

"River Joe", Spirit of Boulder Dam Had Colorful Career During Project

By JOHN F. CAHLAN

To most people, "River Joe" was just a name. To the police officers of Las Vegas, "River Joe" was a definite pain in the neck. But to those who followed the construction of Boulder dam, "River Joe" was the spirit of the "construction stiff" who sweated and toiled in the broiling sun of the desert, so that the job might go forward.

There wasn't anyone who knew "River Joe" who would call him a model citizen. "River Joe" just didn't fit into the social picture. However, when there was work to be done, "River Joe" was there to do it, and he never

then started a gang fight which sent him to the hospital with a slashed throat.

"River Joe" was not, by any stretch of the police records, a good citizen. But he was a hard worker, when he worked. He was on the job from the time the first drill was punched into the towering sides of Blank Canyon and he was there the day President Franklin Delano Roosevelt dedicated the dam.

Good citizen or not, "River Joe" was the spirit of the "construction stiff," and that spirit has been captured forever in the steel and concrete of the "biggest engineering job in the world"—Boulder dam.