colorado River from start to finish.. We told him that we intended to do the same thing, only on a small scale. He said that only one of his crowd was going with him down the river, that was his brother, Walter Powell. He said he would like to have our party join him and go with him down the river. We had most of our provisions on White River at that time. This was Powell's first trip with his pack animals and it would be necessary for him to make another trip, as most of his party would winter with him. After we both got over on White River where our cabins were, he said he would buy our provisions, horses and mules and our traps, and that we could become members of his party and that he would pay us reasonable wages to come with him. So we all agreed on prices for different articles. I had four head of animals, Sumner five head, Dunn two, and the Rowland brothers had three head. I owned all the traps. These he was to replace when we got through at Cottonwood Island. So we went to work building more cabins and put up ten or twelve, and fixed up for the winter by dragging up wood, which was plentiful there. Then we laid in a fine supply of venison. Before the snow got too deep, Powell took the most of his party that came from the east with him out to Green River Station and he with them went east, leaving his wife and brother in camp. In April we all broke camp and went to Green River Station and made camp about one-half mile below the U. P. R. R. bridge, and waited for Powell to return with our boats, which he did the latter part of April. He sent all the horses to Echo Canyon and sold them. He drew his rations from Fort Bridger. We all then went to calking up and painting our boats, which was no small job for us, for we knew nothing about a boat. Powell got a man discharged out of the army at Fort Bridger to come and show us how to calk the boats. This man's name was George Bradley, a man of nerve and staying qualities, as he proved later on. Mrs. Powell went to Salt Lake City before going east. We were all anxious to get started, but little did we know what was in store for us in the way of experience and danger. We had four boats, three of them were 22 feet long, 4 feet wide and 3 feet deep. Each end was decked over 4 feet at each end, air tight. These three were supposed to carry the provisions for ten men for eighteen months, that being the time Powell was going to take to make the trip. He was going to winter somewhere in the Canyon. His boat was sixteen feet long, made of pine; the others were oak. They were of the Whitehall pattern. The men were assigned to their boats and then the loads were placed in them. The Major's boat was used for a guide boat. It was manned by J. C. Sumner and William Dunn and the Major; next was Walter Powell and Bradley; the next was the Howland brothers and Frank Goodman; the next was the cook boat, manned by myself and Andy Hall. Each boat was loaded so as to have a nearly equal distribution, so that in case of an accident to one of them the others would still have an assortment of the provisions. After each boat had received its load we were ready to start. But where, none of us knew, only that we were going to go down through the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River. We had been told that in places the water ran under the ground. There was a great many people on the bank of the river to see us start. We were all green at the business, Bradley was the only one that had any experience. But he acknowledged afterwards that this was a little rough. We had very good water for some twenty miles, but, of course, had to watch out for the small boat, as it was supposed to go where the other boats that were loaded could not go. I remember our first camp that evening for the night and as I was steering the boat with one oar behind and standing up I could see what was in front of us. I saw that they were all landing and I told Andy they were camping at this point. The river was straight and the water smooth and Powell signaled to me and we tried to land, and did finally get to shore some four hundred yards below and the other boats dropped down to where we were and the rest of the boys had the laugh on us. Andy and I told the Major that we were too heavily loaded, the water only lacking four inches from running over the sides of our boat, and as Andy said the next day, we were seven inches nearer the bottom of the river than the other two large boats, as they were nine inches above water, and that we better unload some of the bacon and take chances of replacing it with venison and mountain sheep later on. So we unloaded five hundred pounds of bacon in the river. We soon found out that was better. We now passed through Brown's Park, some forty miles from where we

started. At the lower end of this park the river now runs into a bad canyon of red sandstone. This was our first canyon and Powell named it the flaming gorge, and it was well named. We made many portages and it was twenty-five miles long. It required ten days to go that distance, as we had to make a trail and carry our provisions and instruments from one place to the other the entire distance, and let the boats down by ropes over the bad rapids. Of course, when we got through and loaded up again the boats were not so heavy and the Major said our appetites were growing. At the mouth of this canyon we came to a nice little island which we called Island Park. Here we camped a few days, for we sure had rolled many a rock two-thirds of the twenty-five miles and soaked our provisions. I went out on the east side of the canyon some three miles to see if there was any game and run across a big buck deer coming down the trail to water about one-half mile from camp. He stopped to take a look at me and I shot just as he stopped and broke his neck. The boys heard the shot and Hall and Dunn came out and helped me in with it. Powell named the mountain Hawkins Mountain. We moved on down the river, which was very good traveling for a ways and then we heard a great roaring below and saw Powell standing on some rocks on the east side of the river. He motioned us to land, which we all succeeded in doing except Howland's boat. It went over the rapids and broke in two and threw the men out. They succeeded in catching hold of a large pine tree that was drifting top down stream and seemed to stop just to let the boys crawl on to it. The river was raising fast and Sumner, with the small boat, was trying to reach them, but his two first trials failed and the tree began to move on slowly and Goodman shouted, "Goodbye, boys." But then Sumner threw a line he made to where the boys were on the log, which had moved on down a ways, but he got them in the boat and finally got near enough to catch a rope and was hauled into shore some hundred yards below. As we had lost considerable of our provisions and one boat, of course the men had to double up in the other boats. Howland No. 1 came in with Hall and myself, Howland No. 2 went in with Capt. Powell and Bradley, Goodwin went in with Sumner, Dunn and the Major. But as we had good water for some time we finally came to the mouth of —— Creek. Up this creek about 18 miles is the Uinta Agency. We went up to the agency—Powell, Goodman and myself. It was the 4th day of July and we had dinner with the Indian agent. Here we left Goodman. He said he had all he wanted of the river. From here to the junction of the Green River with the Grand River the water is very good, a distance of one hundred miles, which took but a few days to make. The canyon is hard rock and the walls on the west side in some places overhang the water three hundred feet. Back under this shelf was drift-wood and willows at that time, a good home for beaver and otter. We stopped for noon and went into camp near the head of a small rapid and tied our boats to small undergrowth, and, being the cook, I had just started a fire in a nice little cove in the brush and rock. I had just got my "mess kit" out of the front of the boat when a wind started up and set the leaves and brush all a-blaze. I gathered up the mess kit and made for the boat. But the blaze beat me to it and had burned the small ropes in two that I had the boats tied with, and they were just moving into the current. I jumped, but missed the boat, and down I went, mess kit and all. I held on to the mess kit until I saw I could not raise with it and so I let it go and came to the top of the water to find the boat some thirty feet from me, and Andy was doing his best to hold it up stream until I could catch it. I just caught the boat as it was going into the rapid, but it was not a bad rapid, as the waves were about eight feet high. Bradley, held fast to the side of his boat, was not able to get into it, but went through the rapid and a part of the time his head was under the water. At the lower end of this rapid we stopped, as in our rush we had left the Major behind, and in order to get him out of a place he had got into we took four oars and made a bridge across a crevis in the rocks for him to cross over on. Three of the best hats the boys had were lost in the fire and rapids. We were now at the junction of the Green and Grand Rivers. The walls on the west side are 1,800 feet high, where the rivers come together in a V shape. Now our trouble begins, and plenty of bad rapids in the river. Dunn was the one who took the altitudes with the barometer and it was here we had the first real trouble in the party, although Powell had named Dunn the "Dirty Devil." But the rest of the boys looked over that. At noon, while we were making a portage and letting the boats over a bad place, the

ropes happened to catch Bill Dunn under the arms and came near drowning him, but he managed to catch the ropes and come out. While we were eating our dinner Sumner said that Dunn came near being drowned and the Major's brother made the remark that it would have been but little loss, and the Major spoke up and said that Dunn would have to pay thirty dollars for a watch belonging to him that had been soaked with water and ruined, and if he did not he would have to leave the party. Andy Hall and I were down at our boat, I having gone down after a cup and Andy had remained at the boat fitting one of his oars. When we returned to where they were eating Sumner asked me what I thought of the Major's proposition, and I asked him what it was, and he then related what had been said. I asked the Major if that was his desire and he said that it was. I made the remark that a part of his wishes could not be granted, as it was impossible to get out of the Canyon on account of the abrupt walls. He then said that it made no difference whether Dunn got out or not. I then said that I was sorry that Dunn had been jerked into the water and got the watch wet, and that I was sorry he felt that way with one of his party, and the Major seemed to be offended at my remarks and said I had no right to pass on the matter. Also that neither Hall nor myself, in the future of the party, would be expected to say anything, as we were too young. Hall made the remark that we had old heads on our shoulders anyway. Before this time everything seemed to be getting along fine, as each man had a certain task, or a certain thing to do, and I was doing the cooking, and I generally found plenty to do. Our meal was ready and we all seated ourselves on the rocks to eat our dinner. Up to this time I had always helped the Major all I could and washed his hand (as he only had one) and generally found him a good place to sit at meals, sometimes a few feet from the rest. But before this it never made any difference to me, but now it did, for, as Andy Hall would say, he raised hell with himself in the break he had made with Dunn. I could see that there was a different feeling in the whole party at this time and the Major had sat down several feet from the rest of the party. I poured out each man a cup of coffee and one for him also and we all began to eat. He then asked me why I did not bring him his dinner as I had been doing before and I told him he had just said that he was going to make a change in the outfit and I told him that I had made that change to start the ball rolling, and that he would have to come and get his grub like the rest of the boys. His brother then handed his dinner to him. After dinner Sumner asked him if he had changed his mind in regard to Dunn and the watch and he said he had not and that Dunn would either pay for the watch or leave the party. Dunn, Hall, Bradley and myself were near the cook boat and about twenty feet from the Major and Sumner. We could not hear what they were talking about, but we had decided that if Dunn left the party we would go with him. Of course, we expected opposition to what we intended to do, so after we had talked the matter over we wanted Bradley to go and tell the Major what we intended to do. But Bradley decided I had better go and tell him myself, as I had made the plan of going with Dunn. I went to where Sumner and the Major were talking, and the two Rowland boys were with them. I told the Major that Bradley, Hall and myself had decided to go with Dunn and that we would take my boat (the cook boat) and some grub, and we would pull out, and he could come when he got ready. He said he would not stand any such work, that it would be the ruin of his party. I told him that it was all his own fault and that I had no more talk to make and went back to the boat. I found Dunn, Bradley and Hall waiting to see what had happened, but before I had time to tell them, Sumner came and began to talk to us, telling us to not feel put out, that the Major was hasty and to give him another chance. Dunn said that the Major never did like him anyway, if he had he would never have named the Eskalanty^[1] River dirty devil. We camped at that place for the night and in the morning the Major said he would take thirty dollars for the watch and that he could pay for it when we got through. None of the party except the Major liked Capt. Powell. He had a bulldozing way that was not then practiced in the west. He threatened to slap me several times for trying to sing like he did, but he never did slap anyone in the party. We all moved off down the river all O.K., but our provisions began to run short, rapids became more often, some of them very bad, but for a few days everything went all right. The boys would tell Indian adventures at night that someone had had, but the remark was made that Dunn had

nothing to say and Captain Powell said he guessed Dunn did not know much about Indians. The Major chipped in and said, nor anything else. Sumner took it up for Dunn because he knew there would soon be trouble, and told Powell that Dunn had been wounded four times by the Comanchies, so it all passed off. The next day we had some very bad rapids, so bad that it was necessary to let the boats around some large rocks, and in order to do this, and as Dunn was a fine swimmer, the Major asked him to swim out to a rock where he could catch the rope and raise it over the rock so the boat would swing in below. He made the rock all O.K. and was ready to catch the rope which was supposed to be thrown to him, so he could swing the boat in below, but the Major saw his chance to drown Dunn, as we thought, and he held to the rope. That was the first time that he had interfered in the letting the boats around bad places and the rope caught Dunn around the legs and pulled him into the current and came near loosing the boat. But Dunn held on to the rope and finally stopped in water up to his hips. We were all in the water but the Major and Captain Dunn told the Major that if he had not been a good swimmer he and the boat both would have been lost. The Major said as to Dunn that there would have been but little loss. One word brought on another, and the Major called Dunn a bad name and Dunn said that if the Major was not a cripple he would not be called such names. Then Captain Powell said he was not crippled and started for Dunn with an oath, and the remark he would finish Dunn. He had to pass right by me and I knew that he would soon drown Dunn, as he, so much larger, could easily do. He was swearing and his eyes looked like fire and just as he passed I caught him by the hair of his head and pulled him over back into the water. Howland saw us scuffling and he was afraid Cap would get hold of my legs, but Dunn got to me first and said, For God's sake, Bill, you will drown him. By that time Howland was there and Cap had been in the water long enough and Dunn and Howland drug him out on the sand bar in the rocks. After I got my hold in Cap's hair I was afraid to let go, for he was a very strong man. He was up in a short time, and mad! I guess he was mad! He cursed me to everything, even to being a "Missouri Puke." I wasn't afraid of him when I got on dry ground; I could out-knock him after he was picked up twice. He made for his gun and swore he would kill me and Dunn. But this talk did not excite me and as he was taking his gun from the deck of the boat Andy Hall gave him a punch behind the ear and told him to put it back or off would go his head. Cap looked around and saw who had the gun and he sure dropped his. This all happened before the Major got around to where we were. He soon took in the situation and came to me and made the remark that he would have never thought that I would go back on him. I told him that he had gone back on himself and that he had better help Cap get the sand out of his eyes, that if he monkeyed with me any more I would keep him down next time. Sumner and I had all we could do to keep down mutiny and there was bad feeling from that time on for a few days and we began to not recognize any authority from the Major. We began to run races with our boats, as the loads were almost all gone. It was fun for the first two days, but the water began to get rough. Hall, Howland and myself were in my boat and I had become an expert in bad rapids and we ran several that the other two boats were let over with ropes. We stopped at noon one day to wait for the other boats. We were at the head of four bad rapids; it was some two hours before the other boats came and I had coffee all ready, as that was our principal food then. We had but little flour, but had plenty of dried apples and coffee. We laid in camp that afternoon and the Major and Sumner spent that afternoon in trying to find a place where we could let the boats over the first rapid with ropes. But they failed to find any place where we could get footing enough and the walls were too high for our ropes, so the Major said we would try to find a place on the west side the next day. That evening late Major and Sumner and the two Howland boys held a consultation (as I afterwards found out) to see about leaving the river with all hands. He said we would cross over and leave our boats and instruments under some large rocks and that we then would go out to some Mormon settlements and get some grub and return to our boats and continue on down the river. The Major asked me to bake up all the flour that we had and said to make the bread into bisquits, or dough-gods (as we called them), as flour and water was what we had to make them with. In about three hours I had them all baked. I told the Major that the bread was ready and

he called the boys and told them all his intentions as to leaving the river. That was the first time Hall and I knew anything about what was going on. I told Hall to take our shares and put them in the boat, as the Major said that each man should keep his own part as we might get separated. I told the Major that Hall and I had no intention of separating, and that Bradley, Hall and myself were going to stay with the river and go through or drown. I also told him that if we had enough coming to us to pay for the boat that he could keep it. Dunn, O. G. Howland and Seneca Howland had made up their minds to go and Dunn said he hated to leave Hall and myself, as we had been together a long time, and that we would perish in the river and that we had better come and stay with the party. I told him that was what I was doing, that I called Hall, Bradley and myself a party of three and each one of them was a party of one. While we were talking the Major came up to me and laid his left arm across my neck, tears running down his cheeks. By that time the rest of the boys were present and the Major said to me, Bill, do you really mean what you say? I told him that I did, and he said that if he had one man that would stay with him that he would not abandon the river, I just simply said that he did not know his party, and that Andy Hall and myself were too young to have any say in council and I said we are off now. He said that it was near noon and if I would make some coffee that we would have a cup of coffee together. I have been present at many solemn occasions, but I never witnessed one that come up to this. There were some strong hearts that shed tears. Bradley said it made him a child again. We crossed over to the west side of the river and there was where we left our instruments and one boat. This is the last time we ever saw Dunn and the two Howland brothers alive. Some years afterwards I, with a party of some others, buried their bones in the Shewitz Mountains, below Kanab wash. As to Powell leaving the party at Lee's Ferry, there was no ferry on the river, no one except some Indians ever crossed. There was no place known as Kanab wash when we first came down. Powell never left the party until we got through to the mouth of the Virgin River, where he and his brother were taken to the railroad or stage by some Mormons who lived on the Muddy. Sumner, Bradley, Hall and myself continued on down the river. Hall and I stopped at Ehrenburg and Sumner and Bradley went on to Yuma. From there Sumner went to Denver and Bradley to San Diego, where he died. Sumner died at Vernal, Utah, so I heard, and Hall was killed near Globe, Arizona. Powell and his brother both died somewhere in the east and I am here nine miles below Phoenix.

W. W. HAWKINS.

[1] Correctly spelled "Escalante," so named after Padre Escalante, who crossed the river in an expedition made in 1776.

PART II.

THE STORY OF JAMES WHITE, THE FIRST MAN TO PASS THROUGH THE CANYONS OF THE COLORADO RIVER.

It seems to be a natural trait for any man, no matter how great, to claim to have been first in any great endeavor, dangerous exploration or unusual undertaking. Hence it was to be expected that after Major

Powell had made his memorable first trip down the Canyons of the Colorado that he and his friends should assert that his was the first expedition to attempt this hazardous undertaking. Yet, while it may appear strange, an account appeared in the *Rocky Mountain Herald* of the date of January 8, 1869, about five months before Major Powell started on his first expedition, giving circumstantial detail of the passage on a raft through the Canyons of the Colorado from the San Juan River, by a Wisconsin prospector, James White.

More dead than alive, he emerged from the lower reaches of the Canyon at Callville, a Mormon settlement, where he was cared for and nursed back to life. Mr. White is still alive, a respected and honored old man, a citizen of Trinidad, Colorado, and while all the writers that have extolled Powell, from George Wharton James down to the Kolb Bros., have either abused or ignored White, there is a growing conviction that the old man's story was and is true and that he did actually make the journey. A stalwart defender of White appeared in 1917 in the person of Mr. Thomas F. Dawson, who succeeded in having the Senate of the U. S. Congress publish an elaborate argument of some sixty-seven pages which he had prepared, entitled: "The Grand Canyon—An article giving the credit of first traversing the Grand Canyon of the Colorado to James White, a Colorado gold prospector, who it is claimed made the voyage two years previous to the expedition under the direction of Maj. J. W. Powell in 1869."

This pamphlet called forth a strong rejoinder from Robert Brewster Stanton, which occupied some twenty-two pages of "The Trail," a monthly publication of the "Sons of Colorado." In it, this eminent engineer and writer, whose intimate knowledge of the Canyon none can dispute, while giving full credit to the honesty and integrity of Mr. White, still insists that he was unintentionally wrong in the main part of his statements.

On the other hand, F. S. Dellenbaugh, who has written two books on the Colorado River, viz., "The Romance of the Colorado River" and "A Canyon Voyage," openly assails White as a mendacious fabricator of the worst type.

It would not be impossible for me, with my intimate personal knowledge of one portion of the Grand Canyon, extending over a period of nearly forty years, to point out discrepancies and inaccuracies in the published statements of both Stanton and Dellenbaugh, but it is not worth while here to do this. Personally, I have come to believe White's statements, and here wish to reproduce in fac-simile a letter he wrote to his brother, dated Callville, September 26, 1867. Owing to the imperfections in spelling, punctuation, etc., I give a rendition (made by Mr. Dawson) into correct English.

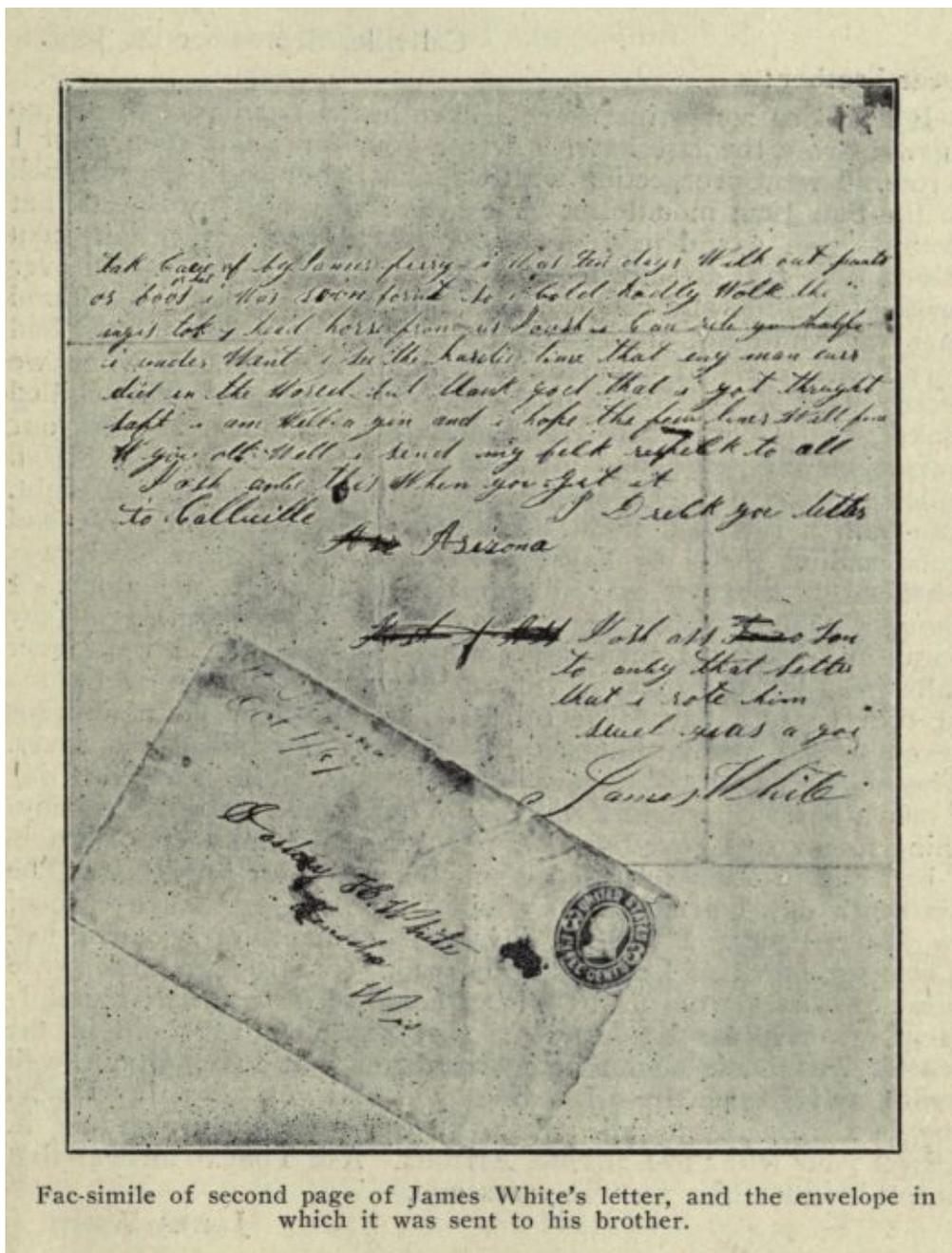
Navigation of the Big Canon
A terrible voyage

Callville September 18 67.

Dear Brother it has been some time since I
have heard from you I got no news from the
last letter that I wrote to you for I left soon
after I wrote I went prospecting with Captain Baker in
the San Juan mountains We found very good prospect but
with that I sold my gun the gun I bought the San Juan mountains
We travelled down a boat 200 miles then the cross over
Colorado and Camp We had one day We found that
found out that we could not travel down the river and
our horse was very fine and we had many up our mines to
Laramie back when the weather was very bad they
killed Baker and George Steele and my self took five papers
off from our horse and a or ten pounds of flour and our
guns We had 15 mules to work ~~to~~ to Colorado We got
to the river first at ~~at~~ night We built a raft that
night We got it built about ten o'clock the night
We sailed all that night We had good sailing for
three days and the ~~four~~ ^{four} days George Steele was work
of from the raft and ~~down~~ that left me alone I thought
that it would be my turn next I then fowl off my
boots and hands I then had a rope my horse I then
over fell from 10 to 15 feet he my raft would
tip over three and four times a day the third day
we lost our flour flour and for ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ days I
had to eat to walk high ridge water the 8 days I got some
muskrat beads the 15 days a party of ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~found~~ ^{found} they
would not give me with eat so I give my ~~raft~~ ^{raft}
for him ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~four~~ ^{four} ~~papers~~ ^{papers} and the
other ~~four~~ ^{four} ~~papers~~ ^{papers} the 18 days I was at Callville there I was

Fac-simile of first page of James White's letter to his brother.

Fac-simile of first page of James White's letter to his brother.



Fac-simile of second page of James White's letter, and the envelope in which it was sent to his brother.

Fac-simile of second page of James White's letter, and the envelope in which it was sent to his brother.

**NAVIGATION OF THE BIG CANON
A TERRIBLE VOYAGE**

Callville, September 26, 1867.

Dear brother:

It has been some time since I have heard from you. I got no answer from the last letter I wrote you, for I left soon after I wrote. I went prospecting with Captain Baker and George Stroll in the San Juan mountains. We found very good prospects, but nothing that would pay. Then we started down the San Juan River. We traveled down about 200 miles; then we crossed over on the Colorado and camped. We laid over one day. We found that we could not travel down the river, and our horses had sore feet. We had made up our minds to turn back when we were attacked by fifteen or twenty Ute Indians. They killed Baker, and George Stroll and myself took four ropes off our horses, an axe, ten pounds of flour and our guns. We had fifteen miles to walk to the Colorado. We got to the river just at night. We built a raft that night. We sailed all that night. We had good sailing for three days; the fourth day George Stroll was washed off the raft and drowned, and that left me alone. I

thought that it would be my time next. I then pulled off my pants and boots. I then tied a rope to my waist. I went over falls from ten to fifteen feet high. My raft would tip over three or four times a day. The third day we lost our flour, and for seven days I had nothing to eat except a raw-hide knife cover. The eighth day I got some mesquite beans. The thirteenth day I met a party of friendly Indians. They would not give me anything to eat, so I gave them my pistol for the hind parts of a dog. I had one of them for supper and the other for breakfast. The sixteenth day I arrived at Callville, where I was taken care of by James Ferry. I was ten days without pants or boots or hat. I was sun-burnt so I could hardly walk. The Indians took seven head of horses from us. I wish I could write you half I underwent. I saw the hardest time that any man ever did in the world, but thank God that I got through it safe. I am well again, and I hope these few lines will find you all well. I send my best respects to all. Josh, answer this when you get it. Direct your letter to Callville, Arizona. Ask Tom to answer that letter I wrote him several years ago.

JAMES WHITE.

Stanton claims that White only went through the lower part of the Canyon, viz., from the Grand Wash Cliff's to Callville. This much he concedes, and he asserts that the evidence is clear that White was led to claim he had traveled the whole length of the Canyons, not through dishonesty, but by the law of suggestion.

The men with whom he talked, after he was rescued from the raft, knowing little or nothing of the Canyon, and assuming he had traveled the whole distance from the San Juan, made him believe he had so traveled. When his terrible physical and mental condition is recalled, it is not hard to believe that he was in such a weakened state as readily to receive any powerful mental suggestion, and that this, once firmly fixed in his mind, ever afterwards appeared to him to be the strict and literal truth.

But this assertion of Stanton's implies that White and his companion, Stroll, after Captain Baker was killed, crossed the intervening hundreds of miles from the San Juan to the head of the Grand Wash, and that he there entered the Canyon and floated down to Callville. To my limited intelligence it seems incredible that any man could believe in the truth and honesty of James White and yet not question him as to how he forgot to mention how he traveled over all these hundreds of miles. White never makes a word of reference to it, nor does Stanton. Did White come on a flying machine in a trance? Let anyone, even though he be unfamiliar with the wild country that exists between the San Juan and the Grand Wash, look at a U. S. Geological Survey map and he will then be able to form some idea of the practical difficulties in the way of anyone crossing it. Then, when it is recalled, that White was beset by hostile Indians, who were determined to slay him and capture his outfit; that the country was unknown to him; that there was no food except that which he could secure with his rifle, is it not evident that he would far rather take his chances on facing the unknown dangers of the river than face certain death at the hands of the surrounding Indians?

Personally, it is far harder for me to believe that White came overland, and forgot all about that trip, and entered the Canyon at its lower end, than it is to accept his own plain statement that he built the raft near the junction of the Grand and the Green and made the whole descent of the Colorado River to the point where he was rescued at Callville.

My first interest in White's trip through the Grand Canyon dates back to 1883, while I was engaged in train service for the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad (now the Santa Fe) during its construction between Williams, Arizona, and the Colorado River where the bridge is now situated near Needles, California. It so happened that we were detained for several days at Kingman, Arizona, due to a fire that destroyed boarding cars and a water tank on the line near the end of the construction work. At this time I had never taken any interest in the Grand Canyon, in fact knew nothing about it, only from vague reports that were

being circulated by the railroad men who had been out to see it from Peach Springs, at the mouth of Diamond Creek Canyon. This route was then in its infancy and later was opened to visitors and was the first one opened to the public. They were so enthusiastic in their descriptions of this now famous "National Park" that I at once became very greatly interested, and when I chanced to meet a man named Hardy, who was then in Kingman, I found that he lived on the Colorado River and was engaged in goat raising. He told me about finding some mountain sheep among his band of goats, and various other experiences he had met, not the least of which was finding a man on a raft who had come through the entire Grand Canyon. He described him as being in an exhausted condition and covered with sores festered by flies. After reviving the man they learned the story of his sufferings and the drowning of his partner while going through some bad rapids; in fact his descriptions to me of what White told him was very much the same as has been published from later interviews to different parties.

This was in July, 1883, when I met Mr. Hardy, and in September following I set out to make my first visit to Grand Canyon, from Williams, Arizona.

Since that time I have taken a great interest in its history and discovery. F. S. Dellenbaugh, a member of the Powell party of 1872, while on a visit to my camp at Bass Trail, told me his opinion of White's dramatic tale and I later read the same in his "Romance of the Colorado River," wherein he stamps the whole story as a "splendid yarn" (and I may here add, "but well told"). He denounces White's account as an utterly improbable feat to accomplish, but from my first personal knowledge of what the river is at the season of year that White's trip was staged, I cannot agree with Dellenbaugh, and never have. From my many years of observation in this section of the Canyon I am thoroughly convinced that during the period of high water, which is from the last of June until late in August, a raft may pass safely through the entire 488 miles of the canyon without disaster. It would be dangerous in the extreme in low water. Another incident to strengthen my belief in White's story was the meeting of a man, J. P. Vollmer by name, then president of the First National Bank of Lewiston, Idaho, who was a visitor to the canyon some years later. He told me he came near being a member of White's party when they were about to start on their prospecting trip on the Mancos in Colorado, but unavoidably he was prevented from joining them in time or he might have been among them when attacked by the Utes and met the fate of Baker, or with White and his partner on the raft. I subsequently corresponded with Vollmer regarding the incident and he once wrote me he was quite sure he could find some record of dates among his papers, but later on failed to do so. He and various others with whom I have talked regarding White have all united in their convictions of the truth of White's claims regarding this, the first journey through the entire five divisions of canyons through which the Colorado River maintains its tortuous existence, 218 miles of which, at the western end, is known as the Grand Canyon.

W. W. BASS.

Grand Canyon, Arizona, May 21st, 1920.

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