



Item of the Week *from the Long Island Collection*

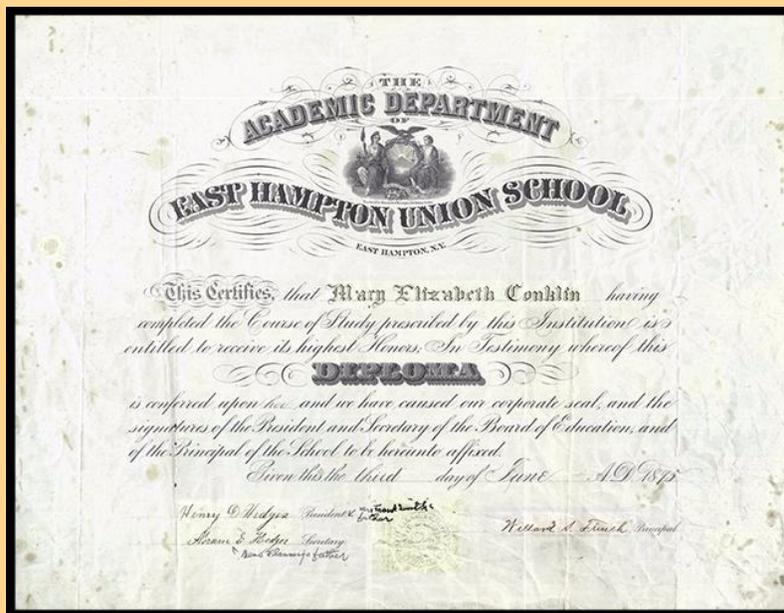
LONG ISLAND COLLECTION

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EAST HAMPTON STAR ARCHIVE



First Graduating Class of East Hampton Union School, 1895



Diploma Awarded to Mary Elizabeth Conklin by the East Hampton Union School, 1895

It's graduation season and earlier this month approximately 100 students, clad in cap and gown, graduated from East Hampton High School. Exactly 122 years prior to this, the first class to ever graduate from East

Hampton High School, then known as the East Hampton Union School, graduated in 1895 with just five students. Seen in the photograph above with their principal, Willard S. French (1867-1949), the small class included (Top row, standing left to right): Bessie Gay Talmage (1876-1943) and Edmund S. Tillinghast (1879-1962); (bottom row, seated left to right): Ettie Hedges Pennypacker (1879-1970), Mary (May) Conklin Bell (1874-1963), and Mary G. Strong (1875-1964). The image below the photograph is Mary Conklin Bell's diploma. The East Hampton Union School was built on Newtown Lane in 1893/1894, with 4 teachers and over 200 students drawn from 2 local grade schools. According to Ettie Hedges Pennypacker, the first class only had two years of high school. The graduation ceremony took place at Clinton Hall (originally Clinton Academy, which had been expanded and used for town meetings, musical productions, dances, etc. beginning in the 1880's), where each student recited speeches, poems, and dramatic pieces to a very proud audience. The graduates went on to do many things: Bessie Gay Talmage remained in East Hampton and became a wife and mother. Though illness cut her life short, she was known for her cheerful disposition and bravery in the face of adversity. Edmund S. Tillinghast attended Lafayette College in Pennsylvania and became a mining engineer and executive, eventually settling in Minnesota. Ettie Hedges Pennypacker continued her education in Southampton and later became the first librarian at the East Hampton Library where she worked for over 55 years. Mary Conklin Bell furthered her education at the Oneonta State Normal School (currently SUNY Oneonta), was active around town, and wrote articles for the Long Island Forum and the East Hampton Star. Lastly, Mary G. Strong attended the Auburn Seminary in Auburn, N.Y. (currently Auburn Theological Seminary in New York, N.Y.) became a teacher and taught for almost 40 years around Long Island and the country.

If you attended East Hampton High School and find yourself feeling nostalgic for your classmates, there's an expanding selection of yearbooks for view on our [Digital Long Island](#) page under the "[Yearbooks](#)" link.

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 6,500+ item collection by collection name, year, title, or keyword search.

[The Local Artist Research Archive](#) is a collection of over 10,000 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, new papers, and w haling logs.

We also have a dedicated and hardw orking staff ready to help you w ith 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 w eekly basis, so there's alw ays 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.
Our public hours are Mon.-Tues. and Thurs.-Sat. 1:00-4:30 p.m.

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