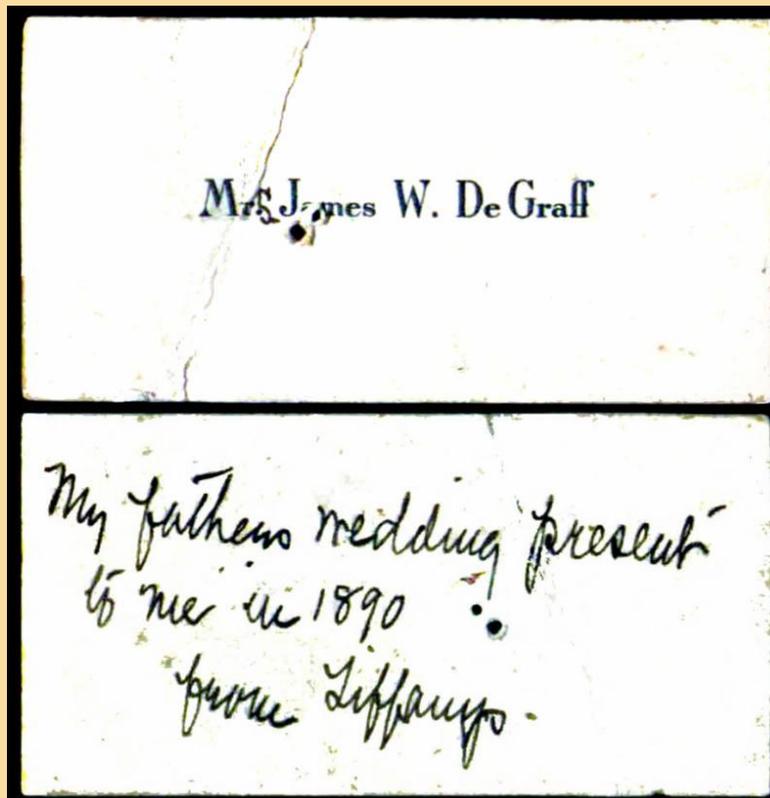




## Item of the Week *from the* Long Island Collection

LONG ISLAND COLLECTION | DIGITAL LONG ISLAND | EAST HAMPTON STAR ARCHIVE



### Calling Card of Mr. James W. DeGraff with Note

If you ever waited on line to check out books, got a cup of coffee, or relaxed with a good book in our reading room, chances are you've heard the East Hampton Library's large grandfather clock near the main desk solemnly toll the hour throughout the course of the day. The clock itself, with its imposing presence and beautiful bell-like tones, takes us back to another time, but not much seems to have been known about it until just a few years ago.

After not having chimed for some time, the grandfather clock was cleaned and repaired in 2016 by local summer resident and clock expert, Stan Bitterman. While examining the clock, a calling card (seen above), about three inches in length, was discovered with the name Mr. James W. DeGraff printed across the front in an elegant typeface. The card is damaged and certainly shows its age, with a large crease and multiple pinholes. However, if you look closely, you'll notice a small "s" attached to "Mr.," with a note scrawled on the reverse side, which reads, "My fathers wedding present to me in 1890 - from Tiffanys."

After doing some sleuthing here in the Long Island Collection, it appears Mrs.

James W. DeGraff (alternately spelled de Graff and De Graff) was Carrie Milliken DeGraff (1867-1951) of Brooklyn, N.Y., who married her husband, James Wilde DeGraff (1862-1956) of Chicago, Ill., on January 22, 1890. The clock was given by her father, Samuel Milliken, who may have purchased the clock from Tiffany & Co. at 15 Union Square West in Manhattan, which was at this location from 1870-1906.

James DeGraff founded and was president of DeGraff & Palmer, a "wholesale notions house" in New York, according to his obituary. The family resided in Plainfield, N.J., but when James retired in the 1920s, they purchased a summer home in East Hampton known as Cherridune, which still stands today at the corner of Cross and Apaquogue Roads. Upon James DeGraff's death in 1956, his daughter, Eleanore DeGraff Carr, gifted the Tiffany clock to the East Hampton Library in his memory. It's amusing to think how much Carrie DeGraff wanted to preserve the memory of her grandfather clock. I'm sure she never imagined how far it would travel.

## EXPLORE MORE

**The Digital Long Island Collection** is part of New York Heritage Digital Collections. Included are searchable scans of deeds, drawings, etchings, inventories, letters, maps, paintings, pardons, patents, photographs, plans, postcards, prints, sculptures, sketches, textiles, tiles, yearbooks and more to come.

**The East Hampton Star Archive** is a fully searchable, online digital archive of our local weekly newspaper, that features each complete issue of the paper from 1918-1968, exactly as it appeared in print. Visit the archive online, for a tour of our Town's history that will fascinate both the amateur and professional historian!

**The Karl Grossman Research Archive** is an extensive collection of materials digitized from the personal archive of Karl Grossman, an investigative reporter, columnist, author, and current professor of journalism at SUNY Old Westbury. The archive brings together a decades long career in reporting and journalism with topics ranging from the economy and pollution to fishing and East Hampton Town. Patrons are capable of searching this 9,500+ item collection by collection name, year, title, or keyword search.

**The Local Artist Research Archive** is a collection of over 19,000 items digitized from Guild Hall, containing materials including personal letters, photographs, news clippings, and art catalogs concerning artists of the East End. Patrons are capable of searching this archive by collection, title, or keyword search.



### **Welcome to the Long Island Collection's "Item of the Week."**

We are an archive dedicated to the history and people of Long Island, with a special interest in all things East Hampton and East End. Unlike some small local history rooms in other public libraries, we have over 100,000 items including, but not limited to, rare books, maps, photographs, deeds, postcards, letters, newspapers, and whaling logs. We also have a dedicated and hardworking staff ready to help you with any questions you may have. Unable to make it to the library? No problem! We upload images from the collection to [Digital Long Island](#) on a weekly basis, so there's always something new and interesting to behold.

Please visit us at the Library, make use of our extensive online digital resources, or contact us

for assistance. Public hours are: Mon. - Tues. and Thurs. - Sat., 1:00-4:30 p.m.

**Researched and written by Gina Piastuck, Department Head, Long Island Collection.**

*Gina Piastuck joined the East Hampton Library in 2007 as a librarian and archivist and has served as the Head of the Long Island Collection since 2009. She's a graduate of LIU Post's Palmer School of Library and Information Science and holds both an M.L.I.S. degree and a Certificate in Archives and Records Management. Her responsibilities managing the Long Island Collection include providing reference and research assistance to patrons on and off site, as well as the acquisition, arrangement, description and conservation of rare and new materials pertaining to the history and people of Long Island.*

[gina@easthamptonlibrary.org](mailto:gina@easthamptonlibrary.org) | (631) 324-0222 ext. 4 | [www.easthamptonlibrary.org](http://www.easthamptonlibrary.org)

