

Myron Baker--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

tells of being in combat in WWII, bullets came close; thought to himself,
"He's saving me for something, and I don't know what He's saving me for."

Neil?

(Another) hardbellied man. (Proxy abt the Duffs? Bruce, similar to Darius?
or Hugh, similar to Darius?)

Montana '94

Fort Peck: slide site @ 1:15 p.m. (Match slide pics to dam today)(is there a plaque?)

--angle of sun: in southern sky, a bit to left from o'head, if facing W.
- warmth o L. side of face; slide carried N to'd sun?

--temperature, feel of air (wind) (or calm, as before earthquake?)

73°/Sept. 10 @ 1:05; water moving o lake

--landscape around

- dredges wkg @ present-day dredge cuts park

* - sense of everything dug up (charred - project)

--sense of proportion: Dam & slide segments, vs. landscape and surviving portion of dam

- huge amt of dam left

- silent gray hills to S & E

(Over)

--work through the slide scene from viewpoint of each character (separate set of f'cards?)

the middle of a moment

full-tilt, · side of · dam we carving into · lake.

by Owen, abt danger sign @ core pool

"The--the OO..." (momentary falter or hesitation, done in dialogue without other
comment?)

awful

"That's very damn pretty." (said sarcastically, i.e. that's a helluva thought.)

Box 176
Photographs - General History
Fort Peck Dam Diversion Tunnels

*earlier smaller slides to trigger Owen's
concern
- another character comments on these?
(Hugh?)*

34/647. June 22, 1934.

Slide occurring in side of cut made in connection with lower portals of diversion tunnels. Note abrupt break near top and clearly defined cleavage plane.

34/705. July 9, 1934.

Aerial view of slide at excavation for lower tunnel portals.

BX 157 - Bd of Consultants of FP Dam

- slide moved 5,200,000 cubic yds (of + than 100,000,000) of fill

possible use w/ eclipse section? or w/ the day of the slide?

a sunrise boils up, too redly hot to look at; in a same instant of that sunrise, look simultaneously at:

--Owen's dam

--Proxy's houseboat window

--Bruce's diving barge

--Neil's truck

i.e., ~~transit~~ on through all the characters, ending with short graf of the sheriff's assessment of the day and weather.

Walter Luse--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

Likely worth hearing this tape for his details on escaping the slide.

summary of slide:

Went down to talk to Doug Moore who was below the fill, to "go down and check the line." Did this and then crawled up "1000 feet" and sat down, then saw that pipe was shaking. Barge in water stood on end and spinning like a top. "I knew I didn't have no business there." started to run as slide started, remembers running as fast as he could....(p. 3) Doesn't think they really know how many died in slide....Gov't wouldn't say if more than the married men had died. (check this: were all the casualties indeed married? Wd lend credence to notion that single men, on not-up-to-date work lists, weren't accounted for. But wdn't payroll records have had their names?)

Neil! Neil

"Don't go dying on me!"

--Owen saves Neil in the slide?

--cd produce the plot conclusion, that it is Phoebe, Neil's wife, who kills Darius in the pickup: to free Owen (who she's had an affair with) of Darius, and of herself as well.

--This conclusion wd leave:

--Owen and Rosellen still together

--Bruce and Rhonda as they were (together, or heading apart?)

--Wyomia alone, but out of her tough past, unsurprised at Darius's betrayal.

--Neil the tragic figure, particularly if he has suspected Phoebe and Owen.

(Phoebe's act of drowning herself and Darius would take away the suspicion

Neil had of Owen, i.e. shift it to Darius.)

--Hugh and Dora as they were?

somebody says to Owen?

we got kind of behindhand on the job

leave open the question of whether Darius sabotaged the spillway railcars?

Gwen?

Let's go at it. (start work, for ex)

slide detail *1st of 2 cards*

TOURTLOTTE, HELEN, 614 - 4th Avenue S., Glasgow, Montana 59230. "The incident I wish to share concerns my husband, Ira Eugene (Gene) Tourtlotte, now deceased. It was a warm sunny day on the afternoon of September 22, 1938, and I had taken a leisurely walk to the grocery store with my infant daughter and 3-year old son. As we were leaving, a woman (whom I didn't know) rushed up to me and exclaimed, 'Have you heard about your husband?' My husband, I knew, was to have driven Gen. Pick and several other officials from Omaha, along with the District Engineer, out on an inspection survey. The half-completed earth-fill dam at that time was the largest project of its kind in the world and there had been some slight problem near the east end. But midway on the huge structure, the earth began breaking away and sliding into the water. My husband, sensing the danger, immediately pushed the throttle of the Ford sedan to the floor in reverse. Miracle of miracles, it held, and they traveled backward as rapidly as the vehicle would go, with the earth breaking away from the front wheels, until they reached firm ground. Much equipment and many workers were lost
(continued)

Tour letter card / 2

in the slide which encompassed nearly a fourth of the dam at that point, but by a miracle, the engineers and my husband were saved. In receiving a special citation later, his answer was, 'Well, you know, I was saving my own skin, too.'" The person I remember most: "Emma Lukin (now deceased). Emma was the head cook at the Fort Peck Cafe. She was an outstanding cook and person, no order or special attention too great."

slide detail

MUSTAD, ROBERT M., P.O. Box 601, 107 Third Avenue North, Glasgow, Montana 59230. "There were many experiences I remember: Diverting the main river channel. (Exciting) My first run-in with rattlesnakes. F.D.R.'s first visit (no connection). The first swim in Fort Peck Reservoir. The big slide. And finding the body of Doug Moore in the lake ten days after the slide." The person I remember most: "Mrs. Pearson, owner and operator of the Wheeler Hotel. She took myself and others in who were broke, jobless and hungry, until we could find employment (some did and some didn't)."

slide detail

JACKSON, ROBERT L., R.R.#1, Box 6, Site 15, Fort St. John, B.C., Canada V1J 4M6. "There are many pleasant recollections of compatible workmen who worked hard and played hard during those Fort Peck Dam days, but there were disasters too. I recall the day of the slide. I was working in the welding shop when there was an unusual tremor. The workers and I looked south and saw that the east end of the dam had disappeared. Some of us drove over to investigate and discovered that the fill had slid upstream. It was horrible to realize that along with the heavy equipment of cats, draglines, trucks, etc., many men were also buried alive. I was born and raised six miles north of Fort Peck, so I am familiar with the surrounding area of the Missouri River with its picturesque badlands, prairies, trails, old telegraph lines, and remains of the old trading post. I'm proud to have lived in this area and worked on one of the engineering marvels of the world -- Fort Peck." The person I remember most: "Walker, Foreman. He was a good understanding foreman."

slide detail part card of 3

GRANUM, ART "BUD," 4828 Hazelwood Avenue, Carmichael, California 95608. "On Sept. 22, 1938, about 1:30 p.m. I ran what I consider my fastest one-quarter to half-mile run of my career, in heavy steel-toed shoes no less, with the famous Fort Peck Dam slide right on my tail. I raced eastward along the upstream edge of the hydraulic fill toward the good ol' terra firma on the east abutment near the tunnel shafts. Just as I reached firm ground the slide zipped past me to swallow up the sizeable east pumpboat (converted dredge, I believe) afloat in the core pool, with a substantial hole formed beside me of about 150-180 ft. depth (pumpboat was buried and never recovered). I was the last of our crew who made it to safety. My work partner, Mr. Christopherson, a large gentleman of about 65 years could not run and he went down with the slide.

(continued)

Granum cd/2

He survived by straddling the 30-inch pipeline and hanging on to the turnbuckle clips, which he rode down like a Chinese dragon, covered up several times with gravel, rocks, earth, trestle poles, ledgers, mud and water, as the slide material went down and then out into the lake nearby, but just shy of, the tunnel entrances. We formed rescue crews to hunt survivors on the very unstable islands formed by the slide material and about an hour or so after the big slide, we ran across Mr. Christopherson crawling out of the mud and all you could see were his teeth, eyes and a big grin. I was really happy to see that big ol' Norwegian and all he had was a gash on his one arm at the elbow--a real miracle of survival. Needless to say, we compared nightmares for the next week or so. I was one of those infamous under-age government employees (15 years old) working my way through high school. Yes, that was my first and very nearly my last year of government employment. But I somehow managed to obtain my

Granum card/3

engineering degree after WWII and completed about 36 years of federal service (mostly Corps of Engineers) before retiring in 1980. (An interesting sidelight which you could say very nearly cost me my life was the fact that I was a hardworking, growing young man at the time of the dam slide with a 'humongous' appetite that required 2 big sacks of lunch each work day. During that run, I passed the temporary telephone shack where we had eaten lunch. I stopped, turned around, ran back, left my jacket, but picked up my sack of grapes and proceeded to run again with the slide right on my heels.)" The person I remember most: "Mr. Brick, roundhouse worker and father of two Fort Peck High School classmates, Lorraine and Leo. He took a lot of time and patience teaching me roundhouse work, boiler work, engine maintenance and operation of the locomotives, which at the time was simply 'the greatest.'"

slide detail

MONTFORT, JAMES W. "MONTY," Vandalia, Montana. 59273.

"One day in September 1938, I was working as foreman of a crew laying quarry stone on the four-to-twelve shift. We were completing a tier of stone at the extreme east abutment and were to move the dragline from the sidehill mats to the berm and start tracking to the dike section at the west end of the dam. Water was coming up through the gravel and we could hear gurgling sounds beneath us. At 7 p.m., we began working off the mats and as the weight of the machine was transferred to the gravel, it began to sink and water rushed up around the tracks. We moved in a bulldozer and a loadmaster and began building up with small mats. At about 11 p.m., we had managed to reach solid ground. The graveyard shift relieved us and moved out with the dragline. Our crew was wet, muddy and exhausted and glad to go home. The next afternoon the slide occurred and the east upstream section of the dam was gone."

slide detail

MEYERS, WILBUR C. "SANDY," 310 E. Williams, Glendive, Montana 59330. "When the dam went out in 1938, we were working on the dredge and the power went off. We didn't know what happened for a couple of hours and couldn't figure out why so many cars with luggage on top were going by. There wasn't any direct communication between offices and men in those days like there is today. One night when we got off work at midnight and went from the dredge to the parking lot by tugboat, we noticed Walter Inlow's new car seemed so small and when we got there we found out why -- someone had stolen all four wheels." The person I remember most: "Walter Inlow, Deckhand. He was a good friend and co-worker."

slide detail

KAO, LEWIS F., 221 E. 5th, Box 421, Culbertson, Montana 59218. "We put in a 4-to-12 shift on the south side of the dam and that night the dam had started to shift. There was a 6 ft. bow in the railroad track. When the 12-to-8 crew came on, they discontinued dredging in that area. The next day the dam went out. The dam went out Sept. 22, 1938. My wife and I were married the next day at 8:30 a.m. and left for a short trip to the mountains in the western part of the state. I read the paper the next day and wondered if we had a home to go back to. Our home was in Park Grove." The persons I remember most: "Joe Bowers, Superintendent of the Fill; and Charlie Hecock, our Foreman. Hecock worked in the Engineers in WWI, knew the job and his men. He said the dam was going to slide out a couple of months before it did. He was a knowledgeable man. Bowers was the right man in the right place."

slide detail

JOHNSON, ALLEN P., "I remember the day of the slide. We were working on the downstream berm road and had just loaded poles. I hiked up to the top of the dam and it was gone--all I saw was a big blue cloud. I called to Pappy Crane, a fellow truck driver. We took our trucks and blocked the road from the town side allowing only government vehicles and ambulances to pass. The chief of police arrived and asked, 'Whose idea is this?' I answered, 'I figured you wouldn't want traffic here.' So we were left to control traffic flow until 6:00. Rumors flew about trucks, equipment and people, as there were several crews in the slide area. The next day someone asked a cat skinner, 'Did you run?' He answered, 'No, I wasn't running, but I passed a lot who were!' My wife, Marian, remembers it because there was no way for the wives to know the truth of the rumors or the safety of their husbands for several hours." The person I remember most: "C. E. Crane, H.D. Truck Driver. We worked closely together and that friendship has continued to this day."

slide detail

GANNON, PHILIP E., 86 Broadacres Road, Atherton, California 94025. "In mid-afternoon in September 1938, I was working as a striker on a booster pump station about halfway down the downstream face of the dam on the tunnel side. After telephoning in my hourly meter/gage readings, as was my custom, I looked toward the crest of the dam. The first thing I noticed was that sections of the dredge-fill line running parallel to the main axis were slowly disappearing from view, as was a long boom crane. Our booster station was shut down immediately and the dredge (Madison, I believe) was notified, and then I and the other two members of the booster station watched more of the pipeline, and more pieces of equipment move slowly out of sight, over a length of what must have been 2,000 feet. Some personnel were in evidence scurrying to safety as we saw some of the fill drop in towards the core pool. Later, of course, the slide at Fort Peck Dam and its

repair became a major part of U.S. dam construction lore." The person I remember most: "C. R. Smith, Principal Engineer in charge of fill operations, and his ability to handle the multitudinous, complex problems and responsibilities of his high-level

note for Owen?

slide detail

FLAHERTY, ERMA BELL, 983 Robin Drive, College Place, Washington 99324. "Putting in a 12-hour shift the afternoon of the slide, cleaning mud, sand and water out of patients' ears, eyes, noses and lungs. Those were the ones fortunate enough to have survived the catastrophe." The person I remember most: "Dr. Waldron, Surgeon. An outstanding surgeon and an able administrator."

slide detail

FARQUHAR, HOWARD, Box 728, Glasgow, Montana 59230. "I remember the day of the tragic slide on the dam. I was fortunate enough to be working on the other end of the fill. We watched the core pool going down, knowing something was wrong. What was happening? The dredges shut down and we were ordered to go see if we could help in rescue work. None of our crew was lost. It was pretty well under control by the time we got there. Those of us who came home that night really received a warm welcome, so thankful to have survived!" The person I remember most: "Big Gus, foreman on fill. He stands out because of his forceful personality."

slide detail

EPPERSON, ROY S., P.O. Box 565, Mill City, Oregon 97360. "Beans to Bullets - September 22, 1938, began as a normal clear, calm day at the Fort Peck Dam Project. It was my day off as oiler on the Dredge Jefferson. My wife Clara, a teacher in the Fort Peck (continued)

School, had returned to school after having been home for lunch. She had started a pot of beans to cook and gave me orders to see that they did not burn. About 2 p.m., I heard my next door neighbor rush into his apartment and in a loud voice call out to this wife, 'I'm all right. The dam is gone.' He was a surveyor working in the area when an upstream portion of the unfinished dam began to slip. Another neighbor and I jumped in a car to see what we could do. When we got back 2 hours later, the apartment was full of smoke. The beans had boiled dry and looked like buckshot. The construction of the dam had been set back one year."

slide (?) detail

1st of 2 cards

DYCK, JACOB P., 2765 South Eaton Way, Denver, Colorado 80227. "I was working on the crane on top of the dam when it blew out from the water pressure caused from the spring underneath the dam they thought they had dynamited shut before starting to build the dam. I went down the inside of the dam with the crane rolling alongside of me along with other debris. The water pressure inside the dam toward the lake side forced the water straight up toward the lake, crane and all. Found myself about 200 feet from the top of the lake floating in the water. I grabbed another man floating by and towed him to a boat that came along to rescue
(continued)

Dyck card/2

us. They took us to the hospital, but he was already dead. I was so covered with dirt and debris and the Irish nurse at the hospital said to me, 'It's you! I knew you would come out of this!' When I asked 'Why?' she said, 'You have to have a place to go--the Lord doesn't want you and the devil won't have you.'" The person I remember most: "Doug Moore, Supervisor of Heavy Equipment. He lost his life trying to save others when the dam went out."

slide detail

DECKER, BEN, 1010 - 1st Avenue, Havre, Montana 59501.
"Partial failure of part of the upper face of the dam
on Sept. 22, 1938, caused alot of excitement. I had
just driven across the dam during the noon hour and the
slide occurred shortly thereafter. People started to
call from 30 miles down river to say they had heard the
dam had gone out. Lost several friends in the slide."

slide

ARCHAMBEAULT, LEWIS C., 1103 Valley View, Glasgow, Montana 59230. "I remember the slide of 1938. I was to go to work at 1:30 p.m. on the day of the slide in that area, setting out stakes in the core pool. When I arrived there was nothing left, so with a long probe I started looking for dead bodies."

Martin Iver, 1st folder MHS oral history summaries

slide details

Lloyd Larson, 1st folder MHS oral history summaries

the slide: engineers knew it was going, but not that quick.

Thelma Bondy, 1st folder MHS oral history summaries

--husband at the slide (p. 10)

Robt't Tayler, 1st folder MHS oral history summaries

--knew of movement of dam night before the slide

Rob 't Taylor, 1st folder MHS oral history summaries

--slide: rumor hit Glasgow that the dam had gone out

Robert Rhodes--1st folder MHS oral history summaries

saw light poles fall over in area of slide

dredge workers' feeling something was going wrong, week before slide

Kermit Baecker--1st folder MHS oral history summaries

slide theory: project was going too fast, trying to set records

William Fly, 2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

p. 13--untranscribed portion of interview, he recalls the slide, offers theory.

Owen Williams--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

p. 3--claims there were indications the night before that the slide was happening.

Philip Gannon, 2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

tells his reaction to the slide (might be worth listening to)

James Montfort--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

Remembers indication that slide was going to occur. Thinks they tried to finish the dam too quickly.

--cd be worth listening to tape for this and other details.

Harold Bryant--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

Recalls the slide; saw people getting out of way, vehicles going down; thought he was "seeing things" like a heat wave.

Cd be worth listening to tape.

Myron Baker--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

Summary says he tells what was doing when slide happened, what saw; doesn't think the Corps told truth about death toll or loss of equipment; has theory for cause of slide.

Doesn't sound particularly trustworthy, but if I gather gossip abt slide, might be worth listening to tape.

Tom Mullen--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

the slide: his wife's brother ran from sliding sand and when he finally stopped, found he'd been clutching his shovel the whole time.

George Larson--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

Was at slide, was sent out to look for men lost in it.

That's nowhere near right.

Bucking

Got you foxed and boxed, looks like to me.

slide detail

WATTERS, ELMER, J., 6930 Brookcrest Way, Citrus Heights, California 95621. "I was operating the tugboat the day of the slide and lost my deckhand, Archie Moore, in the slide. The tugboat was found and salvaged, but no evidence was located of Archie." The person I remember most: "Many. During the 17 years at Fort Peck, many personal acquaintances are remembered."

Random death? (Owen mulls @ spillway after the slide.)

"How you feeling?"

Rosellen to Neil ? (alone in hospital)

"Weak and crippled." (i.e., tired after hard day's work)

, thanks very much.

thank you for asking."

Other than that, lucky.

D: "Woman, you..."

P: "Talk to me by name, damn you."

May 18, 1938:

President Roosevelt signed Fort Peck Power Act authorizing the construction of hydroelectric power generating facilities.

June 5, 1938:

Spillway considered complete.

September 22, 1938:

A major slide involving less than 5% of the in-place material, 5,000,000 cubic yards, occurred when a section 1,700 feet long slid into the partially filled reservoir almost covering the diversion tunnel inlets. 34 men were on the section when it unexpectedly slid, but all but 8 survived. Subsequent investigations attributed the slide to a foundation failure.

Montana '94

Fort Peck: spillway, for Owen's despairing scene after the slide

- cheese wedge gates channels
- C's pic of distance down
- sense of width makes it seem not so far down (but it is)
- w/ort-high solid concrete railing (bulletproof?)
- river water, beyond end of spillway
- drying pattern of $\frac{1}{2}$ wet $\frac{1}{2}$ dry conc. sqs below: mad harlequin

pathless (Gwen, in despair @ spellway?)