

FM-845

**The Frederick J. Lawrence Papers  
1842-1904**

Biographical Note

This collection contains the papers of Frederick J. Lawrence, b.1825, d. 1904. Lawrence was a prominent decorator and coach painter who resided in Albany from 1863 until his death in 1904. Mr. Lawrence was born in London on April 7, 1825 and came to this country in 1842. Shortly afterwards he was apprenticed to a Mr. John Ham of Worcester, Mass. as a coach painter. He worked at this trade in Worcester until 1863, when he came to Albany. From 1864 to 1869 Lawrence worked as a decorator for the New York Central Railroad.

It was during the 1870's and 1880's that Mr. Lawrence built his reputation as a skilled artist and decorator, primarily by his designs of banners, badges, and display posters for various private and public organizations. He also had a significant role in the redecoration of the White House in 1882, under the auspices of the Tiffany Company. Lawrence worked in several mediums, ranging from textiles to paint. The Institute's Textile Dept. has seven examples of needlework badges by Lawrence.

Mr. Lawrence was also an accomplished singer and member of the choir of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Albany for 28 years. He was also a longtime Mason (Knights Templar) and member of an Albany amateur theater group. Erastus D. Palmer and Asa Twitchell were contemporaries and associates of Lawrence. Lawrence married Elizabeth Jane Rogers on November 6, 1850. They had three children, Herbert Myron Lawrence b. November 19, 1851, Jennie Elizabeth Lawrence b. June 24, 1854, and Annie Louis Lawrence b. August 7, 1859. Herbert Myron Lawrence became a well-known artist in his own right and was a friend and associate of Walter Launt Palmer, who was best man at his wedding.

Scope and Content Note

Lawrence's business papers include his naturalization decree (1851), his indenture of apprenticeship (1843), a household notebook containing recipes for paints, inks, and varnishes used in Lawrence's craft, as well as some 19th century culinary and medicinal recipes. There are also numerous newspaper clippings describing Lawrence's work on banners and badges, his role in the White House redecoration, and other projects. Included are numerous rough drawings, sketches and inkings by Lawrence.

Personal items of note include two letters Lawrence's mother (1840's), a letter to his wife written in poetic verse (1875), two Valentines to the future Mrs. Lawrence (1840's), and wedding announcements from son Herbert's and daughter Annie's weddings. There are four photographs in velvet lined metal cases that appear to date from the late 19th century and are unidentified.

Mr. Lawrence's papers eventually wound up in the hands of Grace Tallmadge, wife of Edward Tallmadge II, Lawrence's grandson

by his daughter Annie. There is a folder containing papers of the Tallmadge family dating from the first half of the 20th century, along with genealogical information on the Rogers and Bishop families (Lawrence's wife's antecedents).

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Box Folder

1	1	Business Papers, 1843-1904.
	2	Personal Papers, 1842-1904.
	3	Edward Tallmadge Papers, 1900-1972.