

# 9-Year-Old Boy Drowns In Big Rock Quarry

*Jose Otero Loses Life Despite Efforts  
Of 13-Year-Old Arthur Felix To Save Him*

By DEAN PRICHARD

A nine-year-old Tucson boy drowned in a murky rock quarry yesterday while a 13-year-old boy, who didn't know him, nearly died trying to save him.

Dead is Jose Otero, son of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Otero of 1400 W. Farmington St.

The boy who ran three blocks to answer screams for help, then leaped into the deep water with clothes and shoes on to bring to shore the limp body, is Arthur Felix, 13, of 325 W. 29th St.

"You must have been a good swimmer to risk your life like that without hesitation," comforted Sheriff's Sgt. Richard Lease later.

"No, sir," replied the saddened rescuer, "I can't swim very good . . . not very good at all . . ."

But little Arthur Félix had found the body submerged in six-foot depths, and, despite the drag of clothes and shoes, had brought the victim to the surface, then to shore and up onto the bank in a last desperate effort of youthful exertion.

Deputy Norman C. Ranger arrived and took over. He administered artificial respiration. The gasping, muddy little rescuer looked on, silently, tears welling in his eyes.

The Fire Department rescue squad arrived then, administered oxygen with a resuscitator. An ambulance came.

Jose Otero was pronounced dead at the county hospital.

Jose's mother, summoned by sheriffs' deputies, came into the emergency room, where she collapsed in severe shock.

Scene of the tragedy was a

Pioneer Construction Co. rock quarry 200 yards north of the Santa Cruz River bridge on W. Silverlake road. The quarry is about the size of a football field. Water covers its bottom from a few inches in depth to six or seven feet.

Little Jose and his brother, Ernesto, 7, and a friend, Leo Perez, 11, of 1081 S. 10th Ave., had gone there to play. Jose climbed down to the edge of a deep pocket.

**He decided to wade. He** stripped to his shorts. He inched into the cold water. A couple feet out, there was a dropoff.

Jose went down, disappeared immediately.

Above, his stunned brother and playmate waited breathlessly a moment, then screamed for help.

Three blocks away, Arthur Felix was having a picnic with friends. He heard the screams, ran, plunged in with lungs already straining from the run.

Jose is also survived by three sisters, Rita, Lidia and Mrs. Anita Ronquillo; a second brother, Danny, and his grandfather, Luis Robles, all of Tucson, and his grandmother, Mrs. Rita Corrales, Los Angeles, Calif.

The body is at Tucson Mortuary.