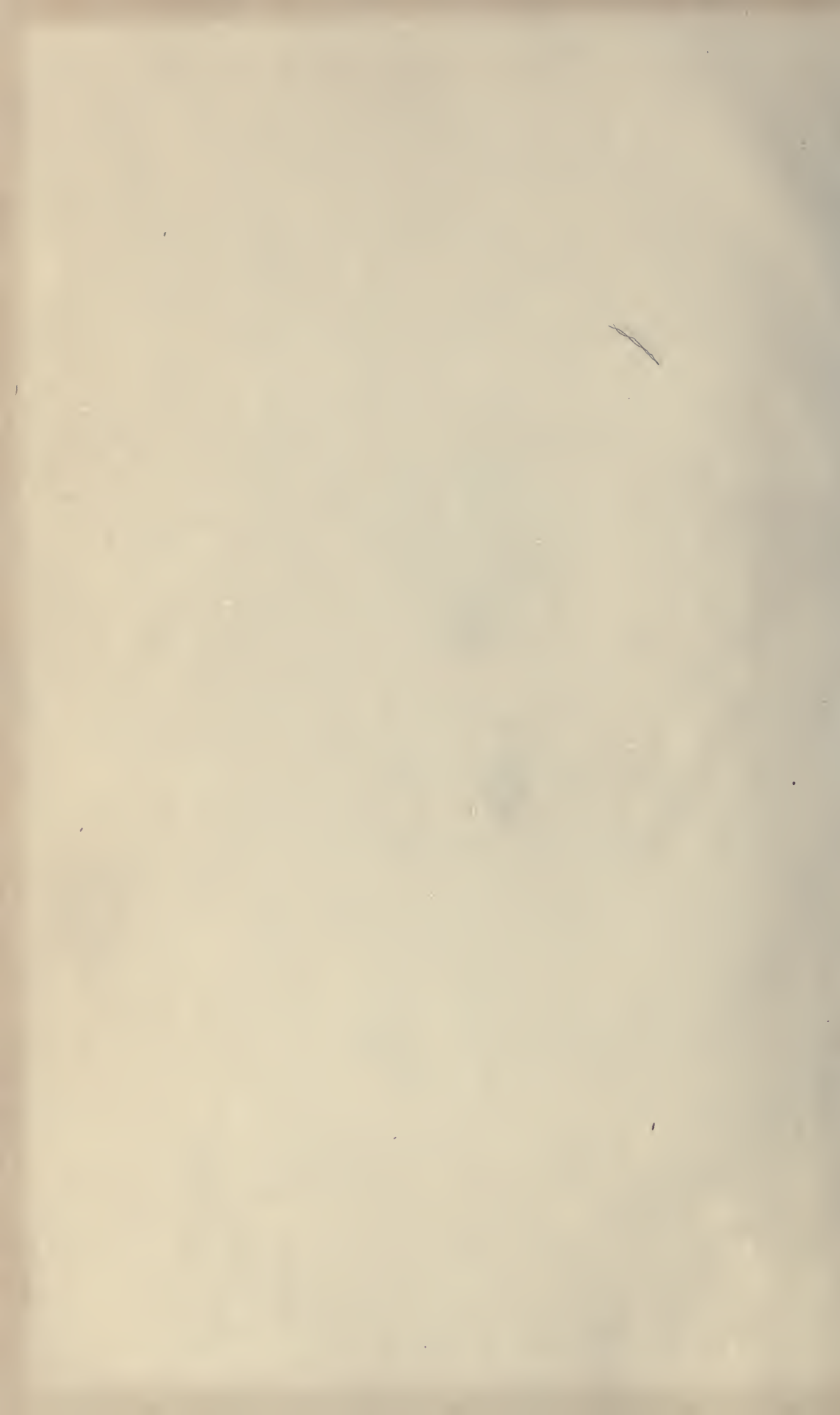
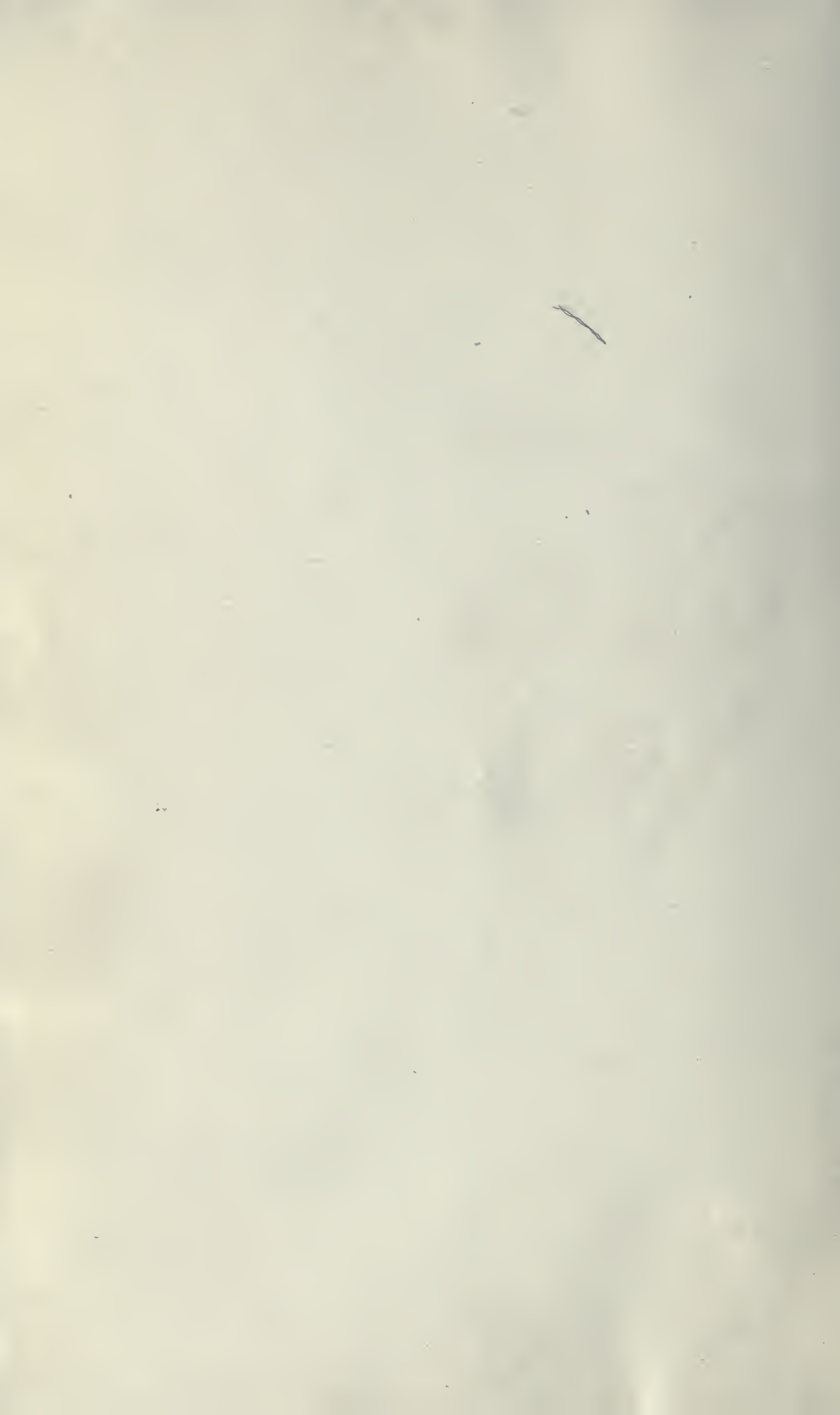




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OFFICIAL RECORD

of

THE NIAGARA FALLS MEMORIAL COMMISSION,
IN SUCCESSION TO THE WILLIAM B. RANKINE
MEMORIAL COMMISSION

Together with Biographical Sketches of Judge Augustus Porter,
General Peter B. Porter, Judge Samuel DeVeaux,
William B. Rankine, Hon. Arthur Schoellkopf,
Jacob F. Schoellkopf, Hon. Peter A.
Porter, Hon. Thomas V. Welch,
Hon. W. Caryl Ely, and
Col. Charles B. Gaskill.

Distinguished Citizens of Niagara Falls, the Memory of Whose
Outstanding Accomplishments is Being Perpetuated by
Monuments Erected in Front of the City Hall.

BY EDWARD T. WILLIAMS

Secretary of the Niagara Falls Memorial Commission,
in succession to the William B. Rankine Memorial Commission.

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19. 12. 34

PREFACE

Two facts stand out prominently in the lives and affairs of men, as respects their fellow men. One is that it seems to be necessary for a considerable period of years to elapse before their characters and works are fully appreciated, and the other is that it is usually many years after their death before their neighbors and friends pay appropriate tribute to their memories.

To a considerable extent this is true in the cases of the men whose memories are now being honored by the people of Niagara Falls and the State of New York by the erection of monuments bearing their names, in front of the Niagara Falls, New York, city hall.

Upon these monuments are to be placed the names of 10 men who, during a period of 122 years have resided in Niagara Falls and brought distinction to themselves, their city, their State and, in several instances, their country.

In three instances these men lived and wrought in Niagara Falls before the present generation came upon the scene. Judge Augustus Porter was the first and, in fact, he was the great grandfather and the great great grandfather of representatives of his family who are now leading factors in this community. He located here in 1805. Another instance was his brother, General Peter B. Porter, who, although closely associated with him from the first, resided at Black Rock, Buffalo, for many years and did not locate in Niagara Falls until he built the mansion on Falls street, later called the Prospect Park House, in 1840, he dying in 1844. The third was Judge Samuel DeVeaux, our first merchant and the founder of DeVeaux College.

Seven other men, making a total of 10, which the Niagara Falls Memorial Commission in Succession to The William B. Rankine Memorial Commission, created in 1924, has decided to especially honor, have lived here within the memory of all residents of Niagara Falls in the past 30 years, except Jacob F. Schoellkopf, who resided in Buffalo, but had great interests here since 1877 and died in 1899, less than 30 years ago. The remaining six men were William B. Rankine, Hon. Arthur Schoellkopf, Hon. Peter A. Porter, Hon. Thomas V. Welch, Hon. W. Caryl Ely and Colonel Charles B. Gaskill.

THE NIAGARA FALLS MEMORIAL COMMISSION,
IN SUCCESSION TO
THE WILLIAM B. RANKINE MEMORIAL COMMISSION.

Inception and Official Record of the Work of the Body of
Men who Raised the Money and Brought About the
Erection of Three Monuments to Commemorate
the Accomplishments of Distinguished
Niagara Falls Citizens.

The suggestion which resulted in the creation of this
commission was contained in the following letter written by
Hon. Frank A. Dudley to Mayor William Laughlin:

October 25, 1924.

Honorable William Laughlin,
Mayor, City of Niagara Falls,
Niagara Falls, N. Y.

My dear Mayor Laughlin:

Gratitude is one of those rare qualities in human character, which however well merited, seems slow of assertion, and I feel that those of us in Niagara Falls, whether we are new comers or have grown up with the city, and are enjoying the benefits resulting from our great power development, should take time to show a proper evidence of our appreciation of the efforts of those who contributed most to making Niagara Falls the Power City of the World.

I am referring particularly to William B. Rankine, through whose ability and untiring energy the first great electrical power development was made possible. Associated with Mr. Rankine in this great undertaking and who gave largely of their lives in planning and co-operating in making our power development were: Colonel Charles B. Gaskill, Honorable Thomas V. Welch and Honorable W. Caryl Ely.

There are others who were important factors in the development, particularly Alexander J. Porter and the members of his distinguished family.

Following the great development of the Niagara Falls Power Company, the Hydraulic Power & Manufacturing Company proceeded in its great work of power development under the guiding hand of the Honorable Arthur Schoellkopf and his capable engineer, Wallace C. Johnson.

No fitting recognition has ever been given by the city of Niagara Falls or the citizens of Niagara Falls to those gentlemen who have finished their life work and have left to us the enjoyment of the fruits of their labors.

It, therefore, seems to me that while we are erecting a new city building, in the space not occupied by the building, that we should erect a suitable monument to the memory of those who have contributed so largely to our scientific, transportation and commercial progress, and I respectfully suggest that you appoint a committee of representative citizens of Niagara Falls, with power, and with the consent of the city authorities, to prepare suitable plans for the erection of a monument which will perpetuate the memories of those to whom we must all feel indebted in some measure for the present greatness of our community.

I am satisfied that any expense involved in such undertaking will be readily and cheerfully met by the citizens of Niagara Falls.

I think that in the appointment of such a committee it would be quite in keeping if you would act as chairman.

With kindest personal regards, I am,

Very truly yours,

FRANK A. DUDLEY.

Mayor Laughlin presented this communication to the city council at its meeting on October 27, 1924, which body referred it to the committee of the whole, and a week later authorized the Mayor to appoint such a committee as was suggested by Mr. Dudley, and upon November 5 he did appoint the following committee:

Alexander J. Porter, Hon. Frank A. Dudley, Alanson C. Deuel and Edward T. Williams, with Mayor Laughlin a member ex-officio.

The committee had an informal meeting in the Mayor's office on Friday, November 9, 1924, but owing to the absence of Hon. Frank A. Dudley, one of its members, no business was done.

The committee met again at the Niagara Club at 12:30 o'clock on November 17, 1924, as the guests of Mr. Dudley at luncheon.

The gentlemen named were formally designated as the Memorial Commission and organization was perfected as follows:

Chairman and treasurer, Mayor William Laughlin; secretary, City Treasurer Edward T. Williams.

Finance committee, Alexander J. Porter and Frank A. Dudley.

Committee on design for the Rankine memorial, Frank A. Dudley, Alexander J. Porter and Alanson C. Deuel.

Committee on design for other memorials, Mayor William Laughlin and Edward T. Williams.

The Niagara Falls Trust Company was designated as the depository of funds of the commission.

On October 27, 1924, following the publication of the letter from Mr. Dudley to Mayor Laughlin suggesting the appointment of the memorial commission the Niagara Falls Gazette printed an editorial headed: "Honor their memories," reflecting the opinion of people generally upon the subject, which is herewith subjoined:

"With the city hall about completed and the work of grading the ground surrounding it under way, it has been suggested by a prominent citizen, the Hon. Frank A. Dudley, that we, as a community, perpetuate the memory of several of the city's greatest benefactors by erecting on these grounds some suitable memorial calling attention to the character of their achievements and their great importance to the community.

"The names of the illustrious departed to whom Mr. Dudley referred were William B. Rankine, Charles B. Gaskill, Thomas V. Welch and W. Caryl Ely, four men whose names are indissolubly linked with the progress and development of this region. Niagara's greatness to-day lies less in her natural scenic splendor, wonderful as it is, than it does in her marvelous hydro-electric development in which these men, above mentioned, were the early and faithful pioneers. To this distinguished quartet might also be added the name of Arthur Schoellkopf.

"Rankine, Gaskill, Ely and Welch were men of great vision and sublime faith. They struggled against great odds and almost insuperable obstacles in the promotion of that first conception of Niagara power. Only men of such indomitable will and stamina could have succeeded. The story of their efforts, their temporary failures, their perseverance and their final triumphs is the real romance of Niagara. The onward march of science has made their early dreams seem puny indeed in comparison with what has since been achieved in the great development here, but to them, nevertheless, goes all the honor for having blazed the trail and shown the way.

“There are thousands of people in Niagara Falls to-day who appreciate the work of these men and correctly appraise them as benefactors of the community. But it will not be many years before a new generation entirely will command the destinies of the city and the importance of these early efforts will be minimized by the lapse of time. Therefore, now is the time to see that their memories are perpetuated that posterity may know and understand the full significance of their services to the community.

“What form such a memorial should take should be given careful thought. Bronze tablets are well enough, but they lack the impressiveness of marble shafts and heroic monuments that symbolize deeds and achievements.

“The Gazette is much impressed with the suggestion. Nothing has been done to indicate the debt that Niagara Falls owes to William B. Rankine and to the others who labored with him. Our memory as a city seems altogether too short. Why would it not be a gracious thing for our Mayor to respond to this suggestion and name a commission to work out the details of a proper recognition of these benefactors?

“Perhaps a fund might be subscribed for the purpose. Mr. Dudley is ready to head such a list with a liberal sum. Or perhaps the city itself might see its way clear to pay this homage to illustrious citizens. The idea surely is worthy of attention.”

At the organization meeting of the commission Secretary Williams was authorized to prepare and have printed a prospectus regarding William B. Rankine and the plans of the commission for honoring him and other deceased distinguished citizens having to do with the marvelous upbuilding of the city of Niagara Falls. Also he was authorized to and did prepare a special letter, to be signed by all the members of the commission, copies of which were mailed to over 250 prominent business men and other men of affairs in New York, Buffalo, and Toronto, as well as some in this city, all of whom were directly or indirectly associated with Mr. Rankine in his big business affairs or socially during his lifetime. Later more than 1000 letters were mailed to citizens of all classes in Niagara Falls and vicinity inviting them to participate in the memorial movement by voluntary subscriptions to the fund.

The result of the first appeal was that some of the wealthiest and most prominent men in the State, in Canada and in the whole country, in fact, sent substantial subscriptions. The total amount estimated to be necessary to carry the plans into effect was \$25,000.

Of course, several meetings of the commission were held and much work was done until the pledging of the fund was completed, although the subscriptions came in liberally and with reasonable promptness.

Under date of June 26, 1925, the commission presented an interim report to the city council, which after dealing with its inception and the preliminary steps taken and the work done, summarized the plans and the situation as follows:

“(1) That the plan and program as indicated in Mr. Dudley’s letter providing for a memorial to William B. Rankine, the leading spirit in the development of the Niagara Falls Power Company, the great electrical development of Niagara Falls, be established.

“(2) That a similar memorial be established in memory of Honorable Arthur Schoellkopf, and his family, the leading spirit in the great hydraulic and electrical development formerly carried on under the name of the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power & Manufacturing Company.

“(3) That an additional memorial be established in memory of the founders of Niagara Falls and those who through recognized deeds of accomplishment have contributed to the material civic and cultural greatness of Niagara Falls.

“(4) That these monuments be erected on the plot of ground now occupied by the new municipal building and be in harmony with the architectural beauty thereof.

“(5) Your committee has consulted prominent sculptors and recommends that these monuments be similar in size and form, and consist of granite shafts on a granite base, monument number one (1) to be surmounted by the bronze bust of William B. Rankine, with a bronze tablet descriptive of the great electrical power development of Niagara Falls; that monument number two (2) be surmounted by the bronze bust of Arthur Schoellkopf, with a suitable description of the great hydraulic and electrical power development accomplished through Mr. Schoellkopf and his company; that monument number three (3) be surmounted by a bronze figure, following the conception of Mr. J. W. Fraser, sculptor—this monument to bear the names of the founders of Niagara Falls and those who by acts of accomplishment have contributed to the welfare and greatness of our city.

“(6) That the total expense of these monuments, according to estimates, will not exceed the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars.

“(7) That the recognition by the living of those who have accomplished worthy deeds for the benefit of mankind is an incentive to greater accomplishments by present and future generations, and it seems to your committee that the

city of Niagara Falls and its citizens and those residing outside who have benefited through the great hydraulic and electrical power development at Niagara Falls, will be willing, unitedly, to recognize in a fitting manner the accomplishments of those who have contributed so much towards our present prosperity and welfare.

“(8) That voluntary subscriptions aggregating in excess of seven thousand dollars (\$7,000.00) in carrying out the undertakings of your committee have already been received, and with co-operation the complete amount of subscriptions should be available in the near future.

“That this interim report is presented so that the city council and the citizens of Niagara Falls and others interested may be advised of the progress made by your committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Niagara Falls Memorial Commission, in succession to
The William B. Rankine Memorial Commission.

William Laughlin, Mayor.

Alexander J. Porter.

Alanson C. Deuel.

Edward T. Williams.

Frank A. Dudley.”

On August 24, 1925, the contract for the designing and erecting of the monuments was awarded by the Niagara Falls Memorial Commission, in succession to The William B. Rankine Memorial Commission, to J. W. Fraser of New York City, recognized as one of the leading sculptors in the world. The contract provides for the erection of a center shaft of granite, surmounted by a bronze figure depicting an idealized conception of power development and with tablets on the center of the shaft bearing the names of men who have been outstanding in this city's history for the enduring works they have achieved here of great benefit to Niagara Falls. The contract further provides for this shaft to be flanked on either side by a granite shaft, one of the latter to be surmounted by a bronze bust of William Birch Rankine, deceased, known as the “Father of Niagara Power,” and the other shaft to be surmounted by a bronze bust of Arthur Schoellkopf, deceased, former president of the Hydraulic Power Company, who was one of the foremost figures in the building up of the great power development industry here.

Upon the day of the signing of the contract for the monuments the commission announced that the subscriptions had reached \$23,440.25.

It was about this time, August, 1925, when it was apparent that the memorial project would succeed, that the Niagara Falls Gazette, under the heading: "Their Works Live After Them," published the following commendatory editorial:

"With the necessary funds virtually in hand, the memorial project being furthered by the Niagara Falls Memorial Commission, in succession to The William B. Rankine Memorial Commission to perpetuate the memory and deeds of several of the city's most prominent industrial pioneers, is assured of success. The commission is to be commended upon its decision to carry the plans through upon a thoroughly adequate scale. The three memorial shafts and busts to be erected are to be of the finest material and workmanship, something of which the city will be proud and which will be no disparagement to the records of those whose works the commission seeks to memorialize.

"This is the first time in the city's history that any concerted effort has been made to pay lasting tribute to the memory of illustrious citizens who have passed on. The idea is a good one and should be continued. Monuments of this character not only do homage to deserving citizens but they tend to create in the minds of the living an ambition to emulate their deeds and prove worthy of the gratitude of posterity.

"The monuments to be erected on the city hall grounds are in recognition of the services and achievements of those men in the field of hydro and electric power development. They were pioneers in the work and their triumphs have built a city and guaranteed its future. Perhaps there are others whose memories should be honored for their efforts in other directions.

"Now that the idea has taken hold the citizens, as a whole, may be expected to carry it on so that the worthy efforts of true benefactors may not be unrequited."

The contract for the monuments as awarded to Mr. Fraser was \$22,500.

The commission announced in due time that the subscriptions for the monuments would close September 1, 1925, and thereafter Mr. Fraser proceeded with his work in fashioning the monuments.

On November 19, 1925, Mr. Fraser came to Niagara Falls with a preliminary sketch of three pieces which were to compose the memorial group. From his first sketch the

artist shaped three miniature models at his New York studio. Photographs of these were enlarged to the proposed actual size and the enlargements mounted on wood. The photographs were then placed in position before the main entrance to the city hall, to crystallize Mr. Fraser's ideas of what changes were necessary to make the statues harmonize perfectly with the lines of the building, and to enable him to mould the finished products exactly to scale. The members of the commission inspected them with Mr. Fraser. After his observations here, the artist stated that the bronze portrait busts mounted on the granite shafts would have to be considerably over life size. He also said that the most appropriate granite would be a dark reddish brown, with a warmth of color that will strike a pleasing note with the bronze mountings and harmonize with the gray of the building itself.

The most artistic grouping, according to Mr. Fraser, was to place the large central motif depicting the invention of the primitive water wheel directly in front of the main steps of the building, with the bronze busts of William B. Rankine and Arthur Schoellkopf, also mounted on their granite shafts on either side of the main entrance.

J. W. Fraser, who made these monuments, is the designer of some of the most famous monuments in the United States. It was he that shaped the Alexander Hamilton Memorial now mounted in front of the U. S. Treasury building, which was unveiled by President Harding with elaborate ceremonies. Other examples of his art are the statues of Thomas Jefferson in Jefferson City, Mo., and of Bishop Potter in St. John the Divine's Church, New York City. Mr. Fraser's statue, "The End of the Trail," showing an Indian and pony in which their exhaustion is startling with life-like reality, was awarded the gold medal at the World's Fair in San Francisco in 1915. It was he who designed the Buffalo nickel, among other coins. He also designed the memorial monument of John Ericsson, inventor of the screw propeller and the famous "Monitor," which was unveiled in 1926 near the Lincoln memorial in the Mall, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Fraser is president of the National Sculptor Society, and for the last six years has been sculptor member of the National Commission on Fine Arts. His opinion, then, bears weight of authority when he pronounced the city hall building

here one of the most beautiful buildings of its type in the United States.

Following Mr. Fraser's visit here at the time mentioned above, the commission met and formally adopted, under its rule of unanimous secret voting, the names that are to go on the bronze tablets, in addition to William B. Rankine, Arthur Schoellkopf and Jacob F. Schoellkopf, which are to go on their respective monuments, as follows: Judge Augustus Porter, Gen. Peter B. Porter, Judge Samuel DeVeaux, Hon. Thomas V. Welch, Col. Charles B. Gaskill and Hon. W. Caryl Ely. After the death of Hon. Peter A. Porter the following month, the commission formally designated his name as one to go on the bronze tablet. Subsequently, with the approval of Paul A. Schoellkopf, president of the Niagara Falls Power Company, the commission decided to place upon the monument to Arthur Schoellkopf the names of Wallace C. Johnson and John L. Harper, who, during their life time were engineers of the Hydraulic Power Company and given great credit for superior engineering skill and accomplishment.

At one of the meetings of the commission, the following resolution relating to the manner of selecting names to go on the tablets was adopted:

“Resolved:—That in respect to the selection of persons whose names shall be engraved on the memorial tablets erected by the Niagara Falls Memorial Commission in succession to The William B. Rankine Memorial Commission, all such selections shall be made in executive session, the proceedings in relation to which shall be secret.

“That the purposes of the commission are to perpetuate the deeds and accomplishments of those residents of Niagara Falls who have died and who have, by their accomplishments, life work, character and self-sacrifice contributed in a substantial way to the material, moral or spiritual welfare of the city of Niagara Falls and its inhabitants.

“That to entitle the name of such a person to be engraved upon such monument, such name must be nominated by a member of the commission, must be seconded by another member of the commission and must receive the unanimous vote of all the members of the commission.

“That the method of voting shall be secret, but in such manner as shall be determined upon by a majority of the members of the commission. Any person nominated, failing to receive the unanimous vote of the commission, shall not again be nominated for a period of five years thereafter.”



JUDGE AUGUSTUS PORTER

We will look ahead a few years for a perspective before we begin this sketch chronologically. Judge Augustus Porter was virtually the first white settler of what is now the city of Niagara Falls, called Manchester up to 1840. He was a pathfinder and pioneer in the promotion of the development of the power of the Niagara river and in those things which have made this city great. He was an engineer, a lawyer and a business man, as well as a statesman. He built the first mills to use Niagara power. He promoted the then great project of the construction of the hydraulic canal. He, as a civil engineer, surveyed some of the roads through the wilderness that lead to the present city. He was a pioneer of great lakes transportation. In official life he was the first county judge of Niagara county as it was first erected, and including Erie county, in 1808. He was the first postmaster of what later became the village of Niagara Falls. With his brother,

Gen. Peter B. Porter, his name is writ large in the public and business affairs of Western New York, and beyond.

The genealogy of the Porter family traces back to sterling English origin, and representatives of the name settled in New England in the early colonial era of our national history. Judge Augustus Porter was born at Salisbury, Conn., in January, 1769, and the family home was established at Canandaigua, N. Y., in the year 1800. Judge Porter first came to Niagara county in 1795, and incidentally he learned of the now historic ridge leading from the Niagara river, at Lewiston, eastward to Rochester, the Indians having given him the information, which led him to exploit the tracing of a road along the ridge, in 1789. After visiting the Niagara Falls district in 1795, he returned to his home, but in the following year came again to Western New York, as head of a party of surveyors commissioned to lay out townships in this sparsely settled part of the state. He was a skilled surveyor and did a large amount of important surveying work in the early period of the history of Western New York.

The first wife of Judge Porter bore the maiden name of Lavina Steele, the one son, Augustus, born of this union, dying in infancy. After the death of his first wife, he wedded Jane Howell, and they became the parents of three sons and two daughters: Albert H., Peter B., Jr., Augustus S., Lavina and Jane S.

Concerning Judge Porter's activities and services to the community, the following statement was made in a newspaper, in recent years:

"When Augustus Porter located in Niagara Falls, then called Manchester, the place was nearly a wilderness, there being only a few decayed log cabins and a dilapidated barracks at Fort Schlosser. Judge Porter encouraged others to locate here and assist in building up the community in a business way. After the destruction of his first house, he erected the substantial building which is still standing and still occupied by members of the Porter family. For more than a century this house has been a center of gracious hospitality, and under its friendly roof many prominent men and women, from all over the nation, as well as many from foreign lands, have been entertained."

In May of 1789, Augustus Porter set out from Schenectady as one of a party of surveyors from western Massachu-

setts and Connecticut to locate some lands which had been bought by a group of neighbors, of which his father was one.

Similar programs, varied only in methods of travel, occupied several succeeding years. One of these journeys was made in winter on foot. On his second trip West he overtook young James Wadsworth stranded on Wood Creek on his way to settle on lands in Genesee and therewith began a friendship lasting through life.

In 1794 he participated in the last council with the Indians of the Iroquois Confederacy, which meeting is still commemorated by a stone and tablet in Canandaigua. It was then that he first met Andrew Ellicott, who was United States Surveyor General, and by whom he was engaged as an assistant in running the line from Pennsylvania to Lake Ontario. Subsequently he made the acquaintance of Oliver Phelps and was selected by him for important surveys on the lands west of Seneca Lake and this, in turn, led to engagements by Robert Morris on extensive surveys on his large holdings leading, again, to like work on the lands of the Holland Purchase. During these times, too, he made purchase himself, including the buying of an interest in a tract of 20,000 acres where now is located the city of Rochester and, in 1795, purchased a tract six miles northeast of Avon and one-half mile west of Honeoye Falls.

In 1795 he was joined by a younger brother, Peter B. Porter, who then settled in Canandaigua as a lawyer and began a career of national brilliancy and of the closest of associations with that of his older brother. In this year, too, Augustus Porter arrived in Niagara Falls in company with a party of surveyors and assistants to explore and lay out townships in the Western Reserve. From Chippawa Creek he took passage, in company with his friend, Judah Colt, for Presque Isle (now Erie) on a British vessel, for still the British were holding Oswego, Niagara, Detroit and Mackinac. At Buffalo the only then residents were: Johnson, a British Indian interpreter; Winnie, an Indian trader, and two other families. In all the Western Reserve not a family resided.

In 1796 he was employed by the Connecticut Land Company as chief surveyor, with a corps of 50 assistants, to make a traverse of the southern shore of Lake Erie. This

tract was estimated to contain more than 3,500,000 acres. He laid out the city of Cleveland, which he named after General Moses Cleaveland, who was the Connecticut Land Company's managing agent.

In 1797 there was built at the mouth of Genesee river the first vessel of U. S. registry on the Great Lakes. This was the schooner *Jemima* by Eli Granger and in which Augustus Porter was a part owner. In the succeeding year this vessel became the property of Augustus Porter and his brother, Peter B. They afterwards owned a fleet of vessels. In 1802 he obtained the contract for carrying the mails from Utica to Fort Niagara and, during the same year, was elected to the New York Legislature in place of his brother, Peter B., who had withdrawn in his favor. In 1803 Judge Porter and his associates leased from the State the Portage Road and that year he built the first saw mill on the river shore. In 1807 the firm of Porter, Barton & Co. was formed to do a general forwarding business from Oswego, via the Portage, to Mackinaw, Chicago and Fort Wayne. In 1808 he built the original of the present Porter residence on Buffalo avenue, which was burned by the British during the War of 1812, and the present house was built in 1818. In 1826 he, with his son, A. H. Porter, built a paper mill at Bath, now Green Island. In 1816 Judge Porter and Gen. Porter acquired Goat Island from the State and it remained the property of the Porter family until 1885 when the State took it as a part of the Niagara Reservation.

Judge Porter died in 1849, aged four score years.



MAJOR GENERAL PETER BUELL PORTER

Major General Peter Buell Porter was the only man who ever resided in Niagara Falls who was a member of the cabinet of a President of the United States, and General Porter was also a national character in military affairs, as well as in public life in general, and as a lawyer and business man he bulked large far beyond the confines of the Niagara Frontier. He and his brother, Judge Augustus Porter, were the first and principal factors in the settlement and development of the Niagara Frontier during the first half of the 19th century.

Shortly before his death in December, 1925, Hon. Peter A. Porter, his grandson, wrote the following brief sketch of General Porter which was found among his papers after his death:

“A Representative from New York.

“Born in Salisbury, Conn., August 4, 1773; was graduated from Yale College in 1791; was admitted to the bar and began practice in Canandaigua, N. Y.; in 1793 held various local offices; Member of New York Assembly in 1802; moved to Black Rock, Buffalo, N. Y., in 1809; elected as a Democrat to the Eleventh and Twelfth Congresses, March 4, 1809, to March 3, 1813; declined re-nomination to the Thirtieth Congress in order to serve with his constituents in the War of 1812. He was a close personal friend of Henry Clay who appointed him chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Relations, and as such General Porter reported the resolution for the Declaration of the War of 1812. Served in the War of 1812 as Major General of New York Volunteers, 1812 to 1815; was offered the command of the United States Northern Army for 1815, but the Treaty of Ghent put an end to hostilities. Next to Clay, he was the most prominent of the “War Hawks” leading the supporters of that war in the North, as Grundy led them in the South (the gentlemen from Genesee and Tennessee, as John Randolph used to refer to them).

“In 1810 he was named as one of the committee in New York State to decide as to an inland canal from the Hudson to Lake Erie, as against the earlier plan of a Federal ship canal around the Falls of Niagara, of which General Porter had been an earnest advocate. His appointment on that committee was opposed on the ground that being one of the lessees of the Niagara Portage, he would naturally be strongly opposed to any inland canal, which would destroy that portage business. In spite of that opposition, he was named on that committee, and, satisfied that an inland canal would be for the ultimate best interests of the State, he voted in favor of it, regardless of the fact that his firm’s portage business would be killed by the shorter route.

“General Porter was presented with a gold medal under a joint resolution of Congress, of date November 4, 1814, for gallantry in the conflicts of Chippawa, Niagara, Lundy’s Lane and Fort Erie in Upper Canada, and a gold-handled sword by the State of New York, for the same services. He was re-elected to the Fourteenth Congress, and served from March 4, 1815, to January 23, 1816, resigning in order to accept appointment as the United States Commissioner under the Treaty of Ghent to locate our northern border. He was Secretary of State of New York in 1815.

“He was appointed by President John Quincy Adams as Secretary of War, serving from June 21, 1828, to March 9, 1829.

"In 1830, or thereabouts, he was again elected to the New York Assembly for the purpose of adjusting difficulties that had arisen between the Holland Land Company and its grantees.

"In 1836 he removed to Niagara Falls, and died there on March 20, 1844."

Within the limits of this space it is not possible to relate all of the incidents of much interest in the busy life of General Porter whose activities were national in character and importance. With his associates he initiated and carried on the early commerce of the Niagara Frontier and of Lake Erie, at least. He held other public positions besides those mentioned by his grandson above, including that of county clerk of Ontario county. He travelled through the State and helped Governor DeWitt Clinton, its father, select the route for the Erie canal. In 1814 he was made a brigadier general of volunteers by Governor Daniel D. Tompkins of New York, and was brevetted a major general after the battle of Lundy's Lane which was fought July 25, 1814. In 1815, President James Madison appointed him a major general in the United States army.

Beginning in 1816, together with his brother, Judge Augustus Porter, he owned Goat Island and much of the land immediately adjoining the rapids and falls of the Niagara river, which territory is now included in the city of Niagara Falls, and was purchased when the State of New York established the Niagara Reservation in 1885. They also owned land near the Niagara river in the Black Rock section of Buffalo at the American end of the international bridge. Fort Porter at that point, which was recently removed to make way for the entrance to the new Buffalo-Fort Erie bridge, was named after General Porter.

Late in life, General Porter married Mrs. Letitia Grayson, daughter of former Attorney-General Breckenridge of Kentucky. She died at Black Rock in 1831, aged 41 years. They had one son, Peter A. Porter, who became distinguished, being the commander of the Eighth New York Heavy Artillery which went from this section to the Civil War, and Colonel Porter was killed at the battle of Cold Harbor June 3, 1864. General and Mrs. Porter also had one daughter, Elizabeth Porter.

As before stated, General Porter was a member of the International Boundary Commission which in 1819 established the present boundary between the United States and Canada, which, at this point, is located 200 feet out from Goat Island which the Porter Brothers and their descendants owned from 1816 to 1885.



JUDGE SAMUEL DE VEAUX

Judge Samuel DeVeaux had no descendants and it seems that he belongs to the very remote past, as few now living have any recollection of him whatever. And yet Judge DeVeaux was a very large factor during the first half of the 19th century in Niagara Falls and along the Niagara Frontier. He established and endowed an important educational institution here and left it as an enduring monument to his memory. He is credited with being the first merchant in Niagara Falls, and a very successful one, building up what in those days was a very considerable fortune which he put to the very creditable use noted above.

Samuel DeVeaux's ancestry and his own life were decidedly romantic. The roots of that ancestry were in the soil of the old world several centuries back. Not much appears to have been written about himself and his contemporaries within the lifetime of this generation or the one next

preceding it. He was gathered to his fathers in 1852, 75 years before this sketch was written.

He was called "Judge" DeVeaux, and the basis for that title is the rather fragmentary statement that "in 1823 he was appointed a justice at Niagara Falls, which position he held for several years," but by whom appointed is not stated. This is more than a century ago and only eight years after the close of the war of 1812. There is also a tradition that Judge DeVeaux was a Justice of Sessions, or "Side Judge," for Niagara county. Some 40 years ago and many years previous to that, it was the practice to elect two "side judges" in Niagara county to sit with the County Judge in the trial of cases.

In a work entitled "Genealogy of the DeVeaux family, introducing the numerous forms of spelling the name by various branches and generations in the past eleven hundred years," by Thos. F. Devoe, member of the New York Historical Society, etc., etc., published in 1885, now the property of DeVeaux School, which Rev. Dr. William S. Barrows, the Headmaster, has placed at the disposal of the writer, some apparently well authenticated facts are gleaned about Judge DeVeaux. That this genealogy stretches backward over a period of 11 centuries confirms the statement at the beginning of this sketch. From it we learn that during more than a thousand years there were many distinguished members of the DeVeaux family.

According to Rev. Dr. Gregory, Judge DeVeaux was born "in the city of New York, the 12th of May, 1789, where he spent his childhood and youth up to the age of 14 years, when he left the city, and in 1893," he entered the land office of Gorham & Phelps at Canandaigua, and there probably pursued the study of law. In 1807 he was appointed commissary at Fort Niagara. In 1813, during an armistice in the war then raging, he was married to Maria Woodruff, a Canadian lady, and went to LeRoy, where he remained two years. His wife dying in 1815, he returned to Youngstown, and two years later, in 1817, he was united in marriage to Mrs. Sarah McColloch, sister to his former wife, and came to reside in Niagara Falls, where he successfully engaged in trade.

His store is understood to have been located on Main street, near Falls street, and a part of his residence is still standing, at the corner of Main and Niagara streets, many years ago also the residence of Francis R. Delano, the banker. It is recorded in another historical work that in 1819 Judge DeVeaux was appointed a school commissioner here. His church record is that "he was confirmed in the covenant of his baptism, together with his wife, in Trinity Church, New York City, by Bishop Hobart, in the year 1829. He was the first churchman in Niagara Falls. The first Sunday school was organized by him. He was the founder and the first warden of the parish of St. Peter's Church in that village."

Aside from being a justice, Samuel DeVeaux's connection with public affairs consisted in being elected a Member of Assembly from Niagara county, which office he held in 1830.

Judge DeVeaux's investments in real estate, especially at Niagara Falls, became very valuable, and, with his extensive business here, made him a wealthy man. The DeVeaux genealogical work quotes the press, name of newspaper not mentioned, as announcing on August 4, 1852, that:

"Judge DeVeaux, of Niagara county, and the richest man in that section, died at the Falls of cholera morbus yesterday. He was 63 years old."

Then further from the genealogy:

"According to the provisions of his will, he bequeathed for the erection of a large college edifice personal property to the amount of \$154,432 and real estate valued at \$36,213, besides 330 acres of inalienable land. The building was erected in 1855-6. It is built of stone, has two stories and an attic above the ground, story, and a front of 100 feet with a depth of 54 feet. The members of the school are supplied by the institution with food, clothing and books. The president of the college must always be a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and the institute itself under the control of the Diocese of Western New York. Members of the school are appointed by the board of trustees, the children of parents belonging to the Protestant Episcopal Church having the preference. When once received, the children are under the sole charge of the trustees until they attain their majority.

"The building was finished and formally opened for the reception of pupils on the 20th of May, 1857, under the name of 'DeVeaux College.' Bishop deLancey in an address said:

'The founder of this institution is the late Samuel DeVeaux, who, having acquired great wealth in mercantile business at Niagara Falls, has erected a lasting monument of Christian benevolence.'

"Having no children, by his will he directs his executors to pay the widow, Charlotte, of his nephew, William DeVeaux, the sum of 500 dollars. To his niece, Susan D. Flagg, of New Orleans, the sum of 500 dollars for 20 years. To his niece, Maria D. C. Haynes, 10 shares of Niagara Falls International Bridge; also a lot of land in the town of Niagara of 40 feet front by 100 feet deep. And to his nephew, Samuel D. Williams, a lot of land in the town of Niagara; the wife and children not to be disturbed in the occupation of the premises, and to pay the said Williams 1000 dollars."

He also directed the school or college building to be built on lots 33 and 34 of the "Mile Reserve" in the town, with the farm and domain, also the Mount Eagle property. Then he added: "It is my desire that the sum of 25 cents shall be continued to be collected from all persons who first visit the whirlpool grounds for amusement or curiosity, and that the same be used for the benefit of said institution."

Besides the very substantial legacy which Judge DeVeaux left to the cause of education, he also contributed to the literature of this famous region, particularly his "Falls of Niagara or Tourists' Guide to the Wonders of Nature, including notices of the Whirlpool, Islands, Etc., and a complete guide thro the Canadas, embellished with engravings," published in 1839.



WILLIAM BIRCH RANKINE

With the chartering by the New York Legislature of "The Niagara River Hydraulic Tunnel, Power and Sewer Company of Niagara Falls, New York," the predecessor of the Niagara Falls Power Company, proprietor now of the world's greatest hydro-electric power plant, and the presentation of the plan of Thomas Evershed, engineer, eminent in the State because of his genius and high class, there appeared upon the horizon the man whose name will be forever attached to the "Power City of the World," William Birch Rankine, pioneer of hydro-electric power development, the use of electric as distinguished from hydraulic power.

Mr. Rankine went to Francis Lynde Stetson, the great corporation lawyer; J. Pierpont Morgan, premier of bankers, and other leading financiers in New York and secured the capital to build the plant of the Niagara Falls Power Company.

The ordinary details of the extraordinary life of Mr. Rankine have been many times told, and when he died at only 47 years of age many of the leading newspapers and technical periodicals of the State and country did the telling, and paid tributes to his splendid character and exceptional ability.

William Birch Rankine was born in Owego, Tioga county, N. Y., January 4, 1858. His early education was received at the Canandaigua Academy and later at Hobart and Union Colleges, graduating from Union in the class of 1877, with the degree of A. B., and later receiving the degree of A. M. from both colleges. His father, Rev. James Rankine, D. D., LL.D., of Geneva, N. Y., was prominent during his life, in educational work, having been a professor at Trinity College, a trustee of Union and Hobart Colleges, president of Hobart College, and the rector of the deLancey Divinity School, of Geneva, N. Y.

Admitted to the bar in 1880, William B. Rankine was engaged in the general practice of the law of New York City until 1890, since when he devoted his time particularly to the development of Niagara power and other interests on the Niagara frontier. In 1899 he changed his residence to the city of Niagara Falls.

The story of the great work that Mr. Rankine did in interesting New York capitalists in the project to harness Niagara's power, and other interests on the Niagara Frontier, and the magnificent results that have followed is thoroughly known to the people of the Niagara Frontier particularly, of the State in general and of the United States.

After it had been determined to undertake the power project, the Cataract Construction Company was organized to do the work for the Niagara Falls Power Company and Mr. Rankine was secretary of that. After the construction work was done, he was secretary of the power company, later being promoted to be third vice-president and still later to be second vice-president and treasurer. He was resident manager up to the time of his death.

Besides his connection with the Niagara Falls Power Company Mr. Rankine was an officer of many other corpora-

tions, some of them closely allied, and some not. He was second vice-president and treasurer of the Niagara Junction Railway Company; vice-president of the Canadian Niagara Power Company; vice-president of the Francis Hook & Eye & Fastener Company of Niagara Falls; secretary and treasurer of the Cataract Power and Conduit Company of Buffalo; director and chairman of the executive committee of the Natural Food Company of Niagara Falls, now called the Shredded Wheat Company; director of the Tonawanda Power Company, and of Suburban Power Company; secretary of the Tesla Company; a director of the Bell Telephone Company of Buffalo; a director of the Ramapo Iron Works, Niagara Tachometer and Instrument Company, and Niagara Research Laboratories, and a trustee of the Equitable Trust Company of New York. Mr. Rankine was a trustee of DeVeaux College and a life trustee of Union College; a member of Buffalo Club of Buffalo, and of the University, Lawyers' and Delta Phi Clubs of New York City; of the Bar Association of the City of New York, and of the New York State Bar Association.

The deceased had also been connected with other important organizations. He was vice-president of the Niagara Falls & Suspension Bridge Railway Company, and after the company's lines were absorbed by the International Railway Company, he was an officer of that until the re-organization in the spring of 1905. He was also president of the Niagara Falls Waterworks Company until the system was sold to the Western New York Water Company.

Mr. Rankine was married on February 23, 1905, to Miss Annette Kittridge Norton, daughter of Mrs. E. K. Norton, and his death was peculiarly sad, coming only a few months afterwards. The wedding occurred at St. Peter's Church of which he was a member of the vestry, and the funeral was held there less than eight months afterward.

In St. Peter's Church, where he was married and from whence his funeral was held, Mrs. Annette Rankine, his widow, placed a bronze tablet, which was unveiled on Palm Sunday, March 20, 1921, inscribed as follows:

Erected in loving memory of
William Birch Rankine
January 4, 1858—September 30, 1905.
Chancellor of this Diocese.
Warden of this parish.

Whose vision, energy and lifelong
devotion contributed manifestly to
the development of Niagara's power
for the benefit of mankind.

With these few words much is told.

Rev. John Brewster Hubbs, D. D., a classmate of Mr. Rankine at Union College, was selected by the family to conduct the ceremony, and in his sermon at the unveiling, he said, in part: "Service is the royal road to the joy of life. It is the duty and the joy of every man to examine his talents, to find out what gifts the Lord has endowed him with, and then to use those gifts for the service of man in the name of the Lord. The man who uses those gifts for his own good alone, or the man who does not use his gifts at all has missed the greatest joy of life. But the man who increases his talents in the service of others has found the secret of happiness, which lies not in wealth, power or position, but in service."

Probably one of the most apt tributes to William B. Rankine, written during his lifetime, was from the pen of the celebrated electrical savant, Nickola Tesla, who wrote on the margin of his portrait: "This to my friend, W. B. Rankine, who thinks while others sleep, and works while others think and does while others try, who is in many enterprises and, in many hearts, as a mark of my sincere devotion." Signed October 29, 1902.



HONORABLE ARTHUR SCHOELLKOPF

Honorable Arthur Schoellkopf, in memory of whom one of the monuments in front of the city hall was erected by the Niagara Falls Memorial Commission, in succession to The William B. Rankine Memorial Commission, is the only one of ten men whose character and accomplishments are being especially honored, who served as Mayor of the city of Niagara Falls, although Honorable Peter A. Porter and Colonel Charles B. Gaskill served as president of the village of Niagara Falls. Like them, Mr. Schoellkopf did not seek public office, but he was called upon to serve and was elected Mayor with practical unanimity, carrying every election district in the city that was then of opposite political faith to himself.

Arthur Schoellkopf, third son of Jacob Frederick and Christiana T. (Duerr) Schoellkopf, was born in Buffalo, N. Y., June 13, 1856. He studied in private schools in that city, was for four years an academician at Kirchheim, Wurtemberg,

Germany, his father's birthplace, and returned in 1869 to Buffalo, where he completed his literary education at St. Joseph's College, and took a course in Bryant & Stratton's Business College. He began business in the North Buffalo and Frontier Mills, then operated by Thornton & Chester, and later by Schoellkopf & Matthews, remaining four years. In 1877 he became part owner of the Schoellkopf & Matthews Mill at Niagara Falls, and subsequently he became president of the Niagara Falls Milling Company, operating the Central and Schoellkopf & Matthews Mills, with a combined output of 4000 barrels daily. In 1878, in association with his father, he organized the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power & Manufacturing Company to develop the hydraulic canal purchased by his father, and to furnish power for other mills, the father being president, and the son secretary, treasurer and general manager.

A notable instance of the public spirit of Arthur Schoellkopf was shown in his building, equipping and personally managing for seven years the first street railway, known as the Niagara Falls & Suspension Bridge Street Railway, now an auxiliary of the great International Railway system. This was completed July 4, 1883, and he continued as manager until 1890, when he disposed of his entire interest. With his father he founded the Brush Electric Light Company, which is now the Niagara Electric Service Corporation, and he was also connected with many extensive industries as well as others having important financial connections. He founded the Power City Bank in Niagara Falls, which began business in June, 1893, and was president for 17 years, and a director of the Bank of Niagara, and president of the Cliff Paper Company. Later he was president and treasurer of the International Hotel, president of the Gluck Realty Company, which built the Gluck Block on the site of the burned Spencer House, president of the International Theater Company and trustee of the Niagara County Savings Bank.

In the spring of 1896 as the Republican candidate, Mr. Schoellkopf was elected Mayor of the city for a one year term, which was then in practice, his majority being 450, large for that period. His administration was marked by enterprise, ability and integrity. He had served as a village commis-

sioner and as commissioner of public works in the city. He was offered and declined renomination as Mayor.

Mr. Schoellkopf was a member of the Niagara Falls Chamber of Commerce, the Niagara Club, the Civic Club, and the Ellicott Club of Buffalo. He was a Knight Templar Mason, a Noble of the Mystic Shrine, and a member of the Order of Elks, a past exalted ruler of Lodge No. 346. He was a member and trustee of the First Presbyterian Church of Niagara Falls and trustee of Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital. He married October 13, 1890, Jessie, daughter of Alva Gluck, pioneer hotel keeper of Niagara Falls, and they had two children, Paul Arthur, now president of the consolidated Niagara Falls Power Company, and Beatrice Schoellkopf Penn of Reidsville, North Carolina.

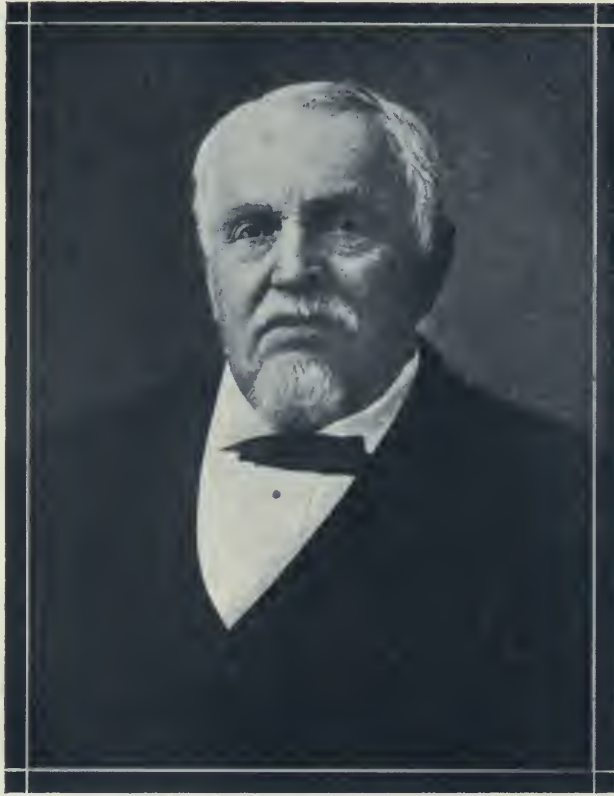
Arthur Schoellkopf died suddenly at Miami, Florida, February 3, 1913, at the untimely age of 56 years. Although he had been indisposed for several months, it was not until the day before his death that his condition became serious. Mr. Schoellkopf left Niagara Falls with members of his family December 1, 1912. His remains arrived in Niagara Falls on February 6, 1913, and the funeral was held at the First Presbyterian Church on the afternoon of that day. All city offices were closed during the services. Mayor Laughlin, members of the Common Council, Board of Public Works and city officials generally attended the funeral. The several industries in which Mr. Schoellkopf was interested closed all day, and nearly every employee was present at the funeral.

At the time of his death, Mr. Schoellkopf was, through his varied business activities, the foremost citizen of the community. But his activities extended beyond his office. He was a man of warm sympathies, quick to respond to the calls of charity. He loved the city he called his home, and was always ready to assist its advancement. He is justly credited with a great part in the splendid industrial development of Niagara Falls. Loyalty to his home city was one of the fundamental qualities of Arthur Schoellkopf. He was a strong champion of every constructive policy that promised increased betterment for Niagara Falls, and was never too busy to find time from the pursuit of his private affairs to assist in civic enterprises for progress and prosperity. It was Arthur

Schoellkopf who made real the way that was blazed by his father, Jacob F. Schoellkopf, in the hydro-electric power development. During the thirty odd years that he directed the affairs of the Hydraulic Company he developed the power canal from a mill race to a mighty stream which gives impulse to countless electric engines. It was a man's work he did, and he did it well.

But finally it is the man and his works of heart, not the man and his works of mind and hand; it is the man as he went among his fellows. Arthur Schoellkopf was a gentleman, affable, kind, charitable. He was a man of fine impulses, impulses to which he gave expression in word and act. So he had many friends. So his passing was sincerely mourned.

In memory of Arthur Schoellkopf and in carrying out his expressed wishes to create something for the citizens of Niagara Falls, whom he loved, for their future welfare and enjoyment, his widow and two children shortly after his death laid the foundation for the future park system of Niagara Falls by a gift to the city of two completed parks, which parks upon acceptance by the city were named Schoellkopf Park and Gluck Park.



JACOB FREDERICK SCHOELLKOPF

The pioneer of the modern hydraulic power development at Niagara Falls was Jacob Frederick Schoellkopf. He became such when he purchased the hydraulic canal in 1877 and continued to be the leader of this great enterprise and its numerous auxiliaries until his death in 1899, with his son, Arthur, as his chief assistant and successor. Mr. Schoellkopf always lived in Buffalo while having great interests in Niagara Falls, but was here frequently, and had larger interest here for years than any other man.

The Schoellkopfs of Erie and Niagara counties spring from a hardy, ambitious ancestor, who not only achieved success for himself, but transmitted to his posterity qualities that have kept them in the front rank of industrial progress and development. Jacob F. Schoellkopf was the head of the line; he was succeeded in the great Niagara Falls enterprise by his son, Arthur Schoellkopf, and he, in turn, has been succeeded

by his son, Paul A. Schoellkopf, as the head of the infinitely greater enterprise, the Niagara Falls Power Company, a combination of the hydraulic and the hydro-electric companies, which now, in turn, have been consolidated into the great \$200,000,000 Buffalo, Niagara and Eastern Power Company. As directors of this gigantic, world's greatest hydro-electric power development enterprises there are now seven Schoellkopfs, either sons or grandsons of Jacob F. Schoellkopf.

Jacob F. Schoellkopf, son of Gottlieb Schoellkopf, was born in Kirchheim, Unter Teck, a small town in the kingdom of Wurtemberg, November 15, 1819, died in Buffalo, New York, September 15, 1899. Like Judge Augustus Porter, the original power development pioneer of Niagara Falls, he lived four score years. He was educated in the town schools, and at the age of 14 years began learning the trade of tanner with his father, a large leather manufacturer, who learned the same trade with his father. After completing his five years of apprenticeship he became clerk in a mercantile house at Strassberg, remaining two years. In 1841, realizing that as a younger son he could not inherit, he determined to try his fortune in the land across the seas, from which such glowing reports came from those of his acquaintances who had made the venture. In December, 1841, he landed in New York City, aged 22 years, totally unacquainted with the English language. He worked in New York City for two years, was for a time in the West and, in 1844, with a capital of \$800.00, loaned him by his father, located in Buffalo. He began his business career there in a small leather store which he established in Mohawk street. In the same year (1844) he purchased a small tannery at White's Corners (Hamburg), Erie county, arranging payments to cover a period of six years. In 1846 he started a tannery in Buffalo for the tanning of sheep skins. In 1848 he built a tannery in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in association with another, the firm name being G. Pfister & Co. In 1850 he became interested in a Chicago firm, C. T. Gray & Company, operating a tannery there, continuing in the latter firm until 1856. He did not long retain these western interests; after seeing them placed on solid business footings, he disposed of them profitably and sought new outlets for his rapidly increasing capital. In

1853-54 he established tanneries at Fort Wayne, Indiana, and North Evans, New York, operating the latter with unusual success for 20 years. In 1857 he made his first large investment outside the tanning business. He erected the North Buffalo Flouring Mills, which proved so profitable that he continued his investments in that line, ultimately becoming one of the largest operators of flouring mills in the Empire State. He bought the Frontier Mills of Buffalo, in 1870, and later erected extensive mills in Niagara Falls. He retained his vast milling and tanning interests until his death, some being held in his own name, others as senior of the milling firm of Schoellkopf & Matthews. In 1877 he purchased the hydraulic canal at Niagara Falls, and in the development of that plan for utilizing the power of the Niagara river has forever connected his name with the city of Niagara Falls, and with one of the greatest of modern enterprises. The canal was later conveyed to a corporation known as The Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power & Manufacturing Company. This name was afterwards shortened to The Hydraulic Power Company, and during the great world war the company was consolidated with the Niagara Falls Power Company, under the latter name, but with the Schoellkopf interests predominating, an enterprise involving some \$62,000,000. Mr. Schoellkopf was president of the original company at the time of his death. Large factories were established along its banks by the owners, and arrangements entered into by many other companies who built, and took their power from the canal. The impetus given to Niagara Falls by this cheap power has resulted in continuous growth and prosperity.

Having safely established his own enterprise and fortune, Mr. Schoellkopf became interested in corporate and financial activities. He was vice-president of the Buffalo & Philadelphia Railroad prior to its sale to the Western New York & Pennsylvania Company; was vice-president of the Third National Bank of Buffalo; the Merchants' and German Banks, also the Bank of Niagara and the Power City Bank of Niagara Falls. He was president of the Citizens' Gas Company of Buffalo, and a trustee of the Buffalo General Hospital until his death. He was intensely public-spirited and placed at the disposal of the city and its institutions his best talents, as well

as a great amount of his time and means. His nature was generous, his charities being many and widely distributed. The church ever had in him a warm friend and a most liberal contributor. His life was a truly remarkable one. He had a capacity for great undertakings, nothing daunted him and he will ever be held as one of the great men of the period, and this, too, without the glamour of a military or a public official life. He was great in the best sense, great in the arts of peace, a builder, not a destroyer.

Mr. Schoellkopf married, in 1848, Christiana T. Duerr, born in Germany, coming to the United States in 1842. She survived her husband four years, dying October 13, 1903. She was a worthy companion and contributed her share to her husband's success. Their children were: Henry, Louis, Arthur, Jacob, Frederick, Alfred, C. P. Hugo and Helena.

In accordance with a communication sent to the Board of Public Works on September 18, 1906, and the recommendation of a committee appointed to have charge of the matter, the bridge last built over the hydraulic canal at Third street was named the Schoellkopf Bridge and at a public ceremonial on December 9, 1908, during the administration of Mayor Anthony C. Douglass, the Schoellkopf Memorial Tablets on that bridge were duly unveiled in honor of Jacob F. Schoellkopf.

The resolution passed by the Board of Public Works authorizing this action read as follows:

"Resolved, That in grateful memory of Jacob F. Schoellkopf, whose foresight and courage laid the foundation of the power development at Niagara Falls, the bridge over the hydraulic canal at Third street be named 'The Schoellkopf Bridge,' and that we hereby authorize the placing of tablets on said bridge, giving its name and stating that it was so named in pursuance of this resolution."



HONORABLE PETER A. PORTER

There are two lines of Porters who are descendants of the pioneer settlers of Niagara Falls, Judge Augustus Porter and General Peter B. Porter, the former of whom located in Niagara Falls a century and a quarter ago. These two brothers were the progenitors of many distinguished men.

Hon. Peter A. Porter was the third in Gen. Porter's line. Both he and his grandfather sat in the House of Representatives of the United States and Gen. Porter was nationally distinguished both as a statesman and a soldier. Hon. Peter A. Porter also won distinction in various ways, particularly as an historian of the Niagara Frontier, leaving to posterity a rich legacy of historic lore, not only covering the period in which the Porter family bulked large in all activities in Western New York, but also dating back to the Red Man's time, the age of exploration and the beginning of the White Man's occupancy of this highly favored region.

Mr. Porter was born in the old Gen. Porter mansion on Falls street in Niagara Falls, October 10, 1853, the son of Colonel and Mrs. Peter A. Porter. He was educated in St. Paul's School at Concord, N. H., and Yale College, from which he was graduated in 1874. He was married in 1877 to Miss Alice Adelle Taylor of Niagara Falls. They had three sons, Peter A. Porter, Jr., C. Breckenridge Porter and Preston B. Porter.

Mr. Porter's father, Col. Peter A. Porter, was a distinguished man in various walks of life before he raised a regiment of Western New York men, the Eighth New York Heavy Artillery, and led it to the front in the Civil War. He was killed at the battle of Cold Harbor, June 3, 1864. As a boy a dozen years old, the son was at the front with his father and was known as the "Little Colonel." For more than 50 years after the Civil War the survivors of Col. Porter's regiment met in annual reunion and Hon. Peter A. Porter was always the guest of honor and chief speaker.

Mr. Porter was engaged in various business enterprises during his long life in Niagara Falls. The Porter family owned Goat Island and much of the mainland adjoining the river from 1816 to 1885 and when the New York State Reservation at Niagara was established in the latter year much of the property taken was purchased of the Porters. Peter A. Porter owned the Niagara Falls Gazette from 1880 to 1895 and converted it into a daily newspaper in 1893. He built the Arcade Building on Falls street in which the Gazette and the United States post office were housed for many years. He owned the famous old hostelry, the Cataract House, for many years. He was president of the Cataract Bank for some time.

Mr. Porter was loath to seek public office, but always took an active interest in public affairs, serving in many ways most efficiently in public movements. Before the organization of the city he was president of the village of Niagara Falls and was a member of the Exempt Firemen's Association at the time of his death. When the matter of the more extensive power development came along, he took an active interest in it and was a director of the predecessor of the Niagara Falls Power Company, called The Niagara River Tunnel Sewer and Water Supply Company. About this time

he was elected as Member of Assembly from the second district of Niagara county and had the distinction of introducing and pushing through the Legislature the charter of the Niagara Falls Power Company. Mr. Porter served two terms in the Legislature, another position, by the way, that various other members of the two branches of the Porter family had held before him.

When the movement was inaugurated to erect the city of Niagara Falls, composed of the village by that name, the village of Suspension Bridge and a portion of the rural part of the town of Niagara, Mr. Porter was a member of the committee that framed the city charter.

A high light in the public career of Mr. Porter was his election as a Representative in Congress from the old 34th Congressional district which was composed of the counties of Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Livingston and Wyoming. He was nominated on an independent Republican ticket and by the Democratic party. He succeeded James W. Wadsworth of Genesee, who had held the position for 20 years. Two years before Mr. Wadsworth had been chosen by 13,000 majority. Mr. Porter was elected by 5,900 majority after the most remarkable campaign in the history of the district. His campaign emblem was "The Good Old Cow," emblematic of the Beef Trust and oleomargarine, that were issues at that time. His home city he carried by 1142 majority, at that time the largest on record. In Niagara county his majority was 3683, the largest ever given for any man for any office, then. He carried four of the five counties in the district and cut Mr. Wadsworth's usual majority in his home county of Livingston in half. Mr. Porter was not a candidate for re-election and following his retirement after his two-year term lived in North Tonawanda and Buffalo.

Mr. Porter was the founder, the president for many years and honorary president for life of the Niagara Frontier Historical Society and many of the large collections of relics were contributed by him. He also took very active interest in the Niagara County Pioneer Association, was its president for three terms, the chief speaker and guest of honor at several of its large annual picnics and did as much for it as any other man.

Mr. Porter was the author and publisher of many booklets. His Niagara guide book is the best one ever published. He has also published booklets on Old Fort Niagara, Goat Island, the block houses on Portage Road, and many others, besides numerous comprehensive illustrated articles in Buffalo Sunday newspapers upon Niagara Frontier history.

Up the river the great plant of the original Niagara Falls Power Company is located upon the 100-acre farm which the company purchased of Peter A. Porter. In turn the company located upon these lands the great plant of the International Paper Company, originally the Niagara Falls Paper Company, built by the Soo Paper Company. Then there is Porter Park, before that called by the less euphonious name of "Ten Rod Strip." Farther up the river is the old stone chimney in which Mr. Porter took such pride and interest. It was attached to the old barracks which the French built for Fort Little Niagara, and was attached to the mess house which the English built in connection with Fort Schlosser. The chimney was reserved by Mr. Porter when he sold these lands to the Niagara Falls Power Company, and it has since been moved near the plant of the Carborundum Company and a tablet placed upon it by the Niagara Frontier Historical Society, which Mr. Porter founded. It is the oldest bit of perfect masonry on the Niagara Frontier, if not all Western New York, except the old castle at Fort Niagara. It was at the head of Portage Road over which passed the early commerce of the Niagara Frontier.

Dying suddenly just before Christmas, 1925, at his home in recent years in Buffalo, his death was a great shock to a wide circle of friends here and elsewhere, and thousands of people felt the sense of personal loss. His remains lie in the Porter plot with his ancestors in Oakwood cemetery.



COLONEL CHARLES B. GASKILL

Col. Charles B. Gaskill was one of the notable men of Niagara Falls and Niagara county. His sphere of influence, however, was far wider, connecting him with activities and enterprises of nation-wide importance. Whether considered as a military leader, or as a far-seeing, able business man and executive, few men of his time brought more distinction to his native state, or have greater claim to have his memory gratefully recalled.

Charles B. Gaskill was born in the town of Wilson, Niagara county, N. Y., November 28, 1841. Pioneer surroundings in his boyhood, gave him more meager educational opportunities than were offered in older settled communities, and this fact made more remarkable his first business enterprise, the issuance of a newspaper, the Niagara City Herald, first published by Nathan Hackstaff in the village called by that name, previously Bellevue, and later Suspension Bridge.

Colonel Gaskill's life was so long identified with military matters, that to get the true measure of his character, one must go back in national history over 65 years. At the outbreak of the Civil War he volunteered as a private in the 44th New York Infantry, and, although but a stripling of 20 years, his military qualifications secured early recognition and in December, 1861, he received a commission as second lieutenant, and subsequently as first lieutenant in the same regiment. In the battle of Gaines' Mills, on June 22, 1862, the young officer was seriously wounded, and was captured by the enemy a day or two later at Savage Station, Va., a month elapsing before he was exchanged, his wound in the meantime receiving but meager attention. After exchange he was sent to a hospital in Baltimore, but months elapsed before he could re-enter the service. On March 27, 1863, he became a captain in the 78th United States Colored Infantry, afterwards becoming lieutenant colonel and colonel of the same regiment, seeing active service throughout the rest of the war. He was honorably mustered out of the service on December 31, 1865. He had been brevetted major for meritorious conduct at the battle of Gaines' Mills, and was brevetted lieutenant colonel for meritorious conduct at the battle of Fredericksburg.

In the interval of peace that followed, Colonel Gaskill embarked in large business enterprises, but when his country once more needed him, in the Spanish-American trouble, he eagerly responded and served under Gen. Nelson A. Miles, in the Porto Rican campaign, when the expedition captured the island. He was appointed captain of the Port of Ponce and had charge of harbor transportation, lighthouses and pilots.

After the close of the Civil War, Colonel Gaskill married and settled on a plantation in Mississippi, but in 1866 he re-entered the army, becoming a commandant at Jackson Barracks, New Orleans, and also commandant at Fort Mason, in North Carolina. He acted as assistant adjutant general of the district of North Carolina under the reconstruction acts, Gen. Miles being the commandant of the district.

Additional military distinction attaches to the memory of Colonel Gaskill because of his deep interest in State mili-

tary affairs. In 1885 he organized the 42d Separate Company of the National Guard of the State of New York, in Niagara Falls, becoming its first captain, and this organization through his inspiring and efficient management, became the crack separate company of the State body. In 1870 Colonel Gaskill resigned from the U. S. army service and shortly afterward returned to Niagara county, settling his family at Niagara Falls, and was enthusiastic over contemplated enterprises. In 1861 the hydraulic canal had been completed, but the Civil War prevented any use of it for manufacturing purposes, and it was Colonel Gaskill who built the first flour mill in 1875 that utilized the water of the canal, this mill being the foundation for what was for many years the Cataract City Milling Company, which was recently purchased by the Niagara Falls Power Company and discontinued in order to use the water power to a better advantage. From that time he participated very actively in the commercial development of Niagara Falls. Colonel Gaskill built a pulp mill on the hydraulic canal, that was subsequently consolidated with the Pettebone Paper Company, and, like the Cataract Milling Company, was only recently purchased by the Niagara Falls Power Company and discontinued so as to make better use of the water power that it took. He was one of the first to recognize the merit in the Thomas Evershed plan for harnessing the Falls, and he was one of the leading spirits in the group of progressive men who organized the Niagara Falls Power Company. Of this company he became the first president, and it was to a considerable extent due to his indefatigable efforts in the face of great discouragements that financial aid was obtained that made possible this great enterprise, and he continued with the company until William B. Rankine had taken the lead and the success of the undertaking was assured.

Among other enterprises of great importance to Niagara Falls was the establishment of modern systems of transportation. He was foremost among business men who took over the old horse car line, in the villages of Niagara Falls and Suspension Bridge, and converted it into a safe, modern, electric railroad. For several years he served as president of the Niagara Falls and Suspension Bridge Railway Company.

Late in the 80's Colonel Gaskill accepted the presidency of the village of Niagara Falls, although in his busy life of constructive work, politics as a leading issue, had never greatly appealed to him. He was intensely interested, however, in the welfare of his community, and his administration of the presidential office was marked by firm enforcement of law and order. Later, some years afterward when cityhood had been established, he served several years on the Board of Education, and to his initial efforts the school teachers of the city are indebted for the pension system.

After his return from the Civil War, Colonel Gaskill was united in marriage to Helen I. Sherwood of Niagara Falls, who passed away in 1903. They had three daughters, namely: Cora M., who is the wife of Morris Cohn, one of the leading attorneys of Niagara county; Flora B., who is the wife of George F. Nye, a prominent business man of the city, and Miss Alice B.



HONORABLE THOMAS VINCENT WELCH

The special and unique distinction of Honorable Thomas Vincent Welch is that he was the leader of the inspiring movement which culminated in the acquisition of the lands adjoining the Falls of Niagara by the State of New York, and in making the contemplation of this greatest natural spectacle on the globe free to all mankind forever, and also that Mr. Welch's refined and sensitive nature, which blended so perfectly with the beautiful and sublime, had full play in the discharge of his duties as Superintendent of the New York State Reservation at Niagara from the day of its opening until his untimely death, a period of more than 18 years. Mr. Welch also had more than the usual part in various other activities that have made Niagara Falls a great and prosperous city, but his name will be forever linked with that project of national and international appeal that brought about the preservation of the Creator's most marvelous work. Once reserved for all

time for the free use of the people, Mr. Welch proceeded to restore the vicinity of the great cataracts to a state of nature, and to erect such structures as were required for practical use, like bridges and buildings, that would be in harmony with their surroundings. Illustrations of what is meant are the rustic bridges over the raceway beside the rapids, the Three Sister Island bridges and the Goat Island bridges, the latter the fourth that has been erected.

All great movements affecting the public require years of agitation and education before consummation. So it was with the Free Niagara project. Again, all great movements require a leader. Scan the pages of American history and you will invariably see that in connection with each the names of some one individual stands out above all others, although many people may do valuable work in co-operation. So it was with the Free Niagara project. Inseparably connected with the State Reservation at Niagara is the name of the late Honorable Thomas V. Welch. Not only did Mr. Welch lead the movement extending over a period of several years, that finally resulted in success, but as Superintendent he did the constructive work.

Honorable Thomas V. Welch was an especially gifted public speaker. Early in life and until his death he was in great demand as a speaker at political gatherings and at many kinds of public functions. He had a most pleasing and impressive personality. He was literary in his tastes, wrote much good poetry, had a sense of humor that was delicious and altogether had few equals and no superiors in this section upon the public platform.

The story of the life of Honorable Thomas Vincent Welch, aside from the great and major activities that have been referred to at some length here, is that Mr. Welch was a self-made and self-educated man in every sense of the word. Born October 1, 1850, in Onondaga county, N. Y., he worked himself up to an unique place in the Hall of Fame in the Empire State of New York. He was a son of Thomas and Honora (Holland) Welch. In 1857 his parents moved to Niagara Falls, where his father died in 1877. There were six children, Thomas V., Edward and John, and Honora, Ellen and Ann, all deceased except Ellen.

Mr. Welch was educated in the public schools of Niagara Falls, and at an early age he entered the employ of the New York Central Railroad Company as timekeeper in the shops in the village of Niagara Falls. In 1873 he was promoted to be freight agent of the Central here, which position he occupied for three years, leaving it at the expiration of that time to engage in the mercantile business. For many years afterwards, although also connected with public affairs, he conducted a dry goods store on Falls street with Michael Ryan and with James E. Rock, under the firm name of Welch & Ryan and Welch & Rock. His particular fitness for the discharge of public duties was manifested at the very beginning of his public career. In 1873-4 he was clerk of the village of Niagara Falls, and in 1875-6 he was a village trustee. In 1876, 1877 and in 1878 he was elected Supervisor of the town of Niagara and in the latter year he was chosen as chairman of the Board of Supervisors of the county of Niagara. Retiring as Supervisor, he was soon called again into public life by being nominated by the Democratic party and elected Member of Assembly from the second Assembly district of Niagara county, which district is and always has been normally Republican in political complexion, and he was re-elected in 1883 and 1884. He was a member of the committee on ways and means in the Legislature and a leader in that body. It was during the memorable presidential campaign of 1884 that Mr. Welch acquired a wide reputation as a talented and convincing speaker. His speeches in behalf of the election of Grover Cleveland to the presidency made him an outstanding figure and following the election of President Cleveland, Mr. Welch was regarded as the most likely appointee for U. S. Collector of Customs at the then Port of Suspension Bridge, for many years the most powerful and most remunerative public position in this part of the country. President Cleveland came into office in 1885, and this was just at the peak of the "Free Niagara" movement. The unanimous choice of Mr. Welch to be Superintendent, by the Niagara Reservation Commission, was the cause of his devoting the remainder of his years to that surpassingly great project.

On April 16, 1872, the New York Legislature incorporated the Soldiers' Monument Society of Niagara Falls.

Its purpose was to honor the brave deeds of Niagara county soldiers on the battlefields. Mr. Welch was named as one of the commissioners to carry out the purpose of the act and delivered an address at the dedication of the monument on August 22, 1976.

Mr. Welch played a most important part in the incorporation of the city of Niagara Falls. He was a member of the charter committee, and, with Hon. W. Caryl Ely, was in Albany when Governor Roswell P. Flower signed the Niagara Falls city charter bill, March 17, 1892, in fact Governor Flower was ready to sign the bill the day before, but Mr. Welch requested him to hold off until St. Patrick's Day. He procured the pen with which the governor signed the bill and it is now in possession of the writer.

Elsewhere in this book it is shown that Mr. Welch had a leading part in the organization of the Niagara Falls Power Company.

Mr. Welch was the first president of the Memorial Hospital Association and active in its affairs for many years. He was a member of a great many civic societies and organizations, many of which he helped to organize. He was prominently identified with a number of organizations of St. Mary's Church, a trustee of Niagara University and had been president of the Catholic Total Abstinence Society. He was vice-president of the Niagara Frontier Historical Society at the time of his death, was also a member of the Niagara Frontier Land Marks Association, and had served two terms as president of the Civic Club, as president of the Niagara County Pioneer Association, of the Shakespeare Club, and was an honorary member of the Niagara County Farmers Club, before which he frequently spoke.

Mr. Welch was married at Belfast, Allegany county, N. Y., October 21, 1902, and died from an attack of typhoid fever, just one year later, October 20, 1903.



HONORABLE WILLIAM CARYL ELY

Honorable William Caryl Ely was not a native of Niagara county, but for more than 35 years his name was prominently connected with large activities along the Niagara Frontier, some of which are of interest far beyond the confines of this section or even New York State. His name is being placed upon one of the memorial monuments in Niagara Falls because, among other things, he was a pioneer in electric street railroad construction and development. In various respects Mr. Ely was a national character, and his activities have even been international at times.

Of absorbing and more than local interest is also Mr. Ely's genealogy, for he traces his ancestry back to the Mayflower, which brought the Pilgrim Fathers to our shores in 1820. One of the outstanding features in the career of William Caryl Ely, is that he was one of the founders of the

Niagara Falls Power Company, which is now conducting at Niagara Falls the greatest hydro-electric power development in the world, and that he organized and became the head of one of the largest electric railroad systems in the country, which is operated by the Niagara power furnished by the company that he helped to found.

William Caryl Ely was born at Middlefield, Otsego County, N. Y., February 25, 1858. He was of German, Dutch, English and French Huguenot ancestry and of New England stock, tracing back to Colonist Edward Fuller, of the Mayflower, and is a lineal descendant on his mother's side of John and Priscilla (Mullins) Alden, through their daughter Betty. Many of his forebears were soldiers in the colonial struggles and the Revolutionary War, and among these veterans who were pioneers in the wilderness that afterwards became Otsego county, N. Y., were his great grandfathers, Lieut. Benjamin Gilbert, Silas Crippen and Isaac Caryl, the great great grandfather, Jonathan Caryl, serving in the Revolutionary War from Vermont. The log cabin built by Silas Crippen after blazing his way through the wilderness, still stands in the town of Worcester, Otsego county. Mr. Ely's paternal grandparents were Leonard and Mary (Crippen) Caryl.

Mr. Ely was educated in the common schools of the towns of Middlefield and Worcester, in his native county, at the Cooperstown Union School, Girard Academy at Girard, Erie county, Pa., Delaware Literary Institute, at Franklin, Delaware county, N. Y., with private tutors and at Cornell University, class of 1878, leaving college in his junior year. While in the university he enjoyed two years of instruction in military tactics under West Point officers. Mr. Ely prepared for the bar with John B. Holmes, of East Worcester, N. Y., was admitted in 1882 and entered into practice in his home town. In 1885 he removed to Niagara Falls, where he practiced law continually until 1899, and for five years was the attorney of the village of Niagara Falls. After becoming a resident of Niagara Falls, he was a director of the Cataract Bank; one of the founders and the first attorney of the Niagara County Savings Bank of Niagara Falls; a director of the Manu-

facturers' and Traders' Bank, and a trustee of the Fidelity Trust Company of Buffalo, for several years.

In 1887 Mr. Ely became professionally associated with Frank A. Dudley under the firm name of Ely & Dudley which, in 1893, with the admission of Morris Cohn, Jr., became the law firm of Ely, Dudley & Cohn. This firm was dissolved in 1899 when Mr. Ely became president of the International Railway Company and retired from active practice.

Mr. Ely was born and reared in a political atmosphere as his father's and mother's families were both prominent in local politics from the organization of the county, and were all of the Democratic faith. In 1880 and 1881 Mr. Ely served as clerk of the board of supervisors of Otsego county; in 1882 and 1883 he was supervisor of the town of Worcester, and in 1883, 1884 and 1885 served in the State Legislature from the first Assembly district of Otsego county. In 1885 he was nominated for Speaker of the Assembly which nomination automatically makes the nominee the leader of his party for that session, when, as in this case, it was the minority party. After coming to Niagara Falls, except the village attorneyship above mentioned, Mr. Ely did not hold public office, although, in 1891, he was honored with the Democratic nomination for Justice of the Supreme Court in the Eighth Judicial district, but the normal Republican majority was too large to overcome. For several years he served as Democratic State committeeman from this district and as such was elected treasurer of that body, a position he resigned in 1896. At several times Mr. Ely was prominently mentioned for the Democratic nomination for Governor of New York and at the Democratic State convention at Rochester in 1910, was actually tendered and urged to accept the nomination but felt obliged to decline for business reasons.

At a meeting in the office of Supt. Thomas V. Welch of the Niagara State Reservation on Bath Island in January, 1886, the project that became the Niagara Falls Power Company was born, those present being Mr. Ely, Mr. Welch, Col. Gaskill, Henry S. Ware and Myron H. Kinsley. Under and upon the advice of Mr. Ely it was determined to seek a legislative charter, and to him was intrusted its preparation and the guidance of the necessary legislation into final enact-

ment. Mr. Ely became a trustee and incorporator of the company, and devoted a great amount of time to the enterprise during the next six years.

Mr. Ely now became in rapid succession counsel and attorney for most of the large concerns in Niagara Falls. In 1887 he handled the incorporation and financing of Carter and Company, Limited, from which has grown the American Salesbook Company, Limited, and soon after the manufacturing company, out of which has come Wm. A. Rogers, Limited, of both of which companies Mr. Ely was a director for about 30 years. He conceived the plan and built the Buffalo & Niagara Falls Electric Railroad and became the president of the company. All of the electric railroad lines on the Niagara Frontier, on both sides of the river, except the Niagara Gorge Railroad, were merged into the International Railway Company in 1899 and Mr. Ely became president of that. He and his associates sold their interests in 1905 and Mr. Ely immediately became interested in electric railway and public utility enterprises in the Ohio valley between Pittsburg and Wheeling, and built between Beaver, Pa., and Steubenville, Ohio, one of the finest electric railways in the country, and was president of The Ohio Valley Finance Company, the holding company. He was president of the American Electric Railway Association in 1903-4-5-6. He also was prominently identified with many other corporate and other enterprises.

Mr. Ely was married February 13, 1884, at Cobleskill, Schoharie county, N. Y., to Grace Keller, daughter of Rev. Henry and Josephine (Courter) Keller. The Courter family was one of the most prominent in the social and business life of Schoharie county from its earliest days. Mr. and Mrs. Ely had one daughter, Marion Caryl, who became the wife of Elbridge Gerry Spaulding of Buffalo.

Mr. Ely was a communicant of the Episcopal Church, a member of Niagara Frontier Lodge, No. 132, F. & A. M., of patriotic organizations and various clubs in Niagara Falls, Buffalo and New York. He died suddenly in New York in 1922 and his remains are interred in Buffalo.

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