

Glass Negatives Series

A Finding Aid



R5-S5-B20-N274

Livingston County Historian's Office
5 Murray Hill Dr.
Mt. Morris, NY 14510
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I. Collection Summary

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Title | Glass Negatives Series |
| Collection Titles And Nos. | Daniel A. Fink (1938-1995) Collection (C109); Jason Sanford Hewitt (1862-1960) Collection (C111); Genesee Wesleyan Seminary Glass Negatives Collection (C110); Springwater and Hemlock Glass Negatives Collection (C194); Floyd G. Ingraham (1881-1920) Collection (C195) |
| Extent | 7.9 linear feet of records; 114 digital images |
| Date Range | c. 1890s – c. 1920s |
| Abstract | This series comprises glass negatives that have been collected from various donors by the Livingston County Historian’s Office over the years. Some items have lost their provenance, but there are known collections from local author and architecture professor Daniel A. Fink and local photographer from Portage, Jason Sanford Hewitt. There are also many images relating to the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary at Lima, NY, with attribution to Professor Adam Clarke Works. Digital-only collections focus on the geographical areas of Springwater and Livonia, Livingston County, New York, with attribution to Floyd G. Ingraham (1881-1920) and the Johnson Brothers, all of Springwater. |
| Languages | English. |
| Access and Restrictions | <p>Use of the records in this collection is for serious research and by request and permission of the Livingston County Historian. Any use of the material in publications must be cited as follows, “Courtesy of Livingston County Historian’s Office, New York.” Additionally, all items should be handled with care.</p> <p>To arrange to conduct research with the documents in the collection, contact the Livingston County Historian by mail at: 5 Murray Hill Drive, Mount Morris, NY, by phone at (585) 243-7955, or by e-mail at Historian@livingstoncountyny.gov.</p> <p>Many materials in the collections have been digitized.</p> |
| Copyright | Some materials may be subject to copyright. Researchers are required to seek written permission from the copyright holder to reproduce and/or publish materials under copyright. |

II. Biographical and Background Information

Daniel A. Fink (1938-1995) Collection (C109)

Daniel A. Fink was an art professor and chairperson of the art department at SUNY Geneseo from 1968 until his death in 1995. He was also a photographer, videographer, and writer, authoring the book Barns of the Genesee Valley, 1790-1915, in 1987. He had collected photographic images of diverse subjects from around Livingston County, especially images of architecture; some images may be duplicates of prints also held by the Livingston County Historian's Office, but many are unique images of local landmarks, street scenes, people, and businesses. Upon his retirement from SUNY Geneseo, Ron Krenzer, Fink's colleague, donated this group of glass negatives from Fink's collection between about 2005 and 2012. Some items are known to be from Fink's collection, while other groups of images are attributed to the collection but it is not certain if this was their provenance.

Genesee Wesleyan Seminary Glass Negatives Collection (C110)

The provenance and donation date of these images is not known; it is likely that they were donated to the Livingston County Historian's Office prior to 2005. According to the former Lima Town Historian, Douglas Morgan, longtime Lima Genesee Wesleyan Seminary (GWS) chemistry professor Adam Clarke Works is likely responsible for this collection. Prof. Works was a photographer, and Mr. Morgan recognized similar photos of Works' family in other collections. Additionally, Mr. Morgan believes there may be a connection to Lima native and GWS graduate George Corby. Corby took photographs of students and classrooms around the Seminary during the 1914-1918 time period, and other photographs ascribed to him are similar to those in the Lima Genesee Wesleyan Seminary Collection. It is likely that Corby had Prof. Works for some of his coursework at the Seminary. The collection is grouped together, but since there are other Lima and Genesee Wesleyan Seminary images in this series not associated with this collection, it may be that it was fragmented within the glass negatives series.

Jason Sanford Hewitt (1862-1960) Collection (C111)

Jason Sanford Hewitt (1862-1960) was a native of Portage, Livingston County, NY. He was a district school teacher and later a rural mail carrier from 1901-1927, but he was also a prolific photographer. He and his two brothers, Frank and Charles, opened a photography studio in Nunda in 1890 and it remained open until 1896, when the brothers went into business for themselves. Jason continued documenting life around Portage. The collection of glass negatives housed by the Livingston County Historian's Office chronicles his family and the surrounding region of the Genesee Valley, with images from Letchworth State Park, the scenery of Portage, and Jason's four daughters, Rena, Maude, Mildred and Edna.

This collection surfaced from amongst the Portage Town Historian's archives and from community members in 2004-2005. Amie Alden, Livingston County historian, was the catalyst for pulling together the materials and housing them safely at the Livingston County Historian's Office for several years. They remain property of the Town of Portage and have been returned to Portage under the care of the town historian. Portage Historian Mary Thompson Ransom and daughter Marri L. Ransom were instrumental in preserving the collection and identifying many of the subjects of the images. A publication about Jason Hewitt and his photography with a sampling of images from the collection was published by Amie Alden and the Ransoms in 2006, titled *Sentimental Journey: the Photography of Jason Sanford Hewitt* (Pioneer, 2006).

Springwater and Hemlock Glass Negatives Collection (C194)

In the summer of 2019, the Livingston County Historian's Office purchased this series of digitized glass negative images from J. Stark, an antiques dealer in Ontario County, New York. He claimed he had purchased the glass negatives from an estate sale, and so provenance is not known. The originals were not purchased by the Historian's Office. For the most part, only those images that can be generally or specifically identified have been retained; some images of advertisements and etchings belonging to other counties in New York were discarded during the inventorying process in 2020.

The images in the collection are mostly identified in white lettering and most pertain to subjects in Springwater, Livingston County, New York, with a significant minority showing Livonia, Livingston County, especially the hamlet of Hemlock. The images detail landscapes, important buildings, people and events, and businesses from these locations. Several are labeled "Johnson Photo" indicating work of the Johnson Brothers, photographers active in Springwater through the 1890s and possibly as late as 1910. They also visited surrounding towns, and may have opened studios in Livonia and Wayland as well.

According to researcher Julie Manwarren of Pennsylvania, from 2021 correspondence, the majority of images in this collection are by the Johnson Brothers and several are attributed to Floyd G. Ingraham based on style, subject, copies found elsewhere, and handwriting analysis. A few remain unknown, but are possibly also Ingraham's work.

For years, these and similar images have been accessed and shared by various historians and enthusiasts, including Jane Schryver of Dansville, Livingston County, New York. At this point it is not known where they originated or if there were several sets that have been circulating.

Floyd G. Ingraham (1881-1920) Collection (C195)

Floyd Ingraham was born 1881 in Springwater, the son of Marchus J. Ingraham (1855-1942) and Nettie Ford (1856-1931), his only sibling being Otto H. Ingraham (1883-1922). In 1909, Floyd was married to Anna Cork (1891-1981) of Springwater, daughter of Joseph and Luthera Loveland Cork. Their only child was Kenneth Ingraham (1913-1975), and among his children was Ron Ingraham of Springwater. After Floyd's death, Anna remarried to Floyd Caskey of Springwater.

Floyd's photographic career began in 1904, though he had previously been a mason, plasterer, and painter and likely continued this work alongside photography. According to work by Rick Osiecki of Hemlock and others, Floyd's images were primarily made into real photo postcards and most depicted homes, scenes, and portraits of local families.

In February 2020, the Livingston County Historian's Office heard from a caller about a series of glass negatives that were offered for auction on eBay.com. The seller, according to Springwater, Livingston County, New York correspondents, was based in Canada and had amassed hundreds of glass negatives with subject matter related to Springwater and area. These photographic plates were attributed, at least in part, to Floyd G. Ingraham of Springwater by members of the Springwater-Webster Crossing Historical Society, Rick Osiecki of Hemlock, and Julie Manwarren of Pennsylvania, a scholar of Floyd G. Ingraham's work. The quantity and rising prices of the glass negatives offered by the seller precluded purchase by any local entity, and therefore the images offered on the online auction were downloaded by the County Historian's Office to document the collection and subject matter contained therein.

The scope of the collection is narrower than the original offerings to include mostly those slides that are easily identifiable as belonging to Springwater or the area, either via original labeling or comparison to existing identified images. Therefore, the managed digital collection may be missing Springwater-related images and information pertinent to the original collection. The title of the collection refers to the suspicion that Ingraham produced the images, but none have been truly verified. The Johnson Brothers of Springwater, also photographers at roughly the same time, produced images with a similar look. A few images were inserted recently, with typed captions and credits.

While many images in the collection appear to be unique, some images have apparently been accessed and shared by various historians and enthusiasts for several years, including Jane Schryver of Dansville, Livingston County, New York. At this point it is not known where they originated or if there were several sets that have been circulating.

Other Glass Negatives

Besides the collections listed above, there are likely other glass negatives collected by the Livingston County Historian's Office over the years from individual donations. Unfortunately most of the provenance and even some identification is missing from these images, but a detailed study could help reveal more subject identification.

III. Contents List

Glass Negatives

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Box 1 | Assorted images - Daniel A. Fink Collection (23 items) |
| Box 2 | Assorted images, some from Dansville – probably Daniel A. Fink Collection (10 items) |
| Box 3 | Geneseo and Avon negatives, positives, and prints – Daniel A. Fink Collection (25 items) |
| Box 4 | Avon images; Aaron Barber Farm (10 items) |
| Box 5 | Geneseo and Avon images (10 items) |
| Box 6 | Assorted images, some from Livonia (20 items) |
| Box 7 | Geneseo and Lima images, including Genesee Wesleyan Seminary (26 items) |
| Box 8 | Assorted Avon images (18 items) |
| Box 9 | Assorted images, may be Stony Brook Park (10 items) |
| Box 10 | St. Agnes School, Avon (4 items) |
| Box 11 | Education-related (5 items) |
| Box 12 | Jackson Sanitorium – probably Daniel A. Fink Collection (13 items) |
| Box 13 | Assorted images – probably Daniel A. Fink Collection (16 items) |
| Box 14 | Avon and Geneseo images (8 items) |
| Box 15 | Assorted family images, one Daniel A. Fink Collection item (38 items) |
| Box 16 | Assorted images (5 items) |
| Box 17 | Assorted Dansville, Geneseo, Portage images, 1 from Daniel A. Fink Collection (31 items) |
| Box 18 | Assorted Avon and Geneseo images, 1 from Daniel A. Fink Collection (14 items) |

No Box 19 – numbering error

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|----------------|--|
| Box 20 | Assorted images – Avon, Livonia, families (52 items) |
| Box 21 | Assorted images – Genesee Wesleyan Seminary Glass Negatives Collection (156 items) |
| Box 22a | Lima images – Genesee Wesleyan Seminary Glass Negatives Collection (50 items) |
| Box 22b | Lima images – Genesee Wesleyan Seminary Glass Negatives Collection (56 items) |
| Box 23 | Lima images – Genesee Wesleyan Seminary Glass Negatives Collection (64 items) |
| Box 24 | Jason Sanford Hewitt (1862-1960) Collection |
| Box 25 | Jason Sanford Hewitt (1862-1960) Collection |
| Box 26 | Jason Sanford Hewitt (1862-1960) Collection |
| Box 27 | Jason Sanford Hewitt (1862-1960) Collection |

Glass Negatives – Digital Images Only

Springwater and Hemlock Glass Negatives Collection (C194)

Images of landscapes, important buildings, people and events, homes, and businesses; especially good representation of Main Street Hemlock in Livonia, Livingston County. Attributed to Johnson Brothers of Springwater and Floyd G. Ingraham of Springwater. (58 items, about 25 relating to Springwater and about 30 for Livonia and Hemlock)

Floyd G. Ingraham Collection (C195)

Images of people (Ingraham family and unidentified), Springwater District #2 school and pupils, railroads, landscapes, homes, and businesses; especially good representation of Springwater village four corners, and also a few images of churches and businesses in Livonia and Hemlock, Livingston County, New York. (56 items)

IV. Related Materials

Livingston County Historian's Office

Mt. Morris, NY

- Alden, Amie. Sentimental Journey: the Photography of Jason Sanford Hewitt. Henrietta: Pioneer Printing and Publishing, 2006
- Photograph collection, subject binders, postcard images, genealogical material, and more
- Daniel A. Fink (1938-1995) Collection architecture slides and prints
- C193 Ron Ingraham Collection
 - Images of Ingraham family members, including Marchus J. Ingraham, Floyd G. Ingraham, Otto Ingraham, and other identified and unidentified people