

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

WESTERN ARCHIVES



THE JOHN DEARNESS FONDS

AFC 72

Inventory prepared by Alison Mitchell-Reid, based on student finding aid project(s) undertaken in partial fulfilment of archives course requirements - September 2009

**WESTERN ARCHIVES
AFC 72
THE JOHN DEARNESS FONDS**

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THE JOHN DEARNESS FONDS
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FONDS DESCRIPTION

Dates

1872-1954, added material 1955-1972

Extent

1.02 m of textual records
4 volumes
30 photographs
77 microscope slides

Biographical Sketch

John Dearness was born in Hamilton, Ontario on May 13, 1852, the oldest child of John and Jane (née Linklater) Dearness. The family moved to the Granton, Ontario area in 1856. Dearness graduated from the Toronto Normal School in 1871 and, at the age of 19, started teaching at School Section #1 (Coursey School) in Biddulph Township. Over the next four years, Dearness would become principal of Lucan School and also teach at elementary and secondary schools in Strathroy.

In 1874, Dearness was appointed inspector of public schools for East Middlesex County. He would travel throughout the area inspecting schools for the next 25 years.

Dearness married Harriet Emma Wilkinson (b. 4 July 1861), one of his former students, on June 20, 1881. Together, the John and Emma had three children:

Jean M. Dearness Tuke (25 May 1882 – 1967)

Margaret E. Dearness Tamblyn (23 Nov. 1883 – 1976)

Walter Dearness (5 Nov. 1886 – 9 Mar. 1957)

In 1888, Dearness began teaching biology courses at the University of Western Ontario and was appointed chair of the medical faculty. He received his own Bachelor of Arts degree in 1902, and Master of Arts degree two years later. Dearness was the first person to scientifically describe the hawthorn mealybug (*Phenacoccus Dearnessi*) in 1900, and a new species of scale insect (*Aspidiotus Dearnessi*) in 1897.

When the London Normal School was opened in 1900, Dearness accepted the position vice principal, serving in this capacity until 1918, when he assumed the role of principal. Between 1911 and 1915, he also taught summer school nature courses at the Ontario Agricultural College. Dearness retired from teaching in 1922, at the age of 70.

Dearness served as president of various associations at one time or another including:

- London and Middlesex Historical Society
- Ontario Historical Society
- Mycological Society of America
- Entomological Society of Ontario

He also served as secretary/treasurer of the Spelling Reform section of the Ontario Educational Association, and was a member of the Simplified Spelling Society.

John Dearness was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from The University of Western Ontario in 1926, the King's Jubilee Medal in 1935, and made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1936. Active in his writing and scientific pursuits until his 100th year, Dearness was a well known figure in London society. John Dearness died on December 6, 1954 at the age of 102. The Dr. John Dearness Home for Elder Citizens (now The Dearness Home), opened in 1952, and John Dearness Public School, built in 1967, were named in his honour.

Scope and Content

The fonds consists of documents relating to the personal and professional life of John Dearness. Correspondence, publications, speeches, and notes are included. Material concerning simplified spelling, science, and education predominate.

Arrangement

The fonds is arranged into the following series:

- Series 1: Correspondence and other documents
- Series 2: Simplified spelling records
- Series 3: School inspector reports
- Series 4: Teaching career documents
- Series 5: Photographs
- Series 6: Toronto Normal School anniversary records
- Series 7: Addresses for public events
- Series 8: Newspaper clippings and notes
- Series 9: Microscope slides
- Series 10: Publications
- Series 11: Biographical added material
- Series 12: Scrapbooks

Finding Aids

File and item lists are available.

Custodial History

John Dearness divided his personal papers prior to his death. All of the material concerning simplified spelling remained with the Dearness family. The remainder of the collection was entrusted to Dearness' friend, W.D. Sutton.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Approximately one third of the fonds was donated to the University of Western Ontario prior to 1960 by relatives of John Dearness. The remaining two-thirds of the collection was acquired from W.D. Sutton, a friend of John Dearness, in August 1979.

Related Material

This fonds relates in part to the London Normal School fonds. For more information, please consult the finding aid available in the archives' reading room.

Conditions Governing Use

For preservation reasons, use of the microscope slides in series 9 requires prior consultation with the responsible archivist.

Conditions Governing Access

No restrictions on access.

THE JOHN DEARNESS FONDS
AFC 72
SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS

Series 1 Correspondence and other documents

Dates

1878-1951

Extent

10 cm of textual records
 2 photographs : b&w ; 15 x 11 cm or smaller

Scope and Content

This series contains correspondence and publications sent to John Dearness. Letters regarding local poet Robert Elliott, as well as scientific correspondence, are included.

Language

Some of the material in file B5037-001-15 is written in Danish.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
“The Tamlachmore Bard” by H.F. Southcott, U.W.O. and letter to John Dearness re Robert Elliott	1947	B5037-001-10
Letter from A.H. MacKay and two publications on fresh water sponges	1889-1926	B5037-001-11
Note and correspondence from Jakob E. Lange found in Vilde Planter	1932	B5037-001-15
Correspondence	1879-1899	B4030-001-1
Correspondence	1900-1930	B4030-001-2
Correspondence	1930-1950	B4030-001-3
Correspondence with Robert Elliott	1878-1890	B4030-001-4
Correspondence with Anne Sutherland including poem and clippings [includes 1 photograph]	1931-1943	B4030-001-5

Title	Dates	Box/File
Correspondence and poems written by William Dearness, cousin of John Dearness [including photograph]	1917	B4030-001-6
Letters from grandchildren	1951	B4030-001-7

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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS**

Series 2 Simplified spelling records

Dates

1890-1950

Extent

20 cm of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains correspondence, notes, and publications concerning the simplified spelling movement. The Simplified Spelling Society Minutes of the Spelling Reform section of the Ontario Educational Association, of which Dearness was secretary/treasurer, are included.

Language

Some of the records in this series are written using simplified spelling principles. Several are written in Anglic, a simplified English spelling system created by R.E. Zachrisson in 1930.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
Correspondence – The Simplified Spelling Society	1909-1949	B4030-001-8
Petitions on simplified spelling	1890-1924	B4030-001-9
Receipts and other financial documents relating to simplified spelling activities	1911-1926	B4030-001-10
Miscellaneous papers re: the Simplified Spelling Society	1909-1922	B4030-001-11
Minutes of the Spelling Reform section of the Ontario Educational Association	1909-1926	B4030-001-12
Notes and miscellaneous papers on simplified spelling and The Simplified Spelling Society	1909-1923	B4030-002-1

Title	Dates	Box/File
News clippings on simplified spelling	1906-1950	B4030-002-2
Pamphlets and other publications by The Simplified Spelling Society	1906-1926	B4030-002-3
Brochures, articles, and clippings on simplified spelling and spelling reform	1908-1925	B4030-002-4
Other publications regarding spelling reform	1909-1937	B4030-002-5
Duplicate publications by The Simplified Spelling Society	1913-1922	B4030-003-1

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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS

Series 3 School inspector reports

Dates

1874-1900

Extent

30 cm of textual records
 1 volume

Scope and Content

This series contains reports, notes, and correspondence relating to John Dearness' career as Inspector for Public Schools for East Middlesex. Formal and informal appraisals of the school and the students, as well as programmes from meetings of the East Middlesex Teachers' Association, are included.

Note

Some of the informal notes and early drafts of letters are written in Pitman short-hand.

File and Item List

Title	Dates	Box/File
Inspector's reports, all township schools, Middlesex County	1875-1878	B5036-1
Summary school reports of the Inspector of Public Schools, East Middlesex	1874-1898	B5036-2
Inspector's reports, Biddulph Township	1876-1894	B5036-3
Inspector's reports, Delaware Township	1876-1899	B5036-4
Inspector's reports, Dorchester Township	1876-1899	B5036-5
Inspector's reports, London Township	1876-1895	B5036-6
Inspector's reports, London West (Petersville)	1877-1895	B5036-7
Inspector's reports, notes, and correspondence, McGillivray Township	1892-1899	B5036-8

Title	Dates	Box/File
Inspector's reports, notes, and correspondence, Oneida Indian Reserve	1884-1887	B5036-9
Inspector's reports, notes, and correspondence, Oneida Indian Reserve	1890-1896	B5036-10
Inspector's reports, notes, and correspondence reporting to warden and council	1876	B5036-11
Inspector's reports, West Nissouri Township	1876-1899	B5036-12
Inspector's reports, Westminster and Dorchester Union	1876-1898	B5036-13
Inspector's reports, notes, and correspondence, Westminster/London South	1878-1887	B5036-14
Letter copying book [vol.]	1876-1895	B5036-15
Reports of the Inspectors of Public Schools, County of Middlesex	1876-1898	B5036-16
Notebook on teaching and E.M.T.A.	1883	B5036-22
Clippings re inspector's reports (fragile)	1874-1875	B5036-17
Programmes, East Middlesex Teachers' Association	1882-1900	B5036-23
Programmes from various teachers' associations	1880-1898	B5036-25

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Series 4 Teaching career documents

Dates

1872-1922

Extent

8 cm of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains documents relating to the teaching career of John Dearness. Notebooks, stencils, and newspaper clippings relating to Dearness' elementary and secondary school teaching career, as well as documents from his time teaching at the Ontario Agricultural College, are included.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
Pupil record book [vol.]	1872	B5036-18
Teaching notebook	1872	B5036-19
Teaching notebook	1874	B5036-20
Correspondence and other papers re the Ontario Agricultural College summer school for teachers	1911-1915	B5036-28
"Nature Gems" souvenir album from the Ontario Agricultural College	1915	B5036-29
Programmes from various teaching associations	1900-1922	B5036-26
Blackboard stencils	[ca. 1890]	B5038-2

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Series 5 Photographs

Dates

1888, [ca. 1910], [ca. 1930]-1962

Extent

28 photographs : b&w ; 28 x 20 cm or smaller

Scope and Content

This series contains photographs relating to the personal and professional life of John Dearness. Photographs depicting Dearness' school, members of various associations, and scientific curiosities are included. Several photographs were added after John Dearness' death.

Note

Ten photographs from this series have been transferred to the regional photograph collection. Please consult the Archives' reference desk for more information.

File and Item List

Title	Dates	Box/File
Photo of Biddulph school where John Dearness taught	[ca. 1930]	B5036-21
Photograph of East Middlesex Teachers' Association	1888	B5036-24
Photograph of Miss Brenton	1958	B5037-001-16
Photographs, notes and correspondence re fungi	1933-1934	B5037-001-20
Photograph of barred owl on tulip stub with note by John Dearness	1935, 1944	B5037-001-21
Photo album and scrapbook [vol.]	1938-1962	B5038

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Series 6 **Toronto Normal School anniversary records**

Dates

1897, 1947

Extent

1 folder of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains clippings, correspondence, and memorabilia from the Toronto Normal School's 50th and 100th anniversary celebrations. Letters of invitation, menus, and programmes are included.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
Miscellaneous clippings, correspondence and ephemera re the jubilee celebration ceremonies of the Toronto Normal School	1897, 1947	B5036-27

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Series 7 Addresses for public events

Dates

1875-1952

Extent

5 cm of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains handwritten notes and drafts of various public addresses. Addresses dealing with education, literature, and science are included.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
Addresses	1875-1882	B5037-001-1
Addresses – O.W. Holmes, Botany	1894-1896	B5037-001-2
Addresses – Kindergarteners, principles, memory	1923	B5037-001-3
Addresses – The second year Normal School course	[ca. 1910]	B5037-001-4
Addresses - various	1885-1887	B5037-001-5
Addresses - various	1900	B5037-001-6
Miscellaneous notes and addresses	[after 1900]-1952	B5037-001-7

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Series 8 Newspaper clippings and notes

Dates

1878-1950

Extent

13 cm of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains newspaper clippings and notes compiled by John Dearness. Articles and notes relating to poets and nature, as well as background research notes for nature studies courses, are included.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
Clippings on Robert Elliott, including manuscripts of poems dedicated to John Dearness	[ca. 1880]	B5037-001-8
Clippings on Robert Elliott	1902-1904, 1947	B5037-001-9
Clippings on Oliver Wendell Holmes	1878-1895	B5037-001-12
Notes and clippings re: E.M.S. Dale	1944	B5037-001-13
Clippings on F.G. Scott found in Poems Old and New	1941-1944	B5037-001-14
Clippings on two species named after Dearness	1898, 1904	B5037-001-17
Botanical notes on specimens	1915-1928	B5037-001-18
Clippings, notes and letter on ornithology	1929-1950	B5037-001-19
Clippings and notes re weather and weather lore found in Weather Folklore and Local Weather Signs	1904-1924	B5037-001-22

Title	Dates	Box/File
Clippings on tree life, weather and nature	[ca. 1900]	B5037-001-23
Clippings and notes found in the Canadian Birthday Book	1935-1940	B5037-001-24
Clippings found in Ryerson memorial volume	1943-1944	B5037-001-25
Notes and clippings found in Profiles Accompanying Report on Altitudes	1904-1913	B5037-001-26
Clippings on nature	1945-1949	B5037-001-27
Miscellaneous notes re nature study	1901-1906	B5037-001-28
Miscellaneous notes re nature study	1901-1906	B5037-001-29
Miscellaneous clippings and notes	1889-1948	B5037-002-1
Articles by John Dearness (clippings)	1895-1897	B5037-002-3
Research notes	[after 1924]	B5038-1

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Series 9 Microscope slides

Dates

[ca. 1900]-1941

Extent

77 microscope slides

Scope and Content

This series contains microscope slides prepared by John Dearness and others. Plant, animal, and geological samples are included. A microscope slide of Hamlet's soliloquy is also included.

Related Material

John Dearness' microscope slides are described in William W. Judd's publication [An account of the collection of microscope slides of John Dearness, 1852-1954](#), available at Western Libraries (call number QH31.D427J83). While the book states that 94 slides were donated, the vacant numbers in the boxes were not taken into consideration; 77 slides were counted and described, and none are missing.

Conditions Governing Use

For preservation reasons, use of the microscope slides in this series requires prior consultation with the responsible archivist.

Item List

Title	Dates	Box
Plant sections slide box	1901-1938	B5038
Selected exhibits slide box	1916-1927	B5038
Diatoms slide box	1927-1941	B5038
Box of miscellaneous microscope slides	[ca. 1900]-1931	B5038

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Series 10 Publications

Dates

[before 1900]-1948?

Extent

15 cm of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains publications by John Dearness. Items relating to science and teaching, as well as a list of serials and publications donated with the John Dearness fonds, are included.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
Bibliographies of John Dearness	1948?	B5037-002-2
Articles in Canadian Teacher and The School	1906-1934	B5037-002-4
Post Graduate Training for Teachers	[before 1900]	B5037-002-5
Reprint of Nature Study Work with Insects from the Nature Study Review	1907	B5037-002-6
Proofs of The Fungi of Manitoba	1929	B5037-002-7
Articles in School and Home with proofs	1904-1909	B5037-002-8
Advertising brochures for The Nature Study Course and Morang's Second Reader	1905	B5037-002-9
Duplicate copies of brochures, pamphlets, and publications	1905-1934	B5037-002-10
Serials and publications in the John Dearness fonds (list)	1900-1941	B5037-002-11

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Series 11 Biographical added material

Dates

1955-1972

Extent

1 volume

Scope and Content

This series contains biographical sketches relating to the personal and professional life of John Dearness. Newspaper clippings and biographical sketches written or collected after Dearness' death are included.

Item List

Title	Dates	Box
Biographical sketches by W.F. Tamblyn, Dr. William B. Hamilton, and Susannah E. McKone [vol.]	1955-1972	B5038

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Series 12 Scrapbooks

Dates

1892-1954

Extent

2 volumes

Scope and Content

This series contains scrapbooks relating to the personal and professional life of John Dearness. Newspaper clippings and correspondence are included.

Item List

Title	Dates	Box
Biographical scrapbook [vol.]	1941-1954	B5038
Scrapbook [vol.]	1892-1953	B5038