

The pace of flooding, as the water begins to back up behind the dam: what gets covered first, say, as the water begins to take one of the alfalfa-seed farms and its buildings. (or were the buildings moved out?)

--first it was alfalfa-deep; then tree-bole deep; then up to the cottonwood limbs; ultimately covering everything that had been in the bottomland and now a mirror surface between ridges.

the tension spiders

OH 1102

Ruby Martin--2nd folder MHS oral history summaries

She was nurse, and if I want material on dangers of dam work, this tape would be worth listening to for her discussion of high "pneumonia" toll among miners; also some accident stories.

...the heavy lid of shell which would press everything into place and hold back the river water.

#. Peak

- 1st view of water (C pic) from 8 mi. S; aquamarine sea in stark land ^{a entry}
- # P + m: pico - Hotel; corps 7 Eggs; theatre; face 7. dam from town rd; around Mo downstream; boulders on dam/face; dam/ace thg 5.
- mosquitos biting C in 15 mph wind
- fair: loud vibrating hum, like processed thunder, of turbines
warm vibros when you touch turbine wall
- penstocks: whole Mo R comes thru, is directed to turbines
- noise sn'whr is a regulated roar; you just can hear one another
- 7 trays, like non-moving conveyor belts; holding cables
- control room: buffalo head in corner, no computers
- Numpy land and dam site
- Ripping wind by 3 p.m.

earthen fill dam over 21,000' long, 4,900' wide @ its base, &
250.5' high "

filled, capacity 19 miln acre/ft, surface area 7249,000 acres, 1,600 mi
shoreline, 134 mi. long, maxm depth 220'

- from observ pt sign

cuds of clay in dredge line traps

Owen gave Darius a headlong tour of the dam project. This and

that were pointed out proudly, but what produced a steady state of

real
amazement in Darius was the size of the river valley, the reach of

way earthfill it was going to take to cross from bluff to bluff.

earthfill process had to live down Johnstown flood.

Mont. '94

34/5 Wiota dumptruck w/ no cab, in winter

Box 167--Ft P project described--in stamped-on phrase--on some plans as
"Missouri River Improvement", a phrase the sheriff would have hated.

dimensions of dam: possible comparisons--

--the dam comparable to Seminary Ridge @ Gettysburg? (i.e., cd Battle of G'burg be fought on the dam?)

--volume of the pyramids? (encyc clip is in "Ft. P dam and lake date" file folder)
--have Norm Lingquist help on this computation, if wanted?

--show the reader, by some comparison, what a cubic yard of earthfill resembles
steamer trunkful? car trunkful? bathtubful?

--congressional testimony (in 1920's?), before Pick-Sloan Act, will show expectations abt effects of the dam, dreams of Missouri Valley Authority.

? --dam buried in the Missouri River bottomland, the best agricultural land in eastern Montana; there still are bitter memories, feelings, in Glasgow.

--there are good Corps of Engineers pics of the dam project; Lorie Morrow at MHS has file copies of some, maybe just a sample.

--Laurie Mercier tape-recorded many of the dam-builders at Ft. Peck golden annvsy; a list of names and addresses may be with the transcripts at MHS or with Laurie.

--original importance of Fort Peck was as fur trading post, 1860s-1880s (Durfee & Peck); retained some importance even after railroads came because the railroads were distant and river traffic still made some sense; Bill Lass, historian at Mankato State, is the expert on this late, interior fur trade.

→ --the scariness of the slide off the dam face; check on this--did it threaten flooding down the entire Missouri? Bill thinks there's good eyewitness description in GF Trib articles about the slide.

--cultural face of Fort Peck: the theater, built by dam crafstmen, out there amid the plains; meant to counterbalance the whores of Happy Hollow etc.?

--Burton K. Wheeler refused to come to one of FDR'S visits to the dam, having politically split with him by then. Murryy in contrast was avidly identifying himself with FDR. The congressman O'Connell had fought in Spain, a wild man politically, whom Wheeler got jettisoned from office in this period.

--Bill knows somebody, but couldn't yet think who, that lost a friend from beside him in the slide.

--Bill points out that changing the course of a river--which is what dams do-- is the largest alteration mankind has ever done.

--How much more interesting a gathering of people Ft. Peck was, compared to a goldrush town.

9 March '94 work

detail

mentioned in "Ft. Peck--A half-century & holding":

- p. 25-- cutting into the shale w/ coal saws
 - constant noise of blasting
 - landslides, from bentonite seams (note: before the big slide?)
- p. 54--laborer who pushed a wheelbarrow in and out of the tunnels (note: doing what?)
 - couple this w/ Arnie Franke's memory of a foreman who called this "driving a Ford"

This so perplexing (dam)...

file folder labeled "project history" may yield phrases & details to use as background for the damwork, especially Owen's part in it.

Glasgow Courier, '33-35, avbl (3 reels, Bell & Howell/Univ. Micflms) for Inter-library loan

--checked w/ Bob Clark 2/28/94

The major construction aspects--the diversion of the river, the dam's progress, the tunnels, and the spillway--need to be treated, and explained through just enough narrative but mostly scenes that show what's going on, separately. They can be a kind of pace for the book.

The spillway should be used as a surprise: entire separate project, miles away from the dam, when the reader should think he's grasped the dam scene.

opening scene of the dam: make it amid the terrible cold of '36 winter?

--or better to lead into this; maybe a third of the way into the book?

--The Duffs' 1st winter at Fort Peck?

Everything about Fort Peck Dam was going to set a record.

(check Engineering Society's report sheet for details.)

Dnieperstroy & Fort Peck

--check this against "ideas" filecard abt Russia as example of remaking a society.

--the US and USSR land masses as facing pages in book of earth. Similarity of the transcontinental experience, for ex, and 1930s efforts to transform society through massive projects.

--Dnieperstroy as inspiration to Darius; he could have gone to Russia instead of the US, except for the strange pull of family (and possibly of Hugh's wife Dora, or at least the desire to show up Hugh in ~~Doris~~ Dora's eyes again).

use in Maria

The Missourians: Price's left wing.

--have a discourse on Missourians in Montana?

--Montana's connection to Missouri began with L & C.

* --Missourians arrived as if they'd come up the Missouri River to spawn.

have Jack say

running a blade (i.e., a grader, such as Christie operated)

--sending a blade up the road

spillway-- use as metaphor?

--has the Fort Peck spillway ever been used?

--the LIFE cover mistook it for the dam; deliberately, ~~in~~ because of concrete
instead of dirt?)
(check this against the Bourke-White camera view filecard)

The camera view of Fort Peck, in the hands of Margaret Bourke White:

This possibly could be not a camera's-eye view, or at least not entirely; instead the camera itself is a kind of character, doing its business (photographic process cd be briefly poetically described), going places (as held or tripoded by B-White)--but ultimately, the NY editors of LIFE see what they've already made up their minds to see, Fort Peck as New Deal wild west.

--cd include how legends accrete (that is, comment on this along w/ the descriptive actuality of B-White and the camera in action: story of B-White being mistaken for well-dressed prostitute, for ex.

--ultimate example of the camera doing its job but the LIFE editors perverting it is the cover shot, mistakenly calling the spillway the dam.

(these are recopied from notebook, I think from watching Jerry Van Faasen's video,
"Fort Peck: A Job Well Done, 1933-37)

--bare brows of dam and ridges above snow

--twinstack derrick boat

--28" dredge pipe to carry slurry

--trash rack on intake structure

--Missouri 1000 cu. ft/sec

--lights on because of dust (trucks @ dam?)

--diver

--"catch-all contract"

--ramp to powerhouse
(possible truck accident site?)

--pelicans on spillway

--cormorant nests

--tree tops being covered by water

terrain

give a sense of the dam project?

Big Red, by John Haase--1980 novel abt building Boulder Dam; Wayne McGuire has
a copy; in Jan. '94 told him thanks but no thanks, I'd
take a look at it when I have my own ms done.

detail

accidents, wrecks, foulups

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

pp. 52-3--dredge capsized from sludge when booster pump gave out

--wreck of runaway rail cars, Sept. '38

--pic of moving blocks of ice on flume, ~~in~~ in draining a pond

The marshmallow in the cage.

(one of the Corps officers--Owen's superior?—who can't make decisions, has to be worked around?)

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Mont. '94

34/74 dredge #1 being constructed: shoulder-high platform of huge timbers,
w/ crosshatch of supports beneath, rising out of snowy field

34/90 shows the crosshatch supports holding the hull timbers up off the grnd

dam panorama pic from Ft. Peck archives, Box 167, undated

(It's taken after closure of the dam; dredges are downstream)