

# F. M. KIMBALL TELLS HORROR OF FATAL ACCIDENT ON POWER LINE

"It's Only a Miracle I Am Alive Today" Workman Declares

## SUFFERS BAD BURNS

"Ground" Man Is Recovering From Injuries Received in Accident

Static electricity was attributed as the only plausible explanation of the accident yesterday afternoon which cost the life of C. W. "Slim" Nelson, Southern Nevada Power company lineman, and severe burns to his two companions, M. Hanson and F. M. Kimball, who were working on the company line at a point about a mile above the boat landing in Hemingway Wash, Kimball said in an interview today.

Kimball, who was acting as "ground man" at the control switch at the foot of the thirty-foot pole on which the other two men were working, said in an interview today, "It is only a miracle that I am alive today. Anyone who knows anything about electricity will tell you that the chances of survival are about one in 5000 when a man acts as the 'ground' and the current passes through his body as it happened to me."

"We don't know the exact cause, but in some way an arc was formed, probably by static electricity. I was on the ground and was holding the control switch handle and caused the 'ground' for the current, which passed through my body. If I hadn't grounded the current, the other two men on the pole probably would have been only shocked and Nelson would not have been killed."

**KIMBALL DISPLAYED** heavy wool white socks which he was wearing yesterday and pointed to the holes burned in the feet of the socks. He suffered burns to the ball of his left foot and one toe on the right foot, and a severe burn in the palm of his left hand with which he was holding the lever. Hanson suffered severe burns to his legs and fingers, it is reported. Both men were treated by Dr. J. R. McDaniel in Boulder City before being brought to Las Vegas.

"The structure on which we were working was not connected by wires at all. The Boulder power line runs parallel to the Southern Nevada power company line and breaks off at an "F" fixture, at a point about a mile south of the boat landing, where we were working.

"**THE LINE** we were working on dead ends on the pole structure, and we think an arc was formed from the 3300 volt line carried by the Vegas line, causing the current. The line we were working on never has been connected, however.

"The first thing I knew after  
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I was knocked loose from the lever, and came to, I looked up and saw Nelson falling. I tried to yell to him but I couldn't speak. When I could get up, I saw Hanson hanging across a two by twelve board he and Nelson had been standing on.

"I called up to him and asked him if he were in the clear and he said he wasn't sure. I told him to lie still and I would see what I could do for Nelson.

**"WHEN I GOT** up, I walked over to where Nelson was lying. He was still breathing so I started to fix a place to put him in the back of the pickup. My left arm seemed to be paralyzed and I told Hanson that he would have to get down as best he could because I couldn't get up the pole to help him. He had been afraid to move because we were not sure that the current was off.

"I don't know how Hanson got down. I never looked up again, because Nelson was dying and I couldn't leave him.

"After Hanson was down we fixed the bed in the truck and put Nelson's body in and started driving toward the boat landing. Hanson went into have someone call from the boatlanding about the accident.

**"WE PUT** Nelson's body in a car there, and Walter Swartz and another man and I took him to Dr. McDaniel's office. The doctor said Nelson was dead. I called Chief Harold Case from there.

"When they put Nelson's body in the ambulance I wanted to come to Las Vegas with him, but the doctor said Hanson and I had to stay for treatment."

Kimball seemed to be visibly affected when he spoke of Nelson and said, "Just yesterday while we ate lunch we were talking about how long we had been with the Southern Nevada Power company. Hanson, Nelson, and R. B. Ball, who was sick yesterday and didn't go to work, and I have been working together as a crew since the company line was finished to Boulder City in April, 1937.

**"NELSON SAID** he first worked for the company in 1927 and after an absence of some time started again in November, 1935. Hanson and I started to work in the same week in October, 1936, and except for short layoffs all of us have been working for the company all that time," Kimball said.

When Kimball was knocked loose from the lever, a circumstance which probably saved his life, he fell into a pile of sharp rocks and suffered deep lacerations on the back of the head, as well as the burns to his feet and hand.

"I have been shocked many times, but until yesterday I didn't know how terrible electricity can affect a man. My wife started the vacuum cleaner this afternoon, and it was just like having that bolt of electricity all over again. That is how badly shocked that I am," Kimball said.