

ESTHER CLARK WRIGHT ARCHIVES

ACADIA UNIVERSITY

Proprietors of the Lower Dyke Common Field fonds

Accession 1936.001-LDC



Compiled by Rhianna H. Edwards
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Proprietors of the Lower Dyke Common Field fonds. – [textual records]. – 1814-1929. – 2 volumes of textual records

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Administrative History¹

In the early days and continuing into the 20th century, under the townships' Commissioners of Sewers, each group of proprietors of a dyke organized itself for the day-to-day use of the lands and the maintenance of their condition. At annual meetings, the proprietors set the yearly rate for covering the dykeland expenses. They also appointed, from among themselves (it was all voluntary work), assizers to assess the size and value of dyke holdings; field watchers to keep an eye on the condition of the fields and to ensure peace on the dykelands; fence viewers; and drivers to care for the animals feeding on the common fields. Branders were also appointed to brand and otherwise mark the livestock to be allowed on the dykelands after haying or harvest.

There were strict rules concerning the number of animals allowed on these community pastures in the fall. Each year the assizers would evaluate the fee. The method of assessment was rather complicated, but a standard unit was the three acres of dykeland that it took to feed a cow during September and October. A three-year-old horse might rate as a cow and a half, while a colt or calf represented a quarter cow.

From the contents of these two volumes, it would appear that the proprietors of the common field of the Lower Dyke organized themselves in the typical manner described above, and the books detail the land values, number of livestock being pastured, etc.

Custodial History

A letter dated 25 February 1936, written by University Librarian Mary Kinley Ingraham, and pasted onto the first page of the volume, states that two volumes, Book I and Book II, were donated 'on this date' by T. J. Borden, Clerk [of the Proprietors].

¹ This information has been taken from Marjory Whitelaw, *The Wellington Dyke*, Nimbus Press Limited and The Nova Scotia Museum: Halifax, 1997.

Scope and Content

Fonds contains record books of the Lower Dyke Common Field, specifically:

1 **[Lower Dyke Common Field record book. – 1814–1864.](#) – 1 v of textual records**

Item contains minutes of meetings held by the proprietors of the Lower Dyke Common Field. The minutes indicated that each year at a meeting, the proprietors of the Common Field would elect that year's assessor, brander, road master(s), fence viewer(s), etc. Decisions would be made as to when cattle could be turned on the field and when they must be removed.

Note: Supplied title based upon contents of item

Note: Cover is missing

2. **Lower Dyke Common Field record book. – 1865–1929. – 1 v of textual records**

Item contains minutes of meetings held by the proprietors, as well as accounts.

Note: Supplied title based upon contents of item

Note: Digital document available in three parts:

[record book \(part one\)](#) includes pages 1-53

[record book \(part two\)](#) includes pages 54-97

[record book \(part three\)](#) includes pages 98-145

Notes

Title based on contents of fonds

Digital copy available

Records subject to the *Copyright Act*

See also Dykes and Common Fields collection 1900.018-DCF

See also Township of Horton accession 1972.004-HOR

See also John F. Herbin accession 1996.002-HER

See also Maritime Marshland Rehabilitation Administration accession 1998.001-MRA

See also Sherman Bleakney accessions 1990.005-BLE, 2004.039-BLE, 2006.037-BLE

Citation for this electronic finding aid:

This finding aid should be cited as a website. Relevant information is as follows:

Title: Proprietors of the Lower Dyke Common Field fonds

Date: 2001

Author: Esther Clark Wright Archives, Acadia University

Access Points

Proprietors of the Lower Dyke Common Field (Kings Co., NS)
Dikes (Engineering)--Nova Scotia—Grand Pre Region--History
