

NUGGETS OF BOULDER COLOR

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By Elton Garrett

HIGH HAT CANYON CAT

Two Hoover dammers sat dangling their legs off something or other down on the job. (There are plenty of somethings-or-others to dangle legs from; pick your own.)

Said one: "See that cat over there? He used to be a Boulder City cat. Came down here in the canyon one day when some fellow loaded him on to a transport with the men, just for the fun of it."

The new recruit on the job, at the pipe shop at the lower cofferdam, appraised the scraggly ex-domestic feline with critical eye.

"Ought to get a bath once in a while. Lots of water down here. Kind of a dirty place for a cat down here. Time he went back up to his mistress in Boulder City and got a bath."

"Funny part of it," replied the old timer, "is that his mistress is down here in the canyon. Can't blame him for not going up to Boulder any more. He's been down here for months now."

The conversation moved around

to the dog that used to ride the transports. Poor dog got killed about a week ago; run over by a truck. They sorrowfully threw his limp body into a muck truck and it got buried in a muck dump somewhere. Sad ending for a Black canyon animal that had "gone native" down in this industrial canyon.

Another dog had been killed similarly several months ago. But about these cats . . .

Bob-tailed Bobbie, black-coated critter of the feline persuasion, lived around dormitory four, until at last he was tossed into t transport departing for the river. Back and forth a few times and he acquired a taste for Black canyon. But he did not stay there.

Other Tom cats there were riding transports. None of them, it seems, were interested in remaining down on the job constantly, early in the project.

Came a time, however, when a certain Tabby cat rode the transports and finally decided to stay on the job, eating scraps from

men's lunches, and living wherever it was found most convenient.

Then it was the Tom cats commenced lingering in the canyon nights—and, e'er long, all the time.

There are no less than six Black canyon pussy-cats now. There is one at the canyon powder house, one at the pipe shop at the lower cofferdam, one at the Arizona spillway, and several others.

The pipe shop cat approached the pair as they talked. The old timer called him over and picked him up, stroking his back fondly.

The Black canyon rookie broke off a chunk of a cheese sandwich and offered it to the cat. The animal sniffed at the sandwich and promptly turned his back upon it, raising both nose and tail high in the air.

"Can't get these canyon cats to eat anything but the very best, big boy," said the old timer. "They're used to a wide selection of grub, from lunches of the fellows. In fact, there's nothing lacking to make their lives entirely comfortable, natural and normal down here. If the cats in

Boulder City knew what a cat paradise Black canyon is, most of 'em would be hopping transports and coming down.