

All the small stuff was behind them now.

Sangster?

remarked,

He ~~stated~~ "It's enough to make a preacher cuss," and cussed.

"Closure: started 4:51 P.M. June 24, 1937
completed 7:05 P.M. " " "

--handwritten entry in Box 167, Ft. P archives; ph'copy in '37 construction articles
file.

--have Owen make this entry?

see Gt. Falls Trib piece (typescript), Sept. 24, '38, for details on
the June 24, '37, problem with the rr bridge pier, @ closure.

(filed w/ "1938 construction articles & slide")

dam detail

1st of 2 cards

RITTER, LESTER O., 439 South 89th Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68114. "Because the celebration on Aug. 1, 1987 commemorates 50 years since closure of the Fort Peck Dam, it seems appropriate that I share my experience during the actual closure on June 24, 1937. Closure was scheduled the latter part of June 1937 (the exact date I don't remember), with all of the news media present. However, due to some movement in the earthen fill about the middle of June, the situation became tense and only construction workers and people with passes were permitted to cross the river at any time. My boss had such a pass. I learned at a night club (Wheeler Inn) at about midnight on June 23, 1937,
(continued)

that due to further movement of the fill the District Engineer had declared an emergency and closure was to be started early in the morning. I called my boss about 2 a.m. and got him out of bed. I convinced him that closure was to start in a few hours. He picked me up and with his pass we crossed over the channel to the intake structure. An earthen dike had been built around the intake structure to keep the river away until closure. I set up my camera on a tripod at a

Ritter card/2

good vantage point and at about 5 a.m. filmed all of the explosions that breeched the dike and permitted the water to start through the tunnels. Then we drove to the tunnel outlets and filmed the first water as it came through tunnel #1. We then drove to the narrowed river channel where I saw and filmed the actual closure which was accomplished by dumping many carloads of rock from the railroad trestle into the channel. My boss and I left the site in time to reach our office in the Administration Building by about 8 a.m. We had just witnessed a first -- the closure of the largest hydraulic fill dam in the world without the news media being present. By 3 p.m. that afternoon, the narrowed river channel had been closed and the entire flow diverted through the tunnels." The person I remember

worker detail

LUX, H. G. "BUD," 7711 E. Vernon Avenue, Scottsdale, Arizona 85257. "During the closure of the river in 1937 (I believe), my crew was dumping gravel cars (continued)

(train). Dozers were pushing gravel from the sides into the torrent, a derrick barge downstream was throwing big rocks into the torrent to hold the gravel. Col. Larkin, the District Engineer, was close at hand watching constantly for approximately 36 anxious hours for the closure to be made. The river was determined. At about 1600 hours, one of my men dumping a railroad car of gravel smashed his finger, so I took his place. Luckily I got to dump the first car of gravel to stay dry. The closure had finally been made. I was working on the upstream face of the dam when it slid out in September 1938 (as I recall). Merle MacClinick and four of us took the only available motorboat into the slide area to rescue whomever we could find. We tried to revive the one we found, but were not successful. Rescued a crane operator and oiler who were unhurt.

closing of river

BEECHER, WILLARD C., E. 9317 Mission Avenue, Spokane, Washington 99206. "I believe it was in the spring of 1938 when I saw this bit of history being made. Earthfill had been pumped in place on both sides of the river and now a decision by the Corps of Engineers was made to close the channel. To do this, all four dredges pumped directly into the channel. On my 8-hour shift that day, the build-up of earth choked off the flow of the river and water began backing up forming Fort Peck Reservoir." The person I remember most: "Mr. Lindsey, a sub-foreman in my crew. A very knowledgeable man in the field of dredging. He was a leader, not a pusher. Before the dam was completed, he was promoted to Fill Superintendent."

dam,

which by all evidence of the eye stood as perpetual^{now} as... (river?)

understanding the dam

see "Ft. Peck--a half-century & holding":

p. 5--sheet pile cutoff wall in center of dam

p. 12--sideview diagram of dam

p. 32--closing off the river, June 24, '37; gives dam dimensions

pp. 34-7--slide of Sept. 22, '38

pigeons, lice of the air, ...

as far as Neil is concerned

- try'g to meet o on er

stanch the flow

--use w/ dam, or w/ some emotional situation?

^{it} ^{them} ^{them here, (dam closure;}
(They) all gathered behind me, pointing me to America.
^{the highway.}

gambol

gamble had become gambol (or vice versa)

river closure: even Owen cuts loose?