

THE PICTURESQUE AND WAR: Visual and Literary Aspects of 19th Century Niagara Tourism

June 10, 2012 - February 24, 2013



CASTELLANI
ART MUSEUM
OF NIAGARA UNIVERSITY



after Louis Hennepin, *Untitled (Chute D'eau de Niagara)* from *A New Discovery of a Vast County in America*, 1698, second-state engraving, 7 x 7½ in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

(Cover Image) Thomas Cole, 1834, *A Distant View of the Falls of Niagara* from *John H. Hilton's History and Topography of the United States of North America*, colored steel engraving, 5½ x 7½ in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection. Gift of Dr. J. Warren Perry, 2003.



William Henry Bartlett, *View Below Table Rock*, 1840-1842, etching, 14½ x 11½ in. Collection of Tom and Beth DiCamillo, Niagara Falls, NY.

Exhibition Overview

This exhibition explores the role of books and related visual arts in the marketing of the Niagara region as a premier tourist destination before and after the War of 1812. The exhibit first shows how ideas of the picturesque and sublime developed beginning in the 18th century. These concepts were later used to market Niagara Falls as a natural wonder of unspoiled beauty and awe-inspiring power. Richly illustrated fine books, travel guides, maps and skillfully rendered prints (many based on paintings by the 19th century's best known artists) all helped to attract visitors to the Niagara region. Following the War of 1812, former battlefields and war monuments were added to the list of the region's tourist attractions. On the lighter side, humorous satiric texts and illustrations show the battle between the sublime and ridiculous as the Falls were exploited by industry and rampant commercialization.

Kete Koperski

Director, Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University

The Picturesque and Sublime

Until the Romantic era, tourist travel was largely focused around the "The Grand Tour" of the great cities of Europe. Along with greater accessibility to the natural environment through improvements in transportation, Romantic ideals engendered a profound shift in cultural perspective. The scenery of the natural world came to be considered picturesque. Romantic poets in England and America celebrated a new kind of tourism and their poetic memoirs of travel granted a new nobility and grandeur to the natural world, according it a status that had previously been reserved for the great man-made monuments of European urban culture. Landscape painting, previously seen only as a background for portraiture or for biblical, historical, and other subject matter of greater import, now enjoyed esthetic standing in its own right.

In their approach to the picturesque, artists, poets and philosophers became particularly interested in what they called the sublime. They found the sublime in the more fearsome and rugged aspects of nature – craggy outcroppings, overhanging cliffs, vast expanses of imposing sky, mists, heaps of boulders piled up treacherously in a deep chasm, the awesome waterfall of a mighty river. It was inevitable that Niagara would become an icon of the sublime on both sides of the Atlantic, arousing those contradictory feelings of terror and attraction that so captivated artist, poet and tourist alike.

Dr. Robert M. Giannetti

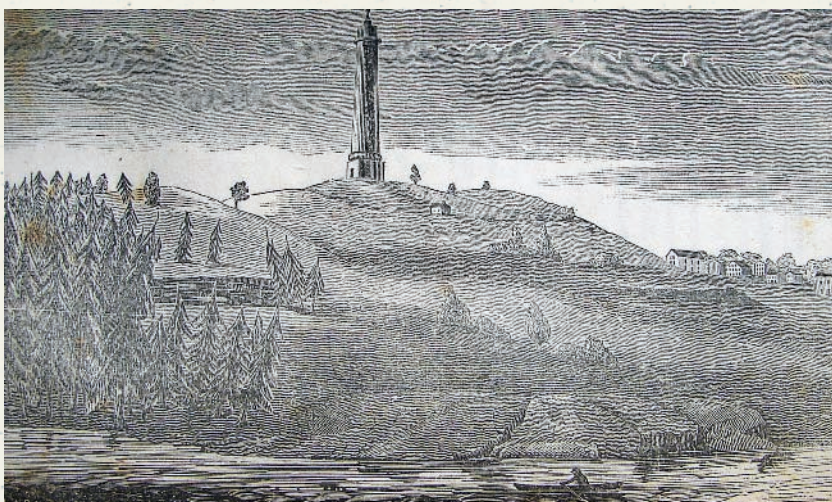
Guest Curator, Author and Antiquarian Bookseller



James B. Dennis, *The Battle of Queenston Heights*, c. 1820-30, oil on canvas, 21½x30 in. RiverBrink Art Museum, Samuel E. Weir Collection. Digital reproduction courtesy of RiverBrink Art Museum.



Frederic Edwin Church, (*Niagara Falls*), 1857, chromolithograph, 17 x 36½ in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.



H. Park, *View of Brock's Monument, Queenston Heights from Samuel De Veaux's The Falls of Niagara/ Tourist's Guide to this Wonder of Nature*, 1840, wood engraving. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

This view of Brock's Monument appeared in the 1840 edition of Samuel DeVeaux's guidebook, *To the Falls*, and must have been hastily edited for the summer tourist season. On April 17, 1840 Benjamin Lett, a supporter of Canadian independence from Great Britain, detonated explosives under the monument and cracked its exterior structure. Note the jagged line on this print, indicating Lett's destructive act. Both Canadians and Americans deplored Lett and his terrorism, uniting the two nations in their opposition to radical opposition to established power. A second monument, which now stands on Queenston Heights, was not begun until 1856. The image of Niagara Falls created by Frederic Edwin Church in 1857 (center) represents an urge to return to the aesthetics of the sublime following many years of excessive commercialism at the falls, a sign of what many felt to be the impending loss of wilderness throughout the United States.

This exhibition and related events are free of charge and will take place at the Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University. Please visit castellaniartmuseum.org for more details.

Sunday, September 23
2:00-4:00 p.m.

The History of Tourism in the Niagara Region

Presented by Dr. Tom Chambers, Assoc. Professor of History, Niagara University; and John Percy, President and CEO of the Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation.

Sunday, October 21
2:00-4:00 p.m.

Reading and interpretation of the poem, *The Foresters*, which describes a journey, by foot, from the lower Niagara River to the Falls in the Autumn of 1804

Presented by Dr. Robert M. Giannetti, author and antiquarian bookseller, Niagara University Adjunct Professor and Guest Curator of *The Picturesque and War*.

Sunday, November 4
2:00-4:00 p.m.

Memories of War: Visiting Battle Grounds and Bone Fields in the Early American Republic

A lecture and book signing with Dr. Tom Chambers, Associate Professor of History, Niagara University.

Sunday, November 18
2:00-4:00 p.m.

Reading and interpretation of the 19th century comic masterpiece: *The Tour of Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque*

by Dr. Robert M. Giannetti, author and antiquarian bookseller, Niagara University Adjunct Professor and Guest Curator, *The Picturesque and War*.

Exhibition Checklist Works are a Generous Donation from Dr. Charles Rand Penney, partially funded by the Castellani Purchase Fund, with additional funding from Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Lytle, 2006, unless otherwise noted.

The Power and Majesty of the Sublime

after Louis Hennepin, Untitled (Chute D'eau de Niagara) from *A New Discovery of a Vast County in America*, 1698, second-state engraving, 7 x 7 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Thomas Cole, *A Distant View of the Falls of Niagara*, 1834, colored steel engraving, 8 3/4 x 10 1/2 in. from John H. Hinton's *The Historic and topography of the United States of North America*: London: J.T. Hinton and Simpkin & Marshall, 1831. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection. Gift of Dr. J. Warren Perry, 2003.

John Vanderlyn, *A Distant View of the Falls of Niagara, Including Both Branches with the Island, and Adjacent Shores, Taken from the Vicinity of the Indian Ladder*, 1804, aquatint, 32 1/2 x 39 1/2 (f). Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Tourist Guidebooks—Mapping the Way to the Falls
Alfred Rudolf Waud, Folding Panoramic View from Niagara to Quebec, 1857, wood engraving, 7 1/4 x 13 1/2 in. from William S. Hunter's *Panoramic Guide from Niagara to Quebec*. Boston, MA: J. P. Jewitt and Company, 1857. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Unknown, Map of Niagara River, 1843, wood engraving, 5 1/2 x 4 1/2 in. from T.G. Hulett's *Every Man his Own Guide to the Falls of Niagara*. Buffalo, NY: Faxton and Company, 1843. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

John Maude, *Visit to the Falls of Niagara*, in 1800. London, England: Longman, Reese, Brown and Green, Paternoster-Row, Richard, Nichols, Wakefield, 1816, 9 1/4 x 8 1/4 x 1 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

William S. Hunter, Jr., *Hunter's Panoramic Guide from Niagara to Quebec*. Montréal, Québec, Canada: Hunter and Pickup, 1860, 7 1/4 x 5 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Alexander Wilson's Poetic Journey and His Artist Followers
Alexander Wilson, *The Foresters: A Poem Descriptive of a Pedestrian Journey to the Falls of Niagara in the Autumn of 1804*, 1838. First Edition, printed by Joseph Painter: West Chester, PA, 1838. Original binding: full-speckled calf-skin. 5 1/2 x 3 3/4 x 1/2 in. Collection of Rita M. and Robert M. Giannetti, Lewiston, NY.

Alexander Wilson, (the Portfolio, Volume III) *THE PORT FOLIO, VOLUME III; NO. 3, 1838 from The Foresters: A Poem Descriptive of a Pedestrian Journey to the Falls of Niagara in the Autumn of 1804*, 1810, hand-bound book, 8 1/2 x 5 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

William Henry Bartlett, *A Forest on Lake Ontario*, 1838, hand colored etching, (f) 12 1/2 x 14 1/2 in. Collection of Tom and Beth DiCamillo, Niagara Falls, NY.

William Henry Bartlett, *Brock's Monument*, after 1840, hand colored etching, (f) 10 1/2 x 12 1/2 in. Collection of Tom and Beth DiCamillo, Niagara Falls, NY.

William Henry Bartlett, *Queenston Heights*, n.d., hand colored etching, (f) 4 x 7 in. Collection of Tom and Beth DiCamillo, Niagara Falls, NY.

Karl Bodmer, *Niagara Falls/Les Chutes du Niagara/Niagara Falls*, 1843, aquatint, (f) 25 x 29 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Alexander Wilson, *White-Headed Eagle*, 1811, engraving with hand color, 11 x 14 1/2 in. from *American Ornithology; The Natural history of the Birds of the United States*. Philadelphia, PA: Bradford and Inskeep, 1808-14. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

William Henry Bartlett, *Niagara Falls (from the ladder on the American side)*, 1839, hand colored etching, 7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in. Collection of Tom and Beth DiCamillo, Niagara Falls, NY.

William Henry Bartlett, *The Landing on the American Side (Falls of Niagara)*, 1838, hand colored etching, 7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in. Collection of Tom and Beth DiCamillo, Niagara Falls, NY.

William Henry Bartlett, *View Below Table Rock*, 1840-1842, hand colored etching, 14 1/2 x 11 1/2 in. Collection of Tom and Beth DiCamillo, Niagara Falls, NY.

John Vanderlyn, *A View of the Westerly Branch of the Falls of Niagara Taken from the Table Rock, Looking up the River, over the Rapids*, 1804, aquatint, 32 1/2 x 39 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Thomas Benecke, *Niagara Falls. Canadian Side*, 1856, lithograph with hand color, 36 1/2 x 47 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

The War of 1812
Horatio A. Parsons, Map of Niagara River and Parts Adjacent, 1835, engraving, 11 1/2 x 7 1/2 in. from *A Guide to Travelers Visiting the Falls of Niagara*. Buffalo, NY: Oliver G. Steele, 1835. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Willis J. Abbot, Blue Jackets of 1812. New York, NY: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1887, 9 1/2 x 7 1/4 x 1 1/2 in. Courtesy of the Niagara Falls Public Library, Niagara Falls, NY.

Attributed to James B. Dennis, *The Battle of Queenston Heights*, c1820-30, oil on canvas, 19 1/2 x 28 1/2 in. Reproduction courtesy of the RiverBrink Art Museum. Samuel E. Weir Collection. Photo credit: RiverBrink Art Museum.

H. M. Brackenridge, *History of the Late War*. Philadelphia, PA: James Kay and Brother, 1839, 7 1/2 x 4 1/2 in. Courtesy of the Niagara Falls Public Library, Niagara Falls, NY.

William D. James, *A Full and Correct Account of the Military Occurrences in the War of 1812*, (Vol. I & Vol. II). London, England: Published from James D. Williams, 1818, 8 1/2 x 5 1/2 x 1 1/2 in. (each). Courtesy of the Niagara Falls Public Library, Niagara Falls, NY.

Samuel de Veaux, *The Falls of Niagara, Tourist's Guide to this Wonder of Nature*. Buffalo, NY: William B. Hayden, 1838. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

William Henry Bartlett, *Brock's Monument*, after 1840, lithograph, 7 1/2 x 9 1/2 in. from Nathaniel Parker Willis's *American Scenery; Land Lake and River Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature*, London, England: Oxford University, Virtue, 1840. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

British and American Satire—Lampoons of Picturesque Tourism in England and the American Commercialization of Niagara Falls
William Combe, *The Tour(s) of Dr. Syntax. In search of the Picturesque (Volume I)*, *The Tour(s) of Dr. Syntax. In search of Consolation (Volume II)*, *The Tour(s) of Dr. Syntax. In search of a Wife (Volume III)*, c. 1821. Third Edition, bound and signed by Root and Loudou: London, England, c. 1821. Full crushed-Morocco binding in maroon with elaborate gilt decoration, 9 1/2 x 6 1/2 x 1 1/2 in. (each). Collection of Rita M. and Robert M. Giannetti, Lewiston, NY.

Unknown, *The Rapids Below Niagara Falls—the Sublime and the Ridiculous*, 1877, wood engraving, 16 1/2 x 23 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Unknown, *Save Niagara Falls—From This from PUCK magazine*, 1906, chromolithograph, 20 1/2 x 13 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Hoster, *Exercices de L'Echelle Perilleuse. Executes par M. Hanlon, en Amerique, Sous le Pont Suspendu de la Cataracte de Niagara*, c1850s or '60s, (f) 21 1/2 x 26 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Unknown, *Monsieur Blondin Crossing Niagara on a Rope, Dressed as an Ape*, July 14, 1859, 1859, wood engraving, 15 1/2 x 11 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Gillam, *The Shaky Situation of the Political Blondin from PUCK magazine*, 1885, chromolithograph, 14 1/2 x 10 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

James Wells Champney, *Scene at Niagara Falls—Buying Mementos from Harper's Weekly*, 1877 wood engraving, 15 1/2 x 10 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Marlene Printup, *Pincushion with Bird's Nest Motif*, n.d., beads, velvet, 5 1/2 x 5 1/2 x 1 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection. Commission to the Artist paid for by a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts' Folk Arts Program, 1997.

Marlene Printup, *Pincushion with Image of Niagara Falls*, 1992, beads, velvet, 10 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 3 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection. Commission to the Artist paid for by a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts' Folk Arts Program, 1997.

Thomas Nast, *The Political Niagara—A Drowning Man Catches at a Straw from Harper's Weekly*, 1868, wood engraving, 15 1/2 x 10 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

H. M. Petit, *Our Famous Niagara Falls as it may Appear Shortly. How the Wonderful Cataract and its Surroundings Will Soon Look Unless the Diversion of Water by power companies for Commercial purposes is Stopped from Leslie's Weekly*, 1906, relief half-tone, 16 1/2 x 11 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

The Re-Emergence of the Picturesque

Charles Parsons, *The Railroad Suspension Bridge Near Niagara Falls*, 1856-7, lithograph with hand color, 14 x 16 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Reputed to be Staffordshire Bone China, Serving Platter, c. 1870-1900, red transfer print, 16 x 20 in. Collection of Tom and Beth DiCamillo, Niagara Falls, NY.

Frederic Edwin Church, (*Niagara Falls*), 1857, chromolithograph, 17 x 36 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

William Cullen Bryant, Illustrations on steel and wood, by eminent American artists. *Picturesque America; or, The Land We Live In. A Delineation by Pen and pencil of the Mountains, Rivers, Lakes, Forests, Water-falls, Shores, Cañons, Valleys, Cities, and Other Picturesque Features of our Country* (two volumes). Published by D. Appleton and Company, New York, NY, 1872. First Edition. 3/4 Brown leather calf, with gilt decorated spine. 13 1/4 x 10 x 2 1/2 in. (each). Collection of Rita M. and Robert M. Giannetti, Lewiston, NY.

Arthur Lumley, *Niagara Seen with Different Eyes*, from *Harper's Weekly*, 1873, wood engraving, 15 1/2 x 21 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

Prints and Print-Making Techniques

Unknown, *History of Wood Engraving from Supplement to the Illustrated London News*, 1844, wood engraving, 23x17 in. (f). Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection. Anonymous Gift, 2011.

Unknown Manufacturer(s), *Steel Printing Plates*, c. 1885-1860, mild steel, 7 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 1/2 & 9 x 11 1/2 x 1/2 in. Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection.

William Henry Bartlett, *Self Portrait from Working A Canoe Up a Rapid*, 1836, steel engraving, 13 1/2 x 10 1/2 in. Collection of Tom and Beth DiCamillo, Niagara Falls, NY.

The Picturesque and War: Visual and Literary Aspects of 19th Century Niagara Tourism was organized by Robert Giannetti, Guest Curator; Dr. Thomas Chambers, Chair, Associate Professor of History, Niagara University; Kate Koperski, Director, Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University and Michael Beam, Curator of Collections and Exhibitions, Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University.

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