

**Collection
SC 0122**

**Loudoun Agricultural Society Records
1852 - 1876**

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Processed by
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**Thomas Balch Library
208 W. Market Street
Leesburg, VA 20176**

USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 4 items

COLLECTION DATES: 1852-1876

PROVENANCE: Loudoun County Historical Society

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS: Collection open for research

USE RESTRICTIONS: No physical characteristics affect use of this material.

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from Thomas Balch Library.

CITE AS: Loudoun Agricultural Society Records, 1852-1876 (SC 0122), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: Catoctin Farmers' Club Records (M 034), Mott-Bentley Family Correspondence (M 116), Norris and Sons Account Book (BV 005)

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 2004.001

NOTES: Previously catalogued as NUCMC 66

HISTORICAL/BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The Agricultural Society of Loudoun, Fauquier, Prince William, and Fairfax was founded during 1825 and 1826 in order to spread agricultural knowledge and innovation among the farmers of the respective counties. In March of 1842, a separate body was created in Loudoun County, called the Agricultural Society of Loudoun, also known as the Loudoun Agricultural Society and the Loudoun County Agricultural Society. The First Annual Meeting occurred in Leesburg on 19 October 1852, with Benjamin Hallowell (fl. 1800-1879) of Alexandria delivering the opening address.

In 1854, the Loudoun County Agricultural Academy and Chemical Institute was created with the aid of Benjamin Hyde Benton (fl. 1839-1857) to educate farmers in method and business skills, and to serve as a resource to catalogue ecological samples from the state of Virginia. The Institute offered the first vocational training in Loudoun but closed in 1861 as an effect of the Civil War, never to be reopened. In 1857, stock in the Society cost \$20, with Robert L. Wright (1813-1865) signing as president and John W. Wildman (1822-1890) as treasurer.

The Agricultural Society sponsored an annual county fair in Leesburg during the 1850s and after the Civil War. The Eleventh Annual Fair and Cattle Show of the Agricultural Society was held in 1871. The fair awarded cash prizes ranging from \$1-10, and after the Civil War, emphasis was placed on the Domestic Manufactures and Home Manufactures categories to encourage the production of local and homemade wares. Other competition categories included culinary classes and household fabrics. In November of 1873, President Ulysses S. Grant visited Leesburg and attended one such fair.

In the years after the Civil War, the Agricultural Society was assisted in their efforts by the formation of the Loudoun County Livestock Exhibition Association in the late 1800s. Farming associations were popular at this time, with the intention to revitalize local economies and restore stability to the area. Similar and concurrent organizations included the Catocin Farmers' Club (est. 1863) and the Patrons of Husbandry, also known as the Grange (est. locally 1875), which later (1892) developed into the Populist Party. Club meetings were held over a meal served at a member's house and often comprised of a discussion of prices, a guest speaker or presentation, and an informal tour of the host's premises.

SOURCES

Ancestry Library Edition, United States census, <http://www.ancestrylibrary.com>.

Loudoun Agricultural Society Records (SC 0122), Thomas Balch Library,
Leesburg, VA.

Poland, Charles P. Jr. From Frontier to Suburbia. Missouri: Walsworth Publishing, 1976.

Thomas Balch Library. Town of Leesburg. Loudoun County Cemetery Database, <http://www.leesburgva.gov/services/library/cemetery/default.aspx>.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains 4 items, the earliest of which is a booklet published by the Agricultural Society in 1853 that replicates the address given by Benjamin Hallowell at their First Annual Meeting on 19 October 1852. The booklet was once secured by a stitched binding, and the spine is now covered by tape. Following the address is a stock certificate titled to Dr. A. R. Mott (1823-1894), dated 10 November 1857. The certificate is numbered 86 and quantifies one share in the Society, costing \$20. The heading of the certificate is ornamented by two plough illustrations, a replication of which can be found on the third item, a blue silk prize ribbon. This ribbon is from the 1859 Loudoun Agricultural Fair, which was held in Leesburg in November. The ribbon has been sleeved, and in addition to the plough symbol, it also bears the image of a sheep.

The final item in the collection is a photocopy of a letter dated 1 May 1876 that was originally found in the Ledger of John Norris & Sons, which covers 1858 to 1861. The letter contains an unfilled proxy form to designate alternative representation at the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders that was to be held on the second Monday in June 1876. The letter is closed by Henry Bronaugh (1844-1887), secretary of the Society.

CONTAINER LIST

Box 1:

- Folder 1: *Address of Benjamin Hallowell, of Alexandria, at the First Annual Meeting of the Agricultural Society of Loudoun County, VA., Held at Leesburg, October 19, 1859* Booklet
- Folder 2: 1857 Loudoun Agricultural Society Stock Certificate
- Folder 3: Photocopy of 1876 Letter and Proxy Form
- Folder 4: 1859 Loudoun Agricultural Fair Blue Ribbon