

Mine Blasting Gives Rise to Story of Little Brown Men, Revealed Today

Rangers Determine "Nothing to Tale" Of Captive Scouts

Routine blasting at an Arizona mine led to the "little brown men" mystery and the fantastic story that 20 Boulder City Boy Scouts and their leader, Private First Class William F. Colley of Camp Sibert, were "held captive" for two nights under a purported "barrage of gunfire," according to Chief Ranger C. F. Peterson, who has been conducting a complete investigation of the case.

Chief Peterson, who termed the story as "the biggest wild goose chase we have ever been on," stated that he and his staff have gone far enough on the investigation "to know there is nothing to it."

Blasting Heard

He said he definitely had established the fact that the only shooting heard was blasting at a mine about one and one-half miles from the camp below Boulder Dam where the Scouts and their leader had gone on an overnight trip. He said the mine was located on the Arizona side of the Colorado river, opposite from where the boys were camped on the Nevada side.

He gave no credence to the story that Colley had exchanged shots with "little brown men" during Saturday and Sunday

nights, stating there was no evidence of shooting except from Colley's service revolver.

Of the 20 boys on the trip, about 12 have been questioned by the officers, and none of the youths has said that he actually saw the "little brown men," Chief Peterson said. The boys are being questioned separately to determine their versions of the story.

"Big Imagination"

The chief ranger stated that Colley "apparently had a big imagination," as there was no evidence of blood on the rocks to give basis to his story of shooting a man there, or that any shooting had been done except by Colley.

The Scouts and Colley left Boulder City Saturday for an over-night hike to Warm Springs, a point about three miles below

Boulder dam. When they failed to return Sunday evening, a search was started for them, planes were sent out, and a boat was sent down the river. Sixteen of the boys returned Monday morning with searchers, and four remained with Colley, to await armed officers, for whom Colley had sent.

Fired Shots

The returning party told of two nights of siege, during which Colley fired 24 shots from his gun, in defense of the Scouts in his care, while "little brown men" allegedly held them at bay in a box canyon. It is this story which Chief Peterson discounted today, after sending officers out to make a complete survey of the area where the purported "gun battle" took place.