NEW JERSEY STATE ARCHIVES COLLECTION GUIDE

Record Group:	Morris Canal Investigation Committee of 1912-13
Series:	Records, 1863-1921
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Institutional History | Contents

Content Note

On 27 February 1911, a bill was proposed to repeal the charter of the Morris Canal and Banking Company and to dispose of its property. A commission, consisting of Governor Woodrow Wilson, Attorney General Edmund Wilson, and Judge Bennet Van Syckel, recommended the abandonment of the canal upon terms providing for the payment to the State of "only about seven hundred thousand dollars" by the Lehigh Valley Railroad Co. By Assembly Joint Resolution No. 11, passed 28 March 1912, it was resolved that a 12-member committee be appointed to report on the extent, condition and value of the property owned by the canal company, and to investigate whether the company had forfeited its charter by reason of failure to operate or maintain the canal. The committee was appointed in April and the twelve men, along with other members of the legislature, toured the canal by boat in July 1912. In 1914, the committee reported that the company had not forfeited its charter; however, they recommended that the canal be abandoned.

Records of the Investigation Committee of 1912-1913 include correspondence, maps, photographs, newspaper clippings, reports, and transcripts of the committee's proceedings. The files also contain several writings of Hudson Maxim, a local land owner who vigorously supported abandonment of the canal. The "Miscellaneous records" file contains legislation, correspondence, and reports, as well as documents relating to the case in chancery between the Morris Canal and Banking Company and the Central Railroad Company of New Jersey, 1863.

Contents

Box 1

Committee Expenses, 1912-1914

Correspondence of F. G. Stickel, 1912-1921

Letter and draft of "Morris Canal Parkway Project: A Little Wisdom and Much Expensive Folly," by Hudson Maxim, 1914

Legislation, 1804-1913

Maps:

a. "Profile of Morris Canal, Compiled and Drawn under the direction of Wm. H. Talcott, Engineer & Supt., by Charles D. Ward, January 1861..." Scale: horizontal 1/2" = 1 mile, vertical 5/8" = 100 feet (blueprint, 2 copies).

b. "Low Water Map of Lake Hopatcong" (no date or scale shown).

c. "Property Map of Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey. Prepared by Hudson Maxim For the Morris Canal Investigation Commission, November 16, 1912. Compiled From Various Maps and Actual Surveys by P. E. Boomer, C. E." Scale approx. 1" = 1030'.

d. "Map of Northern New Jersey... Prepared by Hudson Maxim, Landing, New Jersey, for the Morris Canal Investigation Committee, 1913." Scale approx. 1" = 7.06 miles. Shows Lake Hopatcong Watershed and other watersheds supplying the canal.

e. Map of Jersey City: "This Map was drawn for the Morris Canal & Banking Co., August 1863, by L. B. Ward under direction of W. H. Talcott, Scale: 300 feet = 1 Inch."

Miscellaneous records, 1863-1914

Newspaper clippings, 1912-1914

Box 2

Photographs:

a. 42 small B&W prints, all labeled, Hackettstown to Jersey City. Apparently many missing.

b. 69 mounted 4.5" x 6.5" B&W prints, labeled, Phillipsburg to Jersey City, taken 1-4 July 1912 and 30 December 1913, and index [some missing].

Box 3

Photographs [cont'd]:

c. 42 small B&W prints, all labeled, Hackettstown to Jersey City. Apparently many missing.

Transcripts of Proceedings:

a. 30 October 1912, Newark

b. 16 November 1912, Lake Hopatcong

c. 11 December 1912, Paterson

d. 11 January 1913, Jersey City (2 copies)

e. 18 January 1913, Jersey City (2 copies)

Reports, etc.:

a. *Report of the Commissioners Appointed under Concurrent Resolution of March 31, 1903, To Investigate and Report Upon the Abandonment of Navigation of the Morris Canal* by George T. Werts, John W. Griggs, and Foster M. Voorhees, Commissioners, 1903 [photocopy].

b. *In the Matter of the Investigation before Hon. George T. Werts, Hon. John W. Griggs and Hon. Foster M. Voorhees, Commissioners, Pursuant to a Concurrent Resolution of the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey (passed by the Assembly and concurred in by the Senate, March 31, 1903), to provide for the Appointment of Commissioners to examine into the report upon the question whether legislation should be enacted permitting the abandonment of navigation on the Morris Canal* [brief] by Roderick Byington, Counsel of the Lake Hopatcong Protective Association, 12 August 1903 [photocopy].

c. Two statistical tables [both broken]: one showing New Jersey agriculture and industry statistics (1900-1910); the other showing Ship Canal statistics, Construction Data, and Industries of States [1904 and 1909] Influenced by the proposed Atlantic Intercoastal Waterway from Boston, MA, to Beaufort, NC.

d. *Report of the Morris Canal Investigation Committee appointed under Joint Resolution of April 12, 1912* by Foster F. Birch et als., 1912.

e. *Lake Hopatcong the Beautiful: A Plea for its Dedication as a Public Park and for its Preservation as a Pleasure and Health Resort for the Benefit of all the People* by Hudson Maxim, 1913.

f. *Jersey City's Interest in the Morris Canal* issued by the Board of Commissioners of Jersey City, 14 January 1915; signed by George F. Brensinger, Director of Revenue and Finance, Jersey City, NJ.

g. *The Great Chinese Wall and the Morris Canal* by Hudson Maxim, no date.

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