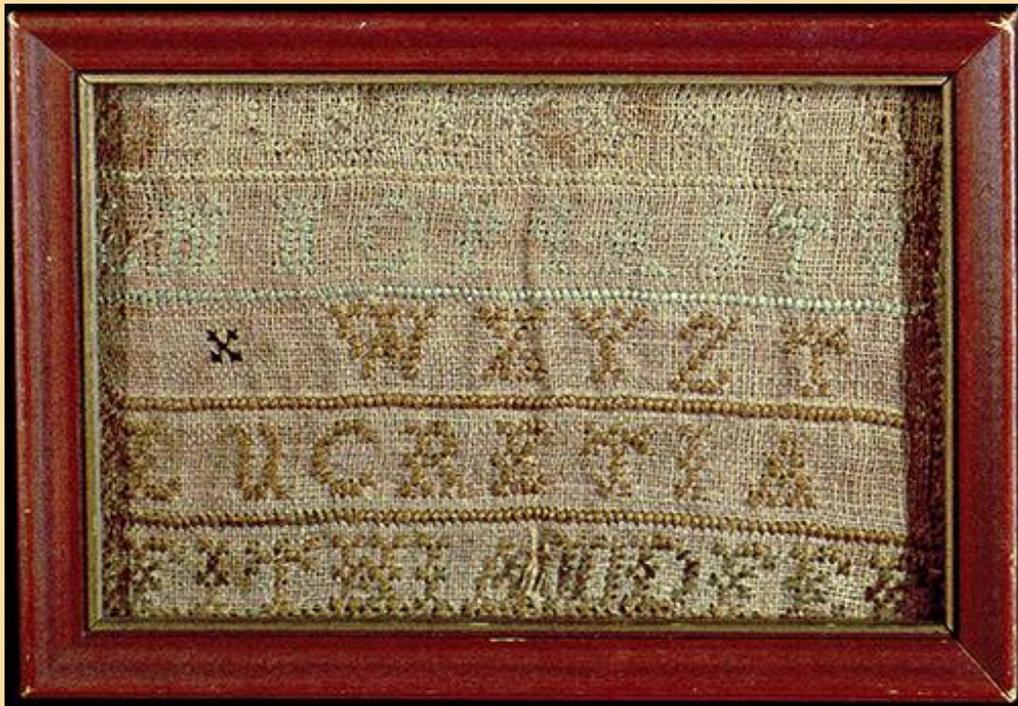




Item of the Week *from the* Long Island Collection

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



Sampler Made by Lucretia Fithian Barnes, c. 1770-1790

Before public education became mandatory in the United States in the mid-19th century, there weren't many opportunities available for girls outside the home, unless they were born into middle or upper class families that valued their education enough to financially support it. If such was the case, they were taught reading, arithmetic, and activities deemed more becoming of women, such as music, painting, manners, and sewing.

Regardless of her social standing, a girl was expected to learn how to sew if she wanted to grow up, get married, have children, and manage a household. Everyday items such as clothing, curtains, tablecloths, bed sheets, and bedspreads were all made by hand, so knowing how to sew was essential. That being said, one of the first tasks little girls were assigned while growing up was to "mark" their family's household linens with initials so that they could be identified for use within the home, or for ownership if they were sent out for repair or lost.

Before they could be trusted with such an endeavor, however, they needed to complete a sampler. The item preserved in the frame above is known as a marking sampler, which displays the needlework skill of its creator, Lucretia Fithian Barnes (1765-1816), who may have been as young as five or six years old when she completed it. Lucretia was the seventh child of Capt. David Fithian and

Esther Conkling of East Hampton. She would later marry David Barnes in 1789.

A marking sampler was never meant to be displayed and served as a homework assignment of sorts; a means by which young girls could learn and practice their alphabet and numbers. It's hard to decipher because the thread has faded over time (the thread was most likely colored with vegetable dye), but the sampler is divided into five lines. The first three lines contain the letters of the alphabet (capitals only). The last two lines say "Lucretia" and "Fithian" followed by some characters that, as of yet, have not been identified. Normally, a girl would list her age and/or the year the sampler was finished after her name. Once completed, Lucretia would have been deemed educated in her alphabet.

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.

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