

ESTHER CLARK WRIGHT ARCHIVES

ACADIA UNIVERSITY

Ralph P. Clarkson fonds

Accession 1900.004



Compiled by Sarah Beckett

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Ralph P. Clarkson fonds. – [textual records]. – 1916-1919. – 5.4cm of textual records

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File List

- 1900.004/1 Letters Patent – Great Britain. – 1916. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Great Britain to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson.
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easily
- 1900.004/2 Letters Patent – Australia. – 1916. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Australia to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easily
- 1900.004/3 Letters Patent – Dominion of Canada. – 1916. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by the Dominion of Canada to Ralph P. Clarkson and George Barton Cutten for the machine for utilizing the energy of flowing water invented by Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Supplied title based on content of item
- 1900.004/4 Transfer of Patent – United States. – 1917. – 1 item**
Item is a record of the transferal of the patent for the Clarkson's Hydraulic Current Motor to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company.
Note: Supplied title based on content of item
- 1900.004/5 Letters Patent –France. – 1917. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by France to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Item is written in French
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easily
- 1900.004/6 Letters Patent – Switzerland. – 1917. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Great Britain to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Item is written in French
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easily
- 1900.004/7 Letters Patent – Sweden. – 1917. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Sweden to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Item is written in Swedish
- 1900.004/8 Letters Patent – Norway. – 1917. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Great Britain to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Item is written in Norwegian
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easily

- 1900.004/9 Letters Patent – Italy. – 1917. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Italy to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Item is written in Italian
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easil.
- 1900.004/10 Letters Patent – United States. – 1917. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by the United States of America to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Supplied title based on content of item
- 1900.004/11 Letters Patent – Columbia. – 1917. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Great Britain to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson.
Note: Item is written in Spanish
- 1900.004/12 Letters Patent – Japan. – 1918. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Great Britain to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Item is written in Japanese, with an attached translation
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easily
- 1900.004/13 Letters Patent – Argentina. – 1918. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Argentina to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Item is written in Spanish
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easily
- 1900.004/14 Patent Specification – United States. – 1918. – 1 item**
Item is a detailed description of the Clarkson Current Motor, including diagrams.
- 1900.004/15 Letters Patent – Brazil. – 1919. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Brazil to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.
Note: Item is written in Portuguese
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easily
- 1900.004/16 Letters Patent – Newfoundland. – 1919. – 1 item**
Item is a patent granted by Great Britain to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson.
Note: Envelope in which patent is housed tears easily

1900.004/17 Letters Patent – Canada. – 1919. – 1 item

Item is a patent granted by Canada to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company for the Hydraulic Current Motor invented by Ralph P. Clarkson. Also included are the specifications for this device.

Biographical Information

Ralph P. Clarkson graduated from the Worcester Polytechnic Institute with a degree in Electrical Engineering, and what would now be considered a minor in Mechanical Engineering. He then spent one year teaching at the University of Vermont before becoming the Assistant Examiner for the U. S. Patent Office, as well as the electrical engineering expert for the United States.¹ Eventually admitted to the bar as a registered patent attorney, Clarkson was widely published in such journals as *Scientific American*, *Electrical World*, *American Machinist*, *Horseless Age*, *Automobile Topics*, and *The Independent* of New York. Clarkson was also involved in the development of experimental machinery for various organizations, but in 1912, he left the U. S. in order to come to Wolfville, N. S. and accept a position as the Ivan Curry Professor of Engineering at Acadia University – a position that he held until 1917.

While at Acadia, Clarkson did not pursue a life of pure academia. Instead, he became involved in the scheme to create a power plant that would utilize the tides of the Bay of Fundy to generate electricity, and in 1916, he became the Vice-President and Managing Director of the Cape Split Development Company. However, this was not to be the only role he played in the scheme. Clarkson invented and patented a hydraulic current motor that came to be known as the Clarkson Current Motor. It was to be used in the proposed power plant. The patents for this motor were granted to the International Stream Flow Turbine Company, Ltd., of which Clarkson was the President. Clarkson later assigned half of his rights in the patent to the Cape Split Development Company. A prototype of the motor was tested first in Pennsylvania and later in the Gaspereau River near Wolfville, NS. In both instances the tests proved the motor to be highly efficient. Ultimately the Cape Split Development Company was unable to follow through on its scheme due to a lack of capital and the company was wound up in 1929. The prototype of the motor was stored at Acadia University, in University Hall where it burned in the 1920 fire that destroyed that building.

¹ "New professors", in *Acadia Bulletin*, 1 October 1912, vol.1, no.9, p.4

Custodial History

Little is known about the custodial history of this fonds. The library's records indicate that the material was in Clarkson's possession until he donated it to the Archives in the first half of the twentieth century, where it was eventually stored as a part of the Nova Scotia Power Commission fonds. At the time of processing, the records were identified as a separate fonds, and removed from the Nova Scotia Power Commission fonds.

Scope and Content

Fonds contains seventeen patents for Clarkson's Hydraulic Current Motor, dating from 1916 to 1919.

Notes

Supplied title based on contents of fonds.

See also the Nova Scotia Power Commission fonds (accession 1989.001)

Formerly catalogued as A621.2 C56. Acquisition date not recorded

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Citation for this electronic finding aid:

This finding aid should be cited as a website. Relevant information is as follows:

Title: Ralph P. Clarkson fonds

Date: 2001

Author: Esther Clark Wright Archives, Acadia University

Access Points

Clarkson, Ralph P. (1886-1964)

Cape Split Development Company
