



CLARA THOMAS ARCHIVES

**Inventory of the
Aplin family fonds**

Inventory #F0151

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F0151 - Aplin family fonds

Fonds/Collection Number: F0151

Title: Aplin family fonds

Dates: 1916-2002

Extent: 0.16 metres of textual records
13 photographs

**Biographical Sketch/
Administrative History:** Edwin Miller (Ted) Aplin was born on 1 April 1909 at Teignmouth, Devon, England and died on 2 June 1973 in Scarborough, Ontario. He immigrated to Canada in 1930 where he met his future wife Elinor Grave Leef. They married on 4 July 1931. They had four children: Nick, Frank, Dave and Jacqueline born in 1933, 1935, 1939 and 1945, respectively. Aplin worked in numerous jobs including positions in banks, an insurance company, a stock brokerage and in sales. He was active in the years before the Second World War in the League for Social Reconstruction, the Canadian Civil Liberties Union and the Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, and was a member of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation. On 1 May 1942 he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force and was stationed in Toronto, Camp Borden, Trenton and Belleville. In December 1944, he left Canada for England and, after the Nazi surrender, was stationed at Celle, Germany as part of Royal Air Force 84 Group Disarmament HQ Unit which was responsible for ensuring that the Luftwaffe was incapacitated in northwest Germany. Being stationed near the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp, Aplin became interested in the welfare of the camp victims, many of whom were interned at Bergen-Belsen long after its liberation. To aid the survivors, he organized a system using the Armed Forces Postal System to put internees in contact with their families and friends, and collected goods from Canadian families for distribution at the camp. His work at Bergen-Belsen led many survivors to refer to him as "The Angel of Belsen". Following his return to Canada, Aplin continued to work in sales and operated several small businesses including Ted Aplin and Company. He became involved in the Scarborough community and was active in a number of local associations. He served as a Scarborough school trustee in 1946 and ran for reeve, unsuccessfully, in 1950. He worked passionately for peace upon his return to Canada up until the time of his death in 1973. His life and work has continued to be commemorated by his sons Nick and Frank who have collected documentation on his military service including testimonies and reminiscences from colleagues and survivors of Bergen-Belsen. They were both actively involved in the commemorative ceremony for the 50th Anniversary of its liberation in 1995.

Scope and Content: Fonds consists of letters written by Ted Aplin to his wife Elinor during his years of service with the R.C.A.F. including letters written while conducting relief work at the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp. It also contains copies of his birth certificate and passport, photographs of Aplin and his family, material that documents his political career in Scarborough, Ontario, a copy of his military service record, copies of articles written about Aplin before and after his death including obituaries and a transcript of his memorial service. It also contains material created and/or accumulated by his sons Nick and Frank in preparation for the 50th anniversary celebration of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen.

**Restrictions on
Access and Use:** No restrictions on access.

Finding Aid: File lists available.

URL of Finding Aid: <http://archivesfa.library.yorku.ca/fonds/ON00370-f0000151.htm>

Accruals: The fonds comprises the following accessions: 1997-044, 2004-049. Further accruals may be expected.

**Immediate source of
acquisition:** Donated by Nick Aplin in 1997 and 2004.

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Provenance Access Points: Aplin (family)
Aplin, Ted

Date of creation: 2004/12/16

Date of last revision: 2005/09/08