



## **du Pont de Nemours letters (photocopies and microfilm) 0316**

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Manuscripts and Archives
<b>Creator:</b>	Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, 1739-1817
<b>Creator:</b>	Du Pont de Nemours, Françoise Robin Poivre, 1748-1841
<b>Title:</b>	du Pont de Nemours letters (photocopies and microfilm)
<b>ID:</b>	0316
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1803-1820
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.5 Linear Feet
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	French .
<b>Abstract:</b>	Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours (1739-1817) was a French political economist, writer, publisher, and public administrator. Françoise Robin du Pont (1748-1841) was the second wife of du Pont de Nemours. The collection contains photocopies of letters written by both du Pont de Nemours regarding brochures.

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## Biographical Note

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Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours (1739-1817) was a French political economist, writer, publisher, and public administrator. He was an advocate for a national educational system and promoted Franco-American trade relations.

Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours was born in Paris on December 14, 1739. He was apprenticed as a watchmaker, but during the early 1760s, he began to study and write on economic matters. In 1767, du Pont de Nemours coined the term "physiocracy," which means the rule of nature, to describe the complex doctrine of French economist François Quesnay (1694-1774), which is now recognized as the first modern school of economics.

In July 1774, the family departed for Poland, where du Pont de Nemours was to serve the Polish monarch in various capacities, including that of honorary councilor. He was shortly recalled to France, however, and commissioned as Inspecteur Général du Commerce, a position he held until its abolition in 1788. During the late 1770s, he was an economic advisor to Jacques Necker (1732-1804), a Genevan banker who served as finance minister for King Louis XVI (1754-1793) from 1789 to 1790 but held a number of other posts in regards to finances for the royal treasury between 1777 and 1789.

In the early 1780s, du Pont de Nemours was involved in the negotiations that led to the Anglo-French Commercial Treaty of 1786. The treaty reduced tariffs on goods between France and Britain. In 1786, he was appointed Conseiller d'Etat by King Louis XVI; in this position, he acted as a government official of administrative law. The following year he served as secretary of the first Assemblée des Notables, convened at Versailles to consult on matters of state.

At the onset of the French Revolution, du Pont de Nemours served as a member of the Assemblée Nationale Constituante (1789-1791). The purpose of the assembly was to discuss a new constitution and taxation system. He allied himself with the moderate Girondist faction. Girondists were initially part of the Jacobin movement. The Jacobin Club were anti-royalists who supported the abolition of the monarchy, the creation of parliament, the introduction of a constitution, the separation of powers, and the establishment of a republic. The Girondins supported the end of the monarchy; however, they were not for the revolution, and most opposed the execution of the King, who was arrested in August 1792 and put to death on January 21, 1793.

After the leader of the Jacobin party, Maximilien Robespierre (1758-1794), took power, Girondin deputies and members of other opposing movements were arrested, put on trial, and many were executed. This time period is known as the Reign of Terror. Du Pont de Nemours was arrested in July 1794, but he escaped the guillotine upon Robespierre's fall at the end of the month.

In 1795, he was chosen as a member of the Conseil des Anciens (Council of Elders), which was the upper house of the French legislature. Following the coup d'état of September 4, 1795, he was again arrested and held for one night.

The du Ponts began to explore the possibility of emigration to the United States. On January 3, 1800, accompanied by his sons, Victor Marie du Pont (1767-1827) and Eleuthère Irénée du Pont (1771-1834), he arrived in America. Du Pont de Nemours and his sons established the commission house of Du Pont de Nemours, Père et Fils & Cie. in New York.

Du Pont de Nemours and his wife, Françoise Robin de Poivre (1748-1841), returned to France in 1802, where he held various government posts under Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821). In 1814, he became a member of the provisional government that deposed Napoleon and exiled him to Elba. Upon Napoleon's return, du Pont de Nemours again fled to America, where he died at the home of his son, Eleuthère Irénée du Pont, in Delaware on August 7, 1817.

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## Biographical Note

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Françoise Robin du Pont (1748-1841) was the second wife of Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours (1739-1817).

Françoise Robin was a daughter of Antoine Robin de Livet (1705-1772) of Lyon. Her first husband, Pierre Poivre (1719-1786), was a naturalist and author. They lived for a time on the Ile de France and

returned to France in 1773. There were two daughters by this marriage: Marie Marguerite Sara (d. 1814) and Françoise Julienne (1770-1845) who married Jean Xavier Bureaux Pusy (1750-1806).

Françoise married second, Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours (1739-1817) at Chevannes in 1795; she was his second wife. She and her son-in-law, Jean Xavier Bureaux de Pusy, sailed from Rotterdam in 1799 to find and establish a home in the United States for the remainder of the family, who joined them several months later. She selected a property in Bergen Point, New Jersey, which the family called "Goodstay."

Poivre and du Pont de Nemours returned to France in 1802. When her husband went back to the United States in 1815, she remained in France due to a hip injury. She was preparing to return when she received word of her husband's death. After his death, she maintained correspondence with the du Pont family until her death in Paris in 1841.

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## Scope and Contents

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Photocopies and microfilm letters of Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours (1739-1817) and Françoise Robin du Pont de Nemours (1748-1841). The letter of Pierre Samuel to Suard, member of the Institut, sending a copy of his brochure, "Sur la banque et les banques," which was published at Paris in 1806. Another letter concerns measures the government may take in order to prevent food shortages. The letter from Françoise Robin to an unidentified recipient concerns several brochures relating to speeches in the Conseil des Anciens, literary works, and reports to the Societe Philantropique.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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### Revision Description

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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- Correspondence.
- Speeches
- Du Pont family