

TEHS Archives and Special Collections

A Look at the Gifts Received in 2012

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This article is adapted from a summary article written by Cheryl Leibold and the program notes from a presentation given by J. Michael Morrison at the Society's June 2013 meeting.

The Tredyffrin Easttown Historical Society Archives and Special Collections was the recipient of numerous 2012 gifts relating to the history of our area. Over thirty new photographs were donated to the collection, as well as interesting items of printed matter, maps, and books. The Society thanks all these donors for thinking of local history.



Item 1: A group of Davis (or Williams?) family members, about 1900



Item 2: First Baptist Church in Berwyn



Item 3: "Nuzum's Mansion"

We'll start with the largest gift, of memorabilia from the estate of Mabel Davis, donated by her son Gene Williams, former long-time manager of Easttown Township. In sorting out his mother's estate he found that she had saved a small cache of things from her school days. Mabel Davis attended Easttown Grammar and Tredyffrin Easttown High. Among other things, she had saved both her grammar school and high school diplomas, miscellaneous photographs, and photographs of student groups. The unidentified group in Item 1 may be her family.

The gift includes eight photographs:

First Baptist Church in Berwyn. Four of the photographs in the Gene Williams gift are probably by Lucy Sampson. You may recall seeing Lucy Sampson photographs in the talk Mike Bertram gave two years ago. It was quite common for photographers to print their images on commercial postcard stock, and we have many other Lucy Sampson photographs printed this way. Here is the First Baptist Church in Berwyn. Lucy Sampson's easily identified handwriting is seen along the left side of the card. This and the next are badly damaged, and are in fact duplicates of cards already in the collection.

"Nuzum's Mansion." This one is inscribed on the back "Nuzum's Mansion." The Nuzum family has a long history in our area and was related to many other families including the Williams family. Their house was on Main Street in Berwyn, but is no longer standing. For many decades the house was occupied by Sarah B. Nuzum, an active member of the Tredyffrin Easttown Historical Society and many other local organizations. She authored numerous articles in the *History Quarterly* and died in 1986 at age 96.



Item 4: Workers at Berwyn train station

Workers at Berwyn train station: The next postcard shows two workers at the Berwyn train station, inscribed “William Bradley and J. Bloomer.” This and the next are new to the collection.

Baseball team. The fourth postcard shows us a baseball team, posed in their uniforms which carry a “B” on the shirt.

Next are two photographs of a class of students at Easttown Grammar, about 1928. Here are two really great photographs of what must have been Mabel’s 5th or 6th grade class at Easttown Grammar, about 1928.

Easttown Grammar class from the front: The children are dressed in their best for this beautifully posed image. Most of the girls have a really big ribbon bow in their hair.

Easttown Grammar class from the rear: There are about 27 students, about one third boys and two thirds girls. They are all holding their books and looking directly at the camera in the view from the front, and reading their books in this view from the back where you can see the teacher at her desk.

T-E High School class trip: A large photograph of Mabel’s 1932 senior class, on the annual spring trip to Washington, D.C. suggests a time when such events were commemorated with formal poses and one’s best clothes. The trip was a long tradition at the high school, and in fact at many high schools in the Mid-Atlantic region. These two images are the left and right thirds of this large composite photograph.



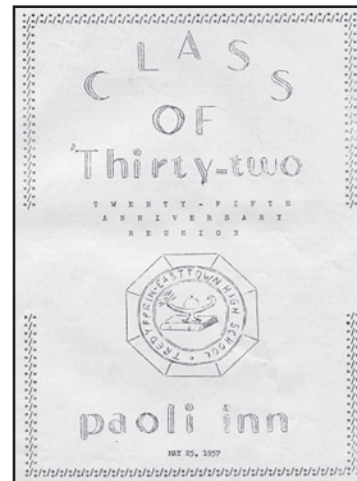
Item 5: Baseball team



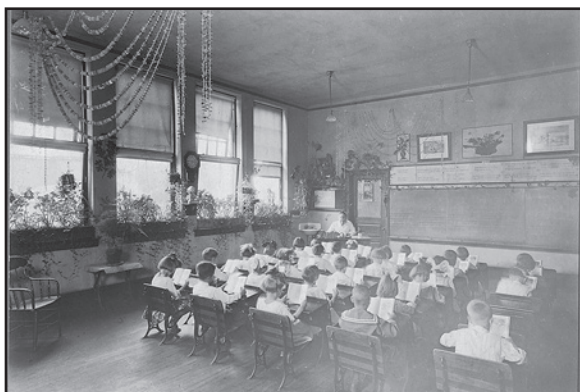
Item 6: Easttown Grammar class from the front.

The Gene Williams gift also included a few items of printed matter relating to Mabel Davis’ grammar school and high school years, including her Easttown Grammar School diploma, 1928; her T-E High School graduation program and yearbook, 1932; and her T-E High School Class of 1932 - 25th Reunion Program and Commemorative book, 1957

Our thanks to Gene Williams for this really fine gift of local history materials.



Item 9: Reunion Commemorative



Item 7: Easttown Grammar class from the rear.



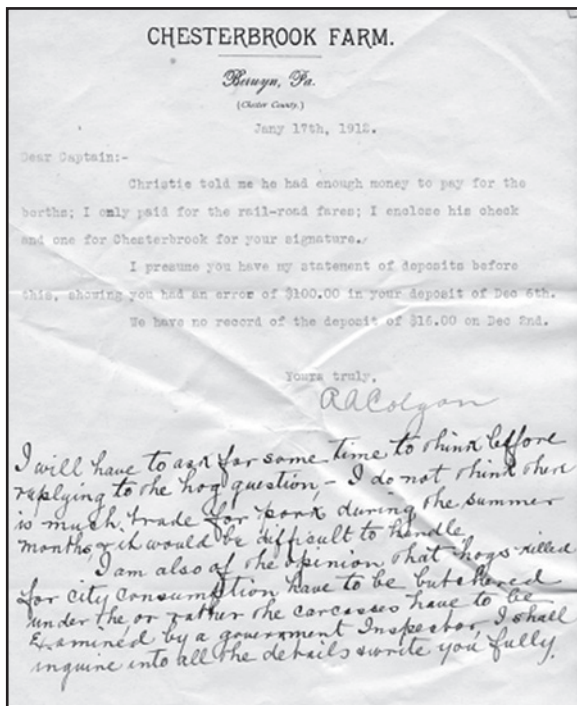
Item 8: T-E High School class trip



Item 10: Newhall home exterior



Item 11: Newhall home library



Item 12: Chesterbrook Farm letter

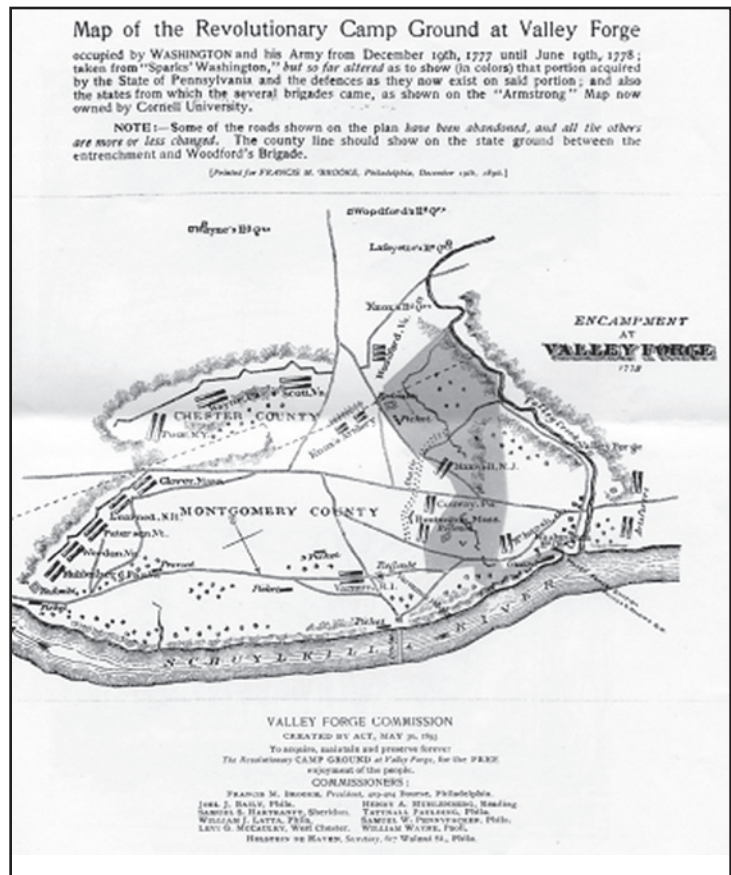
An equally important gift came from the Lower Merion Historical Society. The collection of sixteen (8 x 10 inch) glass negatives depicting the Daniel S. Newhall residence in Strafford, Pennsylvania was featured in the presentation at the Society's April 2012 meeting. The next article provides more information about Newhall, and additional images from the collection are included at the end of this article on page 135.

Newhall images. Item 10 shows the south-facing front of the Newhall house (1912), and Item 11 is a 1902 photograph of the ornate library of the Newhall house.

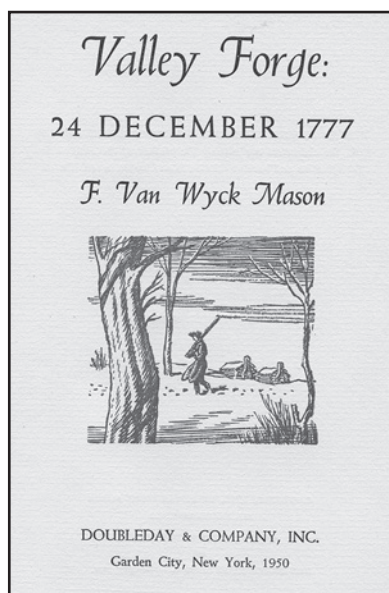
The Society was also the recipient of a number of smaller individual items. We'll look at the highlights of these.

Chesterbrook Farm letter. Gail McAdoo donated two items of Chesterbrook Farm printed matter. Chesterbrook Farm was such an important part of the history of this area, and here we have another item documenting its history in the twentieth century, when it was owned by Alexander Cassatt's son, Edward. In this letter, the farm Manager Robert Colgan writes to Edward Cassatt about railroad reservations, but Cassatt returned it to him with a note about butchering some hogs for sale.

"Report of the Valley Forge Commission." Gift of the King of Prussia Historical Society. Although this pamphlet is in the form of a photocopy, it is a fine addition to our collection of materials relating to the Valley Forge Encampment. Item 13 shows one of several maps in the pamphlet.



Item 13: Map from "Report of the Valley Forge Commission"



Item 14: Novelette

Novelette titled *Valley Forge 24 December 1777*, by Francis Van Wyck Mason (1901-1978), published in 1946. Gift of Martha Gound. Van Wyck Mason was a writer of over seventy full length novels of suspense and espionage, as well as some historical novels. He wrote from 1930 to his death in 1978. He led a colorful life of military service in both world wars, as well as in society and sporting activities. He was also a prolific writer of short stories for magazines. This short story (or novelette) deals with Christmas Eve in the Valley Forge encampment and Gen. Washington visiting the various groups of soldiers on that night. It was so popular that it was published as a small hardbound volume.

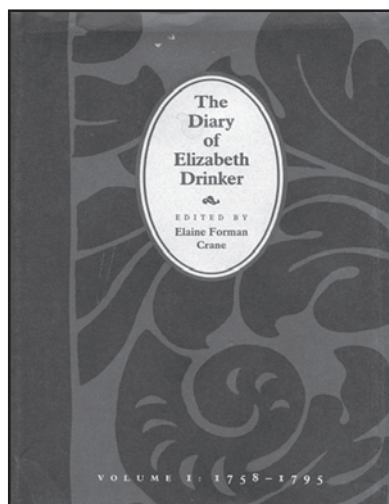
Cover of Volume I of the *Diaries of Elizabeth Drinker*. Gift of Mike Bertram. Regarding this donation, here is a quote from the website of the University of Pennsylvania Press: “*The journal of Philadelphia Quaker Elizabeth Sandwith Drinker is perhaps the single most significant personal record of eighteenth-century life in America from a woman’s perspective. Drinker wrote in her diary nearly continuously between 1758 and 1807. The extraordinary span and sustained quality of the journal make it a rewarding document for a multitude of historical purposes. One of the most prolific early American diarists, Drinker saw English colonies evolve into the American nation. Her journal entries touch on every contemporary subject: political, personal, and familial.*”

And finally we can look at some of the other miscellaneous photographs the Society received in 2012.

Two photographs were donated by Melba Matthews.

Berwyn home of Abraham Latch. The first one is inscribed “Aunt Emma Latch’s Home, Berwyn.” The Latch Family is well known to us. Abraham Latch made an appearance in several Lucy Sampson photographs Mike Bertram showed in his talk. Mr. Latch and his wife Emma owned General Howe’s quarters on Contention Lane until 1900, when he sold it and the surrounding farm land, and built this gray stone house in Berwyn. He became Assessor and Tax Collector for Berwyn, and took the School Census until his death in 1914.

“W. C. Latch’s home, Berwyn.” The other photograph in this gift is inscribed “W. C. Latch’s home, Berwyn.” This would have been Abraham and Emma’s son, who was a founding member of the Tredyffrin Easttown History Club, as it was then called.



Item 15: Diary cover



Item 16: Abraham Latch house



Item 17: W.C. Latch house



Item 18: Pennsylvania Railroad employees at the Paoli Car Shop



Item 19: The Strafford School c. 1959

Employees of the Pennsylvania Railroad's Paoli Car Shop.

Gift of John Fulton. John Fulton and his father before him were long-time employees of the Paoli Car Shop. The role of the Paoli Car Shop was to maintain the extensive fleet of commuter trains that comprised the Paoli Local and several other routes. We were still in World War II in April of 1945 when this photograph was taken. Notice the large number of women in the work force here, most of whom would lose or give up their jobs as the servicemen returned from the war.

The Strafford School, about 1959, with diagram of its floor plan. Gift of Jean H. Naples. The Strafford School was built in 1872, and was the first location for Tredyffrin High until 1902. We have other images of the school, but not one from this angle.



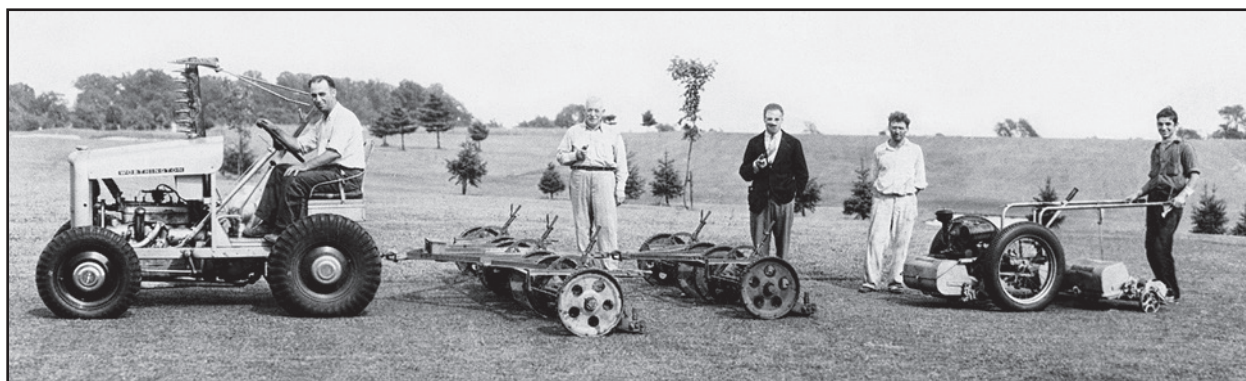
Item 20: (left) John Neuhaus c. 1917
and (right) John and Kate Neuhaus c. 1930

John Neuhaus of Malvern, in his WWI uniform, about 1917, and another photograph of John and his wife Kate Neuhaus of Grubb Road in Malvern, about 1930. Gift of Mary Kelly for the Robinson Family.

Tredyffrin Country Club grounds crew, posed with their Worthington tractor and gang mowers, probably taken during the 1930s. Gift of Amelia De Felice.

So you can see that 2012 was a banner year for donations. If you know of someone retiring or moving to a senior community, ask them if they have any memorabilia of their life on the Upper Main Line.

Things still turn up – one person's trash might just be another's treasure.



Item 21: Tredyffrin Country Club grounds crew

Other archive items donated in 2012 but not described in the presentation:

Recollection of Blue Stone Farm in the late 1950s, 1 page. Gift of Barbara Mazza.

Pasquale Paoli, 3 printed articles, a DVD of images from a trip to Corsica, and a film "Looking for Paoli." Gift of the Paoli Business and Professional Association.

Miscellaneous photographs:

Paoli RR Station, and Paoli rail car shop (two postcards marked "Photo by Skilton"), both 1924. Gift of Mary Kelly for the Robinson Family.

Enlarged aerial photograph showing Mt. Misery and Mt. Joy, and extending southward, 1937.

Maps:

Hand drawn map inscribed "Draught of Jesse Wharton's land situated in Tredyffrin township, Chester County, ... Surveyed the 21st day of March 1818." Gift of the King of Prussia Historical Society.

Two printed maps of Valley Forge: "General Map of the Encampment at Valley Forge," 1908; and "Contemporary Map of the Encampment at Valley Forge, 1777-78, by a French Engineer." 1898. Gifts of the King of Prussia Historical Society.

Map showing plan to extend the PA Turnpike from Carlisle to Philadelphia, 1940s. Gift of Mike Bertram.

Map of Glenhardie Farm, 1947. Gift of Mike Bertram.

Map of Montgomery County, 1848 (facsimile). Gift of Mike Bertram.

Books:

PA Turnpike Reconstruction Report, 2012.

All photographs on this page were part of the gift from Lower Merion Historical Society and depict various aspects of the Daniel Newhall estate.



Front entrance hall (1902)



Dining Room (1902)



Carriage House (1902)



D.S. Newhall seated by front entrance (1909)



D.S. Newhall in garden with pond (1909)