

Matthew Tran-Adams Stamford and Niagara Falls Collection, 1914-2002, n.d.

(non-inclusive)

RG 683

Creator: Matthew Tran-Adams

Extent: 12.5 cm (half box) textual records
13 b&w photos
83 col. photos
13 b&w postcards
19 col. postcards
2 felt crests
1 enameled crest

Abstract: The textual materials of the Matthew Tran-Adams Stamford and Niagara Falls Collection includes: booklets, diagrams, photographs, clippings, postcards and various other material that document the history of Stamford Centre and Niagara Falls, Ontario.

Materials: Booklets, clippings, postcards, crests and photographs

Repository: Brock University Archives

Processed by: Anne Adams

Finding Aid: Anne Adams

Last Updated: May 14, 2019

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Administrative History:

Stamford Centre, Niagara Falls

The original name of Stamford was Mount Dorchester or Township Number 2. This was named for Sir Guy Carleton Lord Dorchester. The name was changed to Stamford by Governor Simcoe, who named it and other portions of Welland County after well-known places in Lincolnshire, England. In 1793,

Stamford Township had formed a municipal government. The first town clerk was Ezekiel Woodruff. John Wilson and Benjamin Skinner were the first assessors and the town wardens were John Wilson and Thomas McMicking. The first survey of Stamford Township was done in 1782 by Colonel Butler for Governor Frederick Haldimand. The first proper survey was done in 1785 when Phillip Rockwell Frey established the township's borders concessions and lots.

During the first half of the twentieth century, Stamford Township was predominantly agricultural. Most of the changes that took place occurred after the Second World War. Cyanamid was contracted by the Canadian Government to create a wartime chemical plant which was named Welland Chemical Works. In 1946, Cyanamid took complete control of the plant. They remained at their Fourth Avenue location until 1992 when market conditions forced them to close. The opening of Cyanamid marked a change for Stamford Township. The township was affected by the "baby-boom" and the growth of industrial plants. There was also a large migration of Europeans to the Niagara Region after the war.

The first plaza in Niagara Falls was the Town and Country Plaza which was built in 1955 on the west side of Portage Road at the corner of Colborne Street. Building began in 1954 on this site which was owned by Frank Branscombe. The site had previously been owned by Canadian Cannery Ltd. who grew sour cherries there. Prior to that, the land was owned by Calvin Emmet. The Stamford Green Shopping Centre was built in sections. This centre was located on the corner of Portage Road and O'Neil Street. The plaza began with only four stores and its grand opening took place on November 21, 1957.

Stamford Township and the City of Niagara Falls were feeling the impact of population growth and post-war problems. There was a decision to amalgamate, and on January 11, 1963, Niagara Falls acquired the land that was surveyed by Frey in 1787. The township's population of approximately 32,000 and city's population of 22,000 made up a population of 54,000 people of Niagara Falls with Franklin J. Miller as their Mayor.

St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church

Sir Peregrine Maitland was appointed as Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada in 1818. He preferred to spend his summers in Stamford rather than in York. He recognized the need for a place of worship and in 1820, Reverend William Leeming was sent to establish churches in Stamford, Drummondville and Chippawa. At Sir Peregrine Maitland's request, St. John's Church was built where he could look at it from his summer residence. Captain Robert Henry Dee, a member of Maitland's staff, gave some of his land, as well as funds and furnishings for the church.

It was built in 1825 as an inter-denominational church. A plan to build a new church began in 1957 and the new St. John's was dedicated in December of 1957. The old church was deconsecrated in 1962 and became a Columbarium.

Lord Elgin Vocational School, Niagara Falls, Ontario

James Robert Shaw was appointed as the principal of Lord Elgin Vocational School which was to be built on Valley Way in Niagara Falls. More than 60 citizens were chosen from the Niagara business and industrial community to serve on 12 sub-committees to actively plan the curriculum. The school had 15 basic shops, 8 classrooms, a science laboratory, a music room, administrative offices, a gym and an auditorium. A courtyard served a dual purpose as a social centre and a space for students to study horticulture. The rear of the school housed the major shops which included: auto-body; auto service; dry

cleaning; metal fabricating and welding; small engine and appliance repair; trowel trades and construction trades. Two-year training programs were offered.

The school opened in 1967, and the official opening took place on January 26, 1968. In 1989, vocational training for Niagara Falls students was transferred to Niagara Falls Collegiate Vocational Institute, which became the Niagara Falls Secondary School in September of 1990. The Lord Elgin building was taken over by St. Michael High School.

The Oliver Pernel House [various spellings: Parnall, Parnell], Niagara Falls, Ontario

Oliver Pernel escaped slavery in the United States with the help of the Underground Railroad. He was one of the early settlers in the Niagara Falls, Ontario. Oliver worked as a laborer for most of his life. Wilma Morrison recalls that she thought that he worked on the Thompson Farm on Portage Road in Niagara Falls. Through his hard work, he and his wife Matilda came to own a significant amount of land in Drummondville. Henry Mason who was Matilda's first husband bought a lot on Stanley Avenue, Niagara Falls in 1868. He died in 1870 and Matilda married Oliver Pernel. It is unclear whether the house at 6071 Stanley Avenue was built by Mason or Pernel, but Oliver and Matilda Pernel were listed as the original owners. The house had historical significance and Ms. Wilma Morrison, Trustee of the British Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada fought to have it preserved. Unfortunately, it was demolished in 2004. The land for the Nathaniel Dett Chapel on Peer Street, Niagara Falls was donated by Oliver and Matilda Pernel.

Organization:

The records are arranged into 2 series.

Series I – Stamford, Ontario

Series II – Niagara Falls, Ontario

Sub-Series A. Lord Elgin Vocational School

Sub-Series B. Niagara Falls

Inventory:

Series I – Stamford Ontario, 1933-1999, n.d. (non-inclusive)

1. 1 *Stamford Centre, A Modern History* by Matthew Adams [Tran Adams]. This report was created for the Old St. John's Stamford Heritage Association of Niagara Falls, Canada. It contains information on: the beginning of Stamford Township, "Five Corners", Hope's Restaurant, the Imperial Bank of Commerce, Collard's Corner, Stamford Women's Institute Memorial Hall, Dr. Major A.E. Mackenzie, Elsley Real Estate Ltd., Martha Johnson Cullimore, Keith Cawthorne MacLeod, Vormittag's Fruit Farm, the Chimney Restaurant, Clark's Cabins, Commisso's Food Terminal, Nico's Boutique, Stamford Centre Branch Library, Burger Chef, Zappi's, Casa Mia, the Town and Country Plaza and the Stamford Green Shopping Plaza. It contains comprehensive lists of stores which were located in the Town and Country Plaza and the Stamford Green Shopping Plaza from their inception up until 1999. Many advertisements are also included, 1999

- 1.2 Photographs of Stamford Green Shopping Plaza, Town and Country Plaza, Commisso's Plaza, "Five Corners", Portage Road, Thorold Stone Road and surrounding area, 4 b&w photos, 81 col. photos, 1999, n.d.
- 1.3 St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church includes a black and white St. John's Christmas card. There is a photograph of the laying of the cornerstone at the newer church in 1957. Choir and processional photos from 1957 include: Agnes Swayze, organist and choir director; Jean Richardson; Olive Wilson; Robb; Mrs. Jackson; Mrs. Coulstock; Reverend Simpson; Jean Matthews; Muriel Hall; Ted Ball; Jack Coulstock and Jack Hall. Choir photos from 1987 include: Reverend Robert Brownlie and Andrew Counsell, organist, 8 b&w photos, 2 col. photos, 1957, 1987, n.d.
- 1.4 Postcards including: United Church of Canada, Stamford Park Race Track, United Presbyterian Church, St. John the Evangelist Church, Clark's Tourist Camp, Uncle Tom's Cabins, Stamford High School and Thorold Stone Road (looking west). Three of the postcards have writing on them, but only two are postmarked. 10 b&w postcards, 3 col. postcards, 1933, 1937, 1951, n.d.
- 1.5 Handwritten notes on Martha Cullimore and photocopied poems by Celia Wallace a Stamford poet, n.d.

Series II – Niagara Falls, Ontario, 1914-2002, n.d. (non-inclusive)

Sub-Series A. Lord Elgin Vocational School, 1965-1985, n.d. (non-inclusive)

- 1.6 Diagrams and plans for the Niagara Falls District Board of Education Special Vocational High School drawn up by H.G. Acres and Company Limited, 1965
- 1.7 Clippings regarding the hiring of J.R. Shaw as principal, talks given by Mr. Shaw, construction of the new school and a Curriculum Bulletin from the Ontario Department of Education highlighting the new school, 1966-1975 (non-inclusive)
- 1.8 Correspondence – Most of the correspondence is between James R. Shaw and Lord Elgin, the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine. The school requested permission to use the armorial bearings as their crest. Other correspondence concerns the official opening. Included are 2 felt crests and an enameled crest which was donated to the school by Anna Buchanan [art teacher], 1966-1985 (non-inclusive)
- 1.9 Documents including: a flyer about Lord Elgin Vocational School, a program for the official opening, a title page from The Elgin News of May, 1968 and a brief history of the school, 1968, n.d.
- 1.10 A mural was created in the foyer of Lord Elgin Vocational School. A Smalti technique was used to form the pieces for the mural. The mural was formed as a mosaic and was designed by Alex Von Svoboda from Conn-Art Studios in Toronto. It was created in four vertical panels at the studio in Toronto and brought to the school. An explanation of the meaning of the mural is enclosed. Dr. Finland donated the mural to the school, 1 b&w photo, n.d.

Sub-Series B. Niagara Falls, Ontario, 1914-2002, n.d. (non-inclusive)

- 1.11 *City of Niagara Falls Historical Properties Inventory – Database of Designated and Historical Resource Properties* prepared for Niagara Falls LACAC (Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committees) by Scott Tufford and Melanie Battell, 1999
- 1.12 Clippings and information on the Oliver Pernell House on Stanley Avenue, Niagara Falls and the Nathaniel Dett Chapel on Peer Street, Niagara Falls. Included is a report on the Oliver Pernell House by Melanie Battell. A letter to Wilma Morrison from the Niagara Falls City Clerk is also included, 1959-2002 (non-inclusive)
- 1.13 *Canada the New Home Land* – This is a pamphlet containing a map of the world and highlighting farm opportunities as well as other opportunities in Canada. A name and a date are written on the pamphlet “Clarice Hodson”, July 21-24, 1924
- 1.14 Postcards including: Brock’s Monument, views of the Falls, Prospect Point, Steel Arch Bridge, Giant rock and trolley line through the gorge, Whirlpool Rapids, Maid of the Mist, the Aero Car, the Refectory, the Administration Building in Queen Victoria Park, Maple Leaf Camp, American Falls, the rainbow, Collegiate Institute, Loretto Academy, Horseshoe Falls, Main Street, Queen Street, The Clifton Hotel, The General Brock Hotel and the Seagram’s Tower. Five of the postcards have writing on them, but only three are postmarked, 3 b&w postcards, 16 col. postcards, 1914, 1927, n.d.

Related Material:

Berge, Robert (2000) *Tourist accommodations along the old No. 8 Highway.*

Hotels/motels/tourist cabins and rooms. Niagara Falls: Old St. John’s Stamford Heritage Association – Special Collections FC 3159 S72 Z57 2000

Cameron, Chantal (1997) *Historic Houses of Stamford Village.* Niagara Falls: Old St. John’s Stamford Heritage Association – Special Collections FC 3159 S72 Z57, 1997

Dillon, A. C. (1981) *The analysis of the implementation of a program in cooperative education.* St. Catharines, Ont: Faculty of Education, Brock University – IRC Thesis

Neufeld, Karen (1998) *Historic Houses of Stamford Village.* Niagara Falls: Old St. John’s Stamford Heritage Association – Special Collections FC 3159 S72 Z57, 1998

St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church (Stamford, Ont.) (1900-) *Annual reports - Church of St. John the Evangelist (Stamford).* Niagara Falls: St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church – Special Collections FC 3159 S72 Z589

St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church (Stamford, Ont.) (1981) *Old St. John's Heritage project [microform].* Niagara Falls: St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church – Special Collections FC 3159 S72 Z6329, 1981

Wallace, Celia (1996) *A Stamford Poet.* Niagara Falls: Bain Printing – Special Collections PS 8595 A5845 S72 1996