



Pierre Gentieu Hagley area photographs and DuPont Company ephemera 1995.261

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on September 14, 2021.

Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Audiovisual Collections

PO Box 3630

Wilmington, Delaware 19807

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URL: <http://www.hagley.org/library>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Audiovisual Collections
Creator - pht:	Gentieu, Pierre A., 1842-1930
Creator:	E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company
Title:	Pierre Gentieu Hagley area photographs and DuPont Company ephemera
ID:	1995.261
Date [inclusive]:	1880-1900
Physical Description:	16 item(s)
General Physical Description:	9 albumen silver photographic prints : b&w ; 3 x 4 in. 1 photographic print (torn) : b&w ; 7.5 x 36 in. 6 photomechanical reproductions : b&w ; images mostly 3 x 4 in., on sheets 12.5 x 9.5 in.
Physical Location:	GL Box 2.
Language of the Material:	English .
Abstract:	<p>Pierre A. Gentieu was a long-term employee of E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company who created an invaluable photographic record of the company's Brandywine Mills at the turn of the century. E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company is a chemical company more commonly referred to as the DuPont company. The company was established in 1802 by Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours and his son Eleuthere Irenee du Pont the company began with the production of gunpowder. This small collection includes original drymounted photographic prints of views near Henry Clay Village in Delaware by Pierre Gentieu. Several have simple hand drawn decorative borders on them and are signed. There are also several items related to DuPont Gunpowder and rifles.</p>

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Historical Note

E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company is a chemical company more commonly referred to as the DuPont company. The company was established in 1802 by Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours and his son Eleuthere Irenee du Pont the company began with the production of gunpowder. The du Pont's purchased a mill site on the banks of the Brandywine River just North of Wilmington, Delaware. During

wartime the company was a major supplier for the United States government. During peacetime, the company marketed their product towards sportsmen and hunters. Throughout the 1900s and 1910s, the company shifted its focus away from gunpowder production and towards chemistry innovations. By 1926 the company officially dissolved the powder production unit, although it had already been inactive for many years.

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Biographical Note

Pierre A. Gentieu (1842-1930) was a photographer and a long-term employee of E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company. Gentieu was born in France in 1842. He immigrated to the United States in 1860. As a member of the local militia in New Orleans, Gentieu refused to swear allegiance to the Confederacy. In July of 1862 he enlisted with the 13th Regiment of Volunteers of Connecticut, which was formed in Louisiana.

He began working for DuPont in 1877 and remained a loyal employee until his retirement in 1911. In 1879, while on a lunch break Gentieu painted the Lower Yard. The painting impressed his direct supervisor, Lamot du Pont (1831-1884) who requested that Gentieu photograph it so that various members of the du Pont family could have a copy. Shortly after Gentieu was promoted to making sieves for separating powder grains. In 1881, he was promoted to yard clerk, and then later store keeper at the mills.

Drawing and photography were among Gentieu's favorite pastimes. The du Pont's allowed Gentieu to photograph the DuPont Co. plant, property, family members, and their homes. He created an invaluable photographic record of the company's Brandywine Mills at the turn of the century.

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Scope and Content

This small collection includes original drymounted photographic prints of views near Henry Clay Village in Delaware by Pierre Gentieu. Several have simple hand drawn decorative borders on them and are signed. Others are drymounted on printed boards with more elaborate borders, and they have the credit line, "P. Gentieu Henry Clay, Del." Most of these are duplicate images found in other Audiovisual Collections with Gentieu photographs. Some of the locations are identified in penmanship on the borders. There is also a torn copy of a much printed panorama of the abandoned DuPont Company rollmills along Brandywine Creek. There are two printed items labeled "DuPont's Rifle Powder" each showing halftone images of magnified grains of DuPont Company gunpowder, a scene with hunted deer, and a

rifle range with the uniformed American Rifle Team. There are also four halftones of scenic views along the Brandywine of which two have captions.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

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Related Materials

Related Archival Materials

Pierre Gentieu family archives (Accession 2019.206), Audiovisual Collections and Digital Initiatives Department, Hagley Museum and Library.

Gentieu collection of Brandywine River Valley images (Accession 1970.001), Audiovisual Collections and Digital Initiatives Department, Hagley Museum and Library.

Pierre Gentieu Hagley Yard photographs (Accession 1985.229), Audiovisual Collections and Digital Initiatives Department, Hagley Museum and Library.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Gunpowder industry
- Powder mills
- Bridges
- Panoramic photographs
- Henry Clay (Del. : Village)
- Brandywine Creek (Pa. and Del.)
- Dams
- Walker's Mill (Newbridge, Del.)
- Dawes, Rumford, 1744-1819