



A PORTABLE BOAT

THE KOLB BROTHERS' photographic expeditions often required crossing the Colorado River or using the river as a highway to reach destinations downstream.

Weighing in at 125 pounds, this canvas boat hardly sounds “portable,” especially given the steep trails leading to the river. Still, it weighed less than one-fourth that of the wooden boats used in the brothers’ 1911–12 river expedition.

INSCRIPTION READS: “125 lb. canvas boat. Built in one day and carried from Kolb Studio to river by Emery Kolb and John Ivens in three hours on trip to North Rim via Shiva Temple. Oct. 1916 climbed from Shiva Saddle 9:30 a.m. Lunched with Jim Owens, Ambrose Means, Adams, and party 1 p.m. at Jim Owens Cabin [on North Rim], camped at Ribbon Falls 9 p.m. same day. Shoes worn out.” NAU.PH.568.59



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THIS BOAT was stored in Emery's garage with a human skeleton inside it. Kolb descendants tell of assembling the skeleton like a puzzle on the dining room table to entertain visiting youngsters. The skeleton remains unidentified, but it is possible that Emery may have acquired it as a representative of the Coconino County coroner's jury.

This is one of 19 boats comprising the Grand Canyon Historic Boat Collection. The collection comprehensively illustrates the history of river running on the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, with the oldest boat dating back to 1909. The project to conserve this unique collection started in 2003 and continues today. Each boat receives a meticulous cleaning and stabilization treatment from professional conservators. NAU.PH.568.11287