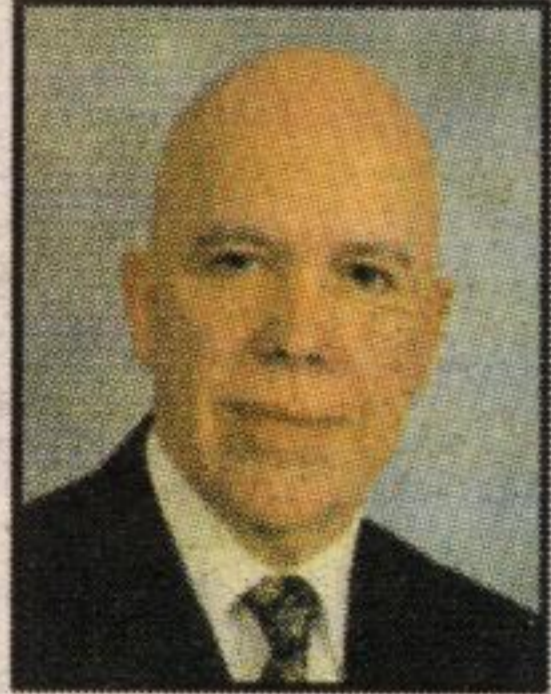


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OCTOBER 19, 1853.

COUNTY OF HALTON AGRICULTURAL SHOW.

(For the Spectator.)

Early on the morning of the 18th inst. were apparent indications of a large turn out of the people of Halton. Numbers were early on the ground to secure the best accommodation. Soon were to be seen pouring in from all directions, pedestrians, equestrians, single and two horse carriages, and the two horse waggon, all filled with visitors to the Exhibition. By 11 o'clock in the forenoon, a large concourse of people were assembled, each face manifesting a deep interest in the display of the rich products of the County.

The articles for exhibition were soon at their allotted stations, for the view of the assembled people, and the scrutinizing inspection of the Judges appointed to the different departments.

The show of Horses for agricultural purposes were excellent, not far, if at all behind your great Provincial Exhibition.



D. R. Springer,
President of the
Fair Board
1856-57

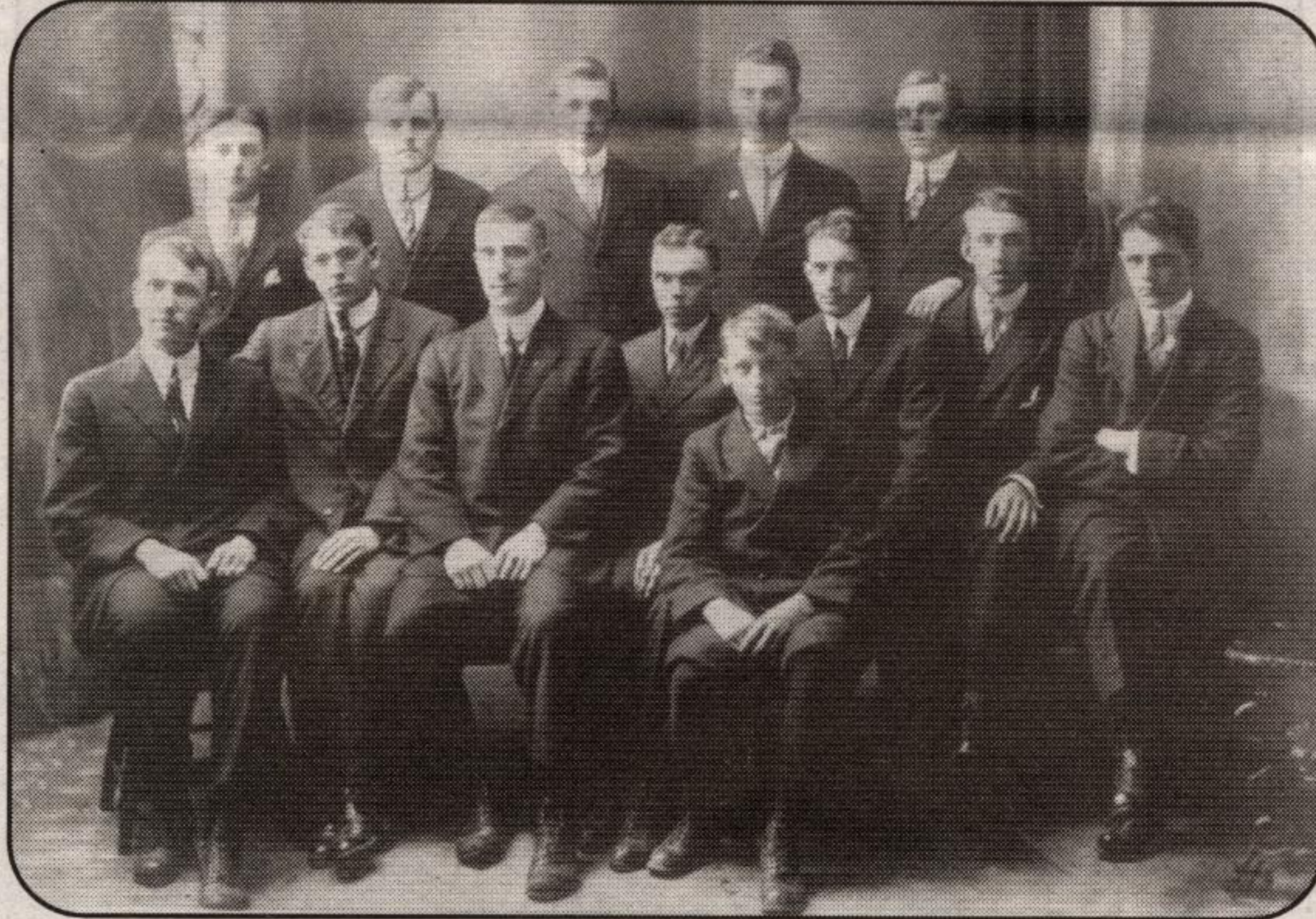


The Halton Agricultural

"County of Halton Agricultural Show" article from the *Spectator*
~ 1853 ~



Fun-loving folks at the fair
~ Circa 1910 ~



Stock-judging, Milton Fair, 1914

Front row, left to right: W. McDonald, N. McCallum, H. R. Hare (Dist. Dep.), A. Dixon, C. McCann, C.K. McDougall, C.W. Brown, R.S. Mountain. Back row, left to right: J. Service, T. Howden, W. Hume, A. McDonald, E. Featherstone.



Dairy cattle judging on the green, 1949

On March 16, 1853, several gentlemen gathered for an inaugural meeting to set up a Halton fair. Thomas Douglas was appointed the first president, William Barber and D. R. Springer were the vice-presidents, and Samuel Clark became secretary-treasurer. One hundred members joined the fledgling Halton Agricultural Society and raised \$305 in prize money for the first county fair, which was held in October 1854.

Yearly fall fairs herald the arrival of autumn and its attendant celebration of the harvest bounty with which we've been blessed. Their function is to entertain and educate visitors about agriculture, and showcase the handiwork of participants, whether they've grown the best selection of tomatoes, bred the finest hen, or cross-stitched the most intricate tablecloth. It's an opportunity to display skills undertaken with pride.

The first show was held in an area on Martin Street at the rear of the present Millside Restaurant, close to the mill. Stock, grain and various produce were presented to the judges' keen eyes. Across the street, women exhibited articles such as butter, eggs and home baking. In the beginning women were not part of the agricultural society, but were allowed to enter produce and handcrafted items such as crocheting, knitwear and stitchery. The male directors, however, certainly made use of their offers of assistance over the decades. Heavy horses and colts were shown on Main Street while light and road horses were driven down Bronte Street. Rows of top-notch harness, boots and machinery were viewed at the rear of the post office.

The *Spectator* of October 19, 1853, noted that, "The thorough bred Horses, though good, were not numerous, this being an Agricultural County, the show of horned Cattle was not as good as might be expected although there were a few good on the ground. The Sheep, chiefly of the Leicester Breed, were by good Judges, declared nearly equal to the best at the provincial Exhibition... The Ploughing was keenly contested by 14 competitors, in which great interest was manifested, not only by those engaged, by a great many present."

In 1864 the fair celebrated the opening of its first building on the grounds. The event slowly grew in scope and attendance, and by 1869 the October fair was held at the Agricultural grounds on a Monday and Tuesday with about 5,535 paid admissions. *The Champion* reported that it was one of the "largest crowds that has ever been in Milton," with paid admission totaling \$491.84. Total receipts that year were \$1,604.09, according to the government publication *Seasonal Papers* of 1869. The generous municipal grant given to the society was \$100 and the legislative grant was \$700.

The first hall was erected off Thomas Street with a boardwalk leading button-booted ladies up to its displays. An addition was added but

History of the Halton Agricultural Society upon the celebration of its 150th Milton Fair. Photos and background information courtesy of Halton Agricultural Society. Compiled by Deborah Quaille.

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MILTON, TRU

HALTON CO
MILTON,
FRIDAY
September 27

TRAILS C

2.17 Trot or Pace.....
2.22 Trot or Pace.....
2.30 Trot or Pace.....

SPECIAL

All exhibits winning in the Halton Fairs to consist of one male and three females.

1. MALTING BARLEY
The ONTARIO AND QUEBEC BREWERY this Special. Each exhibit must consist of 1st prize.....
2nd prize.....
3rd prize.....
4th prize.....
5th prize.....

1. To be eligible exhibit must be of 1855.
2. No exhibitor may win more than one prize.
3. (Winning one of these prizes, by competing at the Royal, or other Fairs.)
Basis of judging shall be as follows: Barley will be judged for its own

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