

Title:	Louisville Weekly Journal, March 3, 1841		
Creator:	Prentice & Weissinger		
Dates of Material:	March 3, 1841	Record Group Number:	RG 888
Summary of Contents:	<p>An issue of the Louisville Weekly Journal containing an article on the front page titled "Destruction of the Niagara Falls". The article is noted to be a hoax at the bottom. The article is purported to be out of the office of the Advertiser, Buffalo, New York on February 14. The article begins "<i>We hasten to announce to our readers and to the world an event in its nature at once the most stupendous and sublime that has ever been recorded in the annals of the wonderful. The Falls of Niagara—the unmatched phenomenon of nature, the centralization of power, grandeur and beauty...IS NO MORE.</i>"</p> <p>The article proceeds to explain what happened, noting that "<i>It has always been conjectured that the bed of these waters was once prolonged to a point far below its latter termination; that the cataract, at some remote period, fell over a precipitous height as far down as Queenstown; and that the elevated bed progressively crumbled away under the corroding, triturating influence of the almighty current, until, in the lapse of centuries, it reached and halted at the terminus over which, so far as authentic history speaks, the vast aggregation of lake waters has dashed and roared. This speculation is now rendered almost certain; for, although the supposed process seemed to have been stayed...yet has at length been subdued and swept away by its never-resting antagonist. But let us hurry to the facts of the case</i>".</p> <p>The article continues that the first symptoms of the great catastrophe began at about 9 a.m. Saturday morning. Mr. Arnold, a citizen of the village, was waiting at the bottom of the staircase for a boat when he noticed rocks on the Canadian side break away and fall into the river. He returned to the village to tell others and soon a crowd had formed waiting to see what would happen next. Over an hour "<i>considerable masses were dislocated and thrown down. The sheet of water, that before fell abruptly, almost perpendicularly, with an unbroken breast over the protruding eave, of course now shot down an obtuse angle, losing its graceful and majestic curve but gaining in tumult and effervescence...nothing further transpired that night</i>".</p> <p>The following morning at half past seven o'clock "<i>a wide space of the frontal bastion, near Goat Island, within the Horseshoe, fell down; and then followed effects with greatly accelerated rapidity. What was actually taking place could only be surmised, as the great confluence of water hid the immediate stage of operations from sight. But it was plain to all that the supporting fabric of the cataract was fast wearing away before the tremendous enginery...at half past eight, the Biddle tower and all the adjoining groundwork had disappeared. The tower sunk into the gulf like a subsiding wave. Shortly after, the water having made a subterranean passage burst</i></p>		

	<p><i>through the wall of Goat Island, cumbered with masses of rock and rolled with earth, and as instantly the crust above collapsed and mixed in the wild chaos below. In rapid succession, on the Canada side of the island, mass followed mass, until the island, throughout its entire length was chafed and narrowed down to a lean stripe...On the British border, the wall of loose friable rock was gored and ploughed away until the Table Rock, so much resorted to by visitors, fell down in fragments, the spiral staircase toppled for a while it was expected the hotel would follow. It still stands, though in a perilous posture, all the furniture being removed. On the American side, the great shelf is unmolested but the water traveling over is greatly diminished, it being diverted to the largely increased channel on the British side... ”</i></p> <p>A note at the end of the article acknowledges that this is an “ingenious hoax”.</p> <p>The back page contains various illustrated advertisements including some for runaway slaves.</p>		
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