

## Finding Aid to the Garrison Dam Construction Photograph Collection

### Garrison Dam Construction Photograph Collection, ca. 1946-1954

139 photographic prints

Collection number: Photo Folio 69

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#### OVERVIEW

**Links:** View collection on [Digital Horizons](#)

**Access:** The collection is open under the rules and regulations of the Institute.

**Provenance:** Donated by Forum Publishing Company, 1984 (Acc. 2105).

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**Citation:** Institute for Regional Studies, NDSU, Fargo (item number)

#### HISTORY

In 1944 U.S. Congress authorized the Garrison Dam and Reservoir project. Through the Flood Control Act of 1944, this project was one of a system of multiple-purpose reservoirs on the Missouri River, extending from Montana to South Dakota. Its purpose was also to develop the water resources of the Missouri River Basin. The job of harnessing the Missouri River and its tributaries was assigned jointly to the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation under the comprehensive Pick-Sloan Plan.

Other federal and state agencies such as the Federal Power Commission, Department of Agriculture, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Public Health Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Public Roads Administration were involved in coordinating the project.

On October 4, 1946 the first shovel of dirt was turned on the excavation for the future Garrison Dam. This was preceded by approximately one year of preparatory work, during which some temporary housing, connecting highways and railroad and bridge construction were done.

The Garrison Dam was completed in 1954, the world's largest roll-filled earthen dam. In 1953 the dam was closed at ceremonies featuring President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Garrison Dam Collection contains 139 photographic prints, predominately 11x14 and 8x10 inches in size, taken from circa 1946 to 1954. The collection has been divided into six series: Aerial views, Dam construction, Intake structure, Spillway, People, and Power plant and tunnels.

The [Aerial Views Series](#) includes aerial photographs of stages of the construction of site, as well as views of the completed site. There is one night-time photograph. The Riverdale file features the newly formed village and the new cemetery.

In the [Dam Construction Series](#) there are photographs of the landscape of the site as well as pictures of various stages of construction including earth moving, and unloading rocks, in addition to general scenes and machinery. Three photographs show the build-up of the rock foundation of the dam, and one features the dam from the reservoir in 1954.

The [Intake Structure Series](#) features construction photographs at different stages of completion. There are only two photographs of the construction of the Spillway.

The [People Series](#) photographs contain unidentified dignitaries and groups at the opening of the dam. Some individual speakers are pictured, with one showing the turning on of a switch by Gov. Norman Brunsdale and a man in a U.S. Army Corps of Engineering uniform.

Included in the [Power Plant and Tunnels Series](#) are construction photographs from early days through the construction of the power plant and tunnels. There are also photographs of the interior of the power plant and tunnels.

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**Intake Structure Series**

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**Spillway Series**

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**Power Plant and Tunnels Series**

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