



## Face Reflects Tragedy

Mike Knagge, the Patagonia rancher whose efforts led to the discovery of the bodies of three Tucson boys yesterday, explains where and how the Ft. Huachuca soldiers under his control made the discovery. Knagge, his face showing the strain of the tragic search, worked every day but one on the 19-day search. He estimates that he lost \$3,000 in income, but said it was worth it. "I know how I'd feel if my two sons were caught in similar circumstances," he explained. (Jack Sheaffer photos)

## After 19-Day Search

# Mountain Tells Grim Secret

### Record-Size-Hunt Brings Sad Ending To Trek Begun As Birthday Excursion

Twenty days ago, six Tucson Boy Scouts set out to conquer rugged Mt. Baldy, a treacherous 9,412-foot peak some 46 miles south of Tucson. Midway up the mountain, three boys turned back, but their partners in the climb could not be deterred.

Two of them, Mike Early, 15, and David Greenberg, 12 had more than just routine interest in the climb.

Early would reach his 16th birthday on the next day, Nov. 16, and Greenberg had just that day become 12.

A trip to the top of the jagged mountain would be an extra special birthday accomplishment for them. Their companion was Michael LaNoue, 13.

But, apparently, it wasn't meant for the boys to attain their goal.

A sudden snowstorm, the worst in the Santa Rita Mountains since 1953, struck on the boys' way up. Sunday, the 16th, they were reported missing.

Yesterday they were found dead—believed to have perished the day after they started their ascent.

What went on after their disappearance developed into one of the largest searches ever staged in southern Arizona. And its climax reduced some of the toughest men in this part of the state nearly to tears.

John Early, the father of Mike and a Douglas Aircraft employe, had taken the boys to Madera Canyon that Saturday afternoon for their overnight excursion.

Learning of the bad weather, he returned to pick up the boys early Sunday.

But he found only the three companions, Louis Burgess, 17, of 545 S. 4th Ave., Ralph Coltrin, 14, of 333 S. 3rd Ave., and Rnary Sepulveda, 13, of 419 S. Stone Ave.—who had tired early in the hike and returned to their base camp.

They had spent the night huddled under a picnic table. When they

returned to the Santa Rita Lodge with Early, they had mild cases of frostbitten feet.

Early and Burgess fought their way back up the trail but returned when they found the snow drifts too much for them.

The Pima County Sheriff's Department was alerted at 1:30. Led by Sgt. Guy Hill, a group managed to reach the lodge late in the afternoon.

A boundary problem (the site of the search is in Santa Cruz County) and trouble in clearing the road accounted for most of that first day.

On Monday approximately 100 men turned out to search for the boys. But only four parties managed to reach the top of Baldy.

Their goal was a ranger station where they thought the boys might have holed up. They found only an empty cabin.

Hill took to the air that day in a Davis-Monthan AFB helicopter and surveyed the entire area. He did discover two lost Davis-Monthan airmen and pulled them to safety.

"I know the boys were dead then," Hill said yesterday. "That chopper went right over where we found their bodies. If their fire had been burning we would have seen the smoke then."

Hope dimmed somewhat the following day, Tuesday, but nevertheless the assault on the mountain continued. At that time Sheriff James Clark said he held out only a brief hope that the boys might be found alive—after three days and four nights of sub-freezing temperatures.

Wednesday continued in much the same fashion. But the search force was bolstered by an estimated 300 men from Ft. Huachuca's 16th Signal Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. J. R. Sereno. And late that night a nationally known search expert flew into Tucson at Clark's request.

Thursday, the expert Russ Case, his partner Tom Cox and two bloodhounds marched into the mountains. They returned that night with word that their dogs had smelled "something."

The soldiers attacked the eastern slopes of the Santa Ritas that day, but they returned empty-handed.

Friday another 300 men from Ft. Huachuca joined in the hunt. They composed the 72nd Signal Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. William C. Golladay.

They combed the western side of the range and centralized their search on the area where the dogs picked up a scent.

While the soldiers worked the slopes, under the direction of Hill, several other deputies and numerous Patagonia ranchers headed by Mike Knagge, and 35 airmen from Davis-Monthan AFB, led by Lt.

## Tragic Ending

# Santa Rita Mts. Yield Bodies Of Missing Scouts

### Victims Are Discovered On 19th Day Of Search By Two Soldiers From Huachuca

(Continued from Page One)

evening when temperatures in that area skidded to around five below zero.

Young LaNoue's body was found approximately 30 yards from the fire. He had apparently fallen asleep and then tumbled over the edge of the ledge.

Early, too, had fallen off and was found roughly 25 yards away.

Greenberg, who had been a Boy Scout for just three days, lay some 19 yards away with his face down.

The bodies were found shortly after 50 Ft. Huachuca soldiers began to search areas assigned them by Knagge.

"I had just finished stringing 10 men down Temporal Canyon," Knagge said, "and was starting on the small draws leading to the head of Josephine.

"Only six men had started work when I heard a big yell (from Pvt. John B. McKenna and Pvt. Kelley Kinser of Ft. Huachuca's 16th Signal Battalion). One of them had looked over the edge of a ridge and sighted a body.

"God, it was lucky. If we hadn't found the kids today, I don't think they would ever have been found."

Knagge said he thought the boys had climbed at least as far as to within 400 yards of the ranger cabin near the summit of treacherous Mt. Baldy.

On Nov. 23, searchers had found the makings of a small fire. It had a piece of Kleenex—similar to that carried by Greenberg—in the center weighted down by a stone. The Kleenex was brown only at the edges.

"I think the boys got at least that far," said Knagge, "and then started back down. It looks as though they tried to follow the telephone line, but eventually lost it.

"They must have realized their predicament and with snow limiting their vision to no more than four feet decided to stop. Their spot on the ledge was apparently determined by this decision.



MICHAEL LA NOUE



MIKE EARLY



DAVID GREENBERG

The fathers of the boys were waiting at Josephine Saddle when Knagge arrived to radio the news to the lodge headquarters.

The three men—John Early, 138 E. 14th St., Bruce LaNoue, 123 S. Railroad Ave., and David Greenberg, 311 S. Russell—returned to the base camp and then went to their homes.

LaNoue had been combing the mountains ever since the fourth day after the disappearance. Early began his treks after the bulk of the searchers departed Nov. 24, and Greenberg, who is a diabetic, had made his first trip up on Wednesday.

Only Greenberg spoke: "If it's my boy they found (the three only knew of one body), I hope he froze to death the first night. It doesn't sound right to say that, I know. But he didn't have to face so many cold nights and continuing hunger."

When Sgt. Hill rode out of the mountains he was a different man. Previously he had only the tired lines around his eyes to show for his efforts.

"If they had been adults," he said, "maybe I could have taken it . . . but kids . . . I don't know, I guess we all expected to find them alive."

A coroner's jury was sworn in by Justice of the Peace Oliver Rothrock of Patagonia to identify the bodies. An inquest will be held Monday at 10 a.m. in Nogales.

Funeral arrangements for LaNoue and Early are being handled by Reilly's Funeral Home, Tucson Mortuary is taking care of the Greenberg arrangements.

A special high mass for the three boys, all Catholics, will be said at 11:35 this morning at All Saints Church. It was requested by the entire enrollment of All Saints School.

Col. George E. Schafer, worked the top.

Again no results. False clues were discovered and discounted with agonizing regularity.

The massive hunt—the largest of its kind in southern Arizona's history—continued in much the same vein Saturday and Sunday.

Then Sunday evening, Nov. 23, Sheriff Clark called off the bulk of the hunt.

He left Hill and Sgts. Frank Wootan and B. C. Richey at the Santa Rita Lodge to continue the hunt as the snow melted.

Santa Cruz County Deputy Jack Sellivan said he would continue his county's effort from the east.

Day after day the men, aided by numerous volunteers, trudged up and down the mountain's sides.

Yesterday the final push produced an answer to the mystery of what happened to the boys. They were found dead.