

# Bratcher's Death Is Said Accident By Coroner's Jury

5-19-39  
A verdict of accidental drowning, with no other contributing causes, was returned by a coroner's jury yesterday afternoon following an investigation of the drowning of William Bratcher, 50, of North Las Vegas, in Boulder lake while fishing Sunday afternoon.

The inquest was conducted by Coroner A. J. Nelson of Boulder City in Collville Wash, where Bratcher drowned Sunday and where his body was located early yesterday morning.

The jury, composed of Harry Williams, John Westen, and Arthur Howlett returned the following verdict: "Bratcher came to his death while changing positions in a boat, stumbled, lost his balance and fell into the lake. George Mullens, his son-in-law, tried to save him, desisting in his efforts only when exhausted. Death came from accidental drowning, with no indication of any contributing cause."

The body was sighted at 5 o'clock yesterday morning by George Meade of Las Vegas, who was camping along the shore of the lake in Collville Wash.

He went out in his boat and towed the body to shore. A short time later the national park service boat arrived at the scene, preparatory to pursuing the intensive search which had been carried on by rangers, life guards, and divers, using every facility possible, since the drowning Sunday.

Notified of the finding of the body, the park service employes returned to the boat landing and reported the body found. A party of officials, including Coroner Nelson, and Robert Rose, senior naturalist for the national park service, and Mullens, son-in-law of the deceased, left by boat for Collville Wash. The park service boat served as a locale for the inquest conducted by the coroner.

The official party was joined at Collville Wash by James Roschl of Las Vegas, who was in the boat with Bratcher and Mullens when the accident happened.

The body was removed to the Garrison mortuary in Las Vegas by ambulance, which drove down to the lake shore in Collville Wash to receive the body. Funeral services have been set tentatively for Monday, and definite plans will be announced later.