



Item of the Week *from the* Long Island Collection

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



George Sterling

Aside from its collection of historical materials, the [Long Island Collection](#) possesses quite a bit of literature by Long Island authors. The above portrait is of [George Sterling](#), a poet and playwright who was recognized in California's San Francisco Bay Area as one of the greatest American poets of the early 20th century.

Born in Sag Harbor on December 1, 1869, George Sterling was the first of nine children born to Dr. George Sterling, the village physician, and his wife Mary Parker Havens Sterling. George's mother's family, the Havens's, were prominent in Sag Harbor and Shelter Island. Her father, Capt. Wickham Havens, was a whaler and master of the ship *Thomas Dickinson*. Her brother was Frank C. Havens, who would come to have a big influence on his nephew's life.

After graduating from the Union School in Sag Harbor, George attended St. Charles College in Maryland where his father hoped he would enter the priesthood. However, George eventually followed his uncle Frank to San Francisco where he had established himself as a successful lawyer and real estate developer. While working

as a clerk in his uncle's real estate office in Oakland, George published a small volume of poetry titled *The Testimony of the Suns and Other Poems* in 1903 and quickly gained notoriety among local artist and writers. It was shortly after this time that the portrait above was taken by photographer Arnold Genthe, known for his images of San Francisco's Chinatown, the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, and notable figures.

Between 1903 and 1926, Sterling would go on to write twelve volumes of lyric poetry and five volumes of dramatic poetry. His most well-known work was "[A Wine of Wizardry](#)." Despite his successes, Sterling never became well known outside of California. However, it's important to remember this Long Island poet.

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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