

ESTHER CLARK WRIGHT ARCHIVES

ACADIA UNIVERSITY

TOWNSHIP OF CORNWALLIS COLLECTION
Multiple Accessions



Compiled by Wendy G. Robicheau
January 2010

**Township of Cornwallis collection. – [textual records]. – 1795-1864. –
7cm of textual records**

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Scope and Content

The collection consists of items relating to the Township of Cornwallis, including a record book, information about the Poor House, and information about schools.

1911.001-COR/1 [record book](#) (1795-1862) of transactions or proceedings of the meetings of the inhabitants of the Township, April 1795 - November 1862, by Ward Eaton, the Town Clerk. Early records deal almost exclusively with the Overseers of the Poor. This item has been partially transcribed by Majorie Wickwire

1900.357-COR/1 [petition](#) [1839?] signed by John Coldwell (Caldwell?) and George Parker, requesting the appointment of a committee to study the need for the establishment of a Poor House in 'the Town'. The suggested committee members were: John Coldwell, W. H. Chipman, Nathan Parker and Dr. C. C. Hamilton

1900.282-COR/1 [account](#) (1839) by which the Commissioners of the Poor seem to be determining how much money would be needed to support the poor, November 1839. Signed by Wm [Bowlby?], D. Deckey, Wm Henry Chipman, James Ilsley, and Peter Wickwire.

Note: On verso of the document is written: "New the Baptists Meeting [?] on Monday 2 Nov 1849" and several illegible markings in pencil

1900.356-COR/1 [correspondence](#) (1857) from William H. Chipman, Clerk of Peace, to the Town Clerk of Cornwallis Township, in which Chipman asks to be informed of the amount of the Poor Rates for the year 1856

1900.041-COR/1 Cornwallis Township [School orders](#) (19 November 1800) giving the rules of conduct for pupils

Note: Verso covered with bible verses

1900.287-COR/1 [minutes](#) (1864) of a meeting held in the school house at Cornwallis on 25 October 1864. Those present decided to 'support a school agreeable to the new School law'. Also contains a list of the 'rateable inhabitants of School Section 57'

Note: Verso contains three letters [1864?] in which Leander Rand, Major commanding the 1st Regiment Kings County Nova Scotia Militia, attests to the training of three of his men

1900.315-COR/1 agreements (1857-1861) with teachers for Parade School on Upper Church Street, District no. 3

1900.315-COR/2 correspondence (1859, 1862) concerning Parade School on Upper Church Street, District no. 3

1900.315-COR/3 class lists (1858, 1859, 1887) for Parade School on Upper Church Street, District no. 3

1900.315-COR/4 regulations [18--?] for Parade School on Upper Church Street, District no. 3

1900.315-COR/5 account book (1857-1860) for Parade School on Upper Church Street, District no. 3

1900.315-COR/6 invoices (1857-1862) for Parade School on Upper Church Street, District no. 3

Administrative History

In 1759, the Governor of Nova Scotia was empowered to give land grants to settlers wanting to come to Nova Scotia. The intent was that “[a]s soon as the people were settled, townships of a hundred thousand acres each, or about 12 miles square, would be formed, and each township would be entitled to send two representatives to the Assembly [in Halifax]”. In advance of the settlers taking their land grants, agents were sent to scout the lands of Nova Scotia for settlement. Eaton lists these agents as “well-to-do persons” and calls them “worthy gentlemen and prominent persons” (Eaton 1910, 60-63).

In 1759/1760, Charles Morris, the chief land-surveyor for Nova Scotia, came with the agents to look at various sites along the Bay of Fundy. He was able to lay out townships which he would divide in to towns, sections, and lots. Canard, as the township was first called, was located in the north side of the Grand Habitant river. Eaton notes that the name ‘town’ or ‘township’ was given to areas in New England with large settlements. The name ‘township’ was used in Nova Scotia until the original townships formed into municipalities in 1879. The Township of Cornwallis assigned 600 acres of land to the glebe and 400 acres for a school. A Cornwallis Committee was set up to distribute lands in the Township (Eaton 1910, 63-77).

The first land grants were given in 1759 for the newly named Township of Cornwallis; some were never claimed and so additional new grants were given in 1761. Settlers to the Township came mostly from Connecticut and arrived in 1760 (Eaton 1910, 65-67). These settlers are now commonly known as “New England Planters”.

Gwyn notes that the 1763 census indicates that 656 people lived in the Township. By the 1827 census, this number had risen to 4,400. The later census also noted 16 saw mills, 11 grist mills, 2 carding mills, 1 pottery, and some blacksmith shops (Gwyn 2010, 58-59). Newcombe points out that the 1791 census lists occupations such as shipbuilding, blacksmithing, tanning, fishing, and farming. Only later censuses indicate coopering, fruit farming, and apple exporting as occupations (Newcombe 1945, 63-77).

The first school master, Cornelius Fox, started in 1772 and stayed for 25 years. School Trustees were first appointed in 1765/1766. Several school sites are known, but the Church Street School, close to St. Joseph’s Anglican Church, is the best known. The School was run by the Church until 1857 and the building is described as having only two rooms – one for the school and one used by the Church as a hall (Newcombe 1945, 57-60).

Custodial History

Custodial history is unknown. See Appendix A for a letter from Ernest L. Eaton to C. Bruce Fergusson concerning the record book.

Notes

Supplied title based on contents of collection.

Records subject to the *Copyright Act*.

Accompanying material: letter by Ernest L. Eaton to C. Bruce Fergusson concerning the record book. Included as Appendix A.

Related records:

1978.004-WIC/1 partial transcription (1978) of the Township of Cornwallis Record Book, 1795-1862. Note by M. Wickwire included in the file: "The Reports of meetings from 1818-1845 have not been typed. The writing gets worse and so much of it is repetitive. Enclosed a poor transliteration of meetings from 1795-1818; 1846-1862."

- Biographical History of Marjorie Wickwire included as Appendix B.

1900.032-CEN/1 accounts and minutes (1868-1885) of the school in Centreville includes boundaries of Section no. 44, dates of school opening, amount of money to be raised, school books received, and lists ratepayers and amounts. The Board of Trustees is listed in 1868 as Theodorus Kinsman, John Caldwell, and Ward Eaton

Related records can be found at the Nova Scotia Archives.

See also "History of Kings County Nova Scotia" by AWH Eaton [SPCOLL FC2345 .K52E28 1910]

See also "Planter Nova Scotia 1760-1815: Cornwallis Township" by Julian Gwyn [SPCOLL]

See also "The History of the Township of Cornwallis" by Isabelle Newcombe [SPTHEs 1945]

See also "The Basin of Minas and It's Early Settlers" by WC Milner [SPCOLL FC2345 .M5M55 1930z]

See also "Township Books Kings County Nova Scotia" compiled by Lorna Woodman Evans [SPCOLL CS88 .K55E93 1996]

See also "Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia" by TC Haliburton [SPDEN FC2311 .H35 1839]

See also "History of Nova Scotia" by Beamish Murdoch [SPCOLL F1038 .M97 3 vols]

See also "A Planter Success Story: Handley Chipman's Roll in Cornwallis Township 1761-1799" by Peter Martin Walker [SPTHEs 2004]

School records described in this finding aid are not for the Church Street School

Citation for this electronic finding aid:

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

Title: Township of Cornwallis collection

Date: 2010

Author: Esther Clark Wright Archives, Acadia University

Access Points

Township of Cornwallis (Kings Co., NS)

Township of Cornwallis (Kings Co., NS). Commissioners of the Poor

Cornwallis Township School (Kings Co., NS)

Parade School (Township of Cornwallis, Kings Co., NS)

Chipman, William Allen (1757-1846)

Eaton, Ward (1798-1870)

Wickwire, Marjorie (1899-1987)

Schools—Kings County (NS)

Appendix A

C. Bruce Fergusson:

"The Book of Records in which is recorded the transactions or proceedings of the Inhabitants of the Township of Cornwallis at there General Town Meetings" and covering the years 1795-1862 is preserved in the library of Acadia University, Wolfville, N.S.

Nothing in the library files indicates from whom the book was received nor now it came into the donors possession. A registered envelope, apparently originating in Vancouver, carrying several intermediate post marks, and dated 1911 is kept with the book.

Some manuscript notes, also of unknown authorship, are filed with the record book.

It is noted that two minute records appear for the meeting of November 1, 188, one written by the chairman and one by the clerk. No explanation is offered and they differ only slightly.

This copy of the "Book of Records" has been provided through the courtesy of Mr. Harry Ganong, Librarian at Acadia University, and at the request of Ernest L. Eaton, so that a complete file of the Cornwallis Township records, as far as known, may be available in the Nova Scotia Archives at Halifax.

It may be of interest to point out that William Allen Chipman, Clerk until 1845, was born on November 8, 1757 and died December 28, 1846. Thus he was a few days sort of his eighty-eighth birthday when he recorded the minutes of the meeting of November 3, 1855.

Ward Eaton, who became Clerk in 1846, died February 1, 1870, at the age of seventy-two. He was succeeded as Clerk by his son, J. Stanley Eaton, who continued as Clerk until his death, October 26, 1916, at the age of eighty.

Upper Canard, N.S.
March 18, 1966

Ernest L. Eaton

Appendix B

Biographical History

Marjorie Allison Wickwire was born in 1899 and died in 1987. She was born in Wolfville, attended the Wolfville School, and graduated from Acadia University in 1921. She was an Assistant Librarian at Acadia University from 1921-1943, a Librarian with the National Research Council from 1944-1947, a Librarian with the Polymer Corporation in Sarnia from 1947-1959, a Librarian again with the National Research Council from 1959-1965, and the Circulation Librarian at Acadia University in 1965 until at least 1971.