

# Veteran River Pilot Reaches Lake Last Evening

Having run the Colorado from Lee's Ferry to the head of Boulder lake in 10 days, Bert Loper of Salt Lake City, 70-year-old river boatman, had realized a dream of 40 years when he arrived at the boat docks at 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon.

Traveling in two boats, others in the party besides the intrepid boatman were: W. C. Gibson of San Jose, California, who took motion pictures on the river trip; Don Harris of San Francisco of the U. S. geological survey; and Chester Kleven of San Francisco.

Loper handled one boat all the way, while Harris piloted the other.

At "Mile 232 Rapid", the party encountered its most exciting and dangerous experience, Gibson told national park service officials today.

The boat in which Kleven and Gibson were riding upset and Kleven was lost overboard. Tense moments followed, until Kleven was seen far below the rapid bobbing up and down in his life-jacket. Meantime Gibson had almost been swept from the boat three times.

As soon as the boat was thru the rapid, Kleven was rescued and was not injured although he had shot the rapid without benefit of a boat.

Gibson, Harris, and Kleven started the trip from a point on the Colorado known as North Wash, upstream from Glen canyon. At Lee's Ferry they were joined by Loper, who had dreamed for 40 years of running the rapids of the Grand canyon, although he is considered one of the best authorities on other rivers in the west.

They traveled in two specially built river boats, constructed with air compartments. The larger boat, which was unnamed, was 18 feet long. The smaller one, which was called the "Mexican Hat", was 16 feet long and was used by the Nevills expedition down the Colorado last year.

The party left Lee's Ferry on July 6 and completed the trip in 10 days' running time. They stopped at points of interest in the canyon for two days. They were picked up yesterday by the Hualapai, Grand Canyon-Boulder Dam Tours boat, and towed into the boat dock.

Loper has had wide experience on boating excursions on the major rivers of the west, including the Green river, the San Juan, and the area of Cataract canyon on the Colorado. He was a member of the original government survey party, which about 19 years ago explored the Colorado river from the Virgin river down the Colorado through the Black and Boulder canyons.

Gibson is free lancing with pictures made on the trip and plans to lecture with the pictures.