

1934 - 1943

# “There’s more to Niagara than the Big Roar” \*

In the fourth decade of Niagara Falls’ history, from 1934 to 1943, life took a very different turn from the prosperity of the 1920s. The Great Depression, brought on by the stock market crash in 1929, was into its fifth year in 1934. During the same year, the Bank of Canada came into existence, John Labatt was kidnapped, and the Dionne quintuplets were in the news. Far-off Spain would soon break out into civil war in 1936 and many Canadians joined the fight there. In 1937 Dorothea Palmer was arrested for distribution of birth control in Ottawa, Lord Tweedsmuir was our Governor General, and Canadians were doing a dance called the rumba in clubs across the nation. The previous year, King George V succumbed to illness and was succeeded by his son, Edward VIII, for a brief, eleven month period before George VI was named King. Canadians experienced other great and novel changes during this decade including the invention of the ballpoint pen and the paint roller, the tragic and unexpected death of Howie Morenz, renowned NHL player, and the victory of the Bluenose at the 1938 International Fishermen’s Trophy race. By the end of this period the Second World War was well under way, and Dieppe and Pearl Harbor were words that did not escape anyone’s ears.

What was Niagara Falls like in the years between 1934 and 1943? How badly did the Great Depression affect the city? How did local citizens react to the Second World War? What did they do? Where did they eat? Niagara Falls was coming of age in the 1930s. Tourism was growing and the entire city was busy. Inquests into traffic deaths and a rash of automobile accidents in the early thirties clearly show that auto use was on the rise by residents and visitors alike. The Capitol Theatre showed movies like “Death Takes a Holiday,” “Baby Take a Bow,” and

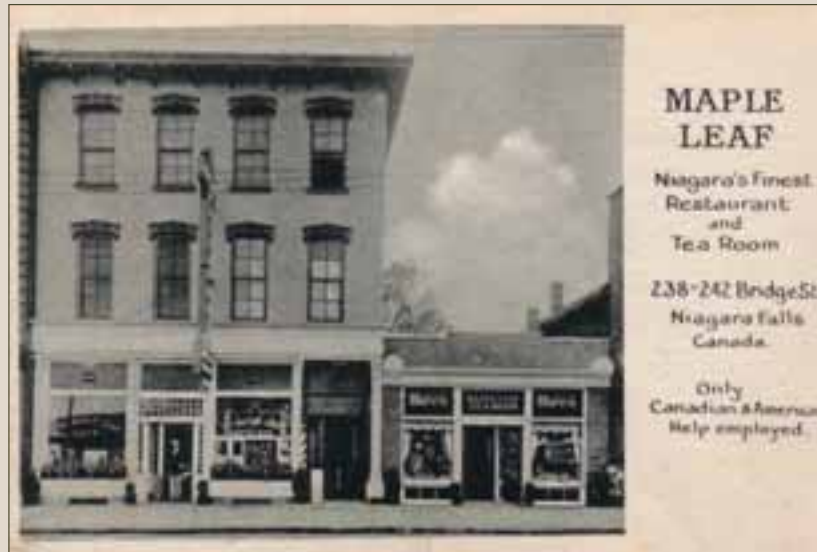
“Casablanca.” The birth rate in the city, like that across Canada, fell dramatically during the first half of the 1930s and levelled off by the mid-1940s. All of Niagara was a-buzz with talk of the war. Citizens of the Falls were concerned with rising fascism in nations such as Germany, Italy, Ethiopia, and Greece, and wanted to be as informed as possible about the global conflict developing around this situation. Strange sightings in the city kept people busy as a supposed timberwolf stalked Stamford Township and a counterfeit fifty-cent piece fooled retailers. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited in 1939, while Winston Churchill and his daughter Mary came to see the falls in 1943. Oakes Garden Theatre was being constructed as the Lafayette Hotel was being torn down. One could dance the night away at the Prince of Wales Club, see a movie, or go to dinner at one of the numerous restaurants. Eaton’s, then known as the Canadian Department Stores Limited, and Rosbergs were mainstays of shopping, and the housing industry was booming. Many Niagara Falls residents received their paycheques from such companies as Spirella, Shredded Wheat, Toronto Power, or Cyanamid, and nearly everyone in the city swam at the Cyanamid pool, newly opened in 1937.

Although the hardships of the Great Depression were lessening by the latter 1930s, the city was soon be into the second World War. Many of Niagara Falls’ sons and daughters would travel overseas and never return. Numerous and nameless, other soldiers came to guard the hydro canal and the power installations. Some would come back after the war to live here, while others just returned for a visit. The decade was fruitful and tense, and Niagara Falls stood on the edge of becoming a world class destination.

\* Title quote taken from an article originally published in Maclean’s Magazine, December 15, 1939, and reprinted in its entirety beginning on page 146.

## 1934

- the population of Niagara Falls was 18,355
- local grocers charged:
  - 27-28¢/lb for butter in winter;
  - 22-25¢/lb in summer
  - 15-19¢/lb for beef in winter;
  - 11-19¢/lb in summer
  - 10-12¢/10 lbs for potatoes in winter;
  - 13-15¢/10 lbs in summer
  - 26-35¢/dozen for eggs in winter;
  - 20-28¢/dozen in summer
  - 67-71¢/10 lbs for sugar in winter;
  - 57-58¢/10 lbs in summer
- there were 473,341 passenger automobiles registered in Ontario
- bread cost between 7 and 9¢/loaf depending on whether you purchased the regular, cracked wheat, or raisin varieties at grocers such as the Superior Stores chain, the Red and White chain, or the A&P
- at the beginning of the year a subscription to *The Niagara Falls Review* cost 12¢/week
- Walker's Drug Stores' 5¢ ice cream cones went on sale, two for 6¢ at the company's Victoria Avenue and Ferry Street locations
- a three-piece chesterfield set cost \$57.50 at the Canadian Department Stores Limited
- rolls of wallpaper were sold for between 8 and 25¢ at J.A. Atkin's Wallpapers, Paints, and Varnish Store on Queen Street
- taking a return trip on the Canadian National Railway between Niagara Falls and Montreal cost \$7.65
- Paris Dry Cleaners charged 50¢ to professionally clean and press men's suits
- going to see a movie at the Hollywood Theatre cost 25¢



Sherman Zvitz



Photo by Eddie Hodge, Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**PICTURED HERE AROUND 1935,** *Charlie's*, on Thorold Stone Road at the corner of Stanley Avenue North, was a popular spot to go for a hamburger after catching a movie. The restaurant was owned by Charles Damato, who had previously operated another eatery at the end of St. Paul Avenue, overlooking the edge of the escarpment and Patterson's sandpit. This new venue was built when highway alterations caused business at Damato's first location to dwindle.

**THE MAPLE LEAF RESTAURANT AND TEA ROOM** around 1935. In a testament to the inappropriate prejudices which were widespread earlier in this century, only those of discernable Canadian or American descent (presumably from a Western European background) would be employed at the establishment. This building, originally known as the Woodruff block, was constructed in 1855. It still stands.



The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), June 1, 1934

## A FLEET OF TAXIS

poses by the falls in 1935. By the mid-1930s a number of local taxi cab companies had sprung up and were in close competition for tourist business.



Lundy's Lane Historical Museum



Photo by W. James Sr., Niagara Falls Heritage Foundation Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**THE RIVER ROAD AREA NEAR THE FALLS VIEW BRIDGE AROUND 1935.** The Tower Inn railway terminal, which also housed the offices of Gray Coach bus lines, is at left, while further down the street the Prince of Wales Dance Club can be seen.

**CARELESS DRIVING  
CHARGE BRINGS \$13 FINE**  
Samuel Cardwell, 966 Hamilton Street, pleaded guilty to a charge of careless driving and paid a fine and costs totalling \$13 into Magistrate's court. He was taken to police headquarters on September 13 by Constable Tex McEwan and remanded until today.

**DROVE THROUGH  
TRAFFIC SIGNAL**  
A fine of \$9.15 was paid into Magistrate's court, today, by Clifford Tontola, 1908 Allen Street, on a charge of driving through a red light.

**FINED ON CARELESS  
DRIVING CHARGE**  
Robert Manear, 445 Wilson St., Hamilton, paid a fine and costs totalling \$10, into Magistrate's court, today, on a charge of careless driving. The information was laid by Highway Traffic Constable Reilly.

**TUSCARORA PICNIC  
SATURDAY NEXT**  
Mayor Carl D. Hanniwell has received an invitation from the Tuscarora Firemen's Club to attend a picnic at the Reserve in Sanborn, N.Y. on Saturday, September 21.

The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), September 13, 1939



- “permanent” hair styles could be had for \$5.00 at the ClarRita Beauty Shoppe on Queen Street, next to the fire hall

#### 1939

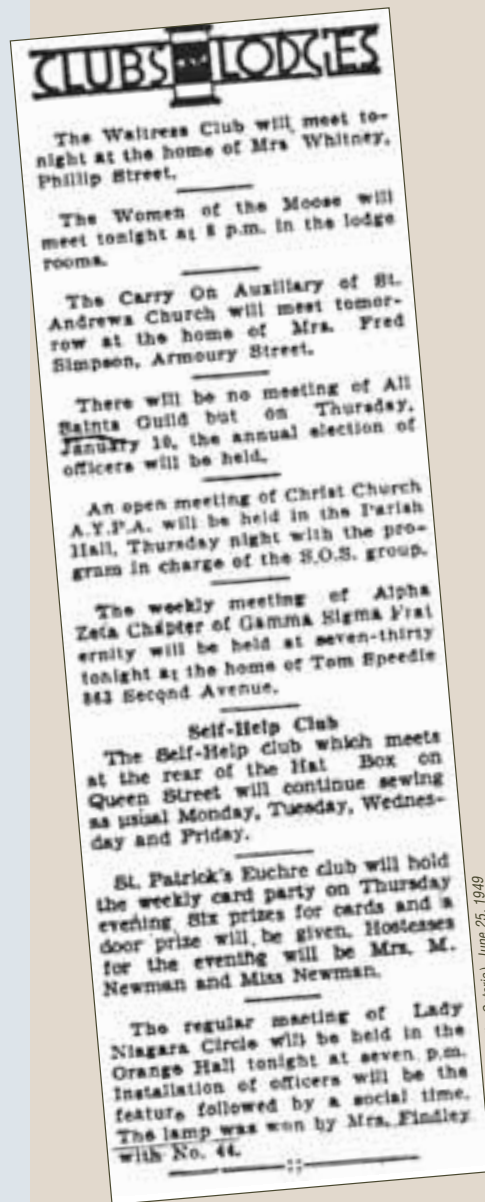
- the Caverly Hotel served complete, three course roast chicken dinners for 35¢
- riding in a Niagara Taxi or Ace Cab Company car cost customers a 25¢ flat fee
- a tin of Players cigarettes commemorating the visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to Niagara Falls sold for 50¢
- the A&P grocery store carried freshly made doughnuts for only 10¢/dozen
- photofinishing cost a mere 23¢ at Vaughan Cut Rate Drugs
- Heinz's famous ketchup ran 35¢/two 14oz bottles at the Eaton's grocery store
- a 4oz jar of Noxzema cold cream could be had for 49¢ at Tamblyn's Drug Store on Queen Street

#### SOURCES:

*Historical Statistics of Canada.* 2nd Ed.

Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

*The Review* (Niagara Falls, Ontario), January 4, 1934; January 5, 1934; January 6, 1934; January 9, 1934; January 11, 1934; January 12, 1934; January 18, 1934; January 20, 1934; January 24, 1934; January 25, 1934; January 26, 1934; June 1, 1934; June 2, 1934; June 7, 1934; June 8, 1934; June 9, 1934; June 14, 1934; June 15, 1934; June 16, 1934; June 21, 1934; June 23, 1934; June 25, 1934; June 28, 1934; June 29, 1934; June 30, 1934; May 27, 1939; June 1, 1939; June 7, 1939; September 27, 1939; October 5, 1939.



*The Review* (Niagara Falls, Ontario), June 25, 1949



Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**IN 1850 MUCH OF THE ROCKY OUTCROP NEAR THE HORSESHOE FALLS** known as Table Rock collapsed into the river below. By 1935 The Niagara Parks Commission decided that it was in the best interest of public safety to blast away the remaining bits of the structure. This was accomplished on July 1 and July 4, 1935.



The Niagara Parks Commission

**THE SAVOY HOTEL**, at the corner of Bridge Street and Zimmerman Avenue, opened in 1899 in what had originally been a bank building constructed in 1855. This photo of the property dates about 1935.



The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario)

**THE ORIGINAL CAMPBELL MUSEUM**, seen here on the northwest corner of Drummond Road and Barker Street in 1936, was established by Clarence Campbell, who would comb the Niagara region looking for relics.

**Beauty Shoppes**

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**COOPER BEAUTY SHOP**  
 347 Third Ave. Phone 2344  
**REDUCED PRICES FOR JANUARY**  
**PERMANENTS**  
 Spiral Curls, Combination  
 Phone for Appointment

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**Elsie's Hair Dressing Parlor**  
 474 Clifton Ave., opp. King Edward  
 Hair cutting, beauty culture. Phone 1444-W.

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**LILLIAN BEAUTY SHOPPE**  
 Now Equipped to Give the Latest  
**THERMIQUE PERMANENT WAVE**  
 Natural looking, no burns, discomforts  
 Reasonable Prices  
 811 ST. CLAIR AVE.  
 Phone 2129 appointment

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**ROSLYN BEAUTY PARLOR**  
 931 VICTORIA AVE.  
 MISS OLIVER, Prop.  
 A shop where you can be sure of the  
 best attention and careful work. Phone  
 135 for appointment.

The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), January 22, 1934



The Niagara Parks Commission

**ANOTHER WELL-KNOWN HOTEL** on Bridge Street during the early 1930s was the Windsor, seen here around 1935. Originally called the Great Western Hotel, the building dated to the mid-1850s.

After Clarence's death, the museum was taken over by Charles Campbell, who many locals knew as "Sanko." After the passing of this second curator, most of the collection was turned over to the Lundy's Lane Historical Museum and the Canadian War Museum.





Photo by Airmaps Limited, Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**THE OHIO BRASS PLANT** on Thorold Stone Road is surrounded by farmers' fields in this 1935 aerial photo. A few scattered buildings can be seen along Portage Road in the upper left corner.



The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), January 4, 1934



Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)



The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), January 25, 1934

**THE MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION** on the southeast corner of Queen Street and Erie Avenue in August 1936. This structure was used by Michigan Central from 1883 until its demolition in 1941.

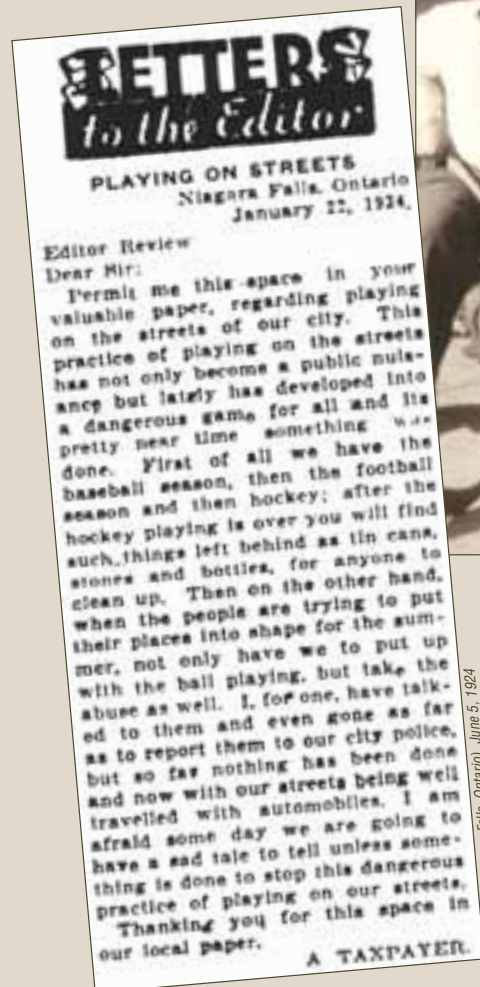


Photo by A.M. Buckley Studios, courtesy Irene Linley

**THE BRIGHT SPOT WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM** was sponsored in 1938 by Nick Vaccaro and John Strange of the Vaccaro & Strange restaurant on Victoria Avenue. These ladies were city champions that year. Front row, left to right: Dom Leone (assistant coach), unknown, Marion Shannon (centre), Irene Petrullo (goalie), unknown. Back row: Nick Vaccaro (sponsor), Mammie Woodbury (defence), Eileen McAndrew (defence), Ernie Saccone, (coach), Okie Lindergreen, Ms. Kalbflesh, Nettie Pullano, John Strange (sponsor).





Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST**, commonly known as the Christian Science Church, began in Niagara Falls in 1925 as a small group who met in the homes of the congregation. By 1927 the community decided to rent Adoniram Hall on Second Avenue. Needing a building of their own, the corner stone of the congregation's church on Jepson Street was laid on February 3, 1935. This photo was taken later that year.



Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**ON JULY 13, 1837**, Father Edward Gordon laid the cornerstone for Our Lady of Peace Church on Stanley Avenue where tradition held Father Hennepin offered the first Catholic mass near the falls of Niagara 159 years earlier. The church was first called St. Edward's, but in 1861 was renamed and dedicated to Our Lady of Peace and raised to pilgrimage status. This picture was taken in the centennial year of the church. Loretto Academy can be seen at the extreme right.



The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario)

**THE BON-VILLA HOTEL**, on Lundy's Lane near Glenholme Avenue was run by Harriett McNaughton from 1936 until 1942 when the business was sold to Steven Allen. This promotional photo was taken on June 4, 1937.



The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), June 23 1934





Niagara Falls Heritage Foundation Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**ON JANUARY 23, 1938**, a tremendous ice jam filled the gorge immediately below the falls. The large build-up of ice severely damaged the Falls View Bridge, also known as the Honeymoon or Upper Steel Arch Bridge. The damaged bridge hung on for four days, drawing crowds of on-lookers. At last, on January 27 at 4:20 p.m., the Falls View Bridge fell into the Niagara River. The bridge sat on the ice for nearly three months before finally sinking into the river on April 13.

**THIS IS THE SAME ICE JAM** that began on January 23, 1938 and was responsible for the collapse of the Falls View Bridge. By January 28 ice had completely surrounded the Ontario Power Company's generating station and broken through the windows, causing power disruption and filling the building with a spectacular yet destructive display of nature's wintry wonder.



Francois J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)



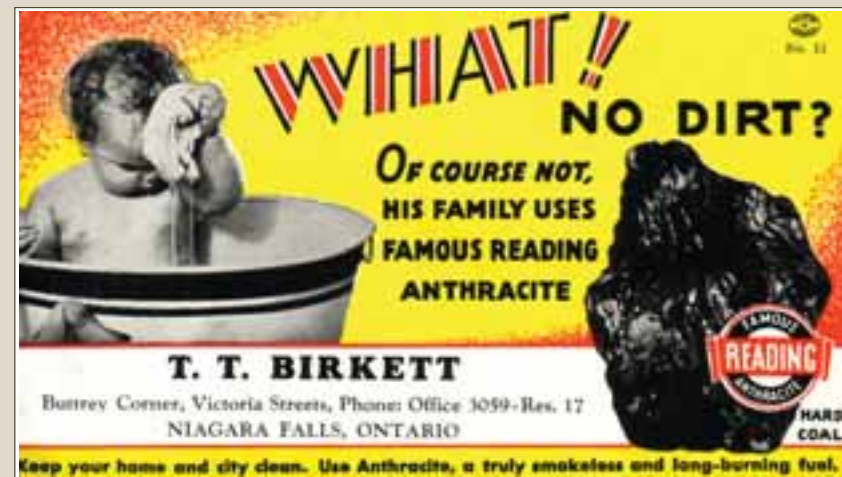
F.H. Leslie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**BUILT IN 1906**, the Toronto Power Company's plant is less than a kilometre (0.6 miles) from the Horseshoe Falls. The Toronto Powerhouse is over 400 metres (436 yards) long and 80 metres (87 yards) wide. Here, Fred Hughes stands in the generating station's control room in 1938. The plant was closed in 1974.



Photo by A.M. Buckley Sudlos, Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**SWORN IN AS GOVERNOR GENERAL ON NOVEMBER 2, 1935**, Lord Tweedsmuir was travelling across Canada in August 1938 when he stopped at Loretto Academy.



F.H. Leslie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)





Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**THE REFECTORY**, later known as the Victoria Park Restaurant, was erected by The Niagara Parks Commission in 1904, the same year the City of Niagara Falls was incorporated. Until 1916 the Parks Commission leased the property to outside service providers. Here, patrons leisurely dine in the summer of 1935 and the establishment's staff pose for posterity on September 2, 1937.

Plans have been completed for the dance to be held on Friday evening in the Stamford Collegiate auditorium by the Grand Court and Power City Court, Order of Amaranth. Old and new dances and refreshments are included on the program.

Miss Grace Manley entertained at her home on Menzie Street on Saturday afternoon in honor of her niece Jean Manley of Ellis Street, at a surprise birthday party. Games were enjoyed and a dainty lunch served. The guest of honor was presented with many nice gifts.

The members of Montrose Women's Institute, were entertained at a very enjoyable social evening at the home of Miss E. Cruickshank. The evening was spent in playing progressive "Gootee" the prizes being awarded as follows: ladies' first, Mrs. C. Bigger; gent's first, Clarence Silverthorn and consolation, Mrs. Jack Thomas and George McGuire. After a delicious lunch was served cards were played until a late hour.

The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), January 22, 1934



Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)



Photo by Eddie Hodge. Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR** all taxi services at the falls were changed to horse-drawn surreys to save gas for the war effort. A number of drivers pose here with their trusty steeds next to Oakes Garden Theatre around 1940.



Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**OPENED IN JULY 1929**, the General Brock Hotel cost 1.5 million dollars to build. It contained 260 rooms and a large roof garden. Notable visitors there included King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in 1939. This photo shows the hotel a few years after its completion.





The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), June 1, 1934

Photo by James Studio, courtesy Allan Agar

EMPLOYEES OF THE GENERAL BROCK HOTEL GATHER FOR DINNER CIRCA 1941.



Niagara Falls Heritage Foundation Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**IN MAY 1939 KING GEORGE VI AND QUEEN ELIZABETH** became the first reigning British monarchs to visit Canada. On June 7, as part of their month long national tour, the Royals came to Niagara Falls. Thousands of citizens and visitors gathered to see their Majesties as they drove through the streets, viewed the cataracts, and were officially welcomed at The Niagara Parks Commission Administration Building in Queen Victoria Park. The King and Queen arrived in the city at 6:40 p.m. and departed from the General Brock Hotel at 10:10 p.m.



Inglis Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)



Pat and Ross Simon

**THIS WAS THE MENU** served to the King and Queen along with their attending guests on the night of June 7, 1939 at the General Brock Hotel.



## **"THE CITY BEHIND THE FALLS: A BUSY INDUSTRIAL SCENE WITH ONE OF THE WORLD'S WONDERS AS A BACKDROP – THERE'S MORE TO NIAGARA THAN THE BIG ROAR"**

Originally published in *Maclean's Magazine*, December 15, 1939 and reprinted herer in its original form.

– By Frederick Edwards

From the windows of the hotel roof dining room, one looked down at Niagara Falls.

The world-famous panorama was spread there, beautiful, magnificent, complete. Brilliant sunshine fired the seething whiteness of the Horseshoe Falls with a glistening radiance. The American Falls, beyond the sun's reach at the moment, crashed green and white over their hundred and sixty-seven-foot precipice.

Above each cascade, against a blue clear autumn sky, the eternal spray spumes hung in the air, floating. Between the two the little steamboat, Maid of the Mist, scurried fussily over the boiling, sudsy river. From the height it looked like a toy a child might play with in his bath. Half a dozen people on the Maid's pier, on the American side, were no more than black dots beneath their towering background of cliff and cataract. The thunderous roar of Niagara reached the ears muted, not aggressive. It was the sound of many bass drums, a long way off.

To the waiter we remarked, doubtless with entire lack of originality, that this must be the finest restaurant view in the world. He said:

"Yes, I suppose it is. But after you've been looking at it for three or four years, it's just a lot of water falling over some big rocks."

Twenty-eight thousand people within the industrial area of which the City of Niagara Falls, Ontario, is the centre, feel that way about the Falls.

They hold a profound admiration for the mighty spectacle—as all mankind must—but they live next door to it, and familiarity has bred, not contempt certainly, but perhaps a slight boredom. Except for the comparatively small proportion of citizens who earn a seasonal living directly from the

Falls, residents of the city can take their cataracts or leave them alone.

The Falls, they say, have been there for 35,000 years. They will be there a long time yet. Meanwhile there are jobs to be looked after—jobs having nothing whatever to do with the world wonder at their gates.

### **VISITORS BY THE MILLION**

Five million people from all parts of the globe visit Niagara Falls, Ontario, every year. Most of them go there during the summer months, between May and October. They arrive at that section of the city where the big hotels, the rooming houses, auto camps, restaurants and souvenir stores are concentrated within sight and sound of the tumultuous waters. There most of them stay until it is time to go home again.

There is no discernible reason why the traveler bent solely on sight-seeing should move beyond the borders of the comparatively small area. Within its limits he will find plenty to do.

He may promenade along River Road, developed into one of the world's most beautiful walks, since the old International Railway was abandoned, its tracks torn up and replaced by a wide avenue, with a waist-high native stone wall on the Gorge side. He may wander through Queen Victoria Park, saunter among the ravines of the lovely Niagara Glen, gaze down on the Falls from Table Rock, walk beneath them through Table Rock tunnel, or look up at them from the deck of the bustling little steamer.

He can, if he feels in adventurous mood, ride high above the Whirlpool in a suspended cable car. Should he seek culture, he can listen to band or choir music

in the Oakes Garden Theatre. Then, having acquired such souvenir bric-a-brac as his purse affords, he can return to the place from whence he came, content. He has seen and enjoyed Niagara Falls.

That is one side of the picture. The other is that when he gets back home, whether he knows it or not, his normal life may be touched every day by products of the place he has just left.

Should he live in Canada, there's a fair chance that the flat silverware he uses at each meal was made at Niagara Falls. If he is a farmer, the chemical fertilizer he spreads on his fields may very well be a Niagara Falls product. Perhaps his wife wears a Niagara Falls corset or girdle, and it is likely that the carpet sweeper she trundles over her rugs was made in Niagara Falls. Cotton cellulose products used in his home may bear a Niagara Falls label, and so may some of his breakfast food, the native wines on his table, the batteries in his flashlight, and any chains he may require. Perhaps he owns stock in a producing gold mine. If so, the cyanamids used to refine the ores from that mine were most certainly processed in Niagara Falls. Any machinery he may use was probably smoothed and polished by abrasives made in Niagara Falls.

The address alone has an advertising value. Internationally famous products made at Niagara Falls, Ontario, add up to a long list of infinite variety. Power generated at the Falls is carried all over Central Ontario, and that is the basic industry; but within the industrial area, including the City of Niagara Falls, the Township of Stamford, and the Village of Chippawa, are made such widely known commodities as Community, Tudor, and William Rogers and Son silver plate, Shredded Wheat, Bissell carpet sweepers, Weed chains, Burgess

flashlights and Spirella corsets.

Three factories produce flat silverware at Niagara Falls, Ontario; the Canadian plant of Oneida Limited, the William Rogers and Son plant of the International Silver Company, and the plant of the McGlashan, Clarke Company. Carborundum, universally employed as an abrasive, is produced in two plants, one on the Canadian side, one in Niagara Falls, New York; and two other concerns, the Norton Company and the Lionite Abrasive Company, make artificial abrasives there. Among them these four establishments make ninety per cent of all the artificial abrasives used, not only on this continent, but in the world.

American Cyanamid manufactures nitrates, chemical solvents and fertilizers in huge volume. There are two canning companies, Bright's and Ellis. The American Can Company produces the precision machinery and tools necessary to perfect the modern vacuum type metal container. Animal traps, paper boxes, sporting goods, woven wire screens for paper making, porcelain insulators for high voltage power lines, cut stone, soft drinks and candles, safes and vaults, cranes and hoists and leather goods all contribute to the diversified picture that is Niagara Falls.

Altogether there are more than forty major industries operating plants within the area. The canneries, and to some extent the cyanamid works, function on a seasonal basis, but the others are going the year round and the tourist season affects them not at all. Only orders count. They are likely to be as busy or busier when the Falls are frozen and the River Road bleak and deserted, as in midsummer when the glad cries of the peripatetic pilgrim are heard voicing shrill sentiments of awe and

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astonishment from Queenston Heights to Table Rock.

The area's industries employ anywhere from 6,000 to 10,000 men and women annually. The Cyanamid Company is the largest single employer, carrying a payroll ranging between six hundred and twelve hundred at various times of the year. Of the forty-odd industrial plants five are located in Stamford Township and one in Chippawa Village. The others are all within the city limits of Niagara Falls.

The tourist sees them, if at all, merely as factories; but to a large majority of the residents they represent year-round bread and butter, rent and taxes, gas and oil. In their lives the industries are vastly more important than the spectacle of 222,000 cubic feet of water tumbling from the Niagara River into the Gorge every second of the day and night.

Yet it is true that the mighty cataracts that draw transient guests from the earth's farthest places are responsible also for Niagara Falls' industries.

Two power organizations, the publicly owned Ontario Hydro Commission and the privately operated Canadian Niagara Power Company, develop approximately one million horsepower of electrical energy from the Falls—one fourth of the estimated total capacity. The power is cheap, and it is certain, since there are no lengthy transmission lines to suffer possible breakdowns. Continuous operation of such electro-chemical industries as the Cyanamid and Carborundum companies demands the use of vast and constant electrical energy. They could function efficiently in few other localities on the continent.

That being the case it is not surprising to find that the life of Niagara Falls, Ontario, as an industrial community began with the development of electrical power from the Horseshoe Falls in the first decade of this century.

It is not an old city, dating its incorporation

as a town under its present name only to 1904, when the villages of Drummondville and Clifton, in the Township of Stamford, were joined to create the town of Niagara Falls. The original villages have to some extent retained their separate entities, a circumstance making for certain peculiar local characteristics fascinating and sometimes baffling to the explorer from foreign parts.

### WHAT'S IN A STREET NAME?

The Town has not been put together on any deliberate plan. It simply assembled itself.

It possesses no one principal shopping street, and no through thoroughfare at its heart. There are actually three shopping districts; in the north on Queen Street, in the southeast, or centre section, around the Falls and on Clifton Hill, and in the southwest on Main Street.

To move from one section of the city to another the wayfarer must follow a meandering, circuitous route, sometimes along streets that change their names without warning. One treads Victoria Avenue's winding sidewalks and is suddenly on Ferry Street. Continuing along Ferry Street, one discovers Lundy's Lane, which is the same Ferry Street that two miles back was Victoria Avenue. Or one may stroll along Portage Road from Queenston toward the south, and so come to Main Street. A mile or so farther on at the boundary of Queen Victoria Park, Main Street becomes Portage Road again.

Further supporting this casual, we're-all-homefolks-together-so-what's-the-odds feeling one gets from walking about Niagara Falls, is the fact that two railways, the Canadian National, and the Michigan Central division of the New York Central, run their tracks through and across the town as the original surveys mapped them through the villages.

So one strolls along a tree-lined

residential street and bumps his bewildered nose against a sign reading: "Dead End. No Thoroughfare." Or again, attempting to establish the boundaries of the city, one encounters the township hall of Stamford on Ferry Street, well within the limits of Niagara Falls.

It is explained that when the town was incorporated, the Township of Stamford was permitted by a gentlemen's agreement to retain ownership of its township building and the land where it stands. Therefore the reeve and other officials of Stamford Township must go into Niagara Falls to transact their business. Never a dull moment.

"This," one of the younger native sons observed a trifle acidly, "is the smallest city in Canada that it's easiest to get lost in." The phrasing may appear involved, but he meaning is crystal clear.

Queen Street, in the north end of the city, is considered in official circles to be the principal shopping district, although there are about as many blocks of shops and one of the two motion picture theatres as well, on Main Street, at the other side of town.

The Dominion Government Building, containing the Post Office and Customs House, is on Queen Street as is the City Hall. Here are half a dozen blocks of bright, up-to-date stores, a locally owned department store, branches of the familiar chains, bank buildings and a movie. There are more shops and a branch of a Toronto department store on Victoria Avenue, but for the most part that fine thoroughfare is residential, or at least, professional. The General Brock and the Foxhead Inn, the two leading hotels, overlook the Falls in the southeast, or central section. They have fine stores on their street level, carrying

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"The City Behind the Falls: A busy industrial scene with one of the world's wonders as a backdrop—there's more to Niagara than the Big Roar"

**CITY STAFF POSE** in the mayor's chambers inside city hall in 1939. Left to right they are: City Clerk William S. Orr, Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce Carl Ward, Mayor Carl Hanniwell, and City Treasurer W. Soulsby.



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stocks for the most part designed to attract the tourist trade; woollens, linens, handicrafts and china.

Visitors who care to wander beyond the sound of the tumult of the cataracts, observe immediately that the city has turned its back on the Falls and the Gorge, to spread its business and residential areas over a comparatively narrow strip of territory approximately five miles long by a mile and a half wide, all of it above and beyond the River Road.

It could hardly be otherwise, since the Niagara Parks Commission, administered under the authority of the Provincial Government, long since staked a permanent claim covering all the Canadian side of the Gorge, and the area in the southeast surrounding the Horseshoe Falls. That was in 1887, the Jubilee year. The original purchase of 154 acres, comprising Queen Victoria Park, has since been

extended, until today the parks commission's domain covers thousands of acres along the river bank reaching from Fort Erie to Niagara-on-the-Lake, a distance of thirty-eight miles.

The sagacity of that move, made more than half a century ago, is visibly established today by a comparison of the view across the river from the Canadian side with the view across the river from Niagara Falls, New York.

Our American friends know well that they are away behind the parade in this particular respect. They are now trying to catch up. Extensive plans have been drawn for doing away with some of the ghastlier excrescences defiling the American bank, and replacing them with what amounts to a duplication of the river development carried out by the Niagara Parks Commission on the Canadian side.

Necessary building restrictions inherent

in the parks commission's requirements have compelled the extension of the city proper away from the Falls. Residences line the west side of River Road, and the residential and business streets run west, north and south from that boundary.

Ninety-nine out of every hundred families in Niagara Falls live out of sight and sound of the roaring cataracts.

## HOMES – TOURIST AND OTHERWISE

When the exploring stranger, having consulted his pocket compass, gets into the city proper, he will find any number of admirable and interesting conditions, distinct and different from those he may have observed in his home town or elsewhere. There is no swanky residential area. On almost every street in the town a home of wealth and luxury may have a humble cottage beside it. The citizens feel that this is an excellent thing, emphasizing the essential democracy of the community. It is true, too, that while there is no district dedicated to the stately homes of the very rich, there is no slum section either. And there are no tenements.

Emphatically, Niagara Falls is a residential as well as an industrial city. Almost all the houses are self-contained and completely detached. The semi-detached or duplex house is rare. Most of the residential lots have a fifty-foot frontage, allowing ample space for a garage and a garden with flowers blooming luxuriantly even in to late October, in the fertile soil for which the whole Niagara Peninsula is famous. The houses are well constructed, too, and the average value of an employed workingman's home is quoted as \$5,000.

In its role of tourist centre Niagara Falls is, inevitably, well supplied with tourist accommodation, and often the sign, "Tourists" hangs before a residence fit to be ranked among the finest anywhere, with

none of the frumpish, down-at-heels look that often accompanies such symbols.

Tourism has been an ancient and honorable vocation in Niagara Falls since its beginnings, and it is practiced as such. The city inspects and licenses the rooming houses, insisting on a high standard of all-round accommodation, and each house advertising rooms for tourists must display the number of its license.

It has been said that Niagara Falls as an incorporated city is comparatively a stripling, and that is true; but it is true also that a lot of early Canadian history was written, some of it in blood, within what are now the city limits. The name, Niagara, is of Indian origin, and long before the first white man came within sight of the cataracts, the lands around the Falls were occupied by neutral Indian tribes, who suffered the pains and penalties of all neutrals, living as they did between the warlike Iroquois and what is now upper New York State on one side, and the equally belligerent Hurons of the Georgian Bay country.

The fields and orchards around Niagara Falls have yielded a vast number of Indian relics in past years. Mr. James Morden, headmaster of the Dunn Street School in Niagara Falls, is an acknowledged authority on the history of that part of Canada. He has a huge collection of authentic Indian tokens; skulls, bones, arrowheads, pipe bowls, amulets, sacred stones, wampum and tomahawk heads, most of them dug from Stamford Township pastures.

## A BRITISH SETTLEMENT

It is generally believed that Father Hennepin, the famous French priest-explorer, was the first white man to gaze upon Niagara Falls, in about 1678; but although the French knew of the existence of the Niagara Peninsula, they seem never to have attempted to settle it. That was done by British families.

Continued ...



The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), September 14, 1939

**SHREDDED WHEAT** has been synonymous with Niagara Falls since the formation of the city. In 1928 the Shredded Wheat Company was purchased by the National Biscuit Company, or Nabisco.

... Continued

The Niagara Falls district, of course, was coveted and fought-for territory during the War of 1812. The site of the Battle of Lundy's Lane, where British forces under General Drummond stopped the American invaders in July, 1814, is within the present city limits of Niagara Falls. And near by, in Drummond Hill Cemetery, is the grave of Laura Secord, whose heroic twenty-mile foray through forests and swamps in June, 1813, brought warning to a British force, enabling them to surprise and capture an American colonel with 542 men.

After the war ended in 1814 the country around the Falls was settled by farmers, many of them United Empire loyalists, who established the village settlements of Clifton, Drummondville and Stamford. Drummondville was named for the General Drummond who led the British troops at Lundy's Lane, and later was knighted and became Administrator of both Upper and Lower Canada. The city of Drummondville, Quebec, derives its designation from the same doughty soldier.

The earliest industries in the district were, inevitably, restricted to local needs. There were grist mills, sawmills, general stores, blacksmiths' and saddlers' shops, and taverns. The tourist was unknown. There were no railroads, travel was difficult and hazardous, and therefore limited to journeys made from necessity, not for fun.

One Samuel Zimmerman, a native of Pennsylvania, is honored by historians today as the real founder of what is now Niagara Falls. Certainly he was the pioneer Big Businessman of the community.

It is in the records that Samuel Zimmerman, having been born in Huntington County, Pa., in 1815, left the United States and settled in the village of Clifton in 1842, when he was twenty-seven years old. The legend is that when he arrived the total of his belongings added up to the clothes he had on, a grey horse and a black buggy, but subsequent events show that he possessed also a shrewd commercial

sense, ambition, energy and an abiding faith in the future of his adopted country.

These qualities brought him into the construction business in due course. He built four locks and an aqueduct on the first Welland Canal. Later Zimmerman contracts included sections of the Great Western Railway, the first railway bridge over the Gorge, the first suspension bridge, and a number of short railway lines connecting Ontario towns. He built steamships, founded a bank and established the first waterworks in the Niagara district.

So far as the general public is concerned, though, Samuel Zimmerman's chief claim to undying fame is that he seems to have been the first man to envision the future of Niagara as a tourist resort, possibly a natural development from his close association with the railways. He built the first Clifton House – in its day one of the finest resort hotels on the continent, with groves and fountains, illuminated promenades, a concert hall and an exclusive and expensive clientele.

Samuel Zimmerman came to an untimely and ironic end on March 12, 1857, when he was but forty-two years old and at the pinnacle of his colorful career. He was one of many passengers killed when a Toronto train on the same Great Western Railway he had helped to construct, broke through a swing bridge over the Desjardins Canal, and plunged fifty feet to crash through the ice below.

But the great man left his indelible mark on his home town. The Clifton House brought thousands of wealthy globe-trotters to view Niagara Falls, and they in turn told others of the wonders they had seen there. For many generations the name Clifton House was synonymous with good living at Niagara Falls. The hotel Zimmerman built was burned in the summer of 1898. It was promptly rebuilt, and the second Clifton House stood until the last day of December, 1932, when it, too,

Continued ...

# At CRITELLI'S

## FURNITURE VALUES

### For Wise Autumn Buyers

You'll want new Furniture for the new Autumn season. We're ready with a marvelously interesting variety of suites and single pieces for every room of your home! You'll find high quality and prices low. Critelli's is the place to buy!

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Look up their savings! Save on floor coverings! Buy in bulk and get the best price!



Marble Pattern Inlaid Linoleum ONLY

**1.15** Sq. Yd.

Resale 27c Sq. Yd.



#### A Graceful New LIVING ROOM SUITE

TWO SMART PIECES

Beautifully designed, very carefully made and finely tailored in strict accordance with the latest in design. You must see this rich looking, smart to appreciate its charm.

**\$97**



#### BEDROOM SUITE

Reflecting the Modern Motif in a Modern design with sturdy lines. All pieces in solid walnut. Bed, dresser, chest, vanity and bench, spring and mattress. All complete.

**124.75**

#### RUG SAVINGS

September is the month for floor covering economies



**15.50** Square Feet

Imagine buying a room size rug for as little as \$15.50! Yet this is just one of the marvelous values in our September rug sale.

Room Size and Small Rugs at Substantial Savings

PHONE 1280

## CRITELLI FURNITURE

400 QUEEN ST.

... Continued

was destroyed by fire.

This time the hotel was not replaced, since the modern General Brock had been erected a few years previously. Instead, the site of the Clifton House and its neighbor, the Lafayette, was purchased by Harry Oakes, the mining millionaire, then a resident of Niagara Falls, and turned over to the parks commission. The commission, in 1937, erected the Oakes Garden Theatre on the property, and so added vastly to the beauty of the River Road development. Altogether the land, the formal gardens and the open-air stage and amphitheatre cost around three quarters of a million dollars. It was worth it.

## THE GREAT STUNT ERA

Although Niagara Falls had become a world-famous resort in the days of Samuel Zimmerman and the Clifton House, it was not until after the turn of the century that the community as a whole began to take on dignity and substance. Outside the elegant boundaries of the exclusive Clifton House, the Falls, in its earlier incarnations, was a raffish, rowdy sort of bazaar, a carnival village devoted largely to circus stunts, slapstick shenanigans and the sometimes violent plundering of innocent travellers by the hardy natives.

The sober historians refer to this phase as "the stunt era." It is fairly widely known that the Great Blondin crossed Niagara Falls on a tightrope, that Captain Webb, the first man to swim the English Channel, was drowned attempting to swim the Niagara Whirlpool, and that numerous daring individuals have gone over the Falls in barrels, some successfully, others to die in their foolhardiness.

Of less common knowledge is the fact that for many years a permanent tightrope was anchored across the Gorge, alongside the Suspension Bridge, and local heroes of both sexes walked it twice a week throughout the summer, while gaping

crowds gazed upon the spectacle from both banks.

Modern Niagara Falls scorns such antics, and it seems probable that the last rope has been stretched across the Gorge and there'll be no more passenger-carrying barrels tossed into the river. The parks commission, the municipal authorities and most of the citizens want no more of that sort of stuff. The town has grown up and has put away childish things.

Today the City of Niagara Falls is administered under a modification of the city manager plan that does away with the necessity for employing a city manager. The mayor is elected annually, and supported by a council of seven aldermen. There are no wards. The system calls for the election of four aldermen-at-large one year and three the next. Election day is the first Monday in December and nominations close a week earlier.

## CIVIC GOVERNMENT

There is only one city council committee—on Finance, with a chairman appointed annually by the incoming council. Other city business is handled by commissions. Members of the Hydro Commission and the Board of Education are elected by the taxpayers; the housing Commission is appointed by the council, and representatives of the council sit on the Library Board and the Children's Aid Society. Accounts of these bodies are audited annually by city auditors.

Permanent appointed officials include a city clerk, city engineer and city treasurer. The city clerk is William S. Orr, who does double duty. Mr. Orr was first appointed city engineer in 1928. Ten years later he took over the additional office of city clerk. The city treasurer for some years has been Mr. W. Soulsby.

Some vital statistics, in easily digestible tablet form:

Population of the City of Niagara Falls,

18,928. Of the industrial area, including Stamford Township and Chippawa Village, approximately 28,000.

Assessment of Niagara Falls for 1938, \$18,256,746. Tax rate, thirty-six mills, a slight reduction this year.

The voters' list contains 9,651 names.

Police Department. Chief M.D. Tisdale and nineteen officers, including one motorcycle patrolman. The department operates two patrol cars and a police telegraph system, and is now planning to install short-wave radio.

Fire Department. Chief Jack Shapton, an assistant chief and twelve paid firemen. A volunteer fire company brings the total fire-fighting personnel to fifty men.

Area of Niagara Falls, 1,794 acres of land and 140 acres of water. There are thirty miles of paved streets, sixty miles of paved sidewalks.

Six public schools, one separate school, one high school. There is also the Niagara Falls College for Boys, Mount Carmel Seminary, and the Loretto Ladies' School.

A modern hospital, directed by a hospital board responsible to the city council.

More than twenty churches, representing every denomination.

Eight branch banks, representing five Canadian banking institutions.

The town has a hustling Chamber of Commerce drumming up new business in the shape of industries and conventions. D.L. Wilson, manager of the Niagara Falls branch of the Bank of Montreal, is the present president. The secretary is F. Carl Ward, a former salesman, who says he doesn't see much difference in the job of selling the obvious advantages of Niagara Falls to the universe than selling any other commodity to a more limited clientele.

There is one daily newspaper, *The Niagara Falls Evening Review*. The paper, first appearing in 1879, celebrated its diamond jubilee last November. The present publisher, Frank H. Leslie, bought the property when it was a weekly throw-

away in 1904. Under Mr. Leslie's management and the astute editorship of James Cowan, a shrewd and experienced Scottish journalist—you find those Scottish newspaper chaps all over the place—the enterprise has progressed steadily. In 1914 *The Review* first appeared as a daily, published in its own building on Park Street, a block away from City Hall. Today *The Review* has a circulation of around 8,000, holds membership in the Canadian Press, prints a number of metropolitan features and runs twelve pages every evening on modern machinery. It covers all the surrounding territory from Thorold to Fort Erie.

## "THE LINCOLN AND WELLAND"

On Victoria Avenue the armories of the Lincoln and Welland Regiment bears the date, 1911, but the regiment goes back to 1867, the year following the Fenian Raid. During the Great War the regiment sent many officers and men overseas, and recruited the 98th Battalion C.E.F. entirely. In front of the armories today stands a piece of artillery that has been pretty badly banged up, apparently by shrapnel. The gun is stamped with the names "Krupp" and "Essen." Mr. Hitler might like to know where it is.

For the most part the population of Niagara Falls is of British-Canadian ancestry or of British birth. After the war there was considerable British immigration, chiefly of skilled workers and professional men. An Imperial Veterans' organization of which Mayor J.L. Miller, M.C., formerly of the Royal Engineers, is president, has two hundred members – an unusually good showing for a city of that size. Colonel C.H. Vandersluys is Commander of the local unit of the Canadian Corps Association, and Lieutenant Jack Cross, R.A.F., heads the Canadian Legion branch. There are quite a few former fliers in the community. Chamber of Commerce Secretary Carl Ward

Continued ...





"The City Behind the Falls: A busy industrial scene with one of the world's wonders as a backdrop—there's more to Niagara than the Big Roar"

**BETWEEN 1904 AND 1938 CITY HALL'S APPEARANCE** remained the same. However, with the impending visit of their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, the city's governing body knew that a facelift was needed. City Engineer William S. Orr, after much deliberation and study, came up with the plan to add a classic portico to the structure. The refurbishment greatly enhanced city hall and made it a building that Niagara Falls was proud to show to the Royals. This photo from the spring of 1939 shows the structure in all of its new glory.

... Continued

was a wartime pilot and later flew Handley-Page planes between London and Paris on one of the first commercial air lines in the world.

From the days of Samuel Zimmerman, Niagara Falls citizens of means have been generous to their town. Harry Oakes was a notable benefactor, up to the time of his departure from Canada to settle in the West Indies. In addition to the site for the Garden theatre, the mining magnate presented the town with a sixteen-acre property for a municipal athletic field. Publisher Frank H. Leslie some time ago donated land on the west side for a swimming pool, completed in 1928 at a cost of \$30,000; and William and Charles Doran, brothers, now deceased,

gave a wading pool for the small non swimmers.

The local Lions Club provides equipment for the two pools and maintains them, conducting a learn-to-swim campaign each summer. There's plenty of play in Niagara Falls. The town boasts of four golf clubs within easy reach, a riding club, bowling club, badminton club and skating club. Niagara Falls teams play senior amateur hockey in the Ontario Hockey Association and senior baseball in the Ontario Baseball League. They do pretty well in that fast company, too.

In its peak depression year the city and province shared a back-breaking relief bill of between \$600,000 and \$700,000. The city

was forced to default on the principal of its debentures in 1934. There has been no default on interest payments at any time.

By 1937 economical city administration had made it possible to pay off the default of about \$700,000. New call debentures were issued to the amount of \$500,000, and last spring they were called and refunded at a saving to the city of one per cent on the interest rate. Niagara Falls debentures, quoted at 65 in 1935, sold this year at 112.

As a matter of fact, the past two years have been pretty optimistic for Niagara Falls, Ontario. There has even been money spent on civic improvements. The River Road widening was one such job. The construction of a new front on the old City Hall is another, and sort of funny, at that.

## IN HONOR OF THEIR MAJESTIES

Until last spring the City Hall of Niagara Falls did the town no credit. Originally built for a market, the square dark grey stone building displayed all the architectural beauty of an old-fashioned jail. Nor was its appearance helped any by the construction many years ago by some forgotten genius, of a fretted and frescoed wooden balcony above the main entrance. Not to put too fine a point on it, the place was a mess. And the King and Queen were coming in June to visit Niagara Falls.

Here was no simple problem. Civic funds could not afford a new City Hall, and it seemed pretty well impossible to do anything with the old one, except tear it down. City Engineer Orr burned midnight oil through most of the summer of 1938 thinking the thing through. He read books, looked at pictures, talked to architects, and finally came up with plans that transformed the ugly old structure into a passable reproduction of an authentic example of the early colonial. Four high steel columns, painted white, support a roofed portico, the whole presenting a dignified front in keeping with the weathered grey walls. The cost was around \$3,000, comparatively

considered a trifle.

Plans are under way, and may be completed before this is printed, to double the illumination of the Queen Street shopping district by installing new lamp standards and using more powerful bulbs. The Provincial Department of Highways is extending the Queen Elizabeth Way in a straight line through the city from west to east, linking Toronto and Hamilton directly with the new Rainbow Bridge. Children of the Glenview district are to get a new playground.

Things are looking up. The Canadian Carborundum and the Burgess Battery companies have built additions to their plants in the past few months.

Last August Niagara Falls gained official recognition from the Department of Transport as—if you please—a water port. That came about as a result of a keen bit of conniving on the part of the Chamber of Commerce and City Hall.

Obviously Niagara Falls is not, in the strict sense of the word, a port; but the regulations say that any industrial area within a given distance of a port may obtain the advantages of port ranking in the matter of freight rates, and those advantages are considerable. Carl Ward figured it out that Niagara Falls is only a fraction over seven miles from Thorold Docks on the Welland Canal, well within the required distance.

With the figures to support the argument, application was made to the Department of Transport for water port ranking. It was granted. The result will be savings of thousands of dollars annually in shipping costs for practically every major industry in the Niagara Falls area.

That's fast thinking. ■

**Editor's Note:** Edwards' assertion that the first Clifton House Hotel was built by Samuel Zimmerman is incorrect. It was actually constructed by Hermanus Cryslar and later owned by Zimmerman.



Photo by Herb Foster, Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

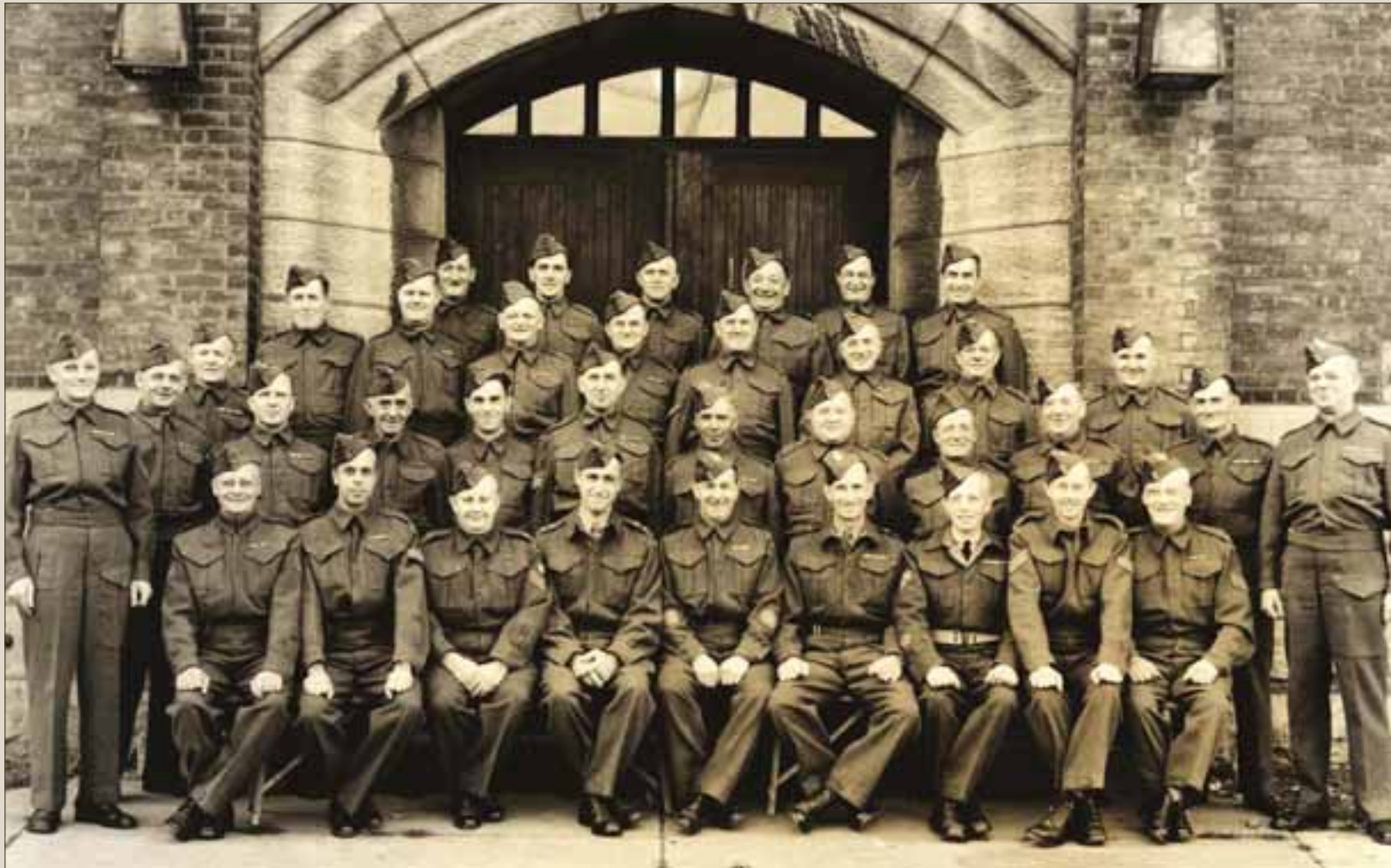
TABLE ROCK HOUSE AND THE SURROUNDING AREA AS IT APPEARED AROUND 1940.



Weekly Est. 1878 Daily Est. 1914 NIAGARA FALLS, CANADA SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1939 Page Three

# NIAGARA DISTRICT PREPARED TO PREVENT SABOTAGE

The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), September 2, 1939



Ron and Joan Brown

## 18 PLATOON, D COMPANY, SECOND BATTALION, LINCOLN AND WELLAND REGIMENT, AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE ARMOURY.

*During World War Two many in Niagara felt a strong sense of duty to enlist for the war effort. Many former soldiers of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces of the First World War wanted to enlist as well. Although some of these loyal citizens were turned away because of their age, by mid-way through the war regiments such as the Lincoln and Welland formed a second battalion. These battalions helped with recruiting and training, and freed younger soldiers within Canadian regiments to travel overseas.*





Maureen West



Maureen West

**FROM LEFT,**  
Phyllis Reid,  
April Campfield,  
Mildred Esseltine,  
Mrs. Fraser,  
June Blain,  
Elsie English.

**AT A TIME WHEN** all things military were fundamentally male in nature, the Second World War was a defining moment for women in the armed forces. Organized groups such as the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service, the Canadian Women's Army Corps, the Women's Division of the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, and the Women's Auxiliary Service Patrol gave Canadian women a means to show their patriotism and help to fight for the Allied effort. Here the local Women's Auxiliary Service Patrol participates in a parade along Victoria Avenue in 1941, and the officers of the patrol pose in 1942.



Inglis Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)



The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), June 23, 1934

**WITH THE COMING OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR,** Niagara pitched in to help with the Canadian war effort. Investing in the conflict was necessary to help the Allied cause, and thus victory bond and war bond drives were a part of everyday life.

## EDITORIAL

### CANADA IS AT WAR

By FRANK H. LESLIE

Britain is at war with Germany and that means even before Parliament meets that Canada is at war. There could have been an honorable peace, but Hitler did not wish it so. He preferred to try out that huge war machine upon which he has spent 90,000,000,000 marks in the last few years according to his own boast.

The British and French warned repeatedly that an invasion of Poland would mean war, but that was no deterrent, and he plunged Europe and possibly the world into a mechanized war that may unfortunately last a long time. He did it with a lie on his lips.

Britain goes into the struggle with determination, but with a clear conscience, and a clear record before the world. Canada follows. Britain could have stood back with the claim that it was none of her business. She felt, however, that it was her business, that some nation had to halt Hitler with his mad ambition to dominate Europe. He who dominates Europe may dominate the world.

A dominant Germany would soon make short work of Britain and the British Empire. Canadians would not like to learn the goose-step.

Canadian sentiment at this moment is not one of hatred of the German people. As individuals they have many fine qualities. But they have the responsibility of having laughed at and later accepted Hitler and his doctrines.

Some one had to oppose the Germans, and when Britain fights it never considers the war over until victory is won.

That will take time; it will take courage; it will take huge resources, but we can confidently say now that Germany with her doctrine of "might makes right" will be defeated.

Canada will do her part when she knows what that part is; further she will tolerate no subversive actions upon the part of her own citizens or strangers within her gates.

Canada, too, is at war!

The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), September 3, 1939

**INCREASE GUARDS ON CITY PLANTS**  
CITY Clerk W. B. Orr stated today that the guards on all the electric utilities have been increased since Britain declared war on Germany. Fully yesterday seventeen men, fully armed, are on constant guard of the premises. It may be considered necessary. Mr. Orr said, to place barbed wire fencing around the transmission plant at Chippawa. Further safeguard will be considered by the City Council at the meeting on Wednesday evening at seven-thirty o'clock.

**NIGHTINGALES START EARLY ON WAR WORK**  
The first bit of Red Cross work done since Britain declared war yesterday, was accomplished by the Florence Nightingales, a group of young women comprising the Red Cross Junior group. They collected 202 books for distribution among soldiers in the Welland Canal Defense force. The books were taken to the home of their honorary president, Mrs. A. J. Holman. Forage Road, and were sorted into a dozen piles. The collection included a number of popular magazines and other publications, which will be sent alternately to the various camps on the canal.

The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), September 4, 1939

**MANY LOCAL WOMEN VOLUNTEER FOR SERVICE**  
Mrs. A. J. Holman, Chairman of the Women's Division of the Red Cross, announced today that many women in this city have volunteered their services for any work which may be necessary. The Red Cross Society is holding a meeting at the Hotel General Brock on Friday. After the Dominion parliament has convened and Canada's position in the war is officially defined. Women begun volunteering for service when the crisis started and in the ensuing days the number of volunteers has increased tremendously. Their names are being recorded and work will be allocated when the plans are completed. Mrs. Holman said.

The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), September 4, 1939



Photo by Herb Foster, Sherman Zavitz

**WARTIME UNCERTAINTY** and its resulting passion fuelled many a romance between 1939 and 1945 in Niagara Falls. Here a soldier and his girl find comfort in a stolen embrace at Oakes Garden Theatre. Note The Niagara Parks Commission employee in the background cutting the grass with a push mower.





The Niagara Parks Commission

**THE SPIRELLA CORSET COMPANY** opened for business in Niagara Falls in 1908 in an impressive building at the corner of River Road and Bender Street. Using the patented Spirella metal stay in their popular foundation garments, this industry employed countless numbers of women. This view of the company's factory dates to about 1940.



Photo by Norman of Stamford Centre, Lundy's Lane Historical Museum



**THE WARDEN FARM** was located on Dorchester Road at the end of Dunn Street. Here, members of the family work to help improve the surrounding infrastructure around 1940. George Warden, road foreman for Stamford Township, is standing on the road presumably directing operations.




# LORETTO ACADEMY

NIAGARA FALLS, CANADA


This Institution of learning for resident and non-resident students, occupies a commanding site directly above the Horseshoe Falls, on the Canadian Side of the Niagara River, in view of the Canadian and American Falls—a position unrivalled in beauty and sublimity.

The curricula of studies followed are those prescribed by the Department of Education for the Province of Ontario. They provide for the requirements of University Matriculation and admission to Normal School. This standing is honored by Universities, Colleges and Normal Schools of Canada and the United States. The Commercial Course in Book-keeping, Stenography and Typewriting is open to High School students.



VIEW FROM VERANDA OF LORETTO ACADEMY



The Niagara Parks Commission

**THE SISTERS OF LORETTO** came to Niagara Falls in 1861, opening a school in a remodelled hotel that same year. That building was replaced by a beautiful stone structure built on the same site over two stages of construction: 1869 through 1870 and 1879 through 1880. The new convent and academy is pictured in the 1910 photo at right, which also shows some young ladies playing badminton. Renovations following a January 1938 fire resulted in the building taking on a somewhat different look. The above advertisement dates to about 1942 and shows the complex in its newly altered appearance.



Sherman Zavitz



Pat and Rosa Simon

**THE NIAGARA, ST. CATHARINES, AND TORONTO RAILWAY** (N.S. and T.) operated both local streetcars and intercity rail service throughout much of the Niagara Peninsula. This photo was taken circa 1940 in front of St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church at the intersection of Victoria Avenue and Queen Street.

**REDUCED STREET CAR FARES**  
EFFECTIVE SUNDAY, JUNE 10th

**NEW FARES**

CASH	10¢
TICKETS	4 for 25¢

CHILDREN UNCHANGED

The Franchise Agreement under which your street railway is operated is on the basis of "Service at Cost." For the past three years, due to so many regular patrons being unfortunately unemployed, riding has decreased to the extent that revenue does not begin to meet operating expenses.

Suggestions have been made from time to time that reduced fares would increase the riding habit and eliminate the use of competitive forms of transportation. In order to ascertain if this argument is correct the above reduced fares will be in effect for a three month period. If the experiment is not successful fares will revert to the present basis on August 31st.

On account of the reduced rate per ticket and the larger number of passengers who will purchase tickets as compared with Cash Fares under the new arrangement, it is estimated that 25 per cent. more passengers will be required to produce the same revenue as at present.

Your railway desires to continue to provide an efficient service to the travelling public. This can only be done if revenue is sufficient to meet operating expenses. On this basis we appeal to you to Ride Your Street Cars—Keep Men at Work.

HELP TO MAINTAIN GOOD SERVICE  
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PHONE 3438

**Niagara, St. Catharines & Toronto Railway**

The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), June 7, 1934

**Special Low Bus Fares  
For Thanksgiving Week-end**

From <b>Niagara Falls</b> ONT. return to	
<b>Hamilton</b>	<b>\$1.10</b>
<b>Guelph</b>	<b>\$1.85</b>
<b>Galt</b>	<b>\$1.85</b>
<b>Brantford</b>	<b>\$1.85</b>
<b>Kitchener</b>	<b>\$2.55</b>

Take advantage of these low fares for the last long week-end of the season. Tickets good going any time from Friday, October 6, to Tuesday, October 10, inclusive; returning up to last coach on October 10. Tickets sold at ticket offices only—not on coaches. For tickets and information consult J. Simons, phone 1110

**CANADA COACH LINES LIMITED**

The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), September 28, 1939



Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**THE UNION BUS TERMINAL NEAR OAKES GARDEN CIRCA 1942.**





Photo by Bud Barnett, courtesy Jack Stevenson

**THE BRIGHTS BASEBALL TEAM OF 1941, SENIOR ONTARIO BASEBALL ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONS.** Front row, left to right: L. Senese (mascot), F. Cochrane. Second row: W. Kalbfleisch (right field), S. Koslonski (infielder), J. Worrall (pitcher), T. Wilkinson (second base), A. Maisenhoss (third base), J. Stevenson (centre field), G. Morden (catcher). Back row: W. Whitehead (left field), S. Wodynski (shortstop), D. Senese (pitcher), P. Bova (coach), W.R. Sootheran (manager), H. Corrigan (outfielder), A. Terry (pitcher), P. Copie (pitcher), M. Kaminsky (captain and first base).



The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), September 14, 1939





Wastie Hoach

**THE DIAMOND JUBILEE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HOCKEY TEAM OF 1940, CHAMPIONS OF THE 1940-41 SEASON.** Front row, left to right: Bob Mowat, Donald Detlor, John Clement, Allen Dell, Wastie Hoach. Back row: Bill Freisman, Bob Burns, John Gracey, Bill Connell, Weldon Carr.

**A JUNIOR BOYS COSSA** playoff basketball game is in progress during the 1939-40 season between NFCVI (in the solid coloured jerseys) and SCVI (wearing the two-coloured jerseys). Tim Turner is the NFCVI player at left of the photo, standing behind Stamford's number six. In the middle group of young men, Ian Dalton is in the midst of turning around while Doug Mearns is right behind him, ready to grab the ball. Although regular games were held at the NFCVI gymnasium, playoffs took place at St. Patrick's School's facilities as there was more room for the spectators who flocked to these events.



Ian Dalton



Sherman Zavitz

THE WEBB BROS. SERVICE STATION AROUND 1940.



Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**A ROW OF WARTIME HOUSES** in the process of construction on Drummond Road in November 1940. During the early 1940s and immediately following the Second World War there was an intensive movement in Canada to make housing more affordable for the nation's citizens, especially those who had served in the conflict.

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The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), September 18, 1939



Photo by Gordon W. Powley, Archives of Ontario, 10002634



Photo by Gordon W. Powley, Archives of Ontario, 10002635



Photo by Gordon W. Powley, Archives of Ontario, 10002641

**NO ONE IN ONTARIO** can think of Niagara without also bringing to mind images of the greatest wine producing region in Canada. The thirties and forties were big years for the wineries here. Experimental vineyards were created to introduce new grapes and different cuttings to the area. The Reisling grape, one of these experimental varieties, went on to become one of the most popular types of wine in Canada. In 1941 Niagara Falls boasted three wineries: Brights (now Vincor), the Fred Marsh Winery Limited, and Canadian Wineries Limited, whose bottling and laboratory facilities are seen here that same year. Before 1941 came to an end, Canadian Wineries had changed their name to the more familiar Chateau-Gai Wines Limited





Charles Burland

HONEYMOON CABINS



Photo by Eddie Hodge. Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

MAPLE LEAF CABINS

**TOURIST CABINS SUCH AS THESE** were very popular in Niagara Falls in the 1930s and 40s. The Honeymoon Cabins, pictured here around 1940, were located where the present-day Travelodge sits on Clifton Hill. The Maple Leaf Cabins, seen in the lower view also circa 1940, were near the corner of Robinson and Buchanan (now Fallsview) Avenue.

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The Review (Niagara Falls, Ontario), June 5, 1934



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**LUNDY'S LANE TOURIST CAMP**, owned by George E. James, was located at the corner of Lundy's Lane and Montrose Road.  
*This photo shows the complex in May 1942.*



Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**THE NORTHERND OF THE NEW RAINBOW BRIDGE COMPLEX** as it appeared on May 28, 1942.  
*The Esso gas and service station at right served the area by the falls for many years.*



Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**VALLEY WAY**, looking east, from the site of the present Niagara Falls Review building on May 25, 1942.



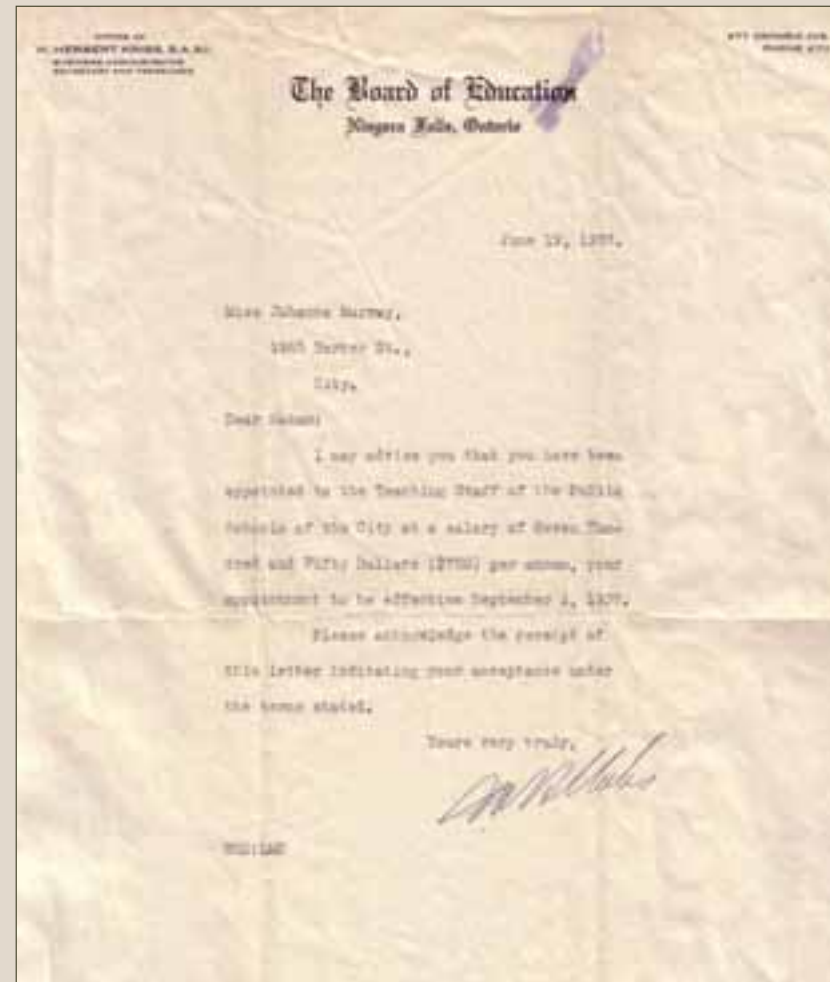
Charles Petrullo

**THE TRACK AND FIELD RIVALRY BETWEEN** *NFCVI and SCVI* was celebrated throughout all of Niagara Falls, each school vying for the Gamma Sigma Cup. Here, while running for the NFCVI team, Ernie Reinhart passes the baton to Charles Petrullo in the 400 metre (440 yard) relay race of the 1942 spring track competition held at Oakes Park. That year Stamford beat Niagara Falls by 121 points.



Francis J. Petrie Collection, Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**A FALLS VIEW SCHOOL BUS** travelling its route by the falls in October 1941.



Jim Mitchinson





Mary Hanna

**THE SPIRELLA WOMEN'S SOFTBALL TEAM OF 1943** poses for the camera after their winning season as city champions. Front row, left to right: Mary Dilay, unknown, Claire Warren, Mary Bartolomie, Claire Bolton, Isobel MacGillivray. Back row: Alec Damato (coach), Gladys Revill, Dolly Damato, Betty Hanlin, unknown, Marjorie Newton, Joyce Gibson, Jimmy Brooks (coach).

**THE PROVINCIAL ENGINEERING SOFTBALL TEAM OF 1943.** Front row, left to right: T. Vescio (second base), W. Beaupit Sr. (coach), Smitty (bat boy), J. Mallet (catcher), W. Beaupit Jr. (third base). Back row: B. Beamer, V. Rusk (left field), G. Spater (third base), G. Johnson (right field), E. McCrae (centre field), E. McCracken (left field), N. Eagen (pitcher), W. Smith (first base), F. Vasil (pitcher). Simcoe Street School can be seen in the background.



Tony Vescio



Christmas & New Year  
Wishes & love from  
us all to all at  
Blenheim from Mary -  
Clemmie

Niagara Falls Public Library (Ontario)

**ON AUGUST 12, 1943**, during the Second World War, Winston Churchill paid a brief visit to Niagara Falls before attending the Quebec Conference with President Roosevelt. He is pictured here with his daughter Mary above the Niagara Gorge near Thompson's Point. This picture was used as a Christmas greeting card sent by Churchill's wife, Clementine, to the residents of Blenheim Palace, ancestral home of the Marlboroughs and where Churchill had been born in 1878. The message reads: "At Niagara/Christmas and New Years Wishes and love from us all to all at Blenheim from Mary-Clemmie."