

# Maj. Hopkins, Geologist Who Helped Select Grand Coulee Site

By EVA HAMILTON  
Mail Tribune Staff Writer  
"God help a wretched geologist whose dam or reservoir fails."

These are words of compassion spoken in Medford by a man who reads of the Vaiont Dam tragedy in the stricken Piave Valley of Italy with an understanding few men share.

The man is Maj. Maurice Jayne Hopkins, 86, former associate geologist, Rivers and Harbors Division, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A.

He has listened for the roar of an avalanche moving down the mountain. He has felt the force of the wind which precedes an avalanche on its course; and he has known stark fear for a dam constructed at his location.

Also A Linguist  
In addition to being a retired geological engineer, Maj. Hopkins is a linguist. He speaks six languages. He is a big game hunter, a fisherman and a man of letters. He also is a descendant of Dr. David Jayne, America's colorful patent medicine king of the 19th century.

More important, however, in Maj. Hopkins' appraisal of himself, is the fact that he is one of the few surviving members of that team which chose the location of Grand Coulee dam, which dwarfs all other concrete or masonry structures in the world.

Grand Coulee dam rests on massive granite. The granite is a remnant of the foothills of the Okanogan Highlands, buried in the Columbia lava plateau millions of years ago.

Maj. Hopkins was invited to participate in the 30th Year Celebration of the ground-breaking for construction of the \$960,496,000 project last autumn. He had to refuse on doctor's orders.

Invitation Is Authorized  
The invitation was authorized by H. T. Nelson, regional director of the United States Department of the Interior. But it wouldn't have been received, Maj. Hopkins said, if his Medford friend, Ralph Eitel, Sr., hadn't informed Gov. Albert D. Rosellini of Washington that he was living — and living in Medford.

"The ranks of those who played a part in the building of this great project certainly are growing thinner," Gov. Rosellini answered Eitel's letter. "I have written to Harold T. Nelson, regional director of the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation, the agency planning the ceremony, in this regard."

Later communications revealed that extensive research was carried on before the invitation was issued to the major. It was established that Maj. Hopkins was a member of the Army Corps of Engineers party which made the original studies on the location of the dam. Then the invitation was authorized by Nelson. It came from Charles Wendt, Jr., president of the Coulee Dam Chamber of Commerce.

Explains Assignment  
To locate such a colossal structure demanded engineers of experience and at least one geologist of long experience, Hopkins explained his assignment to the project.

Included were Maj. John S. Butler, commander of the U.S. Corps of Engineers, who was 52 years old at that time; and President Herbert Hoover, who launched the project. He was then 55. Maj. Butler died when he was only 58.

Men in their mature years, and maturity was essential to that project, Maj. Hopkins emphasized, "are not too often on the scene 35 years later." With this remark, the retired geologist clarified Gov. Rosellini's reference to the "thinning of the ranks."

The tragedy that can result from the wrong location of a dam moved from theory into stark realism for Maj. Hopkins when he participated in the investigation of the St. Francis



POSES WITH TROPHIES — Maj. M. J. Hopkins, a versatile citizen, has a wealth of recollections to draw upon when confined to his apartment. Sometimes memory returns him to the English Channel where he watched from a passenger ship while five British monitors fired upon German forts along the Belgian coast in World War I. Shells from the

dam catastrophe in Los Angeles County, California. There were 400 persons drowned in that 1928 dam failure. It was followed by governmental determination to investigate all probable dam sites in California, Oregon, Montana and Idaho. This experience, Maj. Hopkins explained, undoubtedly qualified him for the Grand Coulee assignment.

Why Called To Study  
And why was he called into the St. Francis Dam investigation? Probably because of his educational background and his experience in the French Pyrenees, he believes.

In the Pyrenees, Hopkins was employed by the French Mining Company, Societe des Mines du Couserans, to locate a dam and equalizing reservoir on the head waters of the River Lez. It was about four miles from the mountain crest separating France from Spain. That was in 1907, three years after he had graduated in engineering and geology from the Royal Belgian University of Liege, where he had spent seven years. Translated into English, his professional rating, the major volunteered, would be "economic geologist."

"The situation in the Pyrenees was not unlike that of the dam in the Italian Piedmont which failed last autumn, hurling a whole mountainside into the reservoir behind the dam, causing a tidal wave that killed everything in its path," Hopkins stated.

"My dam," he continued, "had a drop of about 1,000 feet and produced around 10,000 horsepower. The equalizing reservoir, fortunately, I had placed several hundred yards downstream on a side hill. Otherwise, I might have been held entirely responsible for a disaster rather similar to the Vaiont dam failure in Italy."

While supervising the construction of the dam crew and I were nearly destroyed," Maj. Hopkins began his report of one of the most dangerous incidents in his life.

"There have been many brushes with destiny," he interjected, adding that he is convinced he has the luck of the Irish or he wouldn't be here to tell the story — with just the aid of crutches.

"I had located my diversion dam which was less than 100 feet side along the crest about 50 feet below a large side stream of the River Lez. Both the river and the side stream flowed over steeply inclined beds," Maj. Hopkins described the terrain. "Consequently the roar of the water was almost deafening. We, therefore, did not hear the roar of the huge avalanche which rolled down the bed of the side stream from above us."

First Warning Comes  
"The first warning of the avalanche came when we were almost blown off our feet by the terrific wind which precedes a large avalanche. Fortunately, the avalanche stopped less than 300 feet from us. Later I learned that every few years this same avalanche crossed the river just above the dam, without destroying it, however, my dam," he declared with obvious pride, "is still operating successfully after 57 years. So far, none of the dams I have located has failed, nor has any of the reservoirs."

It was then that Maj. Hopkins, with compassion dominating his English accent, repeated: "God help a wretched geologist whose dam or reservoir fails. I believe the geologist responsible for the St. Francis Dam failure died of grief a month after the catastrophe. I am sorry for the geologist on the Vaiont dam in northern Italy."

Questioned about his relationship with former President Herbert Hoover, Maj. Hopkins said he met Herbert Hoover first in London. He started translating a book, "Principles of Mining," from the English into the French for Hoover. Hopkins speaks both Belgian languages, Flemish and Walloon, as well as French. Hoover wanted him to assist in the Belgian relief program.

"If I had known then that he was going to be president of the United States, I'd have taken the job," Hopkins stated.

Work for Belgian Company  
Both Hoover and Hopkins had worked for a Belgian company before World War I.

In London, Hopkins recalls, Hoover borrowed two shillings from him to pay for a hansom ride. "He still owes me the two shillings," Hopkins added.

During World War I, Hopkins served first with the French in the Red Cross Ambulance detail. When the United States entered the war he joined the Combat Engineers.

the presence of gypsum under the foundations. The gypsum gradually dissolved and caused a lesion under the dam foundation and the dam collapsed.

Maintains Seattle Office  
Hopkins was living on Bainbridge Island at the time and maintaining a consulting geologist's office in Seattle. He attended the reserve officers' luncheons in Seattle and there met Maj. John S. Butler, commander of the U. S. Corps of Engineers.

Needing a geologist, Maj. Butler asked Hopkins if he would serve under him on this investigation.

If any of the 10 or 12 dams recommended failed for geological reasons, Maj. Hopkins recalled, he was to be held "totally responsible." Both Maj. Butler and Hopkins were subject to military law, and could be court-martialed for insubordination.

"Actually, we were later threatened with a court martial for not keeping our mouths shut, as ordered, when we advanced the superiority of the Grand Coulee project over the Spokane river project," Hopkins recalled in recounting the early days of planning for the giant self-liquidating project.

"But how right we were. The Spokane river project would have irrigated a mere 200,000 acres instead of the eventual 1.4 million acres in the Grand Coulee."

Work on Locating Dam  
The actual work of locating the Grand Coulee, which is three times the size of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh, which for 7,000 years loomed as the world's largest man-made structure, was assigned to Hopkins. Maj. Butler left the organizing of the dam and reservoir investigation to Hopkins.

He spent two years on the investigation. He knew you couldn't build a dam on basalt and that the four miles of granite in the canyon was the only place for

the construction. He didn't waiver in his conviction.

Looking out the windows of Rogue Valley Manor, where Maj. and Mrs. Hopkins now make their home, he enjoys the view but memory's eyes provide him with more varied scenes. He has traveled throughout the world and lived on many continents. Australia, he said, is the only one he has missed.

Hopkins and his twin brother were born in Geneva, Switzerland. His mother was injured during a visit there in an accident when carriage horses ran away. She was, as a result, unable to leave Switzerland until after the birth.

Although definitely American, the Hopkins family had deep roots in Europe. Maj. Hopkins' father, W. A. Hopkins, founded the first American Morning News in Paris and he also had an interest in Le Matin in Paris. The morning newspaper was later sold to Gordon Bennett, who converted it into the Paris edition of the New York Herald.

Le Matin went through several sales. Unfortunately, Hopkins reviewed the history with regret, the editor during the German occupation of France collaborated with the Germans and was executed with Monsieur Pierre Laval, who became premier of Vichy France in 1942. Le Matin vanished at the close of World War II, he said.

With this journalistic background, it is not surprising that Maj. Hopkins has done considerable writing. Five hundred copies of his "Fishing in the North Pacific," were distributed to the Navy, and 500 copies of another publication, "Secrets of Sea Fishing," were distributed to the Army. Both were illustrated with Hopkins' own drawings, another evidence of his versatility.

Explaining the crutches he is

monitors, less than a mile away, showered the passenger ship, Hopkins said, reminding him of Civil War pictures. Other days, Maj. Hopkins is hunting again in Alaska where he killed the 1,200-pound Kodiak bear and the moose. In his future there is still a lot of fishing to be done.

Physical and chemical examinations of the children revealed no abnormalities which could be attributed to their addiction, and the scientists concluded that it "probably is physically harmless to most children."

Psychiatrically the boys "exhibited some degree of chronic depression, and all related to peers and authorities in a passive-aggressive manner," and scientists reported.

"The intoxication produced by glue solvents was considered to have helped the child avoid the anxiety that would otherwise have accompanied his hostile or sexual impulses."

Anti-Social Acts  
"Most of these children had been involved in anti-social acts ranging from truancy and shoplifting to attempted homicide while sniffing glue, and tended to blame the resultant intoxication for their delinquent behavior."

Nearly all the boys were from Denver slum areas. The scientists found a direct connection between the addiction and delinquency. But "because of family disorganization, residential area and gang participation (already) delinquent children are more likely to become initiated and inebriated," they said.

In their view, "glue sniffing appears to be a new symptom of an old disease — social and emotional deprivation of children." They recommended legislative action — without specifying the action — to "control" juvenile addictions.

The reporting scientists were

the study made use of the relevant scientific disciplines — physiology, chemistry, psychiatry, psychology and sociology. It was believed to be the first broad-based scientific approach to an ever-spreading and deepening juvenile menace, particularly in cities.

It was undertaken by the University of Colorado Medical Center in Denver. The subjects were 25 boys and 2 girls 10 to 16 years old who had come to attention of authorities because of law-breaking and frequent intoxication (from glue sniffing) in classrooms or on playgrounds.

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"Unfortunately," he lamented, "the translation was never finished because I was sent to Africa."

"In later years, after the St. Francis Dam disaster, it was President Hoover," Hopkins noted, "who ordered an investigation of foundations as well as abutments and the reservoir walls and bottom by all Rivers and Harbors Divisions of the Corps of Engineers."

The St. Francis disaster, according to Maj. Hopkins, resulted from a faulty geological study. The geologist overlooked

Police Investigate Alcohol Deaths  
PHILADELPHIA (UPI) — Twenty skid row deaths from wood alcohol poisoning in the last three days were reported Thursday.

City Medical Examiner Joseph W. Spelman, who reported the deaths, said hospitals also had a number of persons being treated for wood alcohol poisoning.

Spelman said an investigation into the source of the alleged illegal wood alcohol has been started by his office in cooperation with the police.

Three Accidents Reported in Area  
A car driven by James Jones, 16, Medford, went out of control on the Little Switzerland Road on Rocky Anne Friday night and rolled over, according to the Jackson County Sheriff's department.

The driver and passenger were wearing seat belts and reported no injuries, sheriff's deputies reported. They told deputies that the power brakes locked on the front wheels.

A car driven by Tsutomu Shimozato, 27, Seattle, Wash., struck a divider guardrail Friday at the Crater Lake exit on Interstate 5, but only minor damage resulted.

Shimozato hit his brakes and attempted to avoid a car parked on the exit roadway, he told state police.

Cars driven by Elton Percy Taylor, 38, Grants Pass, and Richard D. Landis Jr., 17, of Route 4, Box 435 A, Medford, collided on U.S. 99 Friday at the entrance to Jackson Hot Springs, police said.

## Study of Glue Sniffing Reveals Uniform Pattern

By DELOS SMITH  
UPI Science Editor  
NEW YORK (UPI) — A thorough scientific study of the child's intoxicating vice of glue sniffing turned up a surprisingly uniform personality pattern among the addicted sniffers.

Their pattern was marked by failure to find suitable outlets for aggressive and sexual drives which all children have and which normally are expressed in harmless ways.

This, said the scientists, "was probably because of the lack of a dominant male figure in the home with whom they could identify. The sensations induced by glue sniffing often serve as a means of alleviating the anxiety associated with these drives."

"Most of these children were similar psychologically to adult alcoholic patients, and it seems not unlikely that many of them will substitute alcohol for glue as they become older."

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Although European-educated, Hopkins is proud of his American heritage. His mother's ancestors landed in America in 1668, he said, and settled on Long Island. His father's ancestors landed in Boston in 1710 and settled in Vermont. He was one of a family of 11 children and because of his father's business ventures in France was raised with a "routine of servants," most of them French peasants. As a result he knew French better than any other language.

The young Hopkins was sent to England, however, for his schooling. He was the only "Yank" at Charterhouse, classed with Eton and Harrow in that "esteemed trio of English public schools."

"That's where I got my English accent," he pointed to the Charterhouse heading. "People are always taking me for an Englishman."

Maj. Hopkins was in Brussels when Germany entered World War I. He narrowly escaped being shot for a spy when he insisted upon going through the German lines. Germany had occupied Brussels as it did again in World War II. It was in an effort to get his money out of the Brussels bank that Hopkins pushed through the line.

Joins Ambulance Corps  
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Food Mixers Most Duplicated Gift  
LOS ANGELES (UPI) — The most duplicated Christmas gift this year: electric food mixers.

The most duplicated toy gift: bow and arrow sets.

The least wanted Christmas present: silver candle snuffers.

That's the essence of the post-Christmas communique from Gift Exchange, an organization which specializes in swapping unwanted gifts for 20 per cent of the gift's retail value.

Drs. Oliver N. Massengale, Helen H. Glaser, Robert E. LeLievre, J. B. Dodds, and Mary E. Klock. They reported to the New England Journal of Medicine.

Nearly all the boys were from Denver slum areas. The scientists found a direct connection between the addiction and delinquency. But "because of family disorganization, residential area and gang participation (already) delinquent children are more likely to become initiated and inebriated," they said.

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