

MSS 295, William Fenton Research Collection

Restrictions: none

Amount: 1.9 linear ft.

Biographical note: Internationally recognized as the “Dean of Iroquoian Studies,” William Nelson Fenton (b.1908) has held many academic and civic positions since receiving his Doctorate in Anthropology from Yale in 1937. He has been a Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at SUNY, Albany, Senior Ethnologist for the Smithsonian Institution’s Bureau of American Ethnology, Director of the New York State Museum, and a community worker with the United States Indian Service. Over the years, he wrote numerous books and articles on Iroquois culture and history, the most recent of which was *The Great Law and the Longhouse: a Political History of the Iroquois Confederacy* (1998); this volume quickly became the standard work on its subject.

Scope and content: This collection is comprised of photocopies and typed transcripts of original materials, including speeches and correspondence, as well as photocopies of published materials, such as biographies, journals and narratives. The dates for these materials range from 1791 through 1953, with the bulk of the materials falling into the late 1700’s- early 1850’s range. The general focus of the collection is on the Iroquois Indians, and their relations with the United States Government, especially the Indian’s living conditions and interactions with the US Government Indian Agents. Boxes 1 and 2 mostly contain copies of early published materials (journals, narratives, minutes of meetings, etc.). Box 3 mostly contains transcriptions, summaries, or excerpts from correspondence.

Notes: The items in this collection have been re-folded, but still maintain Fenton’s original order and folder headings. As a result, the order and format of the folder headings are occasionally inconsistent.

Box #	Folder/Item	Folder Heading
1	1	Contents 1791- 1814 ¹
	2	1791 7/ 4 New Arrow and chiefs of Allegany and Cattaraugus Senecas: speech to T. Pickering
	3	1791 John Parrish diaries. Treaty at Newton Point.
	4	1792 8/ 8 Extract of a letter from a gentleman upon his return from Niagara. MHS Coll.
	5	1793 Joshua Hathaway journal. Journey from Bennington, VT

¹ This folder contains Fenton’s original (partial) inventory for the contents of box 1. All items listed on the inventory can be found in Box 1, except for “1795-1830. Halliday, Jackson. Civilization of the Native Indians and a Sketch of their Manners...” and “ca. 1800. Jackson [Halliday]. Some Account of my Residence among the Indians.” This folder also includes photocopies of 64 5x8 inch note cards with bibliographic information or references.

Box #	Folder/Item	Folder Heading
1 (cont.)	6	Iroquois politics, 1792- 1794. Pickering papers, Fenton's house.
	7	[pub.1827] A narrative of an embassy to the western Indians.
	8	1792 Gookin, Daniel. Historical collections of the Indians in New England
	9	1793 Expedition to Detroit: Jacob Lindley's journal.
	10	1793 John Parrish's diary of a trip to Lower Sandusky to attend a treaty with the Indians.
	11	1793- 1794 Taylor, Francis R. Life of William Savery of Philadelphia, 1750-1804.
	12	1794 David Bacon's journal.
	13	Essex Institute Historical Collections, Vol. CII, no. 3. "Timothy Pickering at his Best: Indian Commissioners 1790- 1794."
	14	1793- 1796 Abeel, Henry. From the Pickering Papers in M. H. S. (notes by M. H. D.)
	15	1794 Bacon, David. Some account of our journey to Cannandaigue [sic]...to attend treaty with the Six Nation Indians. 9/ 15- 11/ 27/ 1794
	16	[Unlabeled folder contains materials pertaining to the above Canandaigua documents.]
	17	Two Row Wampum Belt, Henan Scrogg, Jake Thomas, M. K. Foster.
	18	1794 (1936) Treaty between the Indians and the President of the United States; two roads belt; chain of friends.
	19	1794 Treaty of Canandaigua, articles 2-6.
	20	11/ 11/ 1794 Canandaigua Treaty, [includes maps of the area].
	21	1797 Timothy Pickering to Governor Jay, Department of State
	22	1796 Cooper, Jas. Journal of a visit to the Seneca.
	23	Treaty at Big Tree genesis. Thomas Morris. Seneca.
	24	1796- 99 Henry Simmons, his book (journal) while working among the Cornplanter [Seneca].
	25	1798 Sharpless, Joshua. Journal of a visit to Cornplanter.
	26	1798 John Pierce. Journal of a visit to the Seneca Nation of Indians. (type scrip. copy. 46 pp.)
	27	1798- 1896 History of Ceres, by W. M. Mann and Maria King (Olean 1896)
	28	1799 Isaac Coates. "Visit to the Senecas." <u>The Friend</u> . LXVI (Philadelphia 1889).
	29	1799 Account of Handsome Lake's vision. Benn Williams from Blacksnake (Princeton).
	30	Ca. 1800 Jackson, Warner (or Halliday). Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore.
	31	Brant- Holmes. 1801. NYHS. [interview between Joseph Brant and Rev. Elkanah Holmes.]

Box #	Folder/Item	Folder Heading
1 (cont.)	32	1803- 1804 Gerard Hopkins. Journal to Ft. Wayne. HSP 081 notes.
	33	1960 Budka, Metchie J. E. Journal to Niagara.
	34	1805 [unlabeled folder containing "A brief account of the proceedings of the committee...for promoting the improvement and gradual civilization of the Indian natives.]"
	35	1806 Jackson, Halliday. Some account of a visit paid to the Friends at Tunasasse and the Indians living on the Allegany and Cattaraugus Rivers.
	36	1807 Weld, Issac. Travels through the states of North America and provinces of upper and lower Canada during the years of 1795, 1796 and 1797.
	37	John Norton. Mohawk word list. [folder includes part of "Journal of John Norton", and "Newberry Library conference on Indian studies."]
	38	1809 War Dance (mask) [advertisement for performance]
	39	1810 Wm. Hull to Reading Wampum, Detroit, 30 Sept.1810. Proc. At Brownstown: Red Jacket address to 600 Indians.
	40	[Seneca Indians and Tuscaroras Indians, deed, Sept. 19, 1810]
	41	1814 Extracts from records of the Western Missionary Society. Hunt, Law to Cornplanter
	42	[no date] Mrs. M. F. Trippe. Historical facts concerning Peter Crouse, the captive, and his wife Rachael, their descendents, and their times. 13pp.
	43	[no date] Speech of Mr. Wright of New York.
2	1	1850 Conversations with Gov. Blacksnake, Feb. 10- 20, 1850. Coldspring, Catt. County, NY. L. Draper 127 p.
	2	Draper. Life of Governor Blacksnake I and correspondence. M. H. Deardorff (1841). 50 pp. Draper MSS. U. of Wisconsin.
	3	Draper. Life of Governor Blacksnake II and correspondence. M. H. Deardorff (1842), and my notes from Draper MSS. U. of Wisconsin. 62 pp.
	4	Creation. Draper Collection. Brant Manuscript, vol 22.
	5	1883 Williams, B. The life and speeches of Cornplanter. (Warren, PA)
	6	1822 Cornplanter's talk- cosmogony. Draper collection MSS. Princeton U.
	7	Jacob Jameson's answers to Cass inquires.
	8	Ca. 1820 Dean, Jas. Mythology of the Iroquois or Six Nation Indians. Cosmology.
	9	Lewis Cass inquires [respecting the history, traditions, language, manners, customs and religion of the Indians living in the United States.]
	10	Asher Wright. Six Nations Council minutes, Buffalo. 1839

Box #	Folder/Item	Folder Heading
2 (cont.)	11	Memorial. Chiefs and chief warriors of S[ix] N[atations] to President. 10/2/1837. Protesting removal.
	12	Wright's Census. 1840. [Seneca at Buffalo Creek, Wolf and Turtle Tribes.]
	13	n.d. (Wright, A.). The consolations of greatness: dialog between Red Jacket and his admirers. MSS 4pp.
	14	1843 Brooks Redeye. Thanksgiving prayer (Green Corn Dance). Draper College, Brant MSS. Vol. 22, 138-9.
	15	1847 White Dog Prayer- Soshewa. N. Parker. 20 April 1847.
	16	n.d. A short history or description of a recitation festival...Delaware or Minsi. Buffalo Historical Soc. Reel7, 9 pp. MSS GS/ WNF
	17	1844 Hall, Judge Nathank. Opinion on Buffalo Creek Seneca's application for warrant to evict German settlers from 5000 acres of reservation.
	18	1847 Parker, Ely. Extract of speech by Peter Wilson of Cattaraugus before the NY Historical Society. 5/28/1847.
	19	1848 Clark's Onondaga. 2 vols- Vol. I
	20	1850 Book of roots, or of words (roots) in composition. Seneca. Alleg[hany] Mission, 10/25/1850.
	21	A. P. S. [1851?] Council of Six Nations at Tona. Rites for Grand Sachem John Blacksmith, and installation of successors. Buffalo Cour.
	22	A. P. S Peter Wilson to E.S. Parker. [to forward baggage from Roch. to Buff., congratulations on antlers. 9/19/1851]
	23	A. P. S. Geo. Cooper to E. S. P. Pembroke. [my duties as sub-sachem, 5/28/1852]
	24	Asher Wright to Spencer Cove. Re. Printing New Testament "Baptism"; Laura W. to C. G. Parker, 1852.
	25	A. P. S. E. S. Parker to H. R. Schoolcraft, Rochester, 3/25/1853. [threat to Tonawanda reservation]
	26	10/5/1854 Report of the committee investigation by the Seneca Council to examine accounts of Andrew John.
	27	"Old Party Caucus" Catt. Seneca Nation nominations. 4/29/1856.
	28	A. P. S. Ganosqua to E. S. P. Tonawanda. 7/13/1857. [want Nic's services as interpreter]
	29	Census of the Tonawanda Band. 11/1857
	30	Census of the Tonawanda Band. 24/5/1858
	31	Sen L. H. Morgan to Prof. James Hall (Albany). Rochester, 6 Dec. 1868. 4 pp.
	32	Asher Wright: Council of the Six Nations at Cattaraugus. Dec. 1, 1862 (Parker Pub. 1916: 144- 151.)
	33	1914 Onondaga words and names. W. M. Beauchamp. Syracuse Library. [includes correspondence from author]

Box #	Folder/Item	Folder Heading
2 (cont.)	34	1889 De Cost Smith. Midwinter festival and witchcraft at Onondaga. Library M. A. I. – H. F. 20pp. typescript.
	35	1924 Ward, Henry D. D. Sketch of mission work among the Iroquois.
	36	1953 Preliminary report on the Seneca- Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma. 102 pp. mimeo (from attorneys- historical background to land claims). [“rights...arising out of...land holdings are of three kinds...”]
3		This box contains several hundred 8”x5” note cards, grouped by year, from 1796 -1854 (1813 is missing). Most of these cards contain transcriptions, summaries or excerpts from original correspondence. Many of the letters are either to or from Indian Agents, and focus on the US Government’s involvement in the running of Indian affairs on reservations, notably the Canandaigua. Some of the cards in this box contain bibliographic information on documents found in boxes 1 and 2.