



Foster Joseph Sayers

1924-1944, Howard, PA

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Name Change Urged for Blanchard Dam

Urge Blanchard Dam Be Named for Sayers

HOWARD — The Inter-Valley Regional Planning Commission which covers the area of the Blanchard dam has asked that the dam be named for the late Foster J. Sayers of Howard, who won the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously in World War II. A monument to Sayers along Route 220 must be moved during the dam construction.

The planning commission will ask the Army Engineers and representatives in Harrisburg and Washington to memorialize the Sayers dam on the new Blanchard dam.

Johnson Renews Effort to Name Dam for Sayers

The effort to have the Blanchard flood control and recreation dam named in honor of Centre County's Medal of Honor hero, Pfc. Foster Joseph Sayers of Blanchard, has been renewed by Congressman Albert W. Johnson.

Rep. Johnson, who now represents Centre and Clinton counties, as part of his 23rd Pennsylvania Congressional district, is picking up a project initiated during the time when these two counties were part of Mr. Schneebel's 17th district.

4 Cars Derailed in Renovo Yards

RENOVO — Four cars were derailed in the Pennsylvania Railroad yards Friday afternoon, according to a company spokesman.

There were no injuries and no disruption of service.

A broken rail was listed as the cause of the derailment.

The train was a freight en route from Buffalo to Enola, near Harrisburg.

JS Pedestrian

Congress must take official action on the naming of the dam for any specific individual. The rule followed by the House of Representatives is that no such structure will be named for living persons.

The proposal to have the Blanchard Dam named for Pfc. Sayers, who received the Medal of Honor award posthumously after heroic action in World War II, was initiated in Bald Eagle Valley shortly after the dam was authorized. The Centre County Veterans Council supports the proposal.

A bill introduced by Mr. Johnson was then referred to the Committee on Public Works, and the Congressman has asked for early action on it after reports are received from government agencies which have an interest in the structure.

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"I would have the historian be fearless and incorruptible independent, a lover of frankness and truth, indulging neither hate nor affection, an impartial judge benevolent towards both sides but giving neither more than its due, bowing to no authority nor considering what this man or that will think, but stating facts as they occurred."
 —From Lucian the Greek 2nd century, A. D.

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"Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary."

A Good Name for the Blanchard Dam

An excellent suggestion has been made from Centre County for a name for the new flood control dam on Bald Eagle Creek at Blanchard.

It is proposed that the dam be named for Centre County's Congressional Medal of Honor winner in World War II, Pfc. Foster Joseph Sayers of Blanchard.

We think that Clinton County should concur enthusiastically in this proposition and work energetically, with the folks in Centre County, to have the dam named as a memorial to Pfc. Sayers, who lost his life in France in November of 1944 after performing an act of outstanding heroism. He was only 20 years old when he died in World War II. His body lies in the Schenck cemetery east of Howard, which may be moved in order to make way for the reservoir; a memorial along Route 220 E. of Howard probably will not be disturbed.

It would be most fitting to name the dam in honor of this young man in whom the residents of neighboring Clinton County may take pride along with his fellow-citizens of Centre County.

Since the dam will bring its flood-control benefits to the entire downstream area of the West Branch and Susquehanna River valleys, with economic advantages accompanied by heartaches and disruptions of normal life in the Bald Eagle Valley, we believe the naming of the dam should be the prerogative to the people who are going to be most affected in their daily lives. That means the people of the lower Bald Eagle Valley. If they favor the name of Medal of Honor Winner Foster J. Sayers, the rest of us should agree without cavil. Surely, Hero Sayers deserves an impressive memorial. The citation which accompanied his Medal of Honor recounts his fearless action in setting up a machine gun 20 yards from the enemy and creating a diversion which permitted his company to cross an open area to flank the Germans. His close range fire and his one-man assault distracted the opposing forces successfully, so that his comrades took the hill with minimum of casualties—but he was one of them. Relatives and friends of Medal of Honor Man Sayers reside in the valley where the dam will be built. The veterans organizations of the area, who have already memorialized this outstanding hero of World War II, would be happy to have the dam named the Foster J. Sayers Dam. We believe that the people of this area and the veterans groups of Clinton County would gladly acquiesce in that name and would be happy to see it placed in large letters on the control tower of the dam which will rise, in the next few years, to bring the waters of Bald Eagle Creek under control, as Pfc. Sayers brought the enemy under control in that heroic action near Thionville, France, nearly 20 years ago.

The Dedication Citation

Sayers Citation Read by Judge Campbell at Dam

The Congressional Medal of Honor citation described the action in World War II in which Foster Joseph Sayers was killed in Thionville, France, was read at yesterday's dedication of the Foster Joseph Sayers dam at Blanchard, while Sayers' mother, his wife and his son listened in the audience.

Judge Paul R. Campbell read the citation, commemorating Pfc. Foster Joseph Sayers, Company L, 357th Infantry, 90th Infantry Division, for his heroic deed of Nov. 12, 1944, as follows:

"He displayed conspicuous gallantry above and beyond the call of duty in combat on 12 Nov. 1944, near Thionville, France. During an attack on strong hostile forces entrenched on a hill, he fearlessly ran up the steep approach toward his objective and set up his machine gun 20 yards from the enemy.

"Realizing it would be necessary to attract full attention of the dug-in Germans while his company crossed an open area and flanked the enemy, he picked up his gun, charged through withering machine-gun and rifle fire to the very edge of the emplacement, and their killed 12 German soldiers with devastating close-range fire.

"He took up a position behind a log and engaged the hostile infantry from the flank in an heroic attempt to distract their attention while his comrades attained their objective at the crest of the hill. He was killed by the very heavy concentration of return fire; but his fearless assault enabled his company to sweep the hill with minimum of casualties killing or capturing every enemy soldier on it.

"Private Sayers' indomitable and supreme devotion to duty live on as an example of the highest traditions of the military service."

The Congressional Medal of Honor was awarded to Pfc. Sayers in October of 1945, nearly a year after he died in the engagement at Thionville. It was the climax to a brief military career which began when he was drafted into the Army at Howard, while employed by the Piper Aircraft Corp. in Lock Haven.

Foster Joseph Sayers was born in the Marsh Creek area and lived there as a farm boy

until he went to Blanchard to reside at the home of the late Mrs. John Campbell, who conducted a store there.

With other young men of the Piper plant, he frequently drove to Mill Hall to eat lunch at a restaurant near the plant of Sylvania Electric Products, Inc. where he met a girl from Howard, Ellen Gardner.

When he left for service with the Army, with a group of Centre County youths which also included his friend, Charles Bathurst of Howard, young Foster Sayers was engaged to Miss Gardner, and they were married during his first furlough. It was not long afterward that he went to France with his infantry unit.

Pfc. Sayers was on the fighting front when his son, Foster Joseph Sayers, Jr., was born. The baby was two months and a half old when the battle of Nov. 12, 1944 was fought at Thionville. Letters telling him of the birth of his son, and containing pictures of the baby, never reached the soldier; they were returned unopened after his death.

Among the many expressions of sympathy received by the young widow of Foster Joseph Sayers, were letters from Charles Bathurst, who was a close friend of Sayers, and one of the young people of Howard in the group including Ellen Gardner at the time of her marriage. He sent his sympathy in letters from the war zone, and later came in person to extend his condolences. Later he and Mrs. Sayers were married.

Foster Joseph Sayers lies in the new Schenck cemetery on the edge of the new reservoir named in his honor. His funeral five years after the war, when his body was returned from France, was largely attended, and those present included 100 of his wartime comrades.

A Family Affair

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THE FAMILY OF FOSTER JOSEPH SAYERS — Guests of honor at yesterday's dedication of the Foster Joseph Sayers dam at Blanchard, the fourth dam in the system of four flood retention dams to protect the West Branch valley and the lower Susquehanna, were the family of a heroic young soldier, killed in World War II in an action which earned him the posthumous award of the Congressional Medal of Honor. The dam was named in honor of Foster Joseph Sayers, whose son Foster Joseph Jr., left, unveiled the plaque at the dedication. Also standing in the picture, is Mrs. Charles (Ellen Gardner Sayers) Bathurst, Howard, who married Foster Joseph Sayers before he went to France with his infantry unit in 1944. Seated are Helen Coppenhaver, Howard, Mrs. Bathurst's mother; Alice Sayers, Bellefonte, mother of Pfc. Foster Joseph Sayers, and Miss Sydney Confer, Howard, fiancée of Foster Joseph Sayers Jr. (Express Photo)

landing of the plane bringing Vice President Agnew from the moon launch at Camp Kennedy, told the audience at the Sayers Dam dedication that the gallantry of the Apollo moon crew and the gallantry of Medal of Honor winner Foster Joseph Sayers are part of the pride of Americans.



FOSTER JOSEPH SAYERS, JR., unveiling the plaque at the dedication of the Foster Joseph Sayers flood control dam at Blanchard, named in honor of his father. The dam was dedicated at ceremonies Wednesday under the auspices of the Susquehanna River Valley Flood Control Association, and the Chambers of Commerce of Lock Haven and Bellefonte.

The Man

Soldier Killed, Another Missing

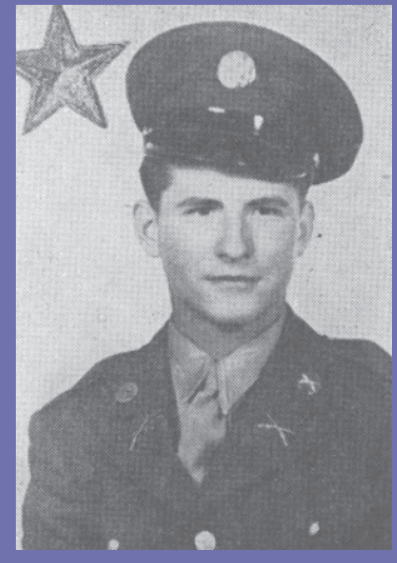
Bellefonte, Dec. 13.—War Department telegrams received by relatives last week revealed that a Howard man was killed in action and a Clarence member of the Air Force is missing in action.

Pvt. Foster Joseph Sayers, 20, who had never seen his four-month-old son, was killed in action in France in November, the message, received at 5 p. m., Friday received by his wife, the former Ellen Gardner, of Howard, said. Two hours before the grim message arrived she received a letter from the War Department stating that her husband had been killed and that his body was buried in France.

He was called for service in March of last year and took infantry training and went overseas last May. His wife and son, Foster J., Jr., live with her mother, Mrs. Helen Gardner, of Howard.

- Medal of Honor recipient (Oct 1945), as Private First Class, serving 357th Infantry, 90th Division
- Awarded for heroic actions near Thionville, France, during WWII, on Nov. 12, 1944 (killed in action)
- Other awards include the Purple Heart and Bronze Star
- Joined Army from Howard while

- employed by Piper Aircraft Corporation in Lock Haven
- His awards and other artifacts are on display at the Pennsylvania Military Museum in Boalsburg



Franco Expected to Name Prince as His Successor

MADRID (AP) — Gen. Francisco Franco is expected to name Prince Juan Carlos de Borbon as his heir next Tuesday, setting the stage for a father-son struggle for the Spanish throne.

The 76-year-old chief of state announced Wednesday night that he was calling an extraordinary session July 22 of the Cortes, the Spanish parliament, "in relation to Article 6 of the Law of Succession of the chief of state."

Article 6 gives Franco the right to propose his successor and to rescind the proposal at any time. He is expected to ask the Cortes to approve his nomination of the 31-year-old prince to become king and chief of state upon Franco's death.

Immediate approval of whatever Franco proposes is expected from the parliament.

DANCE

Every Tuesday and