

**Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School Collection**

**6 linear feet**

**1907-1985**

**Accession Number: MS005DI**

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### **Background Note**

The Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School operated from 1905 until 1993 in Chester County, Pennsylvania. The school was a non-profit institution geared toward neglected or under-achieving African American youth. Founded by prominent Philadelphians John S. Trower and William A. Creditt, the Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School was established to provide academic and vocational training to African American teenagers who were in danger of being declared “delinquent.” Creditt, who was pastor of Philadelphia’s First African Baptist Church, felt that a northern counterpart to Alabama’s Tuskegee Institute was much needed. John Trower, a member of Reverend Creditt’s congregation, also shared this belief. Trower was a prominent businessman and caterer who counted himself as one of the wealthiest black men in Pennsylvania. Together, the two men located land in Chester County and established the school. Both Trower and Creditt served as principals of DIAS until their respective deaths in 1911 and 1921. They were succeeded by J.N.H. Waring and his son, John Waring II, both notable for their work with inner-city African American youths.

DIAS boasted a 110-acre campus and two dormitories that housed approximately one hundred and ten students a year, both boys and girls. Though it originally operated as a non-denominational private institution, it became state funded in 1907. The school achieved national recognition and was well known and respected by the local community. Under the Warings’ regime DIAS was advertised in African American newspapers from all major northeastern cities. Applications to the school were accepted from parents, guardians, and child welfare programs. The school prided itself on the wealth of available extracurricular activities, including sports teams for both boys and girls, domestic studies, and college prep classes. Group activities and socialization were highly encouraged in addition to the academic curriculum or vocational training. The Downingtown Industrial closed in 1993. In 2002 Delaware County Community College opened its Chester County Campus on the school’s former site.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Information from the Diamond Jubilee (1905-1980) pamphlet, with notes corrected by Mrs. Clay Griffin.

## Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School Collection

### **Scope & Content**

This collection documents the Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School (DIAS) from 1904-1993, a vocational high school for African-American students located in Downingtown, Pennsylvania. Items included are administrative and financial documents, publications, correspondence, scrapbooks, photographs, memorabilia and other ephemera. The earlier years of the school's history are well-documented, but the later years are less well-represented in this collection. Also not included are student rosters or enrollment information. The strengths of this collection include a visual documentation (in photographs) of the early years of the school, as well as how DIAS was portrayed in the press.

### **Organization**

The collection is divided into five series:

Series I, Administration and Financial

Series II, Publications

Series III, Scrapbooks

Series IV, Memorabilia & Ephemera

Series V, Photographs

**Accession Number:** MS005DI

### **Restrictions**

This collection is open for research.

### **Acquisition Information**

The collection was donated to Temple University by Dr. Charles L. Blockson in 1985. Dr. Blockson acquired the materials three years earlier, courtesy of a Downingtown faculty member, while giving a commencement address at the school.

### **Processing Note**

The collection maintains its deposit organization structure. Loose materials (primarily photographs, but also newspaper clippings, publications, and memorabilia) were found tucked into the photograph book of George B. Lomax and the scrapbook of Clara Clark. These items were removed and rehoused in separate folders or envelopes and placed within the appropriate series.

### **Recommended Citation**

[Indicate cited item or series here], Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School (Accession # MS005DI), Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection, Temple University Libraries.

Downingtown Industrial and Agricultural School Collection

**Series I, Administration and Financial, (1907-1964; 1976-1985)**

This series documents the earlier years of the school, including the president's report of 1907, and a minute book that was curiously used off and on. Also included are documents pertaining to the estate of school founder William A. Creditt. There are a few financial records (1946-1964), including insurance policies, that document the aftermath and resulting construction after a devastating fire in 1946. A few pages of correspondence are also in this series (1976-1985).

<b>Box / Folder</b>	<b>Folder Title</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
1 / 2	Correspondence	1976, 1981-82, 1985
1 / 9	President's report	November 12 1907
2 / 2	Reassessment for fire insurance	June 10, 1948
2 / 4	Insurance survey	December 1950
2 / 5	Insurance correspondence & policy	1956
2 / 6	Dormitory construction bid solicitation & fire insurance	(1950, 1964)
2 / 7	Building contract & insurance	1949, 1950, ?
2 / 8	Minute book	[1907-1908, 1911, 1921-1929]
2 / 10	Executive Committee 1921-1922 from minute book	[1907-1908, 1911, 1921-29]
2 / 11	Office of Principal, 1922 from minute book	[1907-1908, 1911, 1921-1929]
2 / 12	Re: William A. Creditt estate to principal, 1921 from minute book	1921
2 / 13	Students absent, female	1918-1919
2 / 14	Student Records	1918-1921
3 / 43	Receipt removed from Lomzx book	1925
5 / 1	Trustees elected 1923 from Clark scrapbook	1923
5 / 2	Undated school history from Clark scrapbook	None

**Series II, Publications, (1929-1985; n.d.)**

This series spans many decades of the school's operations and serves to illustrate the depth of events going on at DIAS. Included here are commencement programs, banquet programs, a few issues of the *Downingtown Bulletin*, and a yearbook, the 1972 *Downingtonia*. s Also included are newspaper clippings, some of which are undated.

<b>Box / Folder</b>	<b>Folder Title</b>	<b>Date(s)</b>
1 / 1	Commencement exercise programs	1951-54, 1956-60, 1962, 1964, 1966, 1969, 1975-76, 1981-82, 1985
1 / 3	Creditt-Bradford Memorial Club Flyer	1976
1 / 4	Dedication ceremony program, Creditt- Bradford	October 6, 1968
1 / 5	Founder day's banquet programs	1967, 1969-71, 1973-79

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1 / 6	Founder day's banquet programs	1980-82, 1985
1 / 7	Raymond A. Lemon. Appreciation banquet [Copy and draft of acceptance speech]	October 25, 1980
1 / 8	Middle Atlantic Association bulletin, football and basketball	1934-35
1 / 10	J.H Warning, Jr. testimonial banquet	October 19, 1959
1 / 11	Publications	1923, 1968, 1976, 1980-81, and undated
2 / 1	Pennsylvania State Police: Bureau of Fire Protection	1946
2 / 3	Yearbook – <i>The Downingtonian</i>	1972
2 / 9	Bulletin of information	1981-82
4 / 2	<i>Downingtown Bulletin</i> , Newspaper clippings & misc. items found in 1933 scrapbook	1933
4 / 4	<i>Downingtown Bulletin</i> , Vol. XVII, No. 1 <i>Downingtown Bulletin</i> , Vol. XIX, No. 7 <i>Downingtown Newsletter</i>	October 1941 April 1944; 1962, 1968-70
5 / 4	Newspaper clippings from Clark scrapbook	1951
5 / 5	Newspaper clippings Clark scrapbook	None
5 / 6	Commencement exercises (copy) from Clark scrapbook	1929-1940
5 / 7	Promotional pamphlet from Clark scrapbook	None
5 / 8	<i>Downingtown Bulletin</i> (copy) from Clark scrapbook	1936
5 / 9	Negro History Week Program from Clark scrapbook	February 15, 1935
5 / 10	Football & Basketball bulletin from Clark scrapbook	1934-1935
5 / 11	31 <sup>st</sup> commencement booklet from Clark scrapbook	1936
5 / 12	Newspaper clippings from Clark scrapbook	None
5 / 13	<i>Downingtown Bulletin</i> (copy) from Clark scrapbook	1935
5 / 14	Newsletter from Clark scrapbook	1964
5 / 16	Newspaper clippings from Clark scrapbook	1985
5 / 17	<i>Downingtown Bulletin</i> (copy) from Clark scrapbook	1932
5 / 18	<i>Downingtown Bulletin</i> from Clara scrapbook	1930



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**Series V, Photographs, (1929-1932; n.d.)**

This series contains all photographs in the collection. One album which belonged to a school official named George B. Lomax is included here, and dated 1925, but not all of the photographs are from this year; dates are included where possible. This album and the Clara Clark scrapbook contained many loose photographs that are now in separate envelopes for maximum preservation. Most of the photographs are from the Lomax album. There are many photographs of students, faculty, and facilities, a large portion of which are unidentified.

<b>Box/Folder</b>	<b>Folder Title</b>	<b>Dates</b>
3 / -	Photo book of George B. Lomax	1925
3 / 1	Newspaper clipping: "As a part of the commencement pageant Mr. Waring drills his WACs" from Lomax book	None
3 / 2	Newspaper clipping: "Mr. Lemmon – Get a good look at him while he is still single" from Lomax book	None
3 / 3	1 Photo: seated woman - "Mrs. Hunt 25. N. 40th St. 16th Ave 6868" from Lomax book	None
3 / 4	1 Photo: woman with car "Mrs. Rhodes []" from Lomax book	None
3 / 5	1 Photo: three people in yard – "Kenneth Cousins, Dorothy Peterson, Miss Carter" from Lomax book	None
3 / 6	1 Photo: scenery - "Campus" from Lomax book	None
3 / 7	1 Photo: Group – "Mr. Tignore and service group" from Lomax book	1926
3 / 8	1 Photo: standing man – "D.J.S." from Lomax book	June 1937
3 / 9	9 Photos: women from Lomax book	None
3 / 10	3 Photos: scenery from Lomax book	None
3 / 11	1 Photo of men with a car from Lomax book	None
3 / 12	4 Photos: men/boys from Lomax book	None
3 / 13	2 Photos: groups from Lomax book	None
3 / 14	1 Photo: candid group of 8 people from Lomax book	None
3 / 15	1 Negative: group of 6 people from Lomax book	None
3 / 16	2 Photos: scenery – sports field and waterfall from Lomax book	None

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3 / 17	5 Photo: posed groups of people –men, women, and children, from Lomax book	None
3 / 18	1 Photo: Group of males and female from Lomax book	None
3 / 19	6 Photos: groups of couples, males and females, posed and candid from Lomax book	None
3 / 20	1 Photo: candid shot of woman – “Mother Ni[on]” from Lomax book	None
3 / 21	1 Photo: posed shot of women’s basketball team from Lomax book	None
3 / 22	Advertisement: “The ‘Ideal’ – the original Album Pencil” from Lomax book	None
3 / 23	1 Photo: shot of men’s baseball team in action from Lomax book	None
3 / 24	1 Photo: candid shot of people on beach from Lomax book	None
3 / 25	1 Photo: shot of individual male from Lomax book	None
3 / 26	1 Photo: shot of individual male from Lomax book	None
3 / 27	2 Photos: shots of building from Lomax book	None
3 / 28	5 Photos: candid and posed shots of males and females outdoors from Lomax book	None
3 / 29	2 Photos: shots of scenery from Lomax book	None
3 / 30	1 Photos: posed shot of unidentified woman from Lomax book	None
3 / 31	1 Photo: scene from baseball game from Lomax book	None
3 / 32	4 Photos: sports and crowd from Lomax book	None
3 / 33	3 Photos (beach shots of children and adults) and photograph postcard (two male children) from Lomax book	None
3 / 34	4 Photos: scenic images, including Washington D.C., from Lomax book	None
3 / 35	3 Photos: sports from Lomax book	None
3 / 36	5 Photos from Lomax book	None
3 / 37	3 Photos from Lomax book	None

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3 / 38	Postcard of Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA: card to Lomax from Debora []; from Lomax book	July 10, 1920
3 / 39	4 Photos: football from Lomax book	None
3 / 40	7 Photos from Lomax book	None
3 / 41	4 Photos: fire and portraits, from Lomax book	None
3 / 42	Postcard from Lomax photograph book	None
3 / 44	Photos: page from unknown booklet for Alumni Assoc., officer list and photo from Lomax book	None
4 / 1	Original aerial photograph of DIAS	July 5, 1971
4 / 3	Photos: graduation	1972
4 / 5	Scrapbook	1933
4 / 6	Photos: Girl's basketball team/ boy's football team	1931 None
4 / 7	Photos: faculty & staff (?)	(1920s?)
4 / 8	Photos: faculty & students(?)	(1920s?)
5 / 21	2 Photos removed from Clark scrapbook	None