

Blanche Nevin Collection, 1905-1940

Call Number: MG-39

1 box 3 folders .15 cubic ft.

Repository: LancasterHistory (Organization); PV7

Shelving Location: Archives South, Side 1

Scope and Content Note: Collection contains correspondence, poetry, and newspaper articles.

Creators: Aungst, John; LancasterHistory (Organization)

Conditions for Access: No restrictions.

Conditions Governing Reproductions: Collection may not be photocopied. Please contact Research Staff or Archives Staff with questions.

Language: English

Source of Acquisition: Folders 1-3, gift of Mrs. John Aungst in memory of her husband.

Biographical History: Blanche Nevin (1841-1925), artist and poet, was born in Mercersburg, Franklin County, Pennsylvania. She was the daughter of John Williamson Nevin, a theologian, teacher, and minister, and Martha Jenkins, daughter of the politician and iron master at Windsor Forges, Robert Jenkins. When Dr. Nevin became the president of Franklin & Marshall College in 1855, he moved the family to Lancaster. They moved to Windsor Forges (or Windsor Place) from 1856 to 1858, while Dr. Nevin acted as executor of his mother-in-law's estate, and then moved permanently to Caernarvon Place on Columbia Avenue (the present site of Degel Israel Synagogue). The Nevin children were well-educated and cultivated for society, as their parents had been.

Blanche was the nation's first noteworthy sculptress. In 1889, she sculpted the statue of Revolutionary War General Peter Muhlenberg, which stands in the National Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol. She also sculpted the bust of President Woodrow Wilson. Lancastrians are most familiar with her Lion in the Park (1905) at Reservoir Park and her horse drinking fountain (1898) at the intersection of Columbia Avenue and West Orange Street. Blanche composed a number of poems and set several to music; many were inspired by Lancaster County, her travels, and family and friends. Her poems include: "Great-Grandma's Looking-Glass" (1895), "One Usual Day" (1916), and "To My Door" (1921).



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She bought Windsor Place in Caernarvon Twp. in 1897, restored the mansion house and the name Windsor Forges, and added a studio. Furniture and other influences from her travels adorned the house and grounds. She also owned a house in Manasquan, New Jersey; spent time with friends in New York and Philadelphia; and traveled a great deal, especially during the winter.

Her obituary in a Lancaster County newspaper states, "The simple, unpretentious neighbors of Miss Nevin never questioned her foreign ideas and eccentricities, but accepted her for the true, human qualities which she so abundantly possessed."

Accruals: New accruals are possible.

Preferred Citation: Blanche Nevin Collection (MG-39), Folder #, LancasterHistory, Lancaster, Pa.

Subject Headings:

Sculptors. (LHo-LOC sh 85119000)

Poets, American. (LHo-LOC sh 85103735)

Letters. (LHo-LOC sh 85076240)

Poetry. (LHo-LOC sh 85103704)

Clippings (Books, newspapers, etc.) (LHo-LOC sh 85027084)

Search Terms:

Clippings (Books, newspapers, etc.)

Correspondence

Lancaster Automobile Club

Letters

Newspaper clippings

Poetry

Poets

Sculptors

Windsor Forge

Manuscript groups

Finding aids

Related Materials: MG-730 Blanche Nevin Papers

Processing History: Processed and finding aid prepared in 1998. This collection has been documented, preserved and managed according to professional museum and archives standards. The finding aid was updated using DACS conventions.



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Folder 1 Correspondence

Insert 1 Letters to Roberts Appel from Blanche Nevin

Letter regarding taxes and the mortgage. Stationery of Windsor Forges. 4 November 1905. Postmarked Churchtown, 6 November 1905.

Letter regarding her stay in New York City and the death of her peacock. 16 February 1905. Stationery of the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Postmarked Madison Square Station, New York, 17 February 1905.

Letter regarding heavy rains, work on her studio, and Dr. Bowman's sketch of her father's life. Stationery of Windsor Forges. 3 August 1906. Postmarked Churchtown, 3 August 1906.

Letter regarding more rain and purchasing [calimine] in Lancaster. Stationery of Windsor Forges. 28 August 1906. Postmarked Churchtown, 28 August 1906.

Letter regarding a mix-up with expected visitors. Stationery of Windsor Forges. 3 September 1906. Postmarked Churchtown, 4 September 1906.

Letter asking Roberts to bring \$50 and the puppy. Stationery of Windsor Forges. 5 September 1906. Postmarked Churchtown, 5 September 1906.

Insert 2 Letters to Mrs. Dock from Blanche Nevin

Letter sending condolences on the death of Gen. Fisher and stating that she is preparing Windsor Forges for winter. 29 September 1915.

Letter regarding an influenza epidemic and stating that she does not enjoy New York City as much because "I am afraid of automobiles." Letterhead of Windsor Forges, but written in New Jersey. 21 January 1916.

Letter regarding a recently illness and plans to spend the winter in the South with her sister. Letterhead of Windsor Forges. 26 January 1917.

Letter regarding her rheumatism, the hope for a visit from Mrs. Dock, and daydreams of taking the motor and heading South. Letterhead of Windsor Forges. 28 September 1917.



Folder 2 Windsor Forges and Tourism

Insert 1

Photocopy of newspaper article. "Mount Parnell," *Altoona Tribune*. 18 March 1918.

Personal letter to Blanche Nevin from H. W. Shoemaker at the Altoona Tribune Publishing Company asking her to meet them at Mercersburg and regarding a trip to Italy with the Red Cross. 27 March 1918.

Envelope which contained the above items, from Miss B. Nevin at the Imperial Hotel in Columbia, South Carolina addressed to John Appell at Abbeyville, Lancaster. Postmarked Columbia, South Carolina, 12 April 1918.

Insert 2

Letter from J. G. Forney, secretary of the Lancaster Automobile Club, regarding the need to entice motorists to stay overnight as they travel through the Lancaster County. Letterhead of J. G. Forney, Real Estate and Insurance, Lancaster. 21 July 1928.

Carbon copy of letter from David F. Magee, vice-president of the Lancaster County Historical Society, to the Pennsylvania Historical Commission regarding the preservation of Windsor Forges as a historic site. Letterhead of D. F. Magee, Attorney at Law, Lancaster. 7 August 1928.

Letter from H. H. Shenk, executive secretary of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, to D. F. Magee responding to the above letter. Letterhead of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, Harrisburg. 8 August 1928.

Letter from Henry W. Shoemaker to David F. Magee suggesting using Windsor Forges as bed and breakfast in order to provide a caretaker and upkeep for the property. Letterhead of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission. 13 August 1928.

Carbon copy of letter to S. Edw. Gable, president of the Lancaster Automobile Club regarding plans to entice motorists to spend time in Lancaster County. Letterhead of D. F. Magee. 15 August 1928.

Insert 3

Photocopy of newspaper article. "Iron Lady," *The Sunday News*. 15 December 1940. The article is about Blanche's grandmother, Catharine Carmichael, her marriage to iron master Robert Jenkins of Windsor Forges, and mentions Blanche Nevin and her contributions to the estate.

Folder 3 Poem written for the Lancaster farmers. "One Usual Day."

