
K. SODERSTROM LOSES LIFE WHEN HE LEAVES RAFT IN FAST CURRENT

J. W. Ellis, J. E. Brown
Swim to Island and Are
Rescued This Morn

FIGHT STIFF BATTLE

Soderstrom Goes Under
Just as Life Line Spins
To His Side In Water

A stirring battle in midstream, against the swift current of the newly transposed Colorado River at its exit from diversion tunnels three and four, was waged shortly after eight o'clock this morning by three Boulder Dam workmen when they suddenly plunged into the stream when they feared their raft would overturn.

Karl Soderstrom, 37, was swept to his death as a life-line landed scant inches from his wildly clutching hand, and his two companions, J. W. Ellis and J. E. Brown managed to swim to safety on the island in midstream opposite the outlet of tunnel three and four, rescues being effected by an improvised cableway and breeches buoy.

THE THREE MEN, all miners, were working their way across the river just below the dirt dam being thrown up above the lower portal of tunnel three to keep the swirling waters from that portion of the river-bed from which the river was only recently diverted.

They were on a raft that had been used in work on the dirt fill, and were pulling themselves to the Arizona side of the river by means of a cable stretched across. When the raft struck the current of the stream leaving tunnel three, it was battered and all three men plunged into the stream.

Soderstrom was standing at the front of the raft with a shovel. He started to swim, keeping himself easily afloat while companions ashore threw out a life-line. The first cast reached him but as he was about to grab the rope, he also reached the swift current from the tunnel and was swept away from the rope to his death.

HE WAS NEVER seen again, and despite the fact that crews have been dragging the river all morning for his body, it had not been recovered up to two o'clock this afternoon.

Ellis and Brown both struck out for the island in front of the portals of the two tunnels and made this in safety, remaining there until the improvised cableway carried them to safety on shore again.

Soderstrom was a miner, and is survived by a wife and two children in Glendale, Arizona. He is one of the old-timers on the pro-

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K. Soderstrom

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ject, going to work for Six Companies on September 9, 1931, and working steadily ever since that time.

THIS IS THE first man drowned while at work since the project started and although there have been thousands of men at work in the canyon every day, crossing and recrossing the river by every conceivable kind of transportation, and scaling the walls of the canyon high up above the water, no other workman has been drowned while at work.

The first summer of the project there were two workmen drowned while swimming in the river and several others in narrow escapes while engaged in the same recreation, but the single crowning recorded today constitutes another interesting chapter in the remarkable safety record on the project.