



Haverford Township Historical Society



HTHS WILMER S. RICHTER ART COLLECTION

The Haverford Township Historical Society is fortunate to curate a large collection of textiles, photographs, books, tools and many other items of historic relevance to our community. Many are unaware, however, of our collection of original artwork produced by Haverford residents.

One such resident was Wilmer S. Richter, who lived with his family on Pennsylvania Avenue in the Brookline section of the township.

Richter began drawing at an early age. Seeing his artistic talents, his mother encouraged that interest. His father, however, wanted him to be a pianist. Only after practicing piano for one hour a day was he allowed to bring out his paints. The piano lessons paid off, however, when Richter paid his way through art school by playing piano in his brother's orchestra.



Cobbs Creek at Ford (halfway between Manoa and Mill roads)
May 31, 1942 William S. Richter



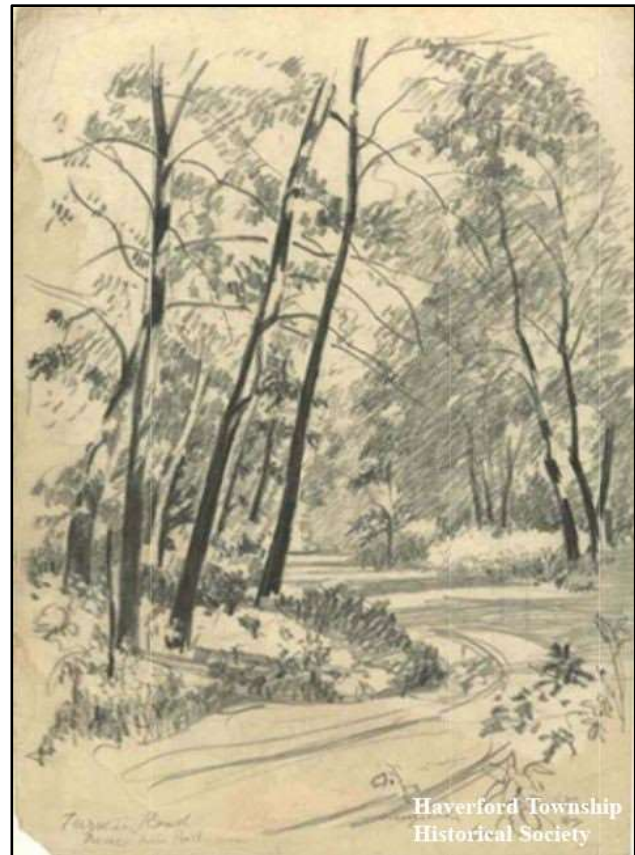
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At age 18, Richter made \$18 a week working in an engraving shop. He also drew opera scenes for a German magazine published along with records produced by the Victor Talking Machine Company, later known as RCA. Richter attended the Philadelphia School of Fine Arts. While in the service in World War I he made many sketches of war scenes. After the war he began to market his artwork, notably to the *Saturday Evening Post* magazine. In 1918 He joined the Philadelphia Sketch Club, an organization known for mentoring and exhibiting many of our nation's top artists and illustrators.

Wilmer Richter became a highly successful commercial artist, and resided in the Philadelphia area until after his retirement in 1947. He took a teaching job at the Ringling School of Art in Sarasota, Florida, where he taught drawing, advertising art, landscapes and still life. Richter continued to draw and paint into his late 90s, when failing eyesight forced him to give up his life's work. He remained active in the arts, however, even headlining a one-man art show in Florida. He passed away in 1994 at age 103.

Richter's reputation as a fine artist presented him with the opportunity to judge art shows at both the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the Academy of Fine Arts in Sarasota, Florida. He received the Life Class Medal from the Philadelphia Sketch Club and is listed in the Who's Who in American Art.

The 38 pencil sketches and four watercolors in our collection include scenes from the Cobbs Creek area of Haverford Township and date from 1924 to 1940. Richter said of these sketches, "As I write this, I am occupied making pencil drawings of certain, sometimes unknown spots, often missed by tourists because of lack of time, or not being aware of these interesting places."



Karakung Drive just beyond Nitre Hall
Pencil Sketch 1942 William S. Richter



Nitre Hall
Pencil Sketch 1942
William S. Richter

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