

NUGGETS OF BOULDER COLOR

By Elton Garrett

"GEAR-JAMMERS' SPECIAL"

A merry crew it was that peopled the "Gear Jammers' Special," on that morning a week or so ago.

For "boys will be boys", even when they've grown up and become he-man truck herders of Hoover dam.

And transport number sixty-nine, on that morning of late January, became even more boistrous than usual. For half a dozen of the first men to load into the transport in front of the messhall, preparatory to the seven mile trip down to the canyon, had oranges to eat, and they got started cramming orangé peelings down each other's neck and throwing peels at one another in gleeful fashion.

Not satisfied with flipping small pieces of peeling, one of the lads conceived the humorous idea of heaving a piece that comprised NEARLY an entire half orange. He aimed it at another playful truck driver.

It missed its mark, alas, and struck in the ear of a particularly sober-minded gantry crane operator, who had not been entering into the spirit of the occasion on that cold morning.

"Hey, what the hell! Grow up,

you! Cut out that stuff!" quoth Mister Gantry Twister.

"Hey, you helpless?" came a retort from the other side of the enclosed 45-man truck. "You can heave back at 'm, can't you?"

Gantry continued his disapproval of the cutups. Another half-orange struck him in the chest. Soon he was belabored with peelings from all sides. THEY'D show him. Feller hadda be a sport to ride in that wagon!

Now this transport carries four rows of men, two rows with their backs to the outsides of the truck, two rows in the middle, back to back. Knees rub knees, for there's barely room for the 45 pairs of legs in the two "aisles," when all the men are seated.

One broad-shouldered truckster near the "portal" of the truck had a NEW inspiration. He whispered it along the line. A new passenger appeared at the rear of the truck, climbed up and started to get inside. Two pair of brawny arms siezed him and lifted him bodily inside, on to the collective aggregation of laps. Other arms made stout by manning big steering wheels upended him, and literally rolled him, bundled him

along the row of knees until he was landed, helpless and disheveled, at the inside end of the truck's interior. That was number one. The new gag became a mania . . .

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On a morning not long afterward, Roy Porter slept in his bunk in dorm four until too late to make the rounds of the breakfast table in the messhall before catching the transport for the canyon.

Buttoning his coat on the run, he scudded through the messhall, collecting just something or other to eat while on the way down to work. He ran for the "Gear Jammers' Special," and jumped aboard just before the loaded transport pulled out.

Porter was siezed at the entrance and lifted aboard the laps of the rows of grinning men. He was upended, twisted and turned, rolled up into a knot and rolled along from overalled lap to overalled lap—moved along as if on a conveyor belt, but not so gently. Arrived at the end, he got himself seated, breathless, at last and reached into his pocket. He pulled out a mass of smashed soft boiled egg, seasoned with tobacco and snoose and matches. Dropping this part of his breakfast on the floor, he fished into other pockets, and repeated the operation in disgust . . .

"Thought those were hard-boiled," said he. But 'twas only the