

# Niagara Falls/Niagara Power,

1792, 1798, 1829, 1832, 1836, 1838, 1848, 1852-1853, 1855, 1859, 1871, 1873, 1875-1876, 1878, 1880-1881, 1883, 1885-1888, 1890-1909, 1916-1917, n.d.

RG 86

Brock University Archives

**Creator:** Thomas Barnett Museum

**Extent:** 0.127 m (1 box) textual records  
1 folio

**Abstract:** This archive contains materials relating to Niagara Falls and its development during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with particular focus on power operations.

**Materials:** Publications, clippings, poetry, pictures.

**Repository:** Brock University Archives

**Processed by:** Jen Goul

**Last updated:** April, 2006

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**Acquisition Info.:** This collection was donated to the Archives by Edward Charles Phelps and received by John Burtinak, Special Collections Librarian and Archivist (no date).

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**History:** *Power at the Falls:*  
The first recorded harnessing of Niagara Falls power was in 1759 by Daniel Joncairs. On the American side of the Falls he dug a small ditch and drew water to turn a wheel which powered a sawmill. In 1805 brothers Augustus and Peter Porter expanded on Joncairs idea. They bought the American Falls from New York State at public auction. Using

Joncairs old site they built a gristmill and tannery which stayed in business for twenty years.

The next attempt at using the Falls came in 1860 when construction of the hydraulic canal began by the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power and Manufacturing Co. The canal was complete in 1861 and brought water from the Niagara river, above the falls, to the mills below. By 1881 the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power and Manufacturing Co. had a small generating station which provided some electricity to the village of Niagara Falls and the Mills. This lasted only four years and then the company sold its assets at public auction due to bankruptcy.

Jacob Schoellkopf arrived at the Falls in 1877 with the purchase of the hydraulic canal land and water and power rights. In 1879 Schoellkopf teamed up with Charles Brush (of Euclid Ohio) and powered Brush's generator and carbon arc lights with the power from his water turbines, to illuminate the Falls electrically for the first time.

The year 1895 marked the opening of the Adam No. 1 generating station on the American side. The station was the beginnings of modern electrical utility operations. The design and operations of the generating station came from worldwide competitions held by panels of experts. Some who were involved in the project include; George Westinghouse, J. Pierpont Morgan, Lord Kelvin and Nikoli Tesla. The plants were operated by the Niagara Falls Power Company until 1961, when the Robert Moses Plant began operation in Lewiston, NY. The Adams plants were demolished that same year and the site used as a sewage treatment plant.

The Canadian side of the Falls began generating their own power on January 1, 1905. This power came from the William Birch Rankine Power Station located 500 yards above the Horseshoe Falls. This power station provided the village of Fort Eire with its first electricity in 1907, using its two 10,000 electrical horsepower generators. Today 11 generators produce 100,000 horsepower (75 megawatts) and operate as part of the Niagara Mohawk and Fortis Incorporated Power Group.

<http://www.niagarafrontier.com/power.html#Origins>

Carr, Jan. *Hydro-Electric Power Developments in the Niagara Peninsula. In Industry in the Niagara Peninsula*, proceedings from the Eleventh Annual Niagara Peninsula History Conference, Brock University April 22-23, 1989 SPCL FC 3140.7 I6 N55 1989

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### **Scope and Content:**

This fonds contains various publications relating to the early development of Niagara Falls. It includes advertisements, newspaper articles, scientific journals relating to hydro-power, geography and geology, photographs and pictures.

Staples, tape and cardboard was removed. The newspaper articles were photocopied and the larger originals were kept in plastic sleeves. The publications were placed into plastic sleeves as most were acidic, rather than photocopying them as they were in fairly good condition. Large newspaper clippings are in folio storage 6-4, their numbers correspond to the numbers listed in the finding aid. Published journal articles are arranged chronologically within the folders (see bottom for detailed listing). Folders are arranged alphabetically within each series.

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**Organization:** The records were arranged into two series:

Series I, Publications, 1792, 1798, 1829, 1832, 1836, 1838, 1848, 1852-1853, 1855, 1859, 1871, 1873, 1875-1876, 1878, 1880-1881, 1883, 1885-1888, 1890-1909, 1916-1917, n.d.

Series II, Folios, 1878, 1880, 1888, 1892-1893, 1895-1897, 1916, n.d.

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<b>Inventory:</b>	<b>Series I. Publications, 1792, 1798, 1829, 1832, 1836, 1838, 1848, 1852-1853, 1855, 1859, 1871, 1873, 1875-1876, 1878, 1880-1881, 1883, 1885-1888, 1890-1909, 1916-1917, n.d.</b>
1.1	Clippings, 1878, 1888, 1891-1897, 1899, 1900-1902, 1904-1909, 1916, n.d.
1.2	Clippings (pictures), 1792, 1798, c.1880-1881, 1890-1891, 1893, 1896, 1898, 1901, 1905-1907, n.d.; includes pictures from publications and newspapers.
1.3	Fragments of Publications, 1832, 1838, 1848, 1852-1853, 1871, 1873, 1881, 1883, 1885-1886, 1891, 1893-1894, 1896, 1900-1901, 1903, 1906, 1909, n.d.; includes poetry, book reviews and notices, anecdotes, conservation items, description and travel.
1.4	General Published Journal Articles, 1829, 1836, 1853, 1859, 1873, 1875-1876, 1883, 1893, 1897, 1899, 1901-1904, 1906, n.d. (see below for listing).
1.5	Geology/Geography Published Journal Articles, 1886, 1890, 1895-1896, 1900, 1905-1906, 1908, 1917 (see below for listing).
1.6-1.7	Hydro/Power Published Journal Articles, 1885, 1887, 1891-1892, 1894-1895, 1899, 1905-1909 (see below for listing).
1.8	Niagara Power Plant Published Article Fragments, 1888, 1891-1893, 1895-1896, 1901, 1906, 1908-1909, 1912, 1916, n.d.

**Series II. Folio, 1878, 1880, 1888, 1892-1893, 1895-1897, 1916, n.d.**

- F.1 The Graphic *The Falls of Niagara From the Canadian Shore*, Dec. 28, 1878
- F.2 Harper's Weekly *The Preservation of Niagara Falls*, May 15, 1880
- F.3 Harper's Weekly *Niagara in Winter Dress*, March 5, 1881
- F.4 The Art Journal *Niagara*, 1885 (?)
- F.5 The Christmas Globe *Niagara!*, 1888
- F.6 The Dominion Illustrated *Sketches on Lake Shore Near Niagara*, Oct. 11, 1890
- F.7 Engineering News *Utilization of The Falls of Niagara*, Jan. 23, 1892
- F.8 New York *Utilizing the Water Power of Niagara Falls*, March 5, 1892
- F.9 The Toronto Daily Mail vol. XXI no. 6,553 *Freaks of Frost* Sat. March 4, 1893
- F.10 The Toronto Daily Mail vol. XXII no. 6,607 *Niagara Falls ONT.*, Sat. May 6, 1893
- F.11 The Daily Mail and Empire vol. XXIII, no. 7,189 (supplement), *Niagara in Winter*, Sat. March 16, 1895
- F.12 Scientific America, NY *The Niagara Falls Power Plant* Jan. 25, 1896
- F.13 New York vol. LXXIV no. 13 *The Gorge Road at Niagara Falls*, March 28, 1896
- F.14 The Saturday Globe vol. LII no. 14, 372 *Winter Scenes at Niagara* Sat. March 14, 1896
- F.15 Scientific America, NY *Niagara Falls Power Plant – One of the 5,000 Horse Power Turbine Wheels* April 4, 1896
- F.16 The Saturday Globe vol. LIII no. 14,756 *A Day's Wheeling on the Niagara Frontier* Sat. June 5, 1897
- F.17 The New York Times Magazine *Over Niagara's Whirlpool in a Cable Car* March 26, 1916
- F.18 The Illustrated Buffalo Express *More Power From the Falls*, n.d.

**Detailed Listing of Journal Articles (chronological order):**

Hydro/Power:

- Science articles from Friday May 15, 1885, no. 119  
*The Niagara Gorge As a Chronometer*  
*The Preservation of Niagara*  
*Niagara Falls Considered as a Source of Electrical Energy*
- Smith, Cecil B. *Construction of Canadian Niagara Power Company's 100,000 H.P. Hydro Electric Plant at Niagara Falls*, 1887, 1905
- Sellers, Coleman. *How Niagara's Power will be Utilized*, 1891
- Mitchell, C.H. *A Triangulation Survey For a Tunnel at Niagara*, 1892
- Buck, L.L. *A few remarks about the Niagara Gorge*, 1894
- Brown, Curtis. *The Diversion of the Niagara*, 1894
- Abbott, Arthur Vaughan. *Industrial Niagara*, 1895 (2 cop.)
- Forbes, George. *Harnessing Niagara*, 1895
- Foster, Horatio A. *Electrical Transmission at Niagara Falls*, 1895
- The Electrical World vol. XXIX no. 23 *The Electrical Features of Niagara*, June, 1897
- Adams, Alton. *Niagara Falls Already Ruined* in The Technical World Magazine April, 1906
- Ellis, P.W. and W.T. White (addresses). *The Power By-Law* in The Canadian Club, Dec. 1907
- Deenen, Charles S. *Vast Wealth For the State* in The Technical World Magazine, vol. IX no.2 April 1908
- Stratton, George Frederic. *The Romance of Transmission* in The Technical World Magazine vol. IX no. 3 May, 1908
- Hyde, Henry M. *Who Owns the Earth and How did they Get It?* in The Technical World Magazine vol. X no. 6, Feb. 1909

Geology/Geography:

- Robb, J. Hampden. *Buying Niagara*, 1886
- Wilkins, D.F.H. *River Valleys of the Niagara Escarpment*, 1890
- Forbes, George. *Harnessing Niagara*

Gilbert, Grove Karl. *Niagara Falls and Their History* [SPCL F 127 N8 G457 1895]

Spencer, J.W. *Niagara as a Timepiece* in Appleton's Popular Science Monthly May, 1896

Wright, G. Frederick. *New Method of Estimating the Age of Niagara Falls* in Appleton's Popular Science Monthly June, 1899 (2 cop.)

Dionne, Professor. *Beginning and Probable Age of the Niagara Gorge*, 1900

Upham, Warren. *Geological History of the Great Lakes and Niagara Falls* in International Quarterly, NY. July, 1905

Nunn, Paul. *Hydro-Electric Enterprise in Canada* in The Canadian Engineer March, 1906

Carter, C.F. *Turning a River's Rage To Power* in Technical World Magazine, Dec. 1908

Showalter, William J. *Niagara at the Battle Front* in The National Geographic Magazine May, 1917

General:

Stone, Col. William A. *A Trip From New York to Niagara in 1829*, 1829

Willis, N.P. *Niagara – Lake Ontario- The St. Lawrence*, 1836

*Niagara and So On*, 1836 (2 cop.)

*Niagara* in Harpers's New Monthly Magazine vol. 7 no. 39 August, 1853

Lynch, Anne C. *Recollections of My Last Visit to Niagara*, 1859

*The Seven Travelers At Niagrara*, 1859

Tyndall, John. *Niagara*, 1873

Dawson, George. *At Niagara and Elsewhere*, 1875

Holley, George W. *Niagara*, in Scribner's Monthly vol. XII, no. 4, Aug. 1876

Howells, William D. *Niagara Revisited*, 1883

Johnson, Frances Benjamin. *A Day at Niagara*, 1893

Meredith, E.A. *The Queen Victoria Niagara Falls Park*, 1897

Van Rensselaer, Mrs. Schuyler. *Niagara*, 1899

Hartt, Mary B. *The Passing of Niagara*, 1901

Dunlap, Orrin E. *Niagara – the Scene of Perilous Feats* in Cosmopolitan Feb. 1902

*The Frost King at Niagara* in The Booklovers Magazine Dec. 1903

Oxley, J. MacDonald. *The Enslaving of Niagara* in The National Monthly Aug. 1903

Dunlap, Orrin E. *Walking on the Brink of Niagara* in The Strand Magazine June, 1904

Wood, Eugene. *Walking on the Brink of Niagara* in McClures (?) Sept. 1906

Arnold, Edwin. *The Splendor of Niagara*, n.d. and Galt, John. *Discovery of Niagara*, n.d. in Niagara, the June Bride's Paradise.

Hartt, Rollin Lynde. *The New Niagara*, n.d.

<b>Added Entries:</b>	600	Barnett, Thomas, fl. 1876
	600	Phelps Edward Charles Howard 1939
<b>Subject Access:</b>	650	Geology -- Ontario -- Niagara Falls.
	650	Groundwater flow -- Ontario -- Niagara Falls.
	650	Hydrogeology -- Ontario -- Niagara Falls.
	650	Land use -- Ontario -- Niagara Falls.
	650	Niagara Falls (Ont.) -- Description and travel.

**Separated Materials:**

In the finding aid listed under Inventory, Folio. See folder marked RG 86 in large format storage 6-4.

**Related Materials:**

Carr, Jan. *Hydro-Electric Power Developments in the Niagara Peninsula. Industry in the Niagara Peninsula*, proceedings from the Eleventh Annual Niagara Peninsula History Conference, Brock University April 22-23, 1989 editors: Burtniak, John and Jackson, John SPCL FC 3140.7 I6 N55 1989