

Introduction

The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum opened to the public in 1951. Located near Wilmington, Delaware, Winterthur evolved from a comparatively modest family dwelling constructed in 1839 on an estate of 450 acres into a large mansion on an expanse of some 2,400 acres. From the 1920s until his death in 1969, Henry Francis du Pont, the museum's founder and namesake, devoted considerable effort and dollars to the task of furnishing his ever-growing home—and then museum—which ultimately contained 175 period rooms decorated with household goods made and used in America from 1640 to 1860. With equal pride and fervor, he planned and nurtured a sixty-acre naturalistic garden to surround it.

To complement Winterthur's museum and garden, a library for the study of American decorative arts and (to a lesser degree) horticulture was established in 1952. Initially it served Winterthur staff and students in the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture (WPEAC)—a graduate-level course jointly sponsored by Winterthur and the University of Delaware. Today the library is open to the public and renowned as a national research center for the study and appreciation of America's artistic, cultural, social, and intellectual history. Recognizing the interdependence of its three important components, the institution is now known as Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library.

The library consists of five departments: imprints and periodicals, photographs, slides, manuscripts, and archives. Books and periodicals provide researchers with secondary sources necessary for their work; photographs and slides offer the kind of visual resources necessary for the study of our artistic heritage; and manuscripts and archives include primary and unique source materials that support advanced research. In much the same way that Winterthur's museum, garden, and library relate to one another, the contents of Winterthur's library departments are complementary. They give researchers opportunities to pursue their studies in a variety of formats (such as printed ephemera, manufacturers' and distributors' trade catalogues, and visual imagery) that are not usually collected in such depth by other research libraries. This publication describes the contents of two of the library's five departments: the manuscript and archival collections.

The manuscript collection was established in 1955, principally to obtain microfilm of early American documents held in other libraries and to acquire original

manuscript material for students in the WPEAC program. The collection was named to honor Winterthur's first curator, Joseph Downs, who died the year before its inception. Born in Shutesbury, Massachusetts, in 1895, Downs graduated from the Boston Museum School in 1921 and then worked as an assistant at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. In 1922 and 1923 he traveled and studied in Europe. After returning to America, Downs designed furniture for two years in New York. From 1925 to 1932 he worked as a curator at the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, now the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Downs then returned to New York, where he became curator of the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In January 1949 he joined the staff at Winterthur. At that point in his career, Downs had written more than 150 publications, and four years into his tenure at Winterthur, his book *American Furniture: Queen Anne and Chippendale Periods* was published by the Macmillan Company. Downs enjoyed a reputation as a distinguished scholar, in part because he was interested in consulting as many primary resources as he could for his writings. This approach to research—remarkable during the early twentieth century but commonplace today—prompted Winterthur's board of trustees, at the urging of WPEAC graduate and longtime Winterthur staff member John Sweeney, to name the collection after Downs. Known initially as the Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection, the name was changed in 1989 to the Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera to reflect the ways in which the collection had developed.

The Downs Collection acquires materials that document American lifestyles, concentrating on the domestic scene and activities within the household. It includes such items as diaries, business accounts of craftsmen whose products decorated dwelling houses, swatchbooks that contain centuries-old fabric samples, architectural drawings used in the construction of homes, and artists' sketchbooks. Items from individuals famous in American history rest alongside materials from people who led routine lives, yet still contributed to the development of the country.

The Downs Collection grew modestly during its first few years. It was initially operated out of the office of Winterthur's first director, Charles F. Montgomery, by M. Elinor Betts, whose chief responsibility at Winterthur was editorial in nature. (Betts had earlier served as Downs's secretary.) Acquisitions at this time included gifts of original manuscript material that du Pont had collected and microfilm of research holdings located at other institutions and in private hands. Although early acquisition records are sketchy, the first original item associated with the Downs Collection is a broadside, "Amicable Society," covering rules for a ball in 1791 at Mr. Grant's New Assembly-Room in Baltimore. The first microfilm records came from the New-York Historical Society, which in 1954 had filmed inventories of estates in New York City and vicinity dated from 1717 to 1844.

As time passed and as the research value of its holdings grew, responsibility of the Downs Collection was transferred to the Library Division, and Winterthur hired a full-time librarian, Elizabeth A. Ingerman, to manage it. By 1961 Ingerman had investigated a number of ways to index the expanding collection, finally settling upon an optical-coincidence or coordinate indexing system, known informally as Termatex after the maker of the equipment needed to make the system work. At that time such a system was noteworthy as an advancement in organizing and retrieving informa-

tion. In 1963 Winterthur and Drexel Institute of Technology (as Drexel University was then known) received a grant from the Copeland-Andelot Foundation of Wilmington, Delaware, to undertake a study that culminated in the publication of *Project History Retrieval*, a book that focused on the use of the optical-coincidence approach to information retrieval. Today the staff of the Downs Collection use computers for the cataloging and description of collection holdings.

The Downs Collection encompasses four kinds of materials: collections, documents, folios, and microforms. *Collections* are made up of many items, including original handwritten and typed manuscripts, pieces of ephemera, photographic images, drawings, bound and unbound volumes, artifacts, and even printed books and periodicals. Typically, collections are not broken up by format but are kept together in order to provide the researcher with context. *Documents* are primarily single volumes that can be comfortably housed in a standard or legal-size document box. All documents have their own bibliographic entries. Although substantially identical in content, *folios* are bigger than documents, but they are too large to fit into document boxes. *Microforms* include microfilms and microfiche.

The Winterthur Archives is the corporate memory of the institution. It is divided into two sections, noncurrent office records and historical archives. The establishment of the noncurrent office records—then identified as the museum archives—began in 1951, coinciding with the opening of Winterthur as a museum. Noncurrent office records pertain to the history, organization, and function of Winterthur as a public institution. An active records management program for the transfer, processing, and selected microfilming of noncurrent office records is in place.

The historical archives was established shortly after the death of du Pont in 1969 and was designated as the repository for some of his family's papers and Winterthur estate records. Its holdings consist of the du Pont family's personal papers and business records relating to the estate, the majority of which are twentieth-century documents. Noncurrent office records are added to the historical archives at designated times.

The Winterthur Archives, through both of its sections, provides researchers with opportunities to study the development of a single family's association with the dwellings and grounds of an extraordinary private estate and the creation and evolution of a museum holding approximately 85,000 art objects. Materials in the Winterthur Archives document not only a period of collecting and patronage but also attitudes toward period room settings and tastes in landscape design. This guide describes materials in the historical archives.

Researchers interested in other du Pont family materials should contact the Hagley Museum and Library, situated on the grounds of Eleutherian Mills, the ancestral home of the du Ponts. There, a manuscript record group identified as the Winterthur Manuscripts contains materials dating from 1588 to 1955 pertaining to various members of the family, chiefly ancestors of Henry Francis du Pont.

Over the years the Downs Collection and the Winterthur Archives have attracted thousands of researchers interested in a variety of topics. Most recently, long-term fellowships, supported by monies from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and short-term fellowships, funded by Winterthur, have attracted an international

group of scholars associated with prominent academic institutions and working independently. It has been most gratifying to see the Downs Collection and the Winterthur Archives cited in their writings and acknowledged in their talks. I hope that readers of this volume will find many items of interest and that they will be drawn to Winterthur to begin or further their own research objectives.

How to Use This Guide

This volume is a guide to the holdings of the Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera and the Winterthur Archives. It covers acquisitions through 1996 that have had cataloguing records prepared for them. Bibliographic entries have been arranged alphabetically by cataloguing main entries, and they are numbered sequentially from 1 to 2,281 (from A. Merrill & Sons to Zukowsky, John).

Each entry follows the prescribed cataloguing outline, featuring the record of a personal name or corporate entity, title, inclusive dates, bulk dates when appropriate, an indication of the item's or collection's physical size, whether there is illustrative material, a biographical or historical sketch of the person or organization represented, scope and content information, miscellaneous notes, and the call number.

Following the main body of the guide is a comprehensive index of names, places, and subjects. All numbers in the index refer to the sequentially assigned entry numbers. For convenience, the index contains both the direct and indirect names of corporate entities. For example, both F. M. Holmes & Co. and Holmes, F. M., & Co. are listed.

