The early history of the Tri-County project began in 1889 when the first survey was taken for a proposed canal to irrigate the farm lands in Phelps County, Nebraska. This early survey did not follow the exact course that is now the Tri-County, but it served as the seed for the present project.

The first survey began at the Dilworth ranch in Phelps County where an island divides the Platte river bed into two channels. The southern-most of these was to be dammed up and deepened and from this a diversion canal was to have run parallel along the Platte to Williamsburg, where it was to turn southward and pass through the divide.

Over the course of years and with the arduous task of building homes, the canal project was allowed to drift into the background. The realization that the project would not be as easily constructed as had first been imagined, or perhaps the prosperity of the land without water deadened the enthusiasm—but at any rate the plans for the canal were allowed to drop.

In 1911, 1912, & 1913 drouth and bad crops were suffered in the Tri-County area of Phelps, Kearney, and Adams counties. Farmers and businessmen alike suffered from the resultant conditions. Subsequently, a mass meeting was called at the Phelps County courthouse in Holdrege early in 1913 to discuss the problem.

Division Superintendent Bignell of the Burlington Railroad spoke at the meeting and told those present that the rail shipments from this territory had seriously suffered over the previous period of years. Bignell had no definite plan to offer but told those gathered at the meeting that the Burlington would gladly cooperate in anything the group attempted to do.
An open discussion took place, and the possibilities of irrigation were discussed. From all angles the prospects of irrigation seemed impractical. It was pointed out that enough water flowed down the Platte to irrigate the land in the spring and fall but other irrigation projects were using the water seasonally. The group was told of a wheat crop planted on a farm north of Holdrege on land that had been planted to corn the previous year. It grew and developed the same as wheat on surrounding farms but when dry weather came, the wheat planted where a shock of corn had stood matured with large heads full of kernels and the rest of the field perished. The theory of supplemental water was advanced and the Supplemental Water Association was formed.
ADDED ENTRIES:**

ADAMS COUNTY (NEB.)--HISTORY
Central Nebraska Supplemental Water Association
Central Nebraska Supplemental Water Association
see also
Clarke, James N., 1852-
Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company
GEOLOGICAL SURVEYS--NEBRASKA
HASTINGS (NEB.)--HISTORY
IRRIGATION--LAWS AND LEGISLATION
IRRIGATION--NEBRASKA
IOWA-NEBRASKA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY
JOHNSON, FRED G., 1876-1951
KEARNEY COUNTY (NEB.)--HISTORY
KEITH COUNTY (NEB.)--HISTORY
KINGSLEY DAM (KEITH COUNTY, NEB.)
Loup River Public Power District
Middle Loup Public Power and Irrigation District
Nebraska. Department of Roads and Irrigation
NEBRASKA ENGINEERING SOCIETY
Nebraska Power Company
Nebraska Public Power System
Nebraska State Irrigation Association
Nebraska State Water Conservation Congress
NEBRASKA vs. WYOMING
North Loup Public Power and Irrigation District
PHELPS COUNTY (NEB.)--HISTORY
Platte Valley Public Power and Irrigation District
POWER PLANTS--NEBRASKA
RURAL ELECTRIFICATION
SOUTHERN NEBRASKA POWER COMPANY
Tri-County Project
see
Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District
UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY
United States. Department of Agriculture
United States. Department of Labor. National Reemployment Service
United States. Department of the Interior. Bureau of Reclamation
United States. Federal Works Agency
United States. Public Works Administration
United States. Securities and Exchange Commission
University of Nebraska, College of Agriculture
WATER CONSERVATION—NEBRASKA
Waterway and Flood Control Association of Mississippi Valley
ADDED ENTRIES (cont)**

CORRESPONDENTS:

Aabel, Christian, 1864-1944
Aabel, Moritz, 1897-
Anderson, Frank A., 1894-1945
Binderup, Charles G. (Charles Gustav), 1873-1950
Bowman, Melville L., 1885-
Budd, Ralph, 1879-1962
Burke, Edward R. (Edward Raymond), 1880-1968
Burnett, E. A. (Edgar Albert), 1864-1941
Canaday, Ralph O. (Ralph Oliver), 1891-1970
Carmody, John M. (John Michael), 1881-1963
Clarke, James N., 1852-
Cochran, Robert Leroy, 1886-1963
Condra, George E. (George Evert), 1898-1958
Davidson, J. E. (James Edward), 1879-1949
Fellows, A. Lincoln (Abraham Lincoln)
Fitzsimmons, J. S. (John S), 1868-
Fricke, Charles B., 1884-1974
Good, Paul F. (Paul Francis), 1893-1970
Green, R. O. (Richard Oscar), 1887-1955
Howard, Edgar, 1858-1951
Ickes, Harold L. (Harold LeClaire), 1874-1952
Jensen, Andrew, 1867-1954
Johnson, George E. (George Edward), 1885-1967
Judkins, C. R. (Caleb Ressegue), 1867-
Kingsley, D. W. (Donaldson Wright), 1899-
Kingsley, Fred R. (Fred Ralph Jr), 1886-1951
Kingsley, H. S. (Hamilton S), 1901-
Kuska, Val (Valentine), 1887-1972
Latenser, John Jr., 1888-1978
Lawrence, James E. (James Earnest), 1889-1957
Marsh, Carl F. (Carl Frederic), 1889-1958
Mead, Elwood, 1858-1936
Mickey, Clark Edwin, 1883-
Norris, George W. (George William), 1861-1944
Ritchie, William (Jr), 1938-1954
Robertson, John P., 1892-1981
Roosevelt, Franklin D. (Franklin Delano), 1882-1945
Ross, J. D. (James Delmage), 1872-1939
Shallenberger, A. C. (Ashton Cokayne), 1862-1938
Smith, Claude W., 1889-
Sorenson, C. A. (Christian Abraham), 1890-1959
Stephens, Dan V. (Dan Vorhees), 1868-1939
Stout, O. V. P. (Oscar Van Pelt), 1865-1935
Thompson, W. H. (William Hale), 1869-1944
McConaughy, C. W. (Charles Washington), 1859-1941
ADDED ENTRIES (cont):
Tilley, A. C. (Albert Charles), 1896-
Waite, Henry Matson, 1869-1944
Wallace, C. Glen (Charles Glen), 1871-1967
Weaver, Arthur J. (Jr), 1873-1945
Chronological Index - 3
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consist of 32 boxes of records and 25 rolls of microfilm of the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District, 1923-1958. The collection is arranged in Four Subgroups containing eleven Series.

Subgroup One, Donaldson W. Kingsley Papers, is arranged in six series (1) Correspondence, 1933-1941; (2) Speeches and radio Addresses, 1938-1940; (3) Reports and Minutes, 1924-1940; Legal material; (5) Printed Matter; and (6) Miscellany. The bulk of this subgroup consists of correspondence of Donaldson W. Kingsley, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the CNPPID, 1933-1941, relates to the organization of the District and its early years of operation. Of note are legal materials relating to a libel suit involving Kingsley and the subgroup also includes the minutes of the District, 1939-1941.

Subgroup two, Records of the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District, is arranged in five series (1) Correspondence of Ralph O. Canaday, 1933-1942; (2) Reports and Resolutions, 1933-1948; (3) Legal Materials, 1938; (4) Speeches and Addresses, 1930-1937; and (5) Printed Matter. The bulk of this subgroup consist of correspondence of Ralph Canaday, an attorney for the CNPPID and James Clarke, Treasurer of the Supplemental Water Association. These materials also relate to the formation and early years of operation of the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District. Of interest are the minutes of the Board of Directors, 1933-1935.

Subgroup Three, Public Works Administration Project Files, 1929-1945, is contained on 25 rolls of 16mm microfilm, which were purchased from the National Archives. These records relate to the engineering aspects of the Tri-County Project; to the geography and geology of the area; to water resources of the state and to the financial, legal and budgetary phases of the project.

Correspondents within this collection include: Aable, Moritz, 1933-1936; Aable, Christian, 1933-1936; Budd, Ralph, 1933-1936; Canaday, Ralph O., 1933-1941; Carmody, John, 1939-1940; Condra, George W., 1933, 1934, 1936; Fitzsimmons, J.S., 1933-1935; Ickes, Harold, 1933-1935; Kingsley, D.W., 1933-1941; Kinsley, Fred, 1933-1936; Kingsley, S., 1933-1936; Kuska, Val, 1933-1940; Lawrence, James E., 1933-1940; Marsh, Carl F., 1936-1940; Mickey, Clark E., 1933-1935; Norris, George W., 1933-1940; Ritchie, William 1933-1936; Roosevelt, Franklin D., 1934; Sorensen, C.A., 1938-1941; and Stephens, Dan V., 1933-1937.

The D.W. Kingsley papers were received in October 1958 through the assistance of Val Kuska. Many of the additional files were received
from Stanley Matzke who was then associated with the CNPPID

**DESCRIPTION**

**CENTRAL NEBRASKA PUBLIC POWER & IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

**SUBGROUP I**  **DONALDSON W. KINGSLEY PAPERS 1933-1941**

**SERIES ONE**  **CORRESPONDENCE 1933-1941**

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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folder 1</td>
<td>Aabel Moritz</td>
<td>1933-1936</td>
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<td>Folder 2</td>
<td>Aabel Morita</td>
<td>1937-1938</td>
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<td>Folder 3</td>
<td>Accounting Dept</td>
<td>1936, 1939, 1940</td>
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<td>Folder 4</td>
<td>Anderson, Frank A.</td>
<td>1936</td>
</tr>
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<td>Folder 5</td>
<td>Auditor, P.W.A.</td>
<td>1936</td>
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<td>Folder 6</td>
<td>Binderup, C.G.</td>
<td>1934-1938</td>
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<td>Folder 7</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
<td>1933-1940</td>
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<tr>
<td>Folder 8</td>
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<td>1937-1941</td>
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<td>Folder 9</td>
<td>Bowman, M.D.</td>
<td>1938-1941</td>
</tr>
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<td>Folder 10</td>
<td>Budd, Ralph</td>
<td>1935-1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folder 11</td>
<td>Canaday, R.O.</td>
<td>1933-1941</td>
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</tbody>
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Folder 17  P.W.A. Reports
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Folder 19  Geological Investigation Of N. Platte River Valley In Keith & Garden Co.’s.
Folder 20  License affecting navigable Waters Description of CNNPP&ID
Folder 21  Reports

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           Dr. O. H. Andrews,  1936-1940
Folder 26  Accident Reports,  
           Dr. Geo. A. Clark,  1936-1939
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           Dr. E.A. Harvey,  1936-1940
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           Dr. T. A. Peterson,  1936-1940
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           Dr. H.A. Vandiver,  1937-1940

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Folder 31  Report: Proposed Lower Platte Valley 
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Folder 32  Reports - State of Nebraska
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           2nd Interim Report
Folder 34  Daily Operation Summary:  
           Platte Valley PP & I Dist.;  
           Loup River PP Dist.;  
           Central Nebraska PP & I Dist.
Folder 35  Nebraska Engineering Society  
           4th Annual Fall meeting, Nov. 4, 1939
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           Loup Public Power Irrigation Dist., 1931

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Box 18  Pamphlets:
We Must Amend the Wagner Act 4-5-38

Text of Brief as Submitted to Federal PWA Board

Campaign literature of Dan V. Stephens
The first 25 Years, The Central Nebraska Public Power District

Campaign literature Tri-County Board Of Directors

The Relation of Drought to Water Use

F.E.A. Cir No 2 - Information required with Applications for Loans to States, Counties, Municipalities and other public bodies 8-1-33

Congressional record 74th Congress 1st Session, Inheritance Tax, Speech by G.W. Norris

Weekly list of U.S. Government Publications 71-21-1937

Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, U.S. Senate S 3524 Part 1, March 24 to April 15, 1936; Part 2 April 27&28, 1936

Economic Benefits of Irrigation for Kingsley (Keystone) Reservoir Oct 1937

Flood Control in the Mississippi Valley 19331

What Price Economics and our Inland Waterways 1-24-30


Hearing before the Committee on Irrigation
and Reclamation HR 1677 & HR 8880

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Pamphlets:

Trees that Temper the Western Winds, USDA, Forest Service July 1938

Preventing Soil Blowing on the Southern Great Plains, USDA No 1771

Making the Missouri River Navigable, Nov. 1928

Missouri River Navigation and the Railroads

Statement of Purpose and Resolutions, Mississippi Valley Assoc., Nov 11 & 12, 1929

The Voice of the Valley, Mississippi Valley Assoc., Jan 1930

Program; Mississippi Valley Assoc.,

Public Works Program, Statement of Policy 6-14-1933

State of Nebraska Dept. of Public Works, Bureau of Irrigation, Water Power, Drainage Rules, 1930

The Skagit Power Project

Message from the President of the United States, Removal of a Member of the TVA, 3-23-38

Some Economic & Social Aspects of Irrigation in Montana, Dept of Agricultural Economics Jan 1938

Waterways, a Review of their Future, 11-24-1930
Congressional Record, Speech of G.W. Norris

Facts About the Sutherland Project

An Outline of the Water Facilities Program, USDA Soils Conservation Service

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Box 18 Pamphlets:

The Central Nebraska District

Radio Interview KOIL, Omaha 8-1433
Cheaper Electricity for Nebraska...

To Keep the water in the Rivers and the Soil on the Land, The Story of the TVA

Tree Planting

Electric Light and Power Industry

Moisture Requirements for Sugar Beets, USDA December 1940

Conference on Flood Control and Related Problems, Mississippi Valley Assoc., 3-12-1937

History Organization and Development of the Loup Public Power District

Amending the TVA Act of 1933

Nebraska’s Hydro Electric Projects, What Shall be Done with Them

The Tri-County Project

Tri-County, We Want Water Club
RG601 Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District

Allis-Chalmers Engine

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Folder 7  Columbus, Platte Valley and tri-County Project
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Nebraska Irrigation & Water Power Laws, 1931
Tri-County Project – Blueprints
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Supplemental Information, 2a thru 2c
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Project #3400 – analysis
Dept. of Public Works special survey report
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Geological Investigation
Keystone Dam Site - Preliminary soil report
Central Nebraska PP & I Distr. - protest petitions
Irrigation of certain lands in Nebraska, U.S. Senate
The significance of subsoil moisture in alfalfa production
The use of Supplemental Water
Drought and its Relation to Supplemental Irrigation
Water Resource Problems in Nebraska
Hastings State Hospital, Ingleside, Nebraska
(3) pump irrigation surveys
State Advisory Board - hearings of Central Nebr. PP & I District
Power & Energy at Upper, Lower & Snell Power Plants

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Agreements, Leases, Option to purchase
Treasurer’s Statement of Disbursement, 1941-1942
Federal Emergency Administration - Contracts
Public works Administration - Contracts
Board of Directors minutes - Extracts, Sept.5 1941
Performance Bonds; Bio Bonds
Central Nebr. PP & I Dist. - Application and Supporting Data
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Kingsley (Keystone) Reservoir - seepage characteristics
Kingsley Dam & Reservoir - General Stability Report of Foundation and Embankment
Classification and Construction Accounts
Construction Forms - CNPP&ID
“Engineering Problems of Nebraska Power”
“Water Power in Nebraska”
Board of Directors Minutes
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Special Report of Budgetary Control

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Reel #6 Utility Corporations #4
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Reel #7 Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District:
    Financial Report, September 30, 1942

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Reel #7 (Cont)
    Corres., Memos., Reports, 1941-1943 (#3400)
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    Agreement for trustee’s services, CNPP&ID
    And Fist Nat’l Bank, Lincoln, Nov 29, 1937
    Supplemental Indenture, Sept. 15, 1939
    Trust Indenture, Nov. 1, 1936
    Agreement & Trust Indenture, Nov. 1, 1938
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    Audit Report #41, vols. 1-4, 1942
    Supplemental to semi-final: Cost schedules, lands Right of way, easements, & Owners payroll
    Audit Report #1, Doc. 3400 Force Account #9
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SUBGROUP FOUR
RESEARCH AND PRINTED MATTER

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