

East Bradford Worldly Goods VI

We have two mysteries for you in this, the sixth East Bradford Worldly Goods article. First, the identity of “EW” – one of the more elusive Chester County schoolmistresses at the turn of the 19th century. The general consensus among needlework scholars is that EW taught in East Bradford Township. Her initials are stitched on four samplers wrought by East Bradford girls in 1804: Sarah Strode from the Strode’s Mill crossroads (see the Summer 2018 Newsletter article); Sidney and Ann Jefferis, cousins who likely lived in the vicinity of Allerton Road and Rte. 842 (on the East side of Jefferis Ford); and Lydia Jefferis from the West side of Jefferis Ford. Lydia’s sampler is pictured here. Perhaps one of the girl’s father kept a book with receipts, including one for schooling, which would spell out EW’s name?

In typical EW fashion, Lydia Jefferis stitched the names of her parents, grandparents and her siblings on her sampler. Because of the detail Lydia provided, we can positively identify her as the Lydia Jefferis who was born in 1789 to Emmor and Charity Grubb Jefferis. We can also identify Lydia’s home as what is now known as “Blue Rock Farm” at 1104 Allerton Road. Lydia’s great-grandfather, James Jefferis (1699-1745), was the first of the Jefferis clan to live here. The property then passed to Lydia’s grandfather, Emmor Jefferis (approx. 1732 - 1802), who was compelled to guide the Crown Forces from Jefferis Ford toward Birmingham in 1777. Lydia’s father, Emmor (1760 – 1813), received the property on the death of Lydia’s grandfather. Blue Rock Farm remained in the Jefferis family until 1849, when Lydia’s cousin sold it to David Meconkey. This is why some historical records refer to Jefferis Ford and Jefferis Bridge as Meconkey’s.

The second mystery is the whereabouts of Ann Jefferis’ 1804 sampler. It has been out of the public domain since 1921 when it was included in a book published under the auspices of The Massachusetts Society of the Colonial Dames of America. The sampler was then owned by Ann Jefferis’ grandson, Frederick F. Sharpless Esq., who lived in New York. If you have any leads, please contact the Historical Commission at info@eastbradford.org.



Lydia Jefferis' 1804 sampler. Chester County Historical Society (1981.527)



"Sign of the Eel's Foot / Emmor Jefferis Farm / Blue Rock Farm". Historic Resource #105, Pennsylvania Historical Resource Survey Form