



## Alexis I. du Pont family papers2659

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Manuscripts and Archives

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Wilmington, Delaware 19807

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Manuscripts and Archives
<b>Creator:</b>	Du Pont, Alexis I. (Alexis Irénée), 1843-1904
<b>Title:</b>	Alexis I. du Pont family papers
<b>ID:</b>	2659
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1854-1858
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.25 Linear Foot
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Abstract:</b>	Dr. Alexis Irénée du Pont (1843-1904) was a businessman and non-practicing physician who resided in both Louisville, Kentucky, and Wilmington, Delaware. He was a grandson of Éleuthère Irénée du Pont de Nemours (1771-1834), the eponymous founder of the E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company in Wilmington, Delaware, and son of Alexis Irénée du Pont (1816-1857) and Joanna Maria Smith du Pont (1815-1876). The collection contains correspondence between Alexis I. du Pont Jr. and his mother Joanna while he was attending the Episcopal Academy in Philadelphia. In addition, there are also letters from his father and sister.

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## Biographical Note

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Dr. Alexis Irénée du Pont (1843-1904) was a businessman and non-practicing physician who resided in both Louisville, Kentucky, and Wilmington, Delaware. He was a grandson of Éleuthère Irénée du Pont de Nemours (1771-1834), the eponymous founder of the E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company in Wilmington, Delaware, and son of Alexis Irénée du Pont (1816-1857) and Joanna Maria Smith du Pont (1815-1876).

Du Pont spent much of his childhood in the home of his maternal grandparents in Philadelphia, where he attended the Episcopal Academy. In 1864, he received a Bachelor of Arts and Doctor of Medicine from the University of Pennsylvania. Despite his training in medicine, however, du Pont decided to forgo starting an active practice and instead moved to Louisville, Kentucky, to join his cousins in the paper manufacturing business. There, he retained a close relationship with his aunt, Sophie Madeleine

du Pont (1810-1888), the widow of Admiral Samuel Francis Du Pont (1803-1865), who resided at Upper Louviers in Wilmington, Delaware.

Du Pont's first marriage on February 5, 1867 to Margaretta Gilpin (1843-1868), daughter of Judge Gilpin (1803-1876) of Wilmington, ended in tragedy with her unexpected death the following year. Consequently, du Pont focused on his business interests in Louisville before marrying Elizabeth Canby Bradford (1852-1925) in Wilmington on January 20, 1875. Elizabeth Bradford du Pont was the daughter of Judge Edward Green Bradford (1819-1884), who in 1871 was nominated by President Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885) to a seat on the United States District Court for the District of Delaware. Her great-grandfather was Thomas Heyward Jr. (1746-1809), a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Over the next ten years, Alexis and Elizabeth du Pont remained in Louisville and had four children: Alice Eugenie du Pont Ortiz (1876-1940), Philip Francis du Pont (1878-1928), Elizabeth Bradford du Pont Bayard (1880-1975), and Eugene Eleuthère du Pont (1882-1966). Philip Francis du Pont attended the University of Virginia from 1897 to 1900, and later became an author and noted philanthropist.

In 1885, du Pont returned home with his family to Wilmington when, around the same time, he acquired interests in the Brooklyn Street Railroad. Consequently, du Pont and his family moved to Brooklyn for a period of three years before moving back to Wilmington. Soon afterward, he became one of the senior partners of the E.I. du Pont de Nemours Powder Company, and was named vice president of the Repauno Chemical Company, formed in 1880 to manufacture dynamite at a remote spot along the Delaware River in Gibbstown, New Jersey. Following the death of his brother Eugene du Pont in 1902, Alexis du Pont was offered the position of president of Repauno Chemical, but ultimately declined due to failing kidney health. Alexis I. du Pont died on November 26, 1904, at the age of sixty-one at his country home, Rencourt, outside Wilmington, Delaware.

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## Scope and Contents

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The collection contains correspondence between Alexis I. du Pont Jr. and his mother Joanna while he was attending the Episcopal Academy in Philadelphia. In addition, there are letters from his father concerning family life, their dog Bruno, and other local gossip. Of particular note is a letter from Alexis' sister Frances Elizabeth du Pont, known as Fanny, discussing an explosion and loss of life at the powder yards. Also, there are numerous letters mentioning the construction of Christ Church and his mother's organ studies.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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### Revision Description

Laurie Sather 2021

### Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

Alexis Irénée du Pont family papers (Accession 2618), Manuscripts and Archives Department, Hagley Museum and Library.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- Correspondence.
- Social history
- Du Pont family