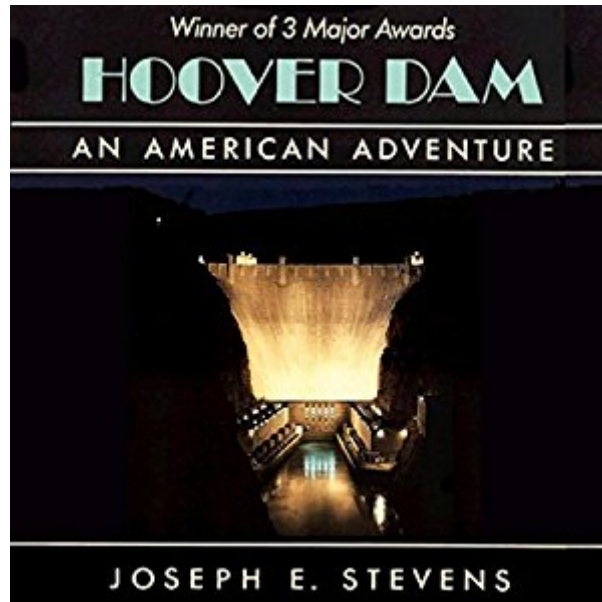




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Hoover Dam: An American Adventure



Synopsis

In the spring of 1931, in a rugged desert canyon on the Arizona-Nevada border, an army of workmen began one of the most difficult and daring building projects ever undertaken: the construction of Hoover Dam. Through the worst years of the Great Depression as many as five thousand laborers toiled twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, to erect the huge structure that would harness the Colorado River and transform the American West. Construction of the giant dam was a triumph of human ingenuity, yet the full story of this monumental endeavor has never been told. Now, in an engrossing, fast-paced narrative, Joseph E. Stevens recounts the gripping saga of Hoover Dam. Drawing on a wealth of material, including manuscript collections, government documents, contemporary newspaper and magazine accounts, and personal interviews and correspondence with men and women who were involved with the construction, he brings the Hoover Dam adventure to life. Described here in dramatic detail are the deadly hazards the work crews faced as they hacked and blasted the dam's foundation out of solid rock; the bitter political battles and violent labor unrest that threatened to shut the job down; the deprivation and grinding hardship endured by the workers' families; the dam builders' gambling, drinking, and whoring sprees in nearby Las Vegas; and the stirring triumphs and searing moments of terror as the massive concrete wedge rose inexorably from the canyon floor.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book was really interesting. The author on occasion made attempts to be a bit flowery with his writing, but his description of all that was involved in building Hoover Dam is in great detail and he obviously did a LOT of research. I found it particularly interesting living in the Las Vegas area, having visited the dam on a number of occasions, and visiting Boulder City often as well. This book adds a lot of color not only to the building of the dam but the political atmosphere as well. I found the information about down stream very interesting as well, the efforts to control the river, venturing into Mexico, and the great benefit the dam (and others along the Colorado River) have had on farming in California.

What a wonderful book. As a civil engineer, if I had been born 50 years sooner, I probably would have gone in dam-building, but by the time I came along, the great dam-building era in the US was over. On a recent trip to Las Vegas, my wife and I visited Hoover Dam three times, we were both so fascinated with this monumental structure. So I bought "Hoover Dam - An American Adventure" by Joseph E. Stevens. The author does a great job of describing the technical details without getting too technical for laymen, and he also covers the human details and the political background of the huge project. One thing that really made the book so enjoyable was the liberal use of photographs, and unlike many books where the photographs are all in the middle of the book, the photographs are located throughout the book in the appropriate chapters. This book made me proud to be an American, with the roll-up-your-sleeves-and-get-the-job-done attitude that typified the early dam and bridge builders. If you have the slightest interest in major engineering feats, read the book, it's a good one.

This book will bring you in the middle of the desert and will make you live the adventure of one great engineer and great people who in the middle of the depression era will build the one most complex civil project ever attempted. You will assist to the birth of the city in the middle of nowhere, you will feel the dangers of the builders working in precarious conditions hanged on canyon walls, and you will follow the technology advancements needed to create something that was never attempted. A real masterpiece.

An extremely well written tale of the inception and construction of Hoover Dam. It covers the political aspects, the big business aspects, and especially the human aspects of building the dam in a time frame that would be virtually impossible today. One cannot help but marvel about the orchestration of men, material, and machines in close concert as the construction surged ahead.

Excellent historical account of a monumental task

I purchased this book after reading a review about it on someone's blog. The book presents the fascinating history of the planning and building of the Hoover Dam. I was particularly struck by the descriptions of the working conditions that the workers endured. While the text appeared to be fairly dense, it was actually a fast read. The only real complaint I have about the book is that I think it could have used a few more maps to help the reader get a sense for where things were. I believe there was one map, and it wasn't very details. If you are at all interested in the history surrounding the construction of the Hoover Dam I highly recommend getting this book.

great

Great book -- I had finished the Wright Brothers and The Panama Canal so it was a great follow through for three enormous undertakings.

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