

## 47. NPIC CHRONICLE IV - Halligan Foundation

*Halligan Reservoir Lake* was envisioned years before the turn of the Century, but by whom and when is a mystery. Here goes some of what I gleaned from the NPIC minutes from 1901-1909...

Barely five years old in 1906, NPIC is up to its eyeballs in construction projects and debt. Despite the Halligan Dam project being destined for a nerve wracking ride and big money problems, the project miraculously goes from concept to completion in a blistering, chaotic forty-six months.

**1st Month:** August 1906. Engineer Snively completes his survey and reports cost projections to the Board. By the end of the year, the survey is filed with Larimer County and approved by the State Engineer.

**2nd Month:** September 1906. The Board, sticking its collective finger in the wind to assess the prospects for a bond issue, convenes a hurried special stockholders' meeting.

**6th Month:** January 1907. NPIC hires Engineer Duvall to prepare plans and specs for the dam to be presented to the State Engineer.

**7th Month:** February 1907. At the annual stockholders' meeting, a motion to double NPIC's bond indebtedness from \$100,000 to \$200,000 is approved. Three days later, the private land owners of the Halligan Reservoir site accept an offer of \$15,000 for their lands.

**8th Month:** March 1907. Everything put on hold while Engineer Duvall recovers from an unspecified illness.

**9th Month:** April 1907. The Board pursues obtaining the additional lands from the US Government and the Union Pacific Railroad. Engineer Duvall returns from meeting with the State Engineer. The Board votes to approve plans for Halligan Dam

to be constructed to a height of seventy feet.<sup>1</sup> Five days later, NPIC solicits construction bids.

**10th & 11th Months:** May-June 1907. Preparations under way for cement storage and testing at the construction site. The Colorado Investment and Realty Company of Colorado Springs proceeds to market \$100,000 worth of bonds, netting NPIC \$95,000.

**12th Month:** July 1907. Last minute hitches with the State Engineer. NPIC receives bids for construction, and after four days of review, the Board accepts the bid of the Walter Sharpe Construction Company, a road and bridge contractor from Eldorado Springs, Kansas. Five days later, the construction contract between NPIC and Sharpe has been negotiated, drafted and executed by both parties, including delivery of a \$5,000 bond by Sharpe.

Cement is ordered delivered by rail to Ingleside,<sup>2</sup> from where it will be hauled by wagon approximately eighteen miles to the Halligan Dam site.

Workmen from Denver are arranged. A Giddings<sup>3</sup> headgate is ordered. Construction begins to blast and build a concrete foundation down to twenty-four feet beneath the surface of the river.<sup>4</sup>

**15th Month:** October 1907. The first signs of discord between Sharpe and NPIC arise over who should pay for rubber boots for the laborers - among other things.

**16th Month:** November 1907. With the foundation nearing completion, the Board decides to hire an engineer to draw up new plans to build Halligan Dam to a height of eighty feet.

**17th Month:** December 1907. The Company runs out of funds. One Director is sent to Colorado Springs to investigate potential for more bonds. The rest of the Board goes to Halligan to try to convince workmen to accept NPIC scrip in lieu of current and back pay.<sup>5</sup>

*(to be continued)*

*Thanks to Jim Carpenter, Zach Thode and Chris Vandemoer for their help with this chapter.*

<sup>1</sup> Why NPIC decided to reduce the height of the dam from one-hundred-twenty feet to seventy, thereby reducing the capacity of the reservoir by 69% from 20,700 acre-feet to 6,400, is not noted in the minutes.

<sup>2</sup> A limestone quarry south of Owl Canyon.

<sup>3</sup> The *Giddings Machine Company* aka *Western Steel Headgate Co.* started business in 1883 as a blacksmithing company and was located in Livermore in the 1890s. It moved to Fort Collins in 1901 and became a leading manufacturer of irrigation headgates. The building it occupied in Fort Collins until the 1970s is now the *Bas Bleu Theater Company*. <https://www.soilsample.com/about-us>, <https://www.fcgov.com/historicpreservation/pdf/oldfortsite-context.pdf>. Robert J. Swan (1907-1997), a cousin of Evan Roberts, and former foreman for the Brackenbury Ranch (Chapter 34), acquired Giddings Machine Company about 1960. Giddings did custom machine work for our Bluebird Manufacturing Co. in the 1970s, so I got to know Bob fairly well (Chapter 33). Bob was a handsome old rancher and quite the ladies' man. He was noted for an episode at the Brackenberry Ranch when he was thrown from a horse near the headwaters of Meadow Creek and broke his leg. He spent most of the day crawling out to the Cherokee Park Road where he got a ride. Bob's older brother Wes (1900-1996), ranched over on Gordon Creek, east of the Currie Ranch aka Glacier View Meadows. We acquired the old Swan Grazing Permit when we took over the Koch Ranch. The permit extended from the Swan Ranch headquarters south to the Poudre River at Mishawaka. (more later)

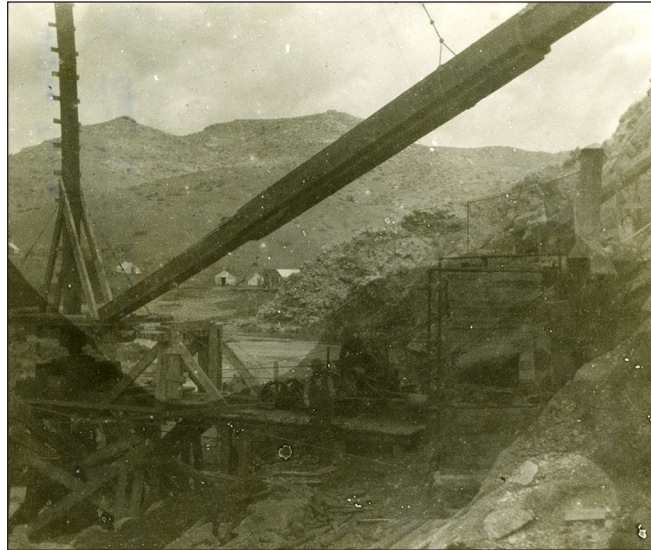
<sup>4</sup> Unverifiable published source.

<sup>5</sup> Not entirely successful, perhaps by being coincident with the conflicting objectives of (A) reducing the workforce, and (B) using "every effort available to continue work until after the annual meeting on February 3 and ascertain the attitude stockholders would take."





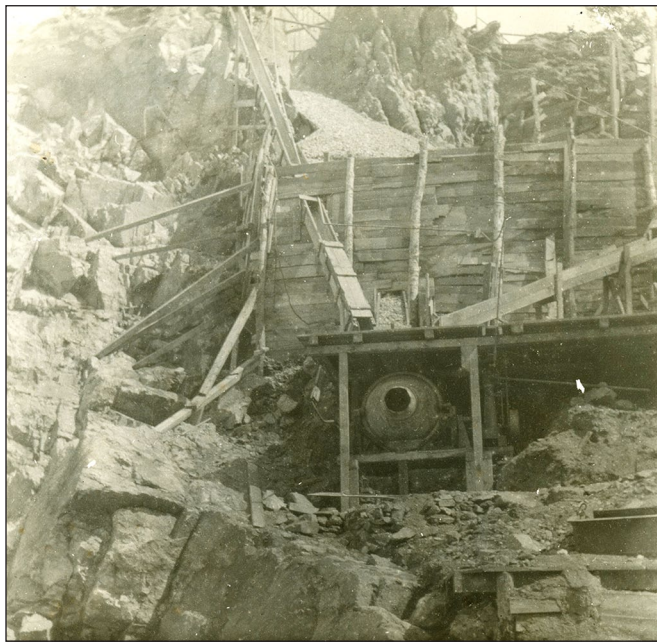
Before Halligan



Construction Derrick



Steam Power Plant



Concrete Batch Plant



Workmen's Quarters



Cleaning Up After A Blast