



## ***Floyd Dominy*** **Big Dam Builder and Public Servant Dies**

Glen Canyon Dam Builder, Floyd E. Dominy, 100, died April 20, 2010 at his home "Bellevue Farm" in Boyce, Virginia. Mr. Dominy was Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Interior, and has the distinction of being the only Commissioner appointed by four Presidents of the United States—Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon. His tenure in that role was longer than any Commissioner since the Bureau was established by Act of Congress in 1902. Mr. Dominy retired from Federal Service on Dec. 1, 1969 after thirty-seven years of participation in land and water resource development at all levels of government—County, State, National, and International.

Born on a farm in Adams County, Nebraska Dec. 24, 1909, Mr. Dominy graduated from the University of Wyoming in 1933 with a B.A. in Economics and B.S. in Agriculture and has since been honored with the Outstanding Alumnus Award in 1963 and an Honorary Doctor of Law Degree in 1967.

Dominy began his professional work as a teacher of Vocational Agriculture at Hillsdale, Wyoming and in Feb. 1934 was appointed County Agricultural Agent for Campbell County, Wyoming. In Aug. 1938 he became Field Agent for the Western Division of the Agricultural Administration with headquarters in Washington, DC. During the first two years of World War II, Dominy worked with Nelson Rockefeller, the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, as Assistant director of the Food Supply Division. The role required extensive travel in South and Central America dealing with acquisition of critical war materials and helping resolve food shortages in the region. In 1944 Dominy was Commissioned in the U.S. Naval Reserve and served the last two years of WWII as a Military Government Officer on the islands of Saipan, Tinnian, Guam, and Iwo Jima.

When mustered out of the Navy in April, 1946, Dominy joined the Bureau of Reclamation as a land development specialist responsible for establishing procedures by which newly irrigated land on public lands could be settled by returning war veterans. Dominy learned the Bureau from the ground up and advanced as Chief of the Repayment Branch, then Chief of the Irrigation Division, to Assistant Commissioner in 1957.

When the new position of Associate Commissioner was created in 1958, Dominy was selected and on May 1, 1959 he was sworn in as Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation upon appointment by President Eisenhower. He continued as Commissioner by appointment from Presidents Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon until his retirement from Federal Service on Dec. 1, 1969.

Floyd Dominy has been one of our nation's giants in water and land development projects and has been recognized here and around the world for his many contributions. For his work in the U.S. he was named one of the top ten "Public Works Men of the Year" in 1966. Spain and Thailand have awarded Dominy their nation's highest Civil Award. The General Contractors of America bestowed the coveted Golden Beaver Award to Dominy in 1974 for "Outstanding Engineering Achievement in Heavy Construction". Dominy was featured in John McPhee's book *Encounters With the Archdruid* and a reviewer wrote: "One of the most interesting people in the book is Floyd E. Dominy, former Commissioner of Reclamation, proudly responsible for the creation of Glen Canyon Dam on the Colorado River. Here is a man who having grown up in the dry lands of Nebraska, knew first hand the damage that lack of water has on livestock, crops, and people. It was for this reason he dedicated himself to building dams that would supply society with necessary water for living and, through the creation of beautiful lakes, access to recreation. His energy and honesty come through each page loud and clear..."

Following retirement, Dominy, a man of the soil, established residence at Bellevue Farm in the heart of the Northern Shenandoah Valley and devoted his energies to the Registered Performance Tested Angus cattle business. He served as Chairman of the Performance Testing Station at Red House, Va. and on the Board of Directors of the Virginia Angus Association. Bellevue Farm became a symbol of excellence for Virginia angus cattle and received the "Get of Sire Award" from the Virginia Beef Cattle Improvement Association in 1978 and in 1979. In addition Dominy was named "1979 Seed Stock Producer of the Year" for Virginia.

His wife of 53 years, Alice Criswell Dominy, died in March, 1982. Survivors include his three children; Janice DeBolt of Grand Junction, Colorado, Charles Dominy of Oakton, Virginia, and Ruth Swart Young of Marshall, Virginia and eight grandchildren and twenty-three great-grandchildren, and one great-great granddaughter.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Northern Virginia 4-H Educational & Conference Center, 600 4-H Center Dr., Front Royal, VA 22630.