



Kim Burdick research notes on Louise du Pont Crowninshield 2395

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Summary Information

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Title:	Kim Burdick research notes on Louise du Pont Crowninshield (photocopies)
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Abstract:	Kim Burdick is a public historian, preservationist and former advisor to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Louise du Pont Crowninshield (1877-1958) was an early leader in the field of historic preservation. The collection includes photocopies of all known surviving Crowninshield letters and Burdick's notes.

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Biographical Note

Kim Burdick is a public historian, preservationist and former advisor to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. She earned a masters degree in American folk culture and museum studies from Cooperstown Graduate Program and a masters in agency management from the College of Urban Affairs, University of Delaware. She served as chairman of the Delaware Humanities Council, curator of the Hale Byrnes House, president of the George Washington Society, and oversaw several public history projects and symposiums.

Louise Evelina du Pont(1877-1958) was the daughter of Henry A. du Pont (1838-1926) and Pauline Foster du Pont (1849-1902). She was born, raised, and educated at the family estate, Winterthur, north of Wilmington, Delaware. A debutante whose coming-out party was held in New York in 1896, she socialized with members of the city's most exclusive families. During the late 1890s, she spent the winter months in the city, enjoying shopping and social life during the heyday of high society. Louise du Pont was also interested in charitable causes and in 1897 organized "Willing Helpers," a group of young women which met Saturday mornings to make clothing for babies at a Wilmington day nursery; she headed this group for three years.

In 1900, Louise du Pont married Francis Boardman Crowninshield (1869-1950), a renowned sportsman who raced yachts and was an expert marksman. There were no children by this marriage. The Crowninshields had homes in Marblehead and Boston, Massachusetts; Boca Grande, Florida; and the original du Pont family estate, Eleutherian Mills, north of Wilmington, Delaware.

Louise du Pont Crowninshield actively participated in charitable organizations, horticulture, historic preservation, and collected antiques and hooked rugs. One of her earliest historic restoration projects was the original du Pont family estate; Eleutherian Mills, where she resided during the spring and fall months. With her husband's eye for architectural detail, and Crowninshield's love of nature, together, they developed a garden on the ruins of the Saltpetre Refinery which stood between Eleutherian Mills and the Brandywine River.

Crowninshield was a founding trustee of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1949 and was vice-chairman of the board in 1953. In 1955, President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969) appointed her to the Boston National Historic Sites Commission. She was also involved with historic restoration in Virginia, particularly the Kenmore Association, of which she was a regent, (Kenmore was the Fredericksburg, Virginia, home of Fielding Lewis (1725-1781) and his wife, Betty Washington Lewis (1733-1797), George Washington's sister). She often provided financial assistance and artifacts when needed at historic sites. In addition, she was a member or trustee of numerous historical societies, museums, art, and symphony organizations. Crowninshield's additional interests included travel and her pet dogs.

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Scope and Contents

The notes consist of photocopies of all surviving letters to and from Louise du Pont Crowninshield (1877-1958) an early advocate of historic preservation. The documents were copied from originals in the Hagley Museum and Library and other repositories. Kim Burdick's notes were used to write several articles, to produce lectures and slide shows, and for a projected film on Crowninshield's role in establishing the historic preservation movement.

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Publication Statement

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Revision Description

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Conditions Governing Access

No restrictions on access; this collection is open for research.

Use Restrictions

Only pages that are copies of documents owned by the Hagley Museum and Library may be photocopied.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Correspondence.
- Scholarships
- Historic preservation
- Women authors, American
- Crowninshield, Louise du Pont, 1877-1958