

# Hikers Safe After Ordeal in Narrows

Zion Narrows, that treacherous canyon that claimed the lives of five Boy Scouts in 1961, trapped in a flash flood, gave up the last of 42 persons Tuesday afternoon in an averted tragedy under similar conditions.

Three separate parties were in the Zion Narrows canyon Sunday when a flash flood again struck the area. The turbulent waters were reported to be higher than the flood of 1961, but all 42 persons managed to scramble to high ground to avert the roaring waters of the Virgin River that has cut the channel as narrow as

seven feet in some places with sheer walls several hundred feet straight up.

Veteran hiker Sheriff Otto Fife of Cedar City was leading the largest of the three parties on the popular hiking trek from Deep Creek through the Narrows to Zion Canyon.

The Otto Fife party was able to find shelter at the "Grotto" within the canyon, a cavern-like nech in the canyon wall which was above the crest level of the flash flood.

Trapped Sunday, some of the 42 persons involved, principally

from northern Utah and southern California, were forced to remain an extra day when rains continued.

Only other local residents include Mark Richsteig of Cedar City and former Cedar City resident, Scott Atkin, now residing in Bountiful.

Most of the groups entered the canyon area Saturday with most expecting to emerge in Zion National Park Sunday.

Friends and families kept a vigil at the emergent point throughout the three-day ordeal. Four of the stranded hikers man-

aged to forge through the muddy waters to Zion Monday with the first report that although wet and cold, all were alive and well.

A larger group came out Monday evening, all but nine were able to come out of the canyon Tuesday morning and in the early afternoon Tuesday Sheriff Fife came out of the canyon with the last of the hiking parties.

Reason for the delay of the final group was injuries to two of the members from a log carried

**(Continued on Page Two)**

# ZION NARROWS

(Continued from Front Page)

ver. Alan Keller, of Orem, and Milton G. Widison,, Salt Lake City, suffered injuries. Keller suffered a knee injury and Widison a foot injury. Behind the main party these two men and their

sons were perched in a box elder tree when the high waters of the flood struck. The two youths were in the upper branches and Keller and Widison were hanging from the tree with half of their bodies in the rampaging waters when they were struck by the log.

One of the parties who were delayed in entering the canyon area Sunday made their way back to the deep creek area rather than attempt the trip on trip on through the Narrows to Zion.

The ordeal brought national attention to the Zion Park area as the three-day episode garnered national wire service attention.

Continued rains Monday averted attempts of Park Service officials going into the canyon with food and drink for the stranded victims.

Several lost all of their gear in the flood waters, another party reported that after the second day they threw their sleeping bags away because they were so soggy from the rain.

Wednesday all was calm again within Zion Park, but the Virgin River remained muddy from the rains.