

# Scouting a Proposed Zion Rim Road, 1916

by Jay M. Jones

The Iron County Record reported in October 1916 that a horseback expedition was in the mountains southeast of Cedar City searching for an automobile route to the brink of Zion Canyon. Zion was not yet a National Park (that status would come in 1919), but it was recognized as scenic wonder worthy of public access.

The Record reported an opinion at the time that Zion Canyon could be best seen and appreciated from the top.

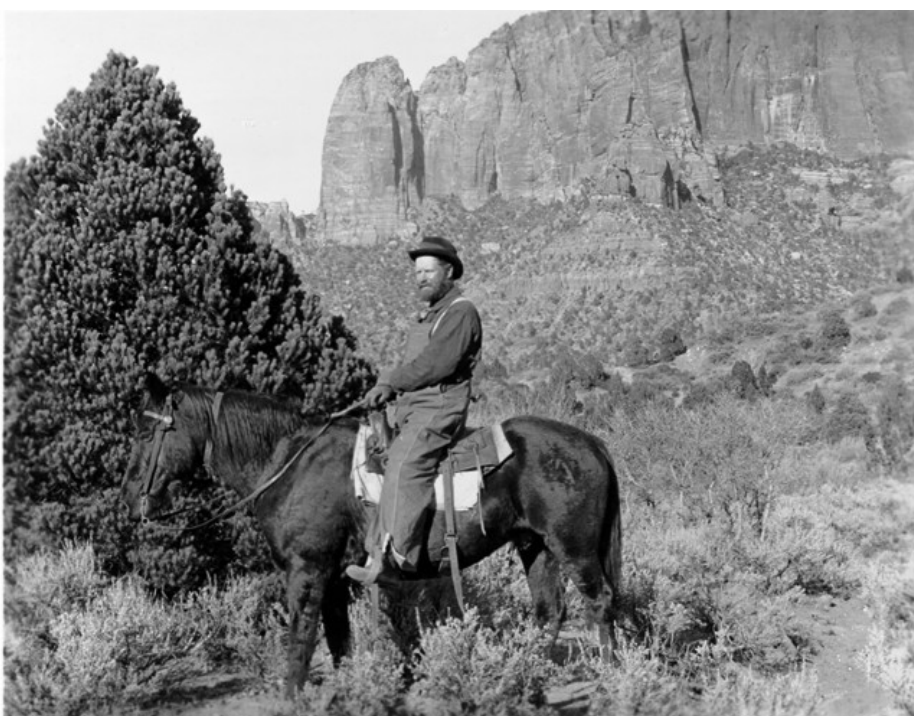
Automobile roads across the country were not well developed. Earlier in 1916, proponents for the Arrowhead Trail, the predecessor to U.S. Highway 91 and later Interstate 15, took 5 days to travel from Los Angeles to Salt Lake City to demonstrate the feasibility of that route. There were less than 40 miles of paved roads in the state of Utah in 1916, none south of Sanpete County.

Members of the scouting party included W. D. Beers, state engineer; Douglas White, agent for the railroad; C. H. Kendall, senior highway commissioner for National Forest District 4, and E. H. Bingham, photographer.

Local members of the group were R. A. Thorley of Cedar City, guide; Henry W. Lunt, County Commissioner; and H. C. Jenson, County Road Commissioner.

Julius Rosenberg and Roy Urie were in charge of food and camp supplies, and preceded the reconnaissance party into the mountains. The party spent several days evaluating possible routes.

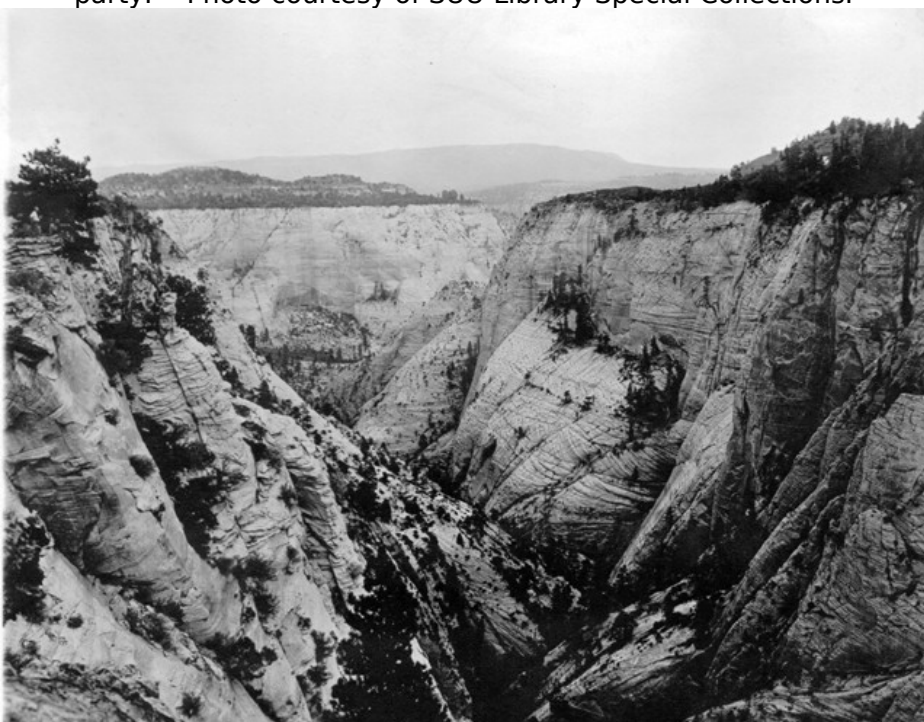
Photos from the Henry H. Lunt collection at the Southern Utah University Special Collections Library offer a glimpse of what the exploring expedition saw.



R. A. Thorley of Cedar City was the guide for the reconnaissance party. Photo courtesy of SUU Library Special Collections.



Guardian Angel Pass, Zion National Park. Photo courtesy of SUU Library Special Collections.



Potato Hollow, Zion National Park. Photo courtesy of SUU Library Special Collections.



Overlooking the La Verkin Breaks, Zion National Park. Photo courtesy of SUU Library Special Collections.