

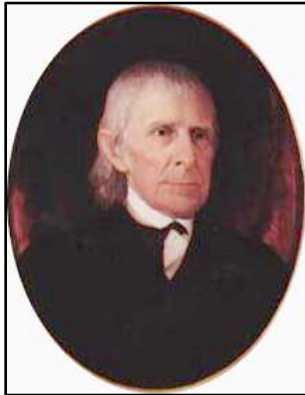


ECKFELDT FAMILY IN HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP

by Richard D. Kerr

John Jacob Eckfeldt was born in Germany in 1733. He and Maria Magdalena Schneider were married in Nuremburg, Bavaria in 1764. Shortly afterward they emigrated to Philadelphia, where John made a business of blacksmithing and general machine work.

Adam Eckfeldt (full name John Adam Eckfeldt), their son, was born on June 15, 1769 in Philadelphia. He apprenticed under his father and demonstrated an aptitude for machinery. When the young United States of America passed the Mint Act of 1792 and established its mint in Philadelphia, Adam constructed presses and machinery for it. He began employment there in the Parting Room under



Joseph Cloud, Melter and Refiner. He also designed coins in his early years there. In 1796 he was appointed Assistant Coiner, with the consent of President George Washington. When Coiner Henry Voight died in 1814, Eckfeldt was appointed Coiner to replace him. He finally resigned in 1839, but continued to be at the Mint on an almost daily basis until his death on February 5 or 6, 1852. Interested in horticulture, he had bought land in rural Haverford Township in 1794, on the north side of today's Township Line Road. Adam had a brief first marriage in 1792 to Maria Hahn, which ended with her death. He later married Margarett Bausch, and they had six children: Sarah, Jacob Reese, Anna Mary M., Elias B., Susannah, Adam C. and Margarett. On his death, his land was split between sons Jacob and Adam C.

Jacob Reese Eckfeldt, the oldest son of Adam and Margarett Eckfeldt, was born in Philadelphia in

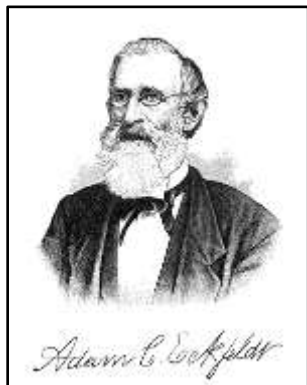


March, 1803. Following in his father's general line of work, he was appointed Assayer of the United States Mint by President Andrew Jackson in the spring of 1832, succeeding John Richardson. Jacob served in that position until he died on August 9, 1872. He was married to Emily Mifflin Levering, daughter of Jonathan H. Levering of Philadelphia, on October 19, 1835. He purchased part of the Grange property in southeastern Haverford Township from the estate of Joseph Cloud in 1845, prior to inheriting part of his father's land. This property, generally listed at 92 acres, was known as "Greenwood." Jacob inherited the western portion of his father's land, listed as 165 acres, which became known as "Edgewood." It was occupied and farmed by a tenant farmer.

Susanna Eckfeldt, a daughter of Adam and Margarett Eckfeldt, married William Ewing DuBois of the U. S. Mint on October 14, 1841. DuBois, among other posts held during his career, including succeeding Jacob R. Eckfeldt as Assayer, served as the first curator of the Mint's coin collection. At the Mint, her father had set aside "master coins," struck with extra care using new dies and polished planchets, as well as interesting foreign coins sent to the Mint as bullion. These pieces became the Mint's Cabinet, or

coin collection. Adam Eckfeldt often spent his own funds to acquire coins for the Mint. This collection eventually evolved into the Smithsonian Institution's National Numismatic Collection.

Adam C. Eckfeldt, another son of Adam and Margaretta Eckfeldt, was born in 1812, according to the seminal history of Delaware County by George Smith. Upon the death of his father, Adam C. received the eastern part of his land, listed as 150 acres, where he continued to live and farm until 1868, when he sold the property to William Cresson Prichett and moved to North Chester Borough. At least by Prichett's time of ownership, this land was called "Richland" in recognition of its fertile character. Adam C. married Rebecca Sulger, and their children were Elias B. (who died at the Battle of Antietam in the Civil War), Anna S. and Margaretta. He later married Martha Ann Campbell, and they had a daughter Sarah E., who became the wife of Dr. Charles Perkins. Adam C. Eckfeldt served as a Justice of the Peace in Haverford Township.



Jacob Bausch Eckfeldt was the son of Jacob R. and Emily Eckfeldt, and was born in 1846. Following in his father's footsteps, he too was an Assayer for the United States Mint in Philadelphia. Surprisingly, he surpassed both his long-serving father and grandfather by working at the Mint for 64 years, from 1865 to 1929. Altogether, the Eckfeldt family had a 137-year association (1792-1929) with the U. S. Mint and is today considered its "First Family." The period covered 31 Presidential administrations, from George Washington to Herbert Hoover. He and Emily settled in Conshohocken, Montgomery County.



John Wiegand Eckfeldt, M. D. was another son of Jacob R. and Emily Eckfeldt, born January 29, 1851 in Philadelphia. He attended Philadelphia public schools, then Friends Central School (15th Street and Race Street) and the Lauderback Academy. He attended the University of Pennsylvania from 1869 to 1872, with a degree in medicine. He practiced in Haverford Township until the fall of 1880, when he relocated his practice to Philadelphia. He regularly visited the family farm "Greenwood" in Haverford Township in the summer months. He was also an early resident of Brookline. John W. Eckfeldt took a great interest in the history of Haverford Township, particularly the Powder Mill Valley, its early businesses and its people. He authored and illustrated a small book called Cobb's Creek in the Days of the Old Powder Mill in 1917. He was an avid amateur photographer, producing glass plate negatives and prints. He would colorize some prints by hand or add drawings of buildings which no longer existed, to give a visual sense of what had once been. His glass plates, photographic prints and camera are held in the collections of the Haverford Township Historical Society, fittingly in Nitre Hall in Powder Mill Valley Park. He also took a great interest in botany and created an extensive herbarium of over 4000 specimens, attaining attention as a published amateur specializing in lichens. He donated his collection to the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. He was a member of many medical and botanical societies. He married Elizabeth McComas on April 30, 1878 in Baltimore, Maryland. They had one child, Harry Eckfeldt (born April 8, 1880), and were divorced prior to 1900. His



second marriage was to Harriet Thomas in about 1908. They had no children. Dr. John W. Eckfeldt died on October 16, 1933, and he and Harriet are buried in Arlington Cemetery in Drexel Hill, Upper Darby Township, Pennsylvania.



Bottom edge detail of the 1875 atlas map of Haverford, showing "Edgewood," "Richland" and "Greenwood" Eckfeldt lands. Present-day Manoa Road runs across the top, with Eagle and Earlington roads near the sides.

Explore for More... Eckfeldt Family

Rural Pennsylvania in the Vicinity of Philadelphia by Rev. S. F. Hotchkin, M. A., published in Philadelphia, Pa. in 1897 by George W. Jacobs and Co.:

<https://archive.org/details/ruralpennsylvani00hotc>

History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania by George Smith M. D., published in Philadelphia, Pa., 1862 by Henry B. Ashmead:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=BYVAAAAYAAJ>

Wikipedia article on Adam Eckfeldt, accessed January 9, 2014:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Eckfeldt

Cobbs Creek in the Days of the Old Powder Mill by John W. Eckfeldt M.D., self-published in Philadelphia, Pa. in 1917:

<http://www.delawarecountyhistory.com/haverfordtownship/documents/CobbsCreek.pdf>

The Botanists of Philadelphia and Their Work by John W. Harshberger, Ph. D., published in Philadelphia, Pa. in 1899 by T. C. Davis and Sons:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=fHEDAAAAYAAJ>

©2014-2018 by Haverford Township Historical Society. Personal non-commercial use permitted; all other rights reserved.