

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

WESTERN ARCHIVES



THE EAST MIDDLESEX AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY FONDS

AFC 73

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 73
THE EAST MIDDLESEX AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY FONDS

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THE EAST MIDDLESEX AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY FONDS
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FONDS DESCRIPTION

Dates

1873-1950

Extent

6 folders of textual records

2 volumes

1 drawing ; 24 x 40 cm

1 technical drawing : blueprint ; 50 x 85 cm

Administrative History

In the early 1840s, small agricultural fairs were held in various parts of London; as the town expanded, larger facilities were needed. The East Middlesex Agricultural Society was formed in 1841, with a mission to organize the smaller agricultural societies and to showcase the region's agricultural achievements. The East Middlesex Agricultural Society represented the local townships of London, Nissouri, Dorchester, and Westminster.

A larger annual fair was held in London at the north-west corner of Oxford and Talbot Streets until 1868; temporary buildings were erected for these short events. Needing to expand, the society purchased land on Richmond Street, today part of Victoria Park and extending northwards, sharing some of this space with the army barracks.

In 1868, members of the East Middlesex Agricultural Society and the London Horticultural and Agricultural Society collaborated to create The Western Fair Association, which was officially incorporated in 1887. Annual fairs were held at the Richmond Street site until that year, when the Association felt that it had outgrown the downtown space. The East Middlesex Agricultural Society, The City of London, and the London Horticultural and Agricultural Society reached a legal agreement with the Western Fair Association; if the city provided suitable grounds to hold the fair events, the East Middlesex Agricultural Society would join the Western Fair Association and contribute four thousand dollars toward its operating costs. With this agreement in place, the Western Fair moved to its current home on Rectory Street. The East Middlesex Agricultural Society continued operations separate from the Western Fair Association, but appointed 6 directors to the 24 member Western Fair Association board.

Due to the changing nature of the use of the fairgrounds, the Western Fair Association planned to sever its ties with the East Middlesex Agricultural Society in 1939. The East Middlesex Agricultural Society, however, was entitled to be reimbursed the four thousand dollars with which it entered the Western Fair Association in 1887. Since the fairgrounds were occupied by the Department of National Defence from 1939 to 1947 for wartime

activities, the Western Fair did not operate during that period, and the money to be repaid could not be raised.

The Western Fair Association reimbursed the East Middlesex Agricultural Society in 1947, and the society began to wind down its affairs according to requirements set out by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture. The \$4,000 was disbursed amongst the agricultural societies that were originally joined together to form the Society, namely the agricultural societies and fair associations of London Township, West Nissouri Township, Dorchester Township, and Westminster Township. The East Middlesex Agricultural Society ceased operations in 1950.

Scope and Content

Fonds consists of correspondence, legal documents, financial records, membership lists, and other documents relating to the East Middlesex Agricultural Society. Two volumes containing minutes from meetings of the East Middlesex Agricultural Society are also included.

Arrangement

The fonds is arranged into the following series:

- Series 1: Minutes of meetings
- Series 2: East Middlesex Agricultural Society and Western Fair Association financial records
- Series 3: Correspondence
- Series 4: Historical accounts
- Series 5: East Middlesex Agricultural Society and Western Fair Association legal and governance documents
- Series 6: Vankleek Hill flagpole documents

Finding Aids

File and item lists are available.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This fonds was acquired by The University of Western Ontario prior to 1972 from an unknown source.

Conditions Governing Access

No restrictions on access.

THE EAST MIDDLESEX AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY FONDS
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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS

Series 1 Minutes of meetings

Dates

1873-1950

Extent

2 volumes of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains two minute books, recording the minutes of meetings of the East Middlesex Agricultural Society. Newspaper clippings are pasted in to the earlier edition.

Item List

Title	Dates	Box
Minute book	1873-1913	B5289-001
Minute book	1914-1950	B5289-001

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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS

Series 2 East Middlesex Agricultural Society and Western Fair Association financial records

Dates

1911, 1921, 1937-1940, 1944-1950

Extent

2 folders of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains financial records, financial reports, and receipts of the Western Fair Association and its parent organization, the East Middlesex Agricultural Society.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
East Middlesex Agricultural Society financial records	1911, 1944-1950	B4069-1
Western Fair Association financial reports	1921, 1937-1940	B4069-2

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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS

Series 3 Correspondence

Dates

1914, 1919, 1945-1950

Extent

1 folder of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains incoming correspondence and copies of outgoing correspondence of the East Middlesex Agricultural Society. Letters from the Western Fair Association and the Department of Agriculture, Agricultural and Horticultural Societies are included. Most were addressed to or sent from East Middlesex Agricultural Society president A.M. Dickie or secretary James H. Wheaton.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
East Middlesex Agricultural Society correspondence	1914, 1919, 1945-1950	B4069-3

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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS

Series 4 East Middlesex Agricultural Society historical accounts

Dates

1944

Extent

2 folders of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains historical information about the East Middlesex Agricultural Society. Newspaper clippings, most from the London Free Press, and a handwritten account of the history of the organization are included.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
East Middlesex Agricultural Society historical accounts	1944	B4069-4
East Middlesex Agricultural Society newspaper clippings	1938, 1945-1947	B4069-5

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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS

Series 5 East Middlesex Agricultural Society and Western Fair Association legal and Governance documents

Dates

1887, 1910-1913, 1918, 1945-1947

Extent

1 folder of textual records

Scope and Content

This series contains the legal and governing documents of the Western Fair Association and the East Middlesex Agricultural Society, its parent body. Member lists, bylaws, and legal documents are included. Copies of several Ontario acts regarding agricultural societies are also included.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
East Middlesex Agricultural Society legal and governance	1887, 1910-1913, 1918, 1945-1947	B4069-6
Western Fair Association legal and governance	[after 1917]	B4069-7
Ontario laws regarding agricultural societies	1927, 1939	B4069-8

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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS and FILE LISTS

Series 6 Vankleek Hill flagpole documents

Dates

1941

Extent

1 drawing ; 24 x 40 cm

1 technical drawing : blueprint ; 50 x 85 cm

Administrative History

Residents of Vankleek Hill, a town of approximately 2000 inhabitants located south of Hawkesbury, Ontario, established the Vankleek Hill Agricultural Society in 1844.

Scope and Content

This series contains a drawing and a blueprint, commissioned by the Ontario Department of Agriculture, of a flagpole to commemorate the upcoming centenary of the Vankleek Hill Agricultural Society.

File List

Title	Dates	Box/File
Vankleek Hill Agricultural Society flagpole documents	1941	B4069-9