

**BLACK ROCK/RIVERSIDE:
 SELECTED SOURCES IN THE GROSVENOR ROOM**



PETER PORTER HOUSE, NIAGARA STREET, BLACK ROCK
 Built 1816, Demolished 1911 [Niagara St. near Ferry]

KEY

*	= Oversized book
Buffalo	= In Buffalo collection in Grosvenor Room
Folio	= On GRO Folio shelf
GRO	= In Grosvenor Room
NON-FICTION	= In the Central Non-Fiction Collection
RBR	= In Rare Book Room
Ref.	= On GRO Reference Shelf, cannot be borrowed
STACKS	= In Closed Stacks, ask staff to retrieve

Grosvenor Room
 Buffalo and Erie County Public Library
 1 Lafayette Square
 Buffalo, NY 14203-1887
 (716) 858-8900
www.buffalolib.org
 Revised Feb 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Books	3
Censuses	5
Church History & Research	5
Church Records on Microfilm	6
City Directories	6
Funeral Home Records	6
Local History File	7
Maps	7
Newspapers and Periodicals	7
Rare Book Room (RBR)	8
Scrapbooks	8
Websites	8
Vertical File	9
The Online Catalog of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library	9
Where Else Can I Research Black Rock?	9

INTRODUCTION

This guide lists research resources on Black Rock in the Grosvenor Room (GRO) of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library. No one has (yet) published a book-length history of the town or the Buffalo neighborhood it became. Instead, this guide features many sources that mention various aspects of Black Rock and Riverside history.

Black Rock's first settlers arrived after 1792, and the village was incorporated on April 24, 1837. It took its name from a large, flat, black limestone rock that rose four to five feet out of the Niagara River, forming a natural harbor and ideal ferry crossing point. The rock was removed with dynamite in the 1820s as part of the construction of the Erie Canal.

Black Rock was Buffalo's rival for the county seat and the terminus of the Erie Canal, and was annexed by the City of Buffalo on April 13, 1853. Prior to the Civil War, it served as a location from which fugitive slaves could cross the Niagara River into Canada. Black Rock is now one of Buffalo's west side neighborhoods.

BOOKS	NOTES
GRO Buffalo E302.6 .P87 G7 1971 Grande, Joseph A. The Political Career of Peter Buell Porter, 1797-1829 Thesis (Ph. D.)--University of Notre Dame, August, 1971	
Buffalo F116 .A45 v. 27 Grande, Joseph A. Peter B. Porter and the Buffalo-Black Rock Rivalry Buffalo, NY: Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society, ©1982	Brief historical pamphlet with images, maps.
GRO Ref. F117 .G7 Gordon, Thomas. Gazetteer of the State of New York... Philadelphia, PA: Thomas Gordon, 1836	See pp. 440-441 for a description of Black Rock in 1813
GRO Buffalo F127.N6 G5, pp. 92-102 Gibbons, Emma Someone Has Been Here Before You [Buffalo, NY: ©1938]	Chapter VIII is devoted to Black Rock
GRO Ref. F127 .N6 W74 v. 1 Wilner, Merton Niagara Frontier: A Narrative and Documentary History Chicago, IL: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1931	See pp. 158-160, 244-246; includes a description of the Battle of Black Rock, 1813
GRO Buffalo F129 .B8 B88 v. 16 Buffalo Historical Society Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Historical Society, 1912	Includes late 19th and early 20th century photos of Black Rock. Online for free at: http://tinyurl.com/rap35
GRO Buffalo F129 .B8 B88 v. 29 Buffalo Historical Society War of 1812 on the Niagara Frontier Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Historical Society, 1927	
GRO Buffalo F129 .B8 C758 Niagara City Association A Concise View of Black Rock... Buffalo, NY: Steele's Press, 1836	Published by a land company to promote Black Rock to investors and settlers.
GRO Buffalo F129 .B8 G63 1973 Goldman, Mark Buffalo's Black Rock: Neighborhood Identity and the Metropolitan Relationship MA Thesis--SUNY at Buffalo, 1973	
GRO Buffalo *F129 .B8 I58 International Institute of Buffalo Survey of Black Rock Educational and Recreational Facilities Buffalo, NY: The Institute, [1941?]	
GRO Buffalo F129 .B8 N6 Norton, Charles Davis Old Black Rock Ferry Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Historical Society, 1879	
GRO Buffalo F129 .B8 O8 Our Community, Black Rock/Riverside: 1979 Calendar [Buffalo, NY:] H.O.P.E./Northwest Community Center, Inc., ©1978	Illustrated with photographs

BOOKS	NOTES
GRO Buffalo F129.B86 B51 2014 Black Rock Canal - Belt Line - Niagara Street industrial heritage historic district, City of Buffalo... Buffalo, N.Y. : kta preservation specialists, 2014.	History of district, maps, images.
GRO Buffalo F129.B86 B512 2015 Upper Black Rock historic district, City of Buffalo, Erie County Buffalo, N.Y.: kta preservation specialists, 2015.	History of district, maps, images.
GRO Buffalo F129 .B86 B524 2018 A Pictorial history of Black Rock Grant Amherst Business Association, 2018.	Photographs of people, recreation, industry, buildings, streets, and waterways.
GRO Buffalo HF5430.5.B9 R5 Riverside and Black Rock Directory [Buffalo, NY]: The Riverside Businessmen's Association, 1982 & 1983	A short directory of businesses, shops and services
GRO Buffalo HN80.B8 S33 Buffalo (N.Y.). Dept. of Community Development Development Plan, CAC District #12, Buffalo, New York Buffalo, NY: Saratoga Associates, 1976	Focuses on the Riverside neighborhood
GRO Buffalo LC1046.5 .B8 A2 B5 Buffalo, N.Y. Board of Education Black Rock Vocational School Buffalo, NY: The Board, 1920	
GRO Buffalo LD7501 .B9 S5 Riverside High School Skipper [Buffalo, NY]: Riverside High School	Yearbook of Riverside High School. We currently own most years 1935-1980. Please check the Yearbooks guide for up-to-date additions to the collection.
GRO Buffalo NA9127.B9 A24 Buffalo (N.Y.). Division of Planning Military Neighborhood of Riverside Community Buffalo, NY: City of Buffalo, 1961	A city planning study
GRO Buffalo TC225 .B9 U6 U.S. Engineer Dept. Buffalo Harbor and Black Rock Harbor, NY... Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1913	
GRO Buffalo TC225 .T65 A3 1954 U.S. Engineer Dept. Black Rock Channel and Tonawanda Harbor...A Review of Reports of Black Rock Channel Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954	
GRO Buffalo *TC225 .B9 F5 1993 Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment: Buffalo Harbor, Black Rock Channel, Tonawanda Harbor Buffalo, NY: Army Corps of Engineers, Buffalo District, 1993	An environmental study
Buffalo *Z733 .B93 H28b Harp, F. Marshall History of Jubilee Library Founded on Water, 1826-1936 Niagara Street, Buffalo, N.Y. [Buffalo, NY: 1936]	History of a former public library and its neighborhood

CENSUSES	NOTES
GRO Ref. *HA547 .B55 Z5 1993 Zintz, June P. Index to the 1850 Census of Black Rock, Erie County, New York [Hamburg, NY?]: Western New York Genealogical Society, ©1993	This is the last census taken of Black Rock before it was annexed by Buffalo. Online for free at: www.wnygs.org/BlackRock1850.html

CHURCH HISTORY & RESEARCH	NOTES
GRO Buffalo BR560 .B85 R48 Black Rock Riverside Church and Community Study Buffalo, NY: Regional Church Planning, 1969	
GRO Buffalo BX8949 .B8 W3 Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of West Avenue Presbyterian Church of Buffalo, New York: October 11-13, 1931 [Buffalo, NY: s.n., 1931]	1831-1870: known as First Presbyterian Church of Black Rock. 1870-1889: known as Breckenridge Street Presbyterian Church of Buffalo. 1889 to present: West Avenue Presbyterian Church of Buffalo.
GRO Buffalo BX9211.B9 R5 Riverside United Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, N.Y. Buffalo, NY: The Church, 1932	A history of the congregation
RBR F129 .B8 .R58 1889 Account Book of the Sunday School of the Riverside Methodist Episcopal Church of Buffalo, N.Y., 1868-1889 1 item, [39] p.	Financial records of the church's Sunday school, including collections and disbursements. Includes a directory of the church membership, 1892 See RBR info on page 6.
GRO Ref *NA5235 .B8 N37 1995 Napora, James Houses of Worship: A Guide to the Religious Architecture of Buffalo, N.Y. Thesis (M.Arch.)--State University of New York at Buffalo, 1995	See pp. 122-151 for Upper and Lower Black Rock churches.
<p>The Grosvenor Room also maintains a Church Pamphlet File containing historical material on Buffalo's churches. Information on the following Black Rock and Riverside area churches can be found in these files. See a librarian for access to this material.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Bethlehem Presbyterian Church</i> <i>Churchill Evangelistic Tabernacle</i> <i>Forest Avenue Church of Christ</i> <i>Lafayette Avenue Baptist Church</i> <i>Saint Francis Xavier Roman Catholic Church</i> <i>Saint John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church</i> <i>Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church</i> <i>West Avenue Presbyterian Church</i> 	

CHURCH RECORDS ON MICROFILM

The Grosvenor Room has copies of records of many Buffalo churches, *but our collection does not include every church*. Below are the records of churches located in the Black Rock—Riverside area in our collection. For other churches, records may be available at Family History Centers* (see below) or may still be held at the church itself, or at a church it merged with.

Microfilm Number	Name and Address of Church	Records/Years
360	Annunciation RC Church 18 Greenwood Pl. Buffalo, NY 14213	Baptisms: 1885-1924 Confirmations: 1877-1916 Marriages: 1885-1927 Deaths: 1885-1916
355	Assumption RC Church 435 Amherst St. Buffalo, NY 14207	Baptisms: 1888-1907 Marriages: 1890-1911
396	Saint Mark Episcopal 40 Vulcan St. Buffalo, NY 14207	Baptisms: 1893-1912 Confirmations: 1893-1912 Marriages: 1893-1912 Deaths: 1893-1916
404	Salem United Church of Christ 114 Morgan St. Tonawanda, NY 14150 <i>In German</i>	Baptisms: 1849-1950 Confirmations: 1849-1949 Marriages: 1849-1948 Deaths: 1849-1960

* See also page 9 of this guide for WNY locations of **The Family History Centers of the Church of Latter-Day Saints (LDS)**. Most centers provide access to the circulating collection of microfilmed genealogical records, from main LDS library in Utah, for a small fee. The LDS catalog includes records for several Black Rock/Riverside churches. Some records are now also searchable online at www.familysearch.org

CITY DIRECTORIES

NOTES

Black Rock residents are not included in the directories until 1854, after the area was annexed by Buffalo in 1853. See **Buffalo City Directories shelf**, F129 .B8A18

FUNERAL HOME RECORDS

NOTES

GRO Desk Ref. #50
Stephan-Burns Funeral Home Records
Buffalo, NY: Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, 2008

Black Rock area funeral home. Records include name of deceased, date of death, address, place of birth, age, birth date, and burial place.

Years available: 1899 to 50 years ago.

LOCAL HISTORY FILE

The *Local History File* is an extensive card index of newspaper articles, journal articles, and other sources. Use these headings:

Black Rock
Cemeteries. Black Rock
Neighborhoods. Riverside
Porter, Peter
Streets – [name of street]

MAPS

GRO Folio F129. B83 E73 1910
 Wing, Frederick K.
Copy of Witmer's Deed Atlas of Buffalo
 [Buffalo, NY: Frederick K. Wing], 1910

See pp. 6-8 for Village of Black Rock

GRO Ref. HE554 .B8 B3
 Baxter, Henry H.
Maps of the Buffalo Harbor, 1804-1964
 Buffalo, NY: Henry Baxter, 1965

Reproductions of various vintage waterfront maps collected in book form.

RBR WNYO 1864.E47 Please see Rare Book Room, page 6.

Emslie, Peter

Maps of the Holland Company's lands in the late town of Black Rock: shewing [sic] the names of the original grantees and date of conveyance; also the north & south villages of Black Rock, and the Parish and Jones tracts, New York State Reservation...

Buffalo: P. Emslie, 1864.

~The following are individual sheet maps. Ask a librarian if you wish to view these items.

32M-8

Lovejoy, Henry

Map of the Village of Black Rock as Surveyed and Drawn by Henry Lovejoy for the Black Rock Land & Railroad Co.

New York: J. Stiles & Co., 1836

32M-9

Map of Part of Niagara River & Plan of Gen. Porter's Proposed Harbor

Shows Squaw Island, Bird Island, illustrations representing reefs, sand banks, and the direction of water. 1820?

See also **Rare Book Room** section in this guide for other maps [page 6].

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

Call Number/Location	Title	Dates We Have
RBR WNYO 1882.B6 Please see Rare Book Room, page 6.	Black Rock Beacon	March 20, 1823-Aug 12, 1824 Please see Rare Book Room, page 6.
Buffalo Stacks (Boxed newspaper) (Shelved as Buffalo International Gazette)	International Gazette	1887-1909, 1926, 1933-1937, 1942-1975

RARE BOOK ROOM (RBR)

Material in the Rare Book Room may be seen by appointment (716-858-8900). The following publications and maps are of special interest to Black Rock or Riverside researchers:

<p>RBR WNYO 1822.B54 Black Rock Harbor Company Documents, Relating to the Western Termination of the Erie Canal: With Explanations and Remarks Black Rock, NY: L.G. Hoffman, 1822</p>	<p>Documents and brief remarks, in reply to the pamphlet written by General Porter, and published by direction of the Black Rock harbor committee, at Albany in Dec. 1822, and at Buffalo in Jan. 1823.</p>
<p>RBR WNYO 1834.C4 Chamberlain, Sylvester To the Citizens of Buffalo [Buffalo, NY? s.n., 1834?]</p>	<p>About the Black Rock Canal.</p>
<p>RBR PRINT 248 Emslie, Peter Lot 235, Parish Tract [1865]</p>	<p>A surveyor's manuscript map of a bounded on the west by Tonawanda Street and on the east by Scajaquada Creek and the "Old Canal," intended to show the best locations for a boat dock on the canal.</p>
<p>Map 32M-4 Emslie, Peter Map of Buffalo and Black Rock Harbors: Together with Part of the City Showing the Proposed Harbor and Canal Improvements Buffalo, NY: Hall & Mooney, 1847</p>	<p>In Buffalo Map case.</p>

SCRAPBOOKS

The Buffalo scrapbooks in GRO were compiled roughly from 1900 to 1960, and are comprised largely of local newspaper clippings and ephemera. All are indexed in the *Local History File*. The following volumes are of special interest to Black Rock or Riverside researchers:

GRO Buffalo *F129 .B8 B6928 v.6, pp. 110-113, 119-120

Local History

GRO Buffalo *F129 .B8 B6928 v.7 pp. 325

Local History

WEBSITES

<http://www.buffaloah.com/h/br/tc.html>

Black Rock Links

<http://www.buffaloah.com/how/9/river.html>

History of Riverside Neighborhood, Buffalo, NY

VERTICAL FILE

The Vertical File is a collection of pamphlets, brochures, clippings, and other loose material. Use these headings:

Black Rock
Neighborhoods--Riverside

THE ONLINE CATALOG OF THE BUFFALO & ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

<https://www.buffalolib.org/> → Catalog

Search the online catalog for books, magazines, CDs, videos, maps, and manuscripts owned by the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library. Find items in the Grosvenor Room, all departments in the Central Library, and every town and branch library. Access it free on the internet at the address above.

To find additional Black Rock and Riverside sources in our collection beyond those listed in this guide, try these Subject searches:

BLACK ROCK – BUFFALO
BLACK ROCK – BUFFALO N Y
BLACK ROCK – BUFFALO N Y – MAPS
BLACK ROCK – BUFFALO N Y – NEWSPAPERS
BLACK ROCK CANAL
BLACK ROCK CHANNEL
RIVERSIDE - BUFFALO N Y

WHERE ELSE CAN I RESEARCH BLACK ROCK?	NOTES
<p>Buffalo History Museum's Research Library 1 Museum Court Buffalo, NY 14216-3199 library@buffalohistory.org 716.873.9644 x 306 https://buffalohistory.org/library-collections/</p>	<p>Has letters, papers, maps, speeches, newsletters, photographs, tax records, Post Office records, church records, voter records, and many other sources relevant to Black Rock.</p>
<p>City of Buffalo Inactive Records Center 85 River Rock Drive, Suite 301 Buffalo, NY 14207 (716) 874-6401 or (716) 570-8721 https://www.buffalony.gov/296/Records-Management</p>	<p>Has Tax & Assessment Roll Books, 1815-1997 and possibly other sources. Please call before to verify staff is on site. Employees divide their time between the Inactive Records Center and City Hall.</p>
<p>Black Rock Historical Society 1902 Niagara Street Buffalo, NY 14207 info@blackrockhistoricalsociety.com http://www.blackrockhistoricalsociety.info/</p>	<p>The Black Rock Historical Society was established in 2011 to preserve the heritage and history of the neighborhoods and people associated with the area defined as Black Rock in the City of Buffalo.</p>

WHERE ELSE CAN I RESEARCH BLACK ROCK?	NOTES
<p>Erie County Clerk 92 Franklin Street Buffalo, New York 14202 (716) 858-8865 Fax: (716) 858-6550 ErieCountyClerk@erie.gov http://www2.erie.gov/clerk/</p>	<p>All deeds and property transactions in Erie County are recorded here. This is a self-serve facility. Deeds are filed chronologically, not by address.</p>
<p>Family History Centers Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints http://www.familysearch.org/</p> <p>Erie County has three LDS Family History Centers:</p> <p>1424 Maple Rd. Amherst, NY 14221 (716) 688-2439</p> <p>4005 Baker Rd. Orchard Park, NY 14127 (716) 662-3117</p> <p>780 N Michigan Ave. Buffalo, New York (716)-855-3302</p>	<p>The LDS has census, church, cemetery, and many, many more microfilmed records of genealogical value for Erie County. These can be requested and used in your local Family History Center (FHC), regardless of where you live.</p> <p>The Church's catalog includes records for several Black Rock/Riverside churches.</p>