

ALBANY INSTITUTE
OF HISTORY & ART

A Guide to the
Annesley and Co. Papers

Collection Summary

Collection Title: Annesley and Co. Papers

Call Number: HP 81-05

Creator: Unknown

Inclusive Dates: 1898-1900, 1905-1911

Bulk Dates: 1898-1900, 1907-1911

Abstract: Business papers of the Albany company Annesley and Co. Includes invoices for items received by the company from 1898 to 1900 and business correspondence from customers, suppliers and artists from 1905 to 1911.

Quantity: 7 boxes, 3,418 items

Administrative Information

Custodial History: These papers were purchased from dealer Dennis Holzman in March of 1981.

Preferred Citation: Annesley and Co. Papers, HP 81-05, Albany Institute of History & Art Library, New York.

Acquisition Information:

Accession #: 81-05

Accession Date: March 1981

Processing Information:

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Restrictions

Restrictions on Access: None

Restrictions on Use: Permission to publish material must be obtained in writing prior to publication from the Chief Librarian & Archivist, Albany Institute of History & Art, 125 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12210.

Index Term

Persons:

Annesley, Richard P.
Birney, William Verplanck
Eaton, Charles W.
Fazakerly, Tom

Organizations:

Aimone MFG. Co.
Albany Art Gallery
Annesley and Co.
Alexander J. Beggs, Dr.
Berlin Photograph Company
Ferdinand Bing & Co. Successors
Curtis & Cameron, Dr.
F.W. Devoe & C.T. Reynolds Co.
Richard Dudensing & Son
Empire Molding Works
Favor, Ruhl & Co.
Fishel, Adler & Schwartz
Foster Brothers
Franz Hanfstaengal
Johnson & Faulkner
Jacques Kahn
Keuffel & Esser Co.
C. Klackner
The Lippy Gold Frame Co.
Theo. W. Morris & Co.
Queen & Co. Incorporated
Rover, Lee & Clem
Faber Prang Art Company
Arthur Tooth & Sons
A.A. Vantine & Co.
London Art Publishers

Subjects:

Art Galleries, Commercial
Furniture
Furniture industry and trade
Interior decorating
Picture frames and framing

Places:

Albany, New York
Boston, Massachusetts
London, England
New York, New York
Paris, France
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Rochester, New York

Document Types: invoices; letters; advertisements; product samples.

Historical Information

Annesley and Co. of Albany was founded in 1802 by Lawson Annesley, a native of Bordentown, New Jersey. Lawson, along with his younger brother William, was a gilder specializing in looking glasses and picture frames. The shop was, as of 1813, located at 16 Stueben Street. Later they relocated to 294 North Market Street. In 1823 they moved again just down the street to a larger location at 325-327 North Market Street. In the following decade, Annesley and Co. relocated to 309-311 N. Market Street and began to advertise itself first as a looking glass store and then as a looking glass warehouse. During the 1840's, Annesley and Co. moved twice. Their first move of the decade took them to 46 Broadway in 1841 and their second, in 1846, took them to 504 Broadway.

The company's first major change came in 1856 when Lawson Annesley took on Marshall K. Williamson as a partner. The company name was changed to Annesley and Williamson. It was also the first year that the Annesleys advertised in the Albany Directories. Annesley and Williamson were billed as manufacturers and dealers of looking glasses as well as sellers of portraits, picture frames, engravings and artists' materials. They were also listed as a Picture Gallery. In the following year, Lawson entered into a partnership with B.H. Veeder and Company. Veeder owned a goldbeating company, which he had founded two years earlier, located at 45 Hudson Street. Also in 1857, Issac and Richard, Lawson's sons, were brought into the family business as clerks. The company's advertisement in the Albany Directory of that year showed that the business had expanded to include not only frames, looking glasses and artists' materials but also paintings and engravings from America and abroad. It was around this time that the Annesley's could start being described as a place where artists and people interested in art could meet informally.

In 1858, Issac Annesley became a partner in the business and, although Marshall Williamson continued to be a partner, the name reverted back to the original Annesley and Co. The following year, Richard Annesley left the company to work as a sign painter for O.S. Rice & Co. In 1860, the Annesley family's partnerships with B.H. Veeder and Marshall Williamson came to an end and the company name was changed to Annesley and Son. Lawson, in his mid to late 70's, retired in 1861. His son Issac took on Thomas R. Ferris as a partner to replace him causing the company name to change once again, this time to Annesley and Ferris.

In 1865 Issac Annesley, died suddenly in his early 40's and his younger brother Richard took over the business. Richard had previously been a sign painter first for O.S.

Rice and Co. and later, beginning in 1862, in his own shop located at 501 Broadway. That venture had been short lived however as Richard had accepted a commission as a lieutenant in the 43rd Regiment during 1863. When he returned to Albany at the close of the Civil War to take over from his late brother, he was a Captain. Lawson came out of retirement part-time to help with the business and James Vint, a man first employed by the company as a porter in 1863 and then as a salesman starting in 1864, became a partner. The partnership between Vint and Annesley lasted for the next twenty years. Lawson Annesley returned to the company fulltime in 1867 and retired again, for good this time, in 1875. During this time Annesley & Vint advertised itself simply as sellers of looking glasses, pictures and frames.

On September 1, 1875 Annesley & Vint moved from 504-506 Broadway to 57 North Pearl Street where the company remained until 1915. In 1881, the company's founder Lawson Annesley died in his late 90's. A year later James Vint's son, James H. Vint the company bookkeeper, became a partner. In the Albany Directory of that year, Annesley & Vint ceased to advertise themselves as sellers of looking glasses, but rather as purveyors of picture frames, fine furniture, upholstery and hangings. Moreover, it was also in this advertisement that they first referred to themselves as the Albany Art Gallery. In 1885, James Vint the elder left the business to set up his own shop on 34 North Pearl Street specializing in artists' supplies. His son remained with Annesley although the name reverted back to Annesley and Co. With the departure of the elder Vint, the company began to turn from manufacture towards becoming more of a gallery for both art and fine furniture.

In 1890 the partnership with the younger Vint dissolved and Richard Annesley never took on another partner. By 1893, the phrase "Albany Art Gallery" came to dominate the Albany Directory advertisements of Annesley and Co. Over the next few years the advertisements of the company changed little, consistently offering etchings, paintings and frames, but also at various times fine furniture, antiques, cut glass, oriental rugs, and artists supplies. The company was incorporated in 1905. On October 24, 1909 Richard Annesley died and was the last Annesley to run the company. Ambrose Boylan, who had begun at Annesley and Co. as a clerk in 1885, succeeded Richard Annesley as president. Within two years of taking over the company Boylan shifted focus and, while continuing to offer art, frames and antiques, Annesley and Co. began to make and modify fine furniture at their new factory located at 40 James Street. In 1915 the company moved back to its 1874 location at 504-506 Broadway. Annesley and Co. ceased to advertise in the Albany Directory after 1930. Sixteen years later it moved again to 121 State Street. By 1941 Annesley and Co. was listed as selling antiques at 20a Stueben Street. All mention of the company disappeared after 1944. In its final years, Annesley and Co. became primarily an antique dealer and furniture maker.

Scope and Contents of the Papers

The Annesley and Co. papers consist of shipping invoices and business correspondence from the company. The papers in this collection are divided into two periods, one from 1898 to 1900, and the other from 1905 to 1911. The collection is divided into two series: Invoices; and Correspondence.

Series I Invoices is a collection of shipping invoices from the wholesalers, manufactures and importers which provided Annesley and Co. with their wares. It spans

from 1898 to 1900 during which time Richard Annesley was the sole proprietor of his family's business. The companies with which Annesley and Co. did business included importers, publishers, glass and metal craftsmen, and manufactures of furniture and upholstery located primarily along the eastern seaboard but also in large mid-western trade ports and major cities in Europe, especially London. The items purchased by the company range from fine wood and metal picture frames, to furniture, upholstery, oriental imports and mass produced art such as photographs and etchings. These records help to give an idea of the goods Annesley and Co. sold at the time. In addition, the documents also include the cost of each item for Annesley and Co., thus granting some insight into the basic economy of the company.

Series II Correspondence consists of letters received by Annesley and Co. The series begins in 1905 after the incorporation of the company, runs through Ambrose Boylan's succession of Richard Annesley in 1909, and ends in 1911. The volume of letters within the collection varies from year to year, and 1905, 1906 and 1908 are rather poorly represented. The correspondence includes requests from customers, notices of art shows at regional galleries, solicitations from charitable groups including the Salvation Army and Albany Academy Alumnae Association, shipping updates from suppliers, product samples from would-be suppliers and letters from artists featured by the Gallery. There is an entire folder dedicated to the letters of William Verplanck Birney, a landscape and genre artist whose work was featured at the Albany Art Gallery in 1907.

Organization of the Papers

The collection is divided into two series: Invoices; and Correspondence. Series I, Invoices, spans from 1898 to 1900 and is contained in 22 folders. The invoices are arranged in alphabetical order by the names of the sending companies. Series II, Correspondence, spans from 1905 through 1911 and is contained in 107 folders. The letters are arranged first by year and then by alphabetical order of the name of the sender. All correspondence sent on a company letterhead is filed under the name of the company rather than that of the signer.

Related Material

- ms-2151, Willaim Anneley Collection. Contains two trade cards and one ad from Annesley & Vint.
- ms-2036. Contains an 1877 letter from portrait artist William Morris Hunt to Richard Annesley regarding the framing of a painting.
- ms-2015, Trivolo Falls. Contains an ad from 1851 concerning the exhibition of William Morris Hunt's painting "Trivoli Falls" at Annesley & Co.
- C-500, The Mary Palmer Calverley Ivy-Bryne Papers. Contains a photograph of Annesley Art Gallery.
- VF (Biography) Annesley Family. Contains history of company, photocopies of Annesley & Co. advert from 1859 and Lawson Annesley's obituary.

Other Finding Aids

A finding aide was made for this collection previously and a copy of it can be found in the control file. There are also two different versions of an inventory of the collection found in an unnumbered folder in the front of box 1.

Detailed Description of the Papers

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.

Series # I, Invoices

Box #	Folder #	Title / Description
1	1	Invoices 1898-1900 A
1	2	Invoices 1898-1900 B
1	3	Invoices 1898-1900 C
1	4	Invoices 1898-1900 D
1	5	Invoices 1898-1900 E
1	6	Invoices 1898-1900 Favor-Fitter
1	7	Invoices 1898-1900 Fort to Freiberg
1	8	Invoices 1898-1900 G
1	9	Invoices 1898-1900 H
1	10	Invoices 1898-1900 J
1	11	Invoices 1898-1900 K
1	12	Invoices 1898-1900 L
1	13	Invoices 1898-1900 M
1	14	Invoices 1898-1900 N
1	15	Invoices 1898-1900 O
1	16	Invoices 1898-1900 P
1	17	Invoices 1898-1900 Q
1	18	Invoices 1898-1900 R
1	19	Invoices 1898-1900 S
1	20	Invoices 1898-1900 T
1	21	Invoices 1898-1900 U-V
1	22	Invoices 1898-1900 W-X-Y-Z

Series # II, Correspondence

1	23	Correspondence 1905-1906 A-Z
2	24	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 A
2	25	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 B
2	26	Correspondence from William Verplanck Birney
2	27	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 C
2	28	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 D
2	29	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 E
2	30	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 F
2	31	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 G

2	32	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 H-I
2	33	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 J
2	34	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 K
2	35	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 L
2	36	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 M
2	37	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 N
2	38	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 O
2	39	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 P-Q
2	40	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 R
2	41	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 S
2	42	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 T
2	43	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 U-V
2	44	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 W
2	45	Correspondence Jan to August 1907 X-Y-Z
2	46	Correspondence 1908 A-Z
3	47	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 A
3	48	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 A
3	49	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 C
3	50	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 D
3	51	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 E
3	52	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 F
3	53	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 G
3	54	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 H
3	55	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 I-J
3	56	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 K
3	57	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 L
3	58	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 M
3	59	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 N-O
3	60	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 P-Q
3	61	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 R
3	62	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 S
3	63	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 T
3	64	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 U-V
3	65	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 W
3	66	Correspondence Jan.-August 1909 X-Y-Z
4	1	Correspondence April to July 1910 A
4	2	Correspondence April to July 1910 B
4	3	Correspondence April to July 1910 C
4	4	Correspondence April to July 1910 D
4	5	Correspondence April to July 1910 E
4	6	Correspondence April to July 1910 F
4	7	Correspondence April to July 1910 G
4	8	Correspondence April to July 1910 H
4	9	Correspondence April to July 1910 I-J
4	10	Correspondence April to July 1910 K
4	11	Correspondence Jan. to July 1910 L

4	12	Correspondence March to July 1910 M
4	13	Correspondence April to July 1910 N-O
4	14	Correspondence April to July 1910 P-Q
4	15	Correspondence April to July 1910 R
4	16	Correspondence April to July 1910 S
4	17	Correspondence April to July 1910 T-U-V
4	18	Correspondence April to July 1910 W-X-Y-Z
5	19	Correspondence August to October 1910 A
5	20	Correspondence August to October 1910 B
5	21	Correspondence August to October 1910 C
5	22	Correspondence August to October 1910 D-E
5	23	Correspondence August to October 1910 F
5	24	Correspondence August to October 1910 G-H
5	25	Correspondence August to October 1910 I-J-K
5	26	Correspondence August to October 1910 L-M
5	27	Correspondence August to October 1910 N-O
5	28	Correspondence August to October 1910 N-O
5	29	Correspondence August to October 1910 N-O
5	30	Correspondence August to October 1910 S
5	31	Correspondence August to October 1910 T-U-V
5	32	Correspondence August to October 1910 W
5	33	Correspondence August to October 1910 Y-Z
5	34	Correspondence August to October 1910 A-Z
6	35	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 A-B
6	36	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 C
6	37	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 D
6	38	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 E-F
6	39	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 G-H
6	40	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 I-J
6	41	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 K-L
6	42	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 M
6	43	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 N-O
6	44	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 P-Q
6	45	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 P-Q
6	46	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 S
6	47	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 T-U-V
6	48	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 W
6	49	Correspondence Jan. to April 1911 X-Y-Z
7	50	Correspondence May to August 1911 A-B
7	51	Correspondence May to August 1911 C
7	52	Correspondence May to August 1911 D
7	53	Correspondence May to August 1911 E-F
7	54	Correspondence May to August 1911 G-H
7	55	Correspondence May to August 1911 I-J
7	56	Correspondence May to August 1911 K-L
7	57	Correspondence May to August 1911 M

7	58	Correspondence May to August 1911 N-O
7	59	Correspondence May to August 1911 P-Q
7	60	Correspondence May to August 1911 R
7	61	Correspondence May to August 1911 S
7	62	Correspondence May to August 1911 T-U-V
7	63	Correspondence May to August 1911 W
7	64	Correspondence May to August 1911 X-Y-Z