

## East Bradford Worldly Goods VIII



This elegant home on Hillsdale Road is sometimes referred to as “Town’s End Farm” because of its proximity to the Borough of West Chester. However, it is indeed a Townsend Farm. It sits on land Joseph Townsend (1684-1766) transferred to his son John (c. 1716-1803), and John transferred in 1784 to his son William (1748-1819). The brick section was built in 1806 for William and Grace Townsend. This is documented not only by the datestone (see inset), but also a three-fold increase in William’s tax assessment in that time period. The date of the center stone section of the house is likely before 1806. In fact, the 1796 tax records list William’s home as an “old stone house.”



William Townsend’s 1819 will devised his plantation to his wife Grace during her natural life. Nevertheless, Grace decided to sell the farm at public sale in 1828, twenty years before her death. The January 1, 1828 advertisement in the American Republican lists the improvements as including “a large two story Brick House, with stone Kitchen...” Through a set of transactions, the farm was purchased by William and Grace’s son, Eusebius Townsend (1787-1863).

In 1829 Eusebius Townsend married Elizabeth Pratt (1807-1894). Undoubtedly, when Elizabeth joined her new husband on the Townsend Farm in East Bradford, she brought with her the sampler shown here which she stitched in 1823. Elizabeth was raised on what we now know as the Colonial Pennsylvania Plantation in Ridley Creek State Park. Elizabeth probably made her sampler in the Edgmont/Willistown area, due in part to its close resemblance to another sampler made by Ann Vodges who lived on Providence Road.

Eusebius and Elizabeth Townsend raised nine children in their fine home. According to Eusebius Townsend’s obituary in the April 21, 1863 Village Record, he “died upon the farm on which he was born...” Following Eusebius Townsend’s death, the 137 acre farm was sold at public auction to C.C. Sellers. The farm was advertised as “A Rare Chance for Capitalists” in the December 15, 1864 American Republican. Elizabeth Townsend died 30 years later in West Chester.

We are fortunate to live in a township that supports the preservation of these wonderful historic resources. We commend the owners of the resources for their commitment to the sympathetic preservation for future generations to admire and enjoy. ●

### “Townsend Farm”

*Inset: 1806 datestone in west gable end.*

*Historic Resource #107.*

*2019 photographs by Sue Hogan*

*Shown at left: Elizabeth Pratt’s 1823 sampler.*

*Photo courtesy of:*

*M. Finkel & Daughter, Philadelphia*