

**Du Pont de Nemours family. Papers relating to
the American Philosophical Society, 1800-1894**

1800-1894

Mss.B.D938f

American Philosophical Society
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Summary Information

Repository	American Philosophical Society
Title	Du Pont de Nemours family. Papers relating to the American Philosophical Society, 1800-1894
Date [inclusive]	1800-1894
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Extent	0.25 Linear feet Ca. 50 items
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Background note

The Du Pont de Nemours family is one of the wealthiest and most influential American families. Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours (1739–1817) was a French nobleman, writer, and political economist. He was a member of the Physiocrats. He was an acquaintance of many leading figures of his day, including Thomas Jefferson. The turmoil of the French Revolution compelled his family to immigrate to the United States in the late 1790s. His two sons Victor Marie (1767–1827) and Éleuthère Irénée (1771–1834, APS 1807) became prosperous businessmen. The latter was the founder of a gunpowder machinery at Eleuterian Mills, near Wilmington, Delaware, which eventually grew into one of the largest companies in the United States. His grandson Henry Algernon Du Pont (1828–1926, APS 1894) was U. S. Senator from Delaware.

Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours was born in Paris of French Huguenot parentage. As a boy he was apprenticed as a watchmaker. However, in his early twenties he began to study economic matters, a field in which he soon showed great promise. The publication of two of his pamphlets on finances in 1762 attracted the attention of François Quesnay (1694-1774), an economist and the French king's consulting physician. Quesnay was a member of the philosophic sect the Économistes. Du Pont soon became a member of Quesnay's group, which Du Pont eventually named the Physiocrats.

Du Pont was a tireless promoter of economic and financial reforms. While this earned him criticism at home it garnered recognition abroad. In 1774, for example, he left for Poland to organize a system of national education. In 1776 political changes in France, which helped create a more favorable environment for him, led to his appointment as France's inspector general of commerce. In 1778 he served as one of the negotiators of the 1783 Treaty of Paris, by which Great Britain formally recognized the independence of the United States. Three years later, he also helped work out the terms of the commercial treaty of 1786 between France and England.

The outbreak of the French Revolution and the political instability that came with it greatly affected Du Pont's career as a public servant. As a supporter of a constitutional monarchy, he initially welcomed the revolution. He served as secretary-general of the assembly of notables in 1787, but then barely escaped banishment after the fall of the finance minister Charles Alexandre de Calonne (1734-1802), whose reform measures he had promoted. He physically defended Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette from a mob in August 1792, and as a result was condemned to death by guillotine. He was arrested and imprisoned, but Robespierre's death led to his release. Du Pont immediately renewed his attacks on the Jacobins, only to be arrested and imprisoned again; his property was looted and destroyed.

In 1799 Du Pont emigrated to the United States, along with his second wife Françoise Robin Poivre (1748–1841) and his two sons Victor Marie and Éleuthère Irénée and their families. There he cultivated close ties with American economic, political and intellectual leaders, especially Thomas Jefferson. In 1800 he was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

In 1802 Du Pont returned to Napoleonic France where he helped President Jefferson negotiate the Louisiana Purchase. However, he was unable to realize his goal of gaining a seat in the Imperial Senate. In 1814 he called for a restoration of the Bourbon monarchy; one year later, Napoleon's return from

exile compelled Du Pont to leave France once again. He settled on his son Éleuthère Irénée's estate in Delaware, where he died in 1817.

Before settling permanently in the United States, Pierre Samuel's older son Victor Marie had already lived for several years in the New World. First, in the late 1780s, he helped negotiate a treaty between the State of New York and the Five Indian Nations. In addition, from 1795 to 1798, he served as French consul at Charleston, South Carolina. Upon his return to the United States, he moved with his wife and children to New York City and founded the trading company Victor du Pont de Nemours & Co. He also served as the agent for Louis Pichon, the French Consul-General and chargé d'affaires. In the early 1810s, he relocated to Delaware where he established a woolen company, later called Du Pont, Bauday & Co. In 1813 he became a partner in Du Planty, McCall & Co. In the years between 1815 and 1823, Victor Marie held seats in the Delaware House and then the Senate. He died in Philadelphia.

Victor Marie was married to Gabrielle Joséphine de la Fite de Pelleport, a daughter of the Marquis de Pelleport. They had five children, four surviving to adulthood. Their son Charles Irénée eventually took over his father's company. Another son was Samuel Francis (1803-1865, APS 1862), who became a Rear Admiral in the United States Navy.

Pierre Samuel Du Pont de Nemours' younger son Éleuthère Irénée was in his mid-twenties when he arrived in the United States. Like his father, he had been an early supporter of the French Revolution but later joined him in physically defending the king and queen. In the United States, Éleuthère Irénée concentrated his energies on business ventures, particularly the production of gunpowder. At that time the gunpowder available in the United States was of poor quality, and the younger Du Pont hoped to change that. In 1802 he established a gunpowder machinery at Eleutherian Mills, near Wilmington, Delaware. The business struggled for much of the time under his leadership; it carried significant debts, including loans taken out to assist the families of workers killed in an explosion in 1818. Nevertheless, the business eventually grew into one of the largest companies in the United States, turning the Du Pont family into one of the richest and most influential American families of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Éleuthère Irénée died in Greenville, Delaware.

Éleuthère Irénée was married to Sophie Dalmas. They had eight children, including Henry. Henry was married to Louisa Gerhard Du Pont; their son was Henry Algernon Du Pont (1828-1926, APS 1894).

Henry Algernon was born at Eleutherian Mills. After attending private schools and the University of Pennsylvania, he studied at the United States Military Academy at West Point. During the Civil War, he served in the Union Army, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Army. From 1879 to 1899 he was president and general manager of the Wilmington Northern Railroad Co.

In 1876 Henry Algernon and his wife Pauline Foster moved to Winterthur, near Wilmington, Delaware; he inherited the property in 1889. The estate had been in the Du Pont family since the 1810s, when Éleuthère Irénée purchased the first four tracts of the land that would become Winterthur. By the time Henry Algernon became its owner it had grown into an estate of 1,135 acres, with a mansion and extensive gardens and farms. He dedicated much of his time after his retirement from business to agricultural pursuits, including the care of his prized Holstein herd.

Henry Algernon also pursued a career in politics. A staunch Republican, he served as U.S. Senator from Delaware from 1906 to 1917. After a failed bid for reelection in 1916 he retired from public service. He died at Winterthur in 1926. His only son Henry Francis (1880-1969) inherited the Winterthur estate.

Scope & content

This collection consists of photocopies of 44 items, mostly letters to and from members of the Du Pont De Nemours family. They are dated between 1800 and 1894, with the bulk of material from 1800 to 1821. The majority of the letters are in French; only a few are in English. A typed table of contents is included.

Generally, the letters are related to APS business. In one letter Jefferson informs P. S. Du Pont de Nemours of his election to the APS (1800). Additional letters by Jefferson refer to his mouldboard plough (1806) and Robert M. Patterson (1809). Several additional letters, including those written by John Vaughan, deal with issues such as scientific experiments, papers submitted by P. S. Du Pont, APS publications, and books ordered for the APS. Also included are two printed forms, with blanks filled in by hand, that thank Du Pont for his donation of books (1815, 1816). The letter by Strickland informs E. I. Du Pont has been appointed to a committee to investigate “the shortest & most practical route connecting the Delaware & Chesapeake Bays” (1821). The item dated 1859 thanks Mrs. E. Du Pont for a donation to the APS, and the two item dated 1894 relate the election of Henry A. Du Pont to membership of the APS.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

American Philosophical Society

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Note on folder in collection box states" This collection is to be used only for reference work and duplication must be ok'd by The Longwood Library (letter of C. W. David, director of the Longwood Library, to Mrs. G. D. Hess, March 21, 1960)"

Provenance

Acquisition Information

Presented by Longwood Library and accessioned, 03/--/1960 (1960 627ph).

Original Location

Originals in Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

Indexing Terms

Corporate Name(s)

- American Philosophical Society.

Genre(s)

- Institutional Records

Personal Name(s)

- Candolle, Augustin Pyramus de, 1778-1841
- Correia da Serra, José Francisco, 1750-1823
- Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, 1739-1817
- Du Pont, Eleuthere Irenee, 1771-1834
- Du Pont, H. A., (Henry Algernon), 1838-1926
- Du Pont, Victor Marie, 1767-1827
- Harmand, Philippe Nicolas, 1759-1838
- James, Thomas C., (Thomas Chalkley), 1766-1835
- Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826
- Lesley, J. P., (J. Peter), 1819-1903
- Letombe, Philippe Joseph, d. 1833
- Michaux, Francois Andre, 1770-1855
- Monroe, James, 1758-1831
- Phillips, Henry, 1775-1838
- Strickland, William, 1787-1854
- Vaughan, John, 1756-1841

Subject(s)

- Science -- Societies, etc.
- Science and Technology

Other Descriptive Information

This Du Pont Nemours Collection contains photocopies of correspondence that relate to APS business.

Collection Inventory

Papers

Lormeny April 28, 1800

Letter to [Pierre S. Du Pont de Nemours,
New York;

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L. 4p.,add. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning
N.Collin and the APS. Business. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826 May 12, 1800

Letter to [Pierre Samuel Du Pont de
Nemours];

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Notifies him of election
to membership in the APS and its publication of an article by him. Refers to Lafayette. Presented:
Longwood Library, March 1960.

**Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel,
1739-1817** August 4, 1800

Letter to Victor Du Pont

In French.

Michaux, Francois Andre#, 1770-1855 Jan. 20, 1801

Letter to [Eleuthère] I. Du Pont de Nemours,
Wilmington;

Paris, Photograph of A.L.S. 3p.and.,end. In French. (see Du Pnt Family. Collection.) Concerning
his publication on oaks. Refers to Vaughan, Humboldt and the APS. Presented: Longwood Library,
March 1960

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 Dec. 23, 1801

Papers

Letter to [Pierre S.] Du Pont de Nemours,
New York;

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Asks that he give APS publications to a specific Frenchman and institution. Presented: Longwood library, March 1960.

Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, March 22, [1802]
1739-1817

Letter to [Philippe Nicolas] Harmand, Paris;

New York, Photograph of L. 1p. and add. In French (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning publications. Refers to APS. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 June 3, 1802

Letter to [Pierre S.] Dupont de Nemours
[sic], New York;

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning APS publications. Needs his dues for the Society. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Lassus, Pierre, 1741-1807 Aug. 25, [1802]

Letter to [Pierre S. Du Pont de Nemours];

Paris, Photograph of A.L.S. 2p. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Sends his book to the APS. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Létombe Nov. 5, 1802

Letter to [Pierre S. Du Pont de Nemours];

Paris, []. Photograph of A.L.S. 3p. and add. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection) Pinchon. Refers to the APS. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Du Pont de Nemours, Victor Marie, & 1802-1805
Co.

Accounts (May 1, 1802 - June 14, 1805)
with E. I. Du Pont de Nemours and Peter

Papers

Bauduy, listing order on the APS by E.I. Du
Pont de Nemours;

Photograph of D. 4p. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.)

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 Jan. 28, 1803

Letter to [E. I.] Du Pont de Nemours,
Wilmington;

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 3p.and add. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning
publication for the APS. Concerning a new plan for resuscitation. Presented: Longwood
Library, March 1960.

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 Sept. 30, 1803

Letter to [Pierre S.] Dupont de Nemours
[sic], Paris;

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning John
Lowell. Refers to gifts to the Society by Du Pont's son. Presented: Longwood library, March 1960.

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 Oct. 17, 1803

Letter to [Victor Marie Du Pont];

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning publications
for the APS. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960

Du Pont, Eleuthere Irenee, 1771-1834 Nov. 3, 1803

Letter to [Victor Marie] Du Pont de
Nemours, New York;

Photograph of A.L. 3p.and add.,end. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection) Politics. Refers to
J.Vaughan and APS. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 Nov. 3, 1803

Letter to [Victor Marie Du Pont];

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning books for the
APS. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Papers

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 Nov. 10, 1803

Letter to Victor [Marie] Du Pont;

New York; Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 2p. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Asks that books due the APS be forwarded as quickly as possible. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 Nov. 23, 1803

Letter to E[leuthère] I. Du Pont,
Wilmington;

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. and add. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Thanks for forwarding books, including Michaux's, for the APS. Wishes to borrow a volume for Dr. James. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 Dec. 18, 1803

Letter to E[leuthère] I. Du Pont de Nemours,
Washington;

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. and add. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning gunpowder. Concerning periodicals for the APS. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Du Pont, Eleuthère Ire#ne#e, 1771-1834 September 19, 1805

Letter to John Vaughan

In French. Concerning yellow fever.

Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826 Feb. 12, 1806

Letter to [Pierre S.] Du Pont de Nemours;

Washington, Photograph of A.L.S. 2p. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) His mouldboard plough. Education in New Orleans. Sent Biot's letter to the Society. Saltpetre for gunpowder. Spain. Presented: Longwood library, March 1960.

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 April 22, 1808

Letter to [P. S.] Du Pont de Nemours, Paris;

Papers

Photograph of A.L.S. 1p.and add. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection) Lists items missing in APS collection. Asks that he give Rembrandt Peale good advice and introduce him to living artists
Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, June 1, 1808
1739-1817

Letter to Thomas Jefferson;

Paris, Photograph of A.L. 1p. Draft. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Introduces M.d'Allarde, who wishes to tour the U.S. Presents publications to him, the APS, etc. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826 May 16, 1809

Letter to [Pierre S.] Dupont de Nemours
[sic], Paris;

Monticello, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p.and add. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Introduces R.M.Patterson, son of R. Patterson, of the APS and asks that he be helped while in France. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 June 13, 1809

Letter to [Pierre S.] Du Pont de Nemours,
Paris;

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p.and add. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection)
Introduces R.M.Patterson, son of R. Patterson. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Michaux, Francois Andre#, 1770-1855 March 19, 1810

Letter to E[leuthère] I. Du Pont de Nemours,
Wilmington;

Paris, Photograph of A.L.S. 3p.and add., end. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) His work on oaks. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

American Philosophical Society Oct.4, 1815

Letter to [Pierre S.] Du Pont de Nemours,
Paris;

Papers

Philadelphia, Photograph of printed L. filled in in ms. S.: Tho.C.James, Sec. 1p. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Thanks for his publications. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, Oct. 10, 1815
1739-1817

Letter to Mme. Du Pont de Nemours, Paris;

Photograph of A.L. 4p. Draft. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection) Newsy letter to current happenings in America. Refers to APS, Jefferson, Du Ponceau, etc. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, April 6, 1816
1739-1817

Letter to [José Francesco Corrêa da Serra];

Photograph of A.L. 3p. and end. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection) Concerning Europe and republics. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Correia da Serra, Jose# Francisco, June 18, 1816
1750-1823

Letter to [Pierre S. Du Pont de Nemours];

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 2p. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Has been ill. Goes to Washington. Friendly letter. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

American Philosophical Society July 29, 1816

Letter to [Pierre S.] Du Pont de Nemours,
Wilmington;

Philadelphia, Photograph of printed L. filled in in ms.S: Thos.C.James, Sec. 1p. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Thanks for communications. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Correia da Serra, Jose# Francisco, Nov. 15, 1816
1750-1823

Letter to [Pierre S. Du Pont de Nemours];

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning America. Will visit him. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Papers

Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, Nov. 29, 1816
1739-1817

Letter to [José Francesco Corrêa da Serra];

Photograph of A.L. Draft. 4p. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection) Praises him. Hopes he visits them. Friendly letter. Presented: Longwood library, March 1960.

Correia da Serra, Jose# Francisco, Dec. 30, 1816
1750-1823

Letter to [Pierre S.] Du Pont de Nemours,
Wilmington;

Washington, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p.and add. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Friendly letter. Botany. Presented: Lowood Library, March 1960.

Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, Jan. 17, 1817
1739-1817

Letter to J[osé Francesco] Corrêa da Serra;

Photograph of L.in hand of Alexandre Cardon de Sandrans, secy. 5p. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Religion; Jefferson; education; Philosophes, Franklin, et al. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Strickland, William, 1787-1854 Sept. 24, 1821

Letter to E[leuthère] I. Du Pont [de
Nemours], Wilmington;

Philadelphia, Photograph of A.L.S. 1p.and add.,end. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Informs him that the APS appointed him to a committee concerning a canal. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

American Philosophical Society Jan. 28, 1859

Letter to Mrs. Eleuthere [Du Pont] Smith,
Wilmington;

Photograph of Printed L.filled in in ms. S. J. P. Lesley, Librarian. 1p.and add. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Thanks for publication. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Papers

American Philosophical Society Feb. 16, 1894

Letter to Henry A. Du Pont, Wilmington;

Philadelphia, Photograph of printed L.S.: Henry Phillips, Sec. 1p. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.)

Notifies him of election as member. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

American Philosophical Society February 16, 1894

APS Membership Certificate

Candolle, Augustin Pyramus de, undated

1778-1841

Letter to Mme. [Françoise Robin Poivre] Du Pont de Nemours,

Paris. Photograph of A.L.S. 1p. and add. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection) Forwards publication for the APS. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Du Pont, Eleuthère Irenee, 1771-1834 undated

Account with the American philosophical society and John Vaughan.

Photograph of D. 1p. and add.: [Peter] Bauduy. 1p. and add. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.)

Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, undated

1739-1817

Letter to Jos[é Francesco] Corrêa [da Serra].

Photograph of L. in hand of Alexandre Cardon de Sandrans, secy. 2p. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Concerning his appointment, and the philosophes who have been friends of kings.

Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Du Pont de Nemours, Pierre Samuel, undated

1739-1817

Letter to [James Monroe].

Photograph of A.L. 1p. Draft. In French. (see Du Pont Family. Collection) Forwards items. Refers to the APS, John Vaughan, and T. Jefferson. Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.

Vaughan, John, 1756-1841 undated

Papers

Letter to E[leuthère] I. Du Pont de Nemours,

Wilmington. Photograph of A.L.S. 1p.and add.,end. (see Du Pont Family. Collection.) Sends APS publication. Concerning Audubon's Birds... Presented: Longwood Library, March 1960.
