



THE ENGINEERING INSTITUTE OF CANADA

and its member societies

L'Institut canadien des ingénieurs

et ses sociétés membres

EIC's Historical Notes and Papers Collection

(Compilation of Articles, Notes and Papers originally published as
EIC Articles, Cedar Grove Series, and EIC Working Papers)

ENGINEERING HISTORY PAPER #8

“Historical sources for EIC and its member societies”

by Andrew H. Wilson

(previously published as EIC Article #8)

EIC HISTORY AND ARCHIVES

© EIC 2017

There is as yet no definitive history of the Engineering Institute of Canada or of the earlier Canadian Society of Civil Engineers. There are a few books and some published articles and Working Papers that cover aspects of the development of both, although usually as part of a larger engineering canvas. A selection of these – some with words of explanation – has been given below.

The stories of the two institutions between 1887 and 1987 have, of course, been told in great - but undigested and usually uncritical - detail in the **TRANSACTIONS** of CSCE and in EIC's **ENGINEERING JOURNAL**, in the Annual Reports of both, in their Council and other written Minutes - some of which have been preserved - and in newsletters and other communication missives distributed at the regional and local levels. Since 1987, the EIC story may be read principally in Council Minutes, Annual Reports and in a few special reports.

Under normal circumstances, formal histories require the review of special reports, internal and external correspondence, membership application forms, technical programs, brochures and other pieces of paper through which the institution under study did its business. Some of this material for both CSCE and EIC has been accepted for storage in the National Archives in Ottawa and some is in the Institute's own archives. But much of it was consigned – for a variety of reasons – to landfill sites and to the flames in some thousand-and-one places from St. John's to Victoria, although some has undoubtedly been retained in private and corporate archival collections. Recent efforts to preserve extant EIC material generated over the past 30 years or so for proper storage have been only modestly successful. These efforts will continue.

Recently, three members of the Institute - the Mechanical, Civil and Geotechnical Societies - published material that covers, in part at least, their own histories and provides some information on their relationships with the Institute. Historical material originating with two of the others - the Chemical Society and IEEE Canada - before they became members of EIC has also been published. The references to these have also been given below, with some comments.

CSCE and EIC:

Norman R. Ball, **MIND, HEART AND VISION** (Ottawa: National Museum of Science and Technology, 1987) This book was specially written for the Engineering Centennial Year in 1987. Most of it describes the technical aspects of significant Canadian engineering projects but, from time to time, the development of the original Civil Society and the Institute is put into context.

J. Rodney Millard, **THE MASTER SPIRIT OF THE AGE: CANADIAN ENGINEERS AND THE POLITICS OF PROFESSIONALISM, 1887-1920** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988) Based on the author's PhD thesis, this book describes - from the point of view of the social historian - the continuing and evolving discussions that took place within the Civil Society and the engineering profession with regard to the status of engineers as professionals and the regulation of engineering practice.

ENGINEERING JOURNAL, Semicentennial Issue, June 1937 This issue includes an article on CSCE/EIC development up until 1937 and biographical material on the presidents from 1887 to 1936. But the bulk of the material discusses the development of 17 sectors of Canadian industry from the engineering point of view.

ENGINEERING JOURNAL, 75th Anniversary Issue, June 1962 This issue includes an article on CSCE/EIC development up until 1962, but the majority of the material is concerned with technical and industrial development.

Andrew H. Wilson, **THE ENGINEERING JOURNAL, 1918-1987: SOME NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS** (EIC History & Archives Working Paper 1/1995, December 1995) The story of the JOURNAL mirrors the story of the Institute itself.

Ralph E. Crysler, Fathi Habashi and Andrew H. Wilson, **HISTORY ACTIVITIES OF LEARNED ENGINEERING SOCIETIES IN CANADA** (EIC History & Archives Working Paper 4/1997, March 1997) The societies included are: EIC; CSCE (post 1972); the Metallurgical Society of CIMM; and CSME)

Andrew H. Wilson, **THE ORIGINAL CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS** (Volume 1, PROCEEDINGS, Canadian Society for Civil Engineering Conference, Sherbrooke, Quebec, 1997)

Andrew H. Wilson, **THE ENGINEERING JOURNAL AS A SOURCE FOR THE HISTORY OF ENGINEERING** (EIC History & Archives Working Paper 6/1998, March 1998) This paper includes a section on "The Institute and Professional Development" which discusses EIC-related material that appeared in specific issues of the JOURNAL.

The Societies:

Larry Collins et al., **ELECTRICITY: THE MAGIC MEDIUM** (Thornhill, Ontario: IEEE Canadian Region, 1985) This book was published to help celebrate the 1984 Centennial of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers - a worldwide organization whose headquarters are in New York. The authors are prominent Canadian electrical engineers. The majority of the material presented is technical and deals with communications and control and with electric power, utilities and manufacturing in Canada during the century from 1884 to 1984. There are also sections on education and the Canadian Region, and a discussion of the past, present and future. The full text appears in both English and French.

L.W. Shemilt, Editor, **CHEMICAL ENGINEERING IN CANADA - AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE** (Ottawa: Canadian Society for Chemical Engineering, 1991) CSChE's celebration of its 25th Anniversary included the preparation and publication of this book. It has four principal parts. The three in the first half deal with chemical engineering education, the development of the Chemical Engineering Society, and biographical and autobiographical material concerning its members. The fourth part, and the entire second half, is devoted to 16 historical essays describing specific Canadian industrial achievements over a wide field of activity.

These two societies celebrated their respective anniversaries before becoming members of the Engineering Institute of Canada. The three that follow published their books to commemorate the 25th Anniversaries of their founding as constituent/member societies of EIC in 1995 and 1997.

Andrew H. Wilson, Editor, **FROM STEAM TO SPACE: CONTRIBUTIONS OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING TO CANADIAN DEVELOPMENT** (Ottawa: Canadian Society for Mechanical Engineering, 1996) This book has two principal parts. The first, and longer, includes a dozen essays describing aspects of the development of mechanical engineering in Canada from the middle of the 19th century to the present day, followed by a half-dozen dealing with mechanical engineering education. The second, and shorter, part is devoted to the Mechanical Engineering Society and some of its activities over the years, as well as to biographical material.

Peter R. Hart, ***A CIVIL SOCIETY: A BRIEF PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR CIVIL ENGINEERING*** (Montreal: Canadian Society for Civil Engineering, 1997) The first part of this book traces the development of learned societies in the civil engineering field, briefly in Europe and at some length in Canada. The first chapter of the second part discusses the professional environment that led to the founding of the Society in 1972. It is followed by chapters that recount its growth and development during each five-year period from 1972 to 1997. The final chapter asks the question: Is there a future? - which it answers in a single word: Yes! The book also includes a number of interesting appendices, the first two of which go back to the beginnings of the original CSCE. The others concern officers, honours and awards and policy matters of the present CSCE. This book is also available in French.

Cyril E. Leonoff, Editor, ***GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERING IN CANADA: AN HISTORICAL REVIEW*** (Vancouver: Volume 15, Number 4 of ***GOETECHNICAL NEWS***, October 1997 - Publisher: John W. Gadsby) Instead of publishing a book, the Canadian Geotechnical Society decided to issue a commemorative edition of its regular magazine. The contents, however, are quite similar to those of the books published by CSChE and CSME. They include essays on the Society itself and geotechnical engineering in Canada, biographical material on distinguished engineers in the field, and a further series of essays on specific engineering projects.

A.H. Wilson