

## Daniel Smith Newhall (1849-1913)

The Newhall residence (95 Crestline Road, Strafford, PA 19087) is one of the most important late nineteenth-century houses in Strafford. It is only one of two residences in the Philadelphia area designed by the renowned architectural firm McKim, Mead & White. One of their other significant local buildings is the former Girard Trust Company bank at Broad and Chestnut Streets, a collaboration with Furness, Evans and Company, who were also the architects of the neighboring house, Deepdale. [Ed. Note: a 2007 estate description document lists “Cramond” as the name of the Newhall estate, but a 1912 railroad atlas shows the name as “Cramond” and that may be a more reliable source.]

Built in 1886, the Newhall house shows the classicizing influence of McKim in its entrance portico and modillion cornice. The rear elevation, with its overlapping gables, is more reminiscent of their shingle style work, but the great arched window is an emphatic Colonial Revival statement. The carriage house at the rear was substantially altered in the 20th century, then further changed when converted to a full residence.

Like his childhood friend McKim, Newhall was from Germantown and was known as a great cricket player. The Germantown Cricket Club (1889-91) was also designed by McKim, Mead & White, and is probably a related commission. Daniel Newhall worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad for over 36 years until his death in 1913 at the age of sixty-four.

*(The preceding adapted from “Triumvirate: McKim, Mead & White: Art, Architecture, Scandal, and Class in America’s Gilded Age” by Mosette Broderick, Random House LLC, 2010)*

Daniel Newhall worked first in the sugar refining company, McKean, Newhall and Borie, founded by his father Thomas. After 1882 he worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad as assistant Secretary and Purchasing Agent. He and his brothers Robert, Charles, George and Walter, founded the Young America Cricket Club, the first cricket club in Philadelphia. Later on, he and his brothers Robert, Charles and George, plus seven members of the younger generation (Walter, Cushman, David, William Price, Morton, Thomas and Daniel) formed the Newhall Cricket Eleven, which did a tour of England about 1903, and did very well. They played against W. G. Grace, among others. (It was on this tour that William Price Newhall, having “looked on the wine when it was red” went out into Piccadilly Circus in full evening dress-tails, white tie and top hat – and held up traffic for some time. History does not say what happened after that.)

Daniel Newhall was working in his yard raking leaves one afternoon when a young man came to call on one of his daughters. The young man was driving a handsome buggy and he called to Daniel, “Here my good man, hold this horse for a minute.” Daniel came meekly over and held the horse; when the young man came out he handed Daniel a dime, which was politely accepted and pocketed while the daughter pretended she’d never seen her father before. Perhaps that particular young man never came back. Daniel Newhall bred and raced pigeons and he and George V. Cresson together owned the first carrier pigeon in the US to complete a 500 mile return flight. He kept a small pigeon loft on the roof of Broad Street Station in Philadelphia, from which he sent out birds on express trains to be released at different places.

*(Reminiscences attributed to Elizabeth George Foulke – niece of William Price Newhall, a nephew of Daniel Smith Newhall – Potter Family Genealogy)*

The former Newhall property is currently owned by Fran Lubbs, and serves as a Goddard School for early childhood development. The carriage house was subdivided years ago, and now serves as a charming private residence. Mrs. Lubbs has tried whenever possible to retain the original mouldings and fixtures, a tribute to another time.

*(J. Michael Morrison)*



1912 photo of the Daniel Newhall residence.  
*Courtesy Lower Merion Historical Society/TEHS Archives*



2012 photo of the former Daniel Newhall residence.  
*Courtesy J. Michael Morrison*