

# DAM BUILDER UNDAUNTED BY GRAVE ILLNESS

Just Another Engineering  
Project to Contractor,  
He Says of Boulder Work

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Universal Service

SAN FRANCISCO, March 7.—  
Who is this builder, who's going  
to tame the wild Colorado river?

What manner of man is he,  
who's going to throw up a dam  
730 feet high and 1,180 feet  
across—the biggest in the world  
—and transform raging floods  
into a placid reservoir 110 miles  
long—10 times as long as any in  
existence?

He was found tonight, a slight  
white-haired man, with a quick,  
expansive smile—found in a local  
hospital undergoing the Coffey-  
Humber treatment.

An incredible sort of man,  
calmly floating a \$50,000,000  
syndicate and eagerly leaping  
into the biggest engineering  
project continental America has  
ever seen—while in a hospital un-  
der treatment for cancer.

## \$165,000,000 PROJECT

That's William H. Wattis of  
San Francisco and Ogden, Utah—  
president of the Utah Construc-  
tion Co., builders of railroads and  
most everything else, and presi-  
dent of the Six Companies, Inc.,  
builders-elect of the stupendous  
\$165,000,000 Boulder dam proj-  
ect.

Wrapped in a bathrobe, puff-  
ing blissfully on a cigar from the  
ready box at his side, he discussed  
this newest of his staggering  
string of ventures, this govern-  
ment project which has stirred  
the imagination of the whole  
world.

"Now this dam," said Wil-  
liam H. Watts, "is just a dam.  
It's no different from any other  
dam. It hasn't got a thing that  
the O'Shaughnessy dam that  
we built hasn't got." He ex-  
haled a cloud of smoke, looked  
at the ceiling, and added:  
"There's just more of it. That's  
all."

## NOT A BIT EXCITED

He elaborated on this amazing  
theme, that the building of a  
Boulder dam is no occasion for  
fuss and feathers.

"People call this a dam," he  
went on, "when, really, they  
ought to call it a tunnel.  
There's a real job, those di-  
vision tunnels. We've got to  
dig way down below the river  
bed and put in four tunnels  
that are 4,000 feet long and  
50 feet around. That's some-  
thing. But this—well, it goes  
up higher and it reaches  
farther back, otherwise it's the  
same little dam we threw up  
in a dozen places."

He talked of other phases of  
the problem and became down-  
right enthusiastic over a "real  
nasty little job" that will receive  
first consideration. That is the  
building of seven miles of rail-  
road, along the narrow gauge, to  
haul mud and muck from the  
tunnels and bring back gravel for  
concrete.

## NEED FOR READY CASH

"We've got to lay that track, and furnish locomotive and heavy cars, at our own expense. It's all dead outlay—expenses we've got to meet before we can even begin work."

With his grin, he added:

"You can see where a contractor has to have a few dollars before he can be a contractor."

Wattis patiently answered questions concerning details of the huge job. He wasn't so sure what the company is going to do about the model city built at Boulder City—whether they could use it or not, but had to pay for just the same; he was sure that a camp could be established right on the job; he thought 4,000 was a good estimate of the number of men that would be used.