

# WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM

30 Elm Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts

## ARCHIVES 1975.23

James Drennan Papers

Processd by Christopher Lewis  
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Series	Sub-series	Page	Box
	Collection Information	3	
	Historical/Biographical Notes	4	
	Scope and Content	4	
	Series Description	5	
1	City Marshall's Record Book	7	OVS Vol. 1, OVS Vol. 2
2	Civil War Time Correspondences	8	1
3	Miscellaneous Military Documents	9	1
4	MO.L.L.U.S. Reports and Records	10	1
5	Miscellaneous Cases	11	2
	1 Worcester and Shrewsbury R.R. (1883)	11	2
	2 Claflin March Case (1862-1868)	11	2
	3 Clark Murder Records (1886)	11	2
	4 Sam Persis-Bank Robber (1878)	11	2
	5 Records of Beer Cases (1874)	12	2
	6 Harriet G. Taft Estate (1878-1879)	12	2
	7 Simeon Butler-Counterfeiting (1868-1869)	12	2
	8 Wanregan Mills(1877)	12	2
6	Receipts	13	3
	1 1856-1867	13	3
	2 1868	13	3

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

Series	Sub-series	Page	Box	
	3	1869	13	3
	4	1870	13	3
	5	1871-1872	13	3
	6	1879	14	3
	7	1880	14	4
	8	Jan.-Aug. 1881	14	4
	9	Sept.-Dec. 1881	14	4
	10	1882	15	4
7		Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889)	16	4
	1	Jan.-June. 1870	16	4
	2	July-Dec. 1870	16	4
	3	1871-1879	16	5
	4	1880-1889	16-18	5,6
8		Miscellaneous Correspondences (1860s)	19	6,7
9		Miscellaneous Correspondences (Early 1900s)	20	7
10		Personal and Business Notebooks	21	8

## **Collection Information**

Abstract : Records of James Drennan (ca. 1860-1920)

Finding Aid : Finding Aid in print form is available in the Repository.

Preferred Citation : Worcester Historical Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Provenance: Donated in 1975 by James B. Lowell, Worcester, MA

MARC Access : Collection is cataloged in MARC under the following subject headings

## **Historical/Biographical Notes**

Col. James Drennan was one of the most famous individuals in Worcester's history. He was said to have been known to more Worcester people than any other one citizen and his career as a public man, has been long and varied. He was born in Ireland, Dec. 25, 1834 and was 70 years, 10 months and 12 days old. When he was a very small boy, his father and mother, Martin and Joan Drennan, came to the United States and bought a farm in Holden where the boy worked. It was in Holden that his early schooling commenced. As a youth he came to Worcester and learned the carpenter's trade of George Hapgood and followed that business up to 1861. His military career started soon after his coming to Worcester when he entered in the Worcester Light Infantry and rose to the rank of Lieutenant. When the war broke out, Col. Drennan gave up his commission in the infantry and enlisted in the Twenty-fifth regiment as a private. He was made a second lieutenant of Co. K of that regiment before it left Worcester, the commission being dated Oct. 12 1861. He was commissioned a first lieutenant in the same regiment July, 1862 and acted as quartermaster through the year 1863-4. He was commissioned a captain on June 4, 1864 and as such was mustered out at the expiration of his terms of service, Oct. 20 1864. In speaking of Col. Drennan, Gen. Josiah Pickett who commanded the Twenty-fifth regiment said he was a very efficient and brave soldier. Immediately after the close of the Civil War, Col. Drennan identified himself with the state militia and in 1875 was made Colonel of the Tenth Massachusetts regiment which included the Worcester companies. In 1865, he was appointed deputy marshal by Mayor Phinehas Ball, and thus began his connection with the police force of Worcester. In 1872, he was appointed a member of the state constabulary and served until the reorganization into the present state office. He was appointed deputy sheriff on June 1, 1875, and served in that capacity continuously since then. Since his initial appointment to deputy marshal in 1865, Col. Drennan served a total 41 years with the police and sheriff's departments of the city, county and state. Probably no officer in the state had a wider experience among the criminals of the state. He knew Worcester thoroughly, and even in his time days when it was a much more wicked city, he was able to keep track of the floating population of crooks and suspicious characters. His reputation among the citizens of the under-world was widespread and this reputation, which accredited him with the ability not only to detect crime, but also to forestall it, undoubtedly saved the city from many crimes. Col. Drennan was survived by his wife and three daughters. Lillian Agnes Bigelow, wife of Irving E. Bigelow; Sarah Porter Lange, wife of A. H. Lange; and Ada Barton Somers, wife of E. J. Somers. Mrs. A. S. Lowell, who died in Rome in 1900, was also his daughter. Two sisters, Mrs. J. M. O'Reilly and Mrs. B. G. Doyle also survive.

## **Scope and Content**

The collection contains eight boxes which contain all the records of James Drennan. Included are records of his military service in the Civil War, cases he worked on as a police officer for over 40 years and various receipts and miscellaneous correspondences. There are also two oversize volumes that were his handbooks when he was Worcester City Marshall.

## **Series Descriptions**

Series 1: City Marshall's Record Book

Series 2: Civil War Time Correspondences

Series 3: Miscellaneous Military Documents

Series 4: M.O.L.L.U.S. Reports

Series 5: Miscellaneous Cases

Series 6: Receipts

Series 7: Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889)

Series 8: Miscellaneous Correspondences (1860s)

Series 9: Miscellaneous Correspondences (Early 1900s)

Series 10: Personal and Business Notebooks

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 1, City Marshall's Record Book

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
OVS Vol. 1		1975.23.1.1	Contains notes and information regarding Drennan's finances and various prosecutions while he was Worcester City Marshal. (1872-1875)
OVS Vol. 2		1975.23.1.2	Contains notes and information regarding Drennan's finances and various prosecutions while he was Worcester City Marshal. (1872-1875)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 2, Civil War Time Correspondences

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	1975.23.2.1-47	Contains various correspondences from business and personal war letters, to formal commission documents. (1861-1864)
1	2	1975.23.2.48-62	Contains various war correspondences and the by-laws of the Worcester Light Infantry. (1861-1864)



James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 3, Miscellaneous Military Documents

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	3	1975.23.3.1-78	Contains various military letters, correspondences and records from the years following the Civil War. (1865-1880)
1	4	1975.23.3.79-105	Contains various military letters, correspondences and records from the years following the Civil War. (1865-1880)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 4, M.O.L.L.U.S. Reports and Records

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	5	1975.23.4.1-68	Contains all the records and reports of the Military Order, Loyal Legion, United States. (1868-1882)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 5, Miscellaneous Cases  
Sub-series 1, Worcester and Shrewsbury R. R. (1883)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	1	1975.23.5.1.1-17	Contains all the records and documents related to the Worcester and Shrewsbury R.R. case. (1883)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 5, Miscellaneous Cases  
Sub-series 2, Claflin March Case (1862-1868)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	2	1975.23.5.2.1-38	Contains all the records and documents related to the Claflin March Case. (1862-1868)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 5, Miscellaneous Cases  
Sub-series 3, Clark Murder Records (1886)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	3	1975.23.5.3.1-34	Contains all the records and documents related to the Clark murder. (1886)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 5, Miscellaneous Cases  
Sub-series 4, Sam Persis-Bank Robber (1878)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	4	1975.23.5.4.1-14	Contains all the records and documents related to Sam Persis. (1878)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 5, Miscellaneous Cases (cont.)  
Sub-series 5, Records of Beer Cases (1874)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	5	1975.23.5.5.1-39	Contains all the records and documents related to a variety of beer cases. (1874)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 5, Miscellaneous Cases  
Sub-series 6, Harriet G. Taft Estate (1878-1879)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	6	1975.23.5.6.1-43	Contains all the records and documents related to the Harriet G. Taft Estate. (1878-1879)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 5, Miscellaneous Cases  
Sub-series 7, Simeon Butler-Counterfeiting (1868-1869)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	7	1975.23.5.7.1-19	Contains all the records and documents related to the Harriet G. Taft Estate. (1868-1869)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 5, Miscellaneous Cases  
Sub-series 8, Wanregan Mills (1877)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	8	1975.23.5.8.1-33	Contains all the records and documents related to Wanregan Mills. (1877)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts  
Sub-series 1, 1865-1867

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	1	1975.23.6.1.1-120	Contains receipts that date from 1865-1867.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts  
Sub-series 2, 1868

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	2	1975.23.6.2.1-101	Contains receipts that date from 1868.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts  
Sub-series 3, 1869

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	3	1975.23.6.3.1-88	Contains receipts that date from 1869.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts  
Sub-series 4, 1870

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	4	1975.23.6.4.1-79	Contains receipts that date from 1870.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts  
Sub-series 5, 1871-1872

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	5	1975.23.6.5.1-79	Contains receipts that date from 1871-1872.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts (cont.)  
Sub-series 6, 1879

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
3	6	1975.23.6.6.1-84	Contains receipts that date from 1879.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts  
Sub-series 7, 1880

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
4	1	1975.23.6.7.1-60	Contains receipts that date from 1880.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts  
Sub-series 8, Jan.-Aug. 1881

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
4	2	1975.23.6.8.1-99	Contains receipts that date from January-August 1881.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts  
Sub-series 9, Sept.-Dec. 1881

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
4	3	1975.23.6.9.1-136	Contains receipts that date from September-December 1881.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 6, Receipts (cont.)  
Sub-series 10, 1882

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
4	4	1975.23.6.10.1-154	Contains receipts that date from 1882.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 7, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889)  
Sub-series 1, Jan.-June 1870

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
4	5	1975.23.7.1.1-56	Contains various private and corporate correspondences that date from 1870.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 7, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889)  
Sub-series 2, July-Dec. 1870

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
4	6	1975.23.7.2.1-39	Contains various private and corporate correspondences that date from 1870.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 7, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889)  
Sub-series 3, 1871-1879

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
5	1	1975.23.7.3.1-74	Contains various private and corporate correspondences that date from 1871-1879.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 7, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889)  
Sub-series 4, 1880-1889

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
5	2	1975.23.7.4.1-69	Contains various private and corporate correspondences that date from 1880-1889.



James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 7, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889) (cont.)  
Sub-series 4, 1880-1889 (cont.)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
5	3	1975.23.7.4.70-120	Contains various private and corporate correspondences that date from 1880-1889.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 7, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889)  
Sub-series 4, 1880-1889 (cont.)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
5	4	1975.23.7.4.121-190	Contains various private and corporate correspondences that date from 1880-1889.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 7, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889)  
Sub-series 4, 1880-1889 (cont.)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
5	6	1975.23.7.4.191-260	Contains various private and corporate correspondences that date from 1880-1889.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 7, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889)  
Sub-series 4, 1880-1889 (cont.)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
6	1	1975.23.7.4.261-287	Contains various private and corporate correspondences that date from 1880-1889.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 7, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1870-1889) (cont.)  
Sub-series 4, 1880-1889 (cont.)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
6	2	1975.23.7.4.288-326	Contains various private and corporate correspondences that date from 1880-1889.

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 8, Miscellaneous Correspondences (1860s)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
6	3	1975.23.8.1-40	Contains various kinds of documents and correspondences ranging from personal and business letters, to various forms (1865-1869)
6	4	1975.23.8.41-86	Contains various kinds of correspondences from personal letters to business transactions and newspaper articles. (1865-1869)
6	5	1975.23.8.87-124	Contains all kinds of business correspondences. (1865)
6	6	1975.23.8.125-177	Contains all kinds of corporate correspondences and private letters. (1866)
7	1	1975.23.8.178-217	Contains all kinds of corporate correspondences and private letters. (1867)
7	2	1975.23.8.218-257	Contains all kinds of corporate correspondences and private letters. (1868)
7	3	1975.23.8.258-316	Contains all kinds of corporate correspondences and private letters. (1869)
7	4	1975.23.8.317-379	Contains all kinds of corporate correspondences and private letters. (1869)
7	5	1975.23.8.380-417	Contains all kinds of corporate correspondences and private letters. (1870)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 9, Miscellaneous Correspondences (Early 1900s)

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
7	6	1975.23.9.1-25	Various records from family heritage documents to correspondences. (Early 1900s)

James Drennan Papers  
1975.23  
Series 10, Personal and Business Notebooks

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
8	BV 1	1975.23.10.1	James Drennan's diary. (1865)
8	BV 2	1975.23.10.2	Address book. (Undated)
8	BV 3	1975.23.10.3	Notebook containing various liqueur violations. (1880)
8	BV 4	1975.23.10.4	Notebook. (1882)
8	BV 5	1975.23.10.5	Notebook containing various robbery violations. (1882)
8	BV 6	1975.23.10.6	Notebook. (Undated)
8	BV 7	1975.23.10.7	Notebook. (Undated)
8	BV 8	1975.23.10.8	Notebook. (Undated)
8	BV 9	1975.23.10.9	Notebook. (Undated)
8	BV 10	1975.23.10.10	Treasurer's Book of the Worcester Soldiers and Sailor's Union. (Undated)