

# WORCESTER HISTORICAL MUSEUM

30 Elm Street  
Worcester, Massachusetts

## ARCHIVES

Drennan, James M.,  
Papers

1995.160

Processed by William F. Carroll, C.A.  
January, 1999

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## Collection Information

Abstract: James Marcus Drennan was a Civil War veteran, attaining the rank of Captain with the 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. Following the war he pursued a police career, serving as City Marshal of Worcester, with the Massachusetts State Police, as a Deputy Sheriff of Worcester County, as Police Chief of Worcester, and finally as Worcester County probation officer. The Drennan Papers collections illustrate events from military activities through his police career.

Finding Aids: Finding Aid in print form available at Worcester Historical Museum Library and Archives.

Preferred Citation: Worcester Historical Museum Archives, 30 Elm Street, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Provenance: Donated by Mrs. Thomas Lowell Salter, Worcester, in 1995.

Access: The Finding Aid is cataloged in MARC under the following subject headings (LCSH, AAT, TGM, GMGPC)

- Drennan, James Marcus, 1834-1904.
- Drennan, James Marcus, 1834-1904 – Diaries.
- Drennan, James Marcus, 1834-1904 – Family.
- Drennan, Sarah Leseur – Family.
- Massachusetts. Militia. 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry – Campaigns.
- United States – History – Civil War, 1861-1865.
- Police – Massachusetts – Worcester.
- Police chiefs – Massachusetts – Worcester.
- Police regulations – Massachusetts.
- Sheriffs – Massachusetts – Worcester County.
- Crime – Massachusetts – Worcester.
- Crime – Massachusetts – Worcester County.
- Criminals – Massachusetts – Worcester.
- Criminals – Massachusetts.
- Criminals – Massachusetts – Worcester – Identification.
- Criminal investigation – Massachusetts – Worcester.
- Letters.
- Cartes de visite.
- Albumen prints.
- Ephemera.
- Diaries.

### Biographical Information

James Marcus Drennan was born in Ireland in 1834, son of a farmer who relocated to Rutland, Massachusetts. He was educated in the Worcester public schools and at Leicester Academy, and learned the trade of a carpenter. Prior to the Civil War he was engaged in contracting.

Drennan enlisted in the 25<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, and served throughout the Civil War, reaching the rank of Captain. The regiment took part in nine battles and numerous other skirmishes and engagements. After the war he remained active in the state militia, attaining command and the rank of Colonel in the 10<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts.

Soon after his return from war he was appointed Deputy Marshal of Worcester, later Marshal (Chief of Police), a position he held until 1872. In that year he joined the Massachusetts state police and remained until 1879. He again was appointed City Marshall and held that position until 1883, when he was appointed Deputy Sheriff, remaining in that position until 1897. For a three year period, 1897-1899, he again served as Chief of Police of Worcester. From 1900 until his death in 1904 he was Probation Officer for Worcester County.

Drennan was a charter member of the George H. Ward Post, No. 10, Grand Army of the Republic. He was also Founder and first President of the Lakeview Improvement Society, and was active in many other public affairs.

Drennan married Sarah Leseur in 1856, and was father of five children.

## Scope and Content

The Drennan Papers Record Group 1995.160, one of three collections of papers of James Marcus Drennan, highlights aspects of Drennan's military career during the Civil War, and aspects of his police career from the late 1860s until the early 1900s.

Letters are primarily personal letters written by Drennan to his wife or children while on duty in Virginia and North Carolina during the Civil War, and reflect his thoughts and feelings of the war and of separation from his loved ones. Part of the military aspect of the collection includes documents and information relative to Drennan's application for a veteran's pension, which illustrates the bureaucratic functioning of the federal offices involved.

Police-related documents relate to various investigations throughout Drennan's long police career, including his tenure as Chief of Police and actions undertaken to determine equitable pensions for retired officers.

A large group of clippings on a wide miscellany of subjects are included in the collection.

## Series Descriptions

- Series 1. Letters. Bulk of the letters are from James M. Drennan to his wife from various locations in southern United States written during his service with the 25<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War, 1861-1864. Includes a letter sent to Drennan from friend also in the military, and a letter sent by Drennan during a trip in northern New Hampshire.
- Series 2. Military-related documents. Includes correspondence and documentation concerning military pension for Drennan, and materials relating to the Worcester Light Infantry.
- Series 3. Police-related documents. Includes letters, memoranda, and other documents relative to Drennan's activities with the Worcester Police Department, information gathered by Drennan about police pensions, and notes on various complaints and investigations.
- Series 4. Clippings. Miscellaneous items including children's bedtime stories, annexation of Hawaii, veteran's affairs, etc. Various newspapers ca. 1890-1917.

Drennan, James. M., Papers  
1995.160  
Series 1, Letters

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	1	1995.160.1.1	Letter. James M. Drennan in Annapolis, Md., to his wife, December 23, 1861. [1995.160.62] 1aAqp.
1	1	1995.160.1.2	Letter. James M. Drennan at Roanoke Island, N.C., to his wife, February 12, 1862. [1995.160.64] 2aAqp.
1	1	1995.160.1.3	Letter. James M. Drennan at Roanoke Island, N.C., to his wife, February 20, 1862. [1995.160.63] 3aAqp.
1	1	1995.160.1.4	Letter. James M. Drennan at Newberne [sic], N.C., to his wife, March 15, 1862. [1995.160.70] 4aAqp.
1	1	1995.160.1.5	Letter. James M. Drennan at Camp Oliver, Newbern [sic], N.C., to his wife, September 23, 1862. [1995.160.66] 5aAqp.
1	1	1995.160.1.6	Letter. James M. Drennan, S.I., to daughter Mamie, October 18, 1862. [1995.160.67] 6aAqp
1	1	1995.160.1.7	Letter. James M. Drennan, S.I., to daughter Mamie, nd. [1995.160.68] 7aAqp.
1	1	1995.160.1.8	Letter. James M. Drennan at Camp Harkness near Newbern [sic], N.C., to his wife, December 22, 1862. [1995.160.69] 8aAqp.
1	1	1995.160.1.9	Letter. James M. Drennan at Plymouth, N.C., to his wife, March 28, 1863. [1995.160.75] 9aAqp

Series 1, continued

1	1	1995.160.1.10	Letter. James M. Drennan at New Bern, N.C., to his wife. [1995.160.76]
1	2	1995.160.1.11 11a	Letter. James M. Drennan at Washington, N.C., to his wife, July 28, 1863. [1995.160.74] Aqp.
1	2	1995.160.1.12 12a	James M. Drennan at Camp Wellington near Portsmouth, Va., to his wife, April 26, 1864. [1995.160.71] Aqp.
1	2	1995.160.1.13 13a	Letter. James M. Drennan at Cobs Hill, Va., to his wife, May 21, 1864. [1995.160.73] Aqp.
1	2	1995.160.1.14 14a	Letter. James M. Drennan, near Cold Harbor, to his wife, June 12, 1864. [1995.160.72] Aqp.
1	2	1995.160.1.15 15a	Letter. James M. Drennan at Lancaster House, N.H., to Sarah, August 15, 18—. [1995.160.77] Aqp.
1	2	1995.160.1.16 16a	Manuscript leaf, part of letter (?) [1995.160.78] Aqp
1	2	1995.160.1.17 17a	J.W. Denny at Beaufort, N.C., to Lieut. Drennan, July 24, 1862. [1995.160.65] Aqp.



Drennan, James M., Papers  
1995.160  
Series 2, Military-related documents

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	3	1995.160.2.1	Muster-in roll, Capt. Ames M. Drennan, 25 <sup>th</sup> M.V.I., September 1, 1864. [1995.160.127]
1	3	1995.160.2.2	Muster-out roll, 1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. James M. Drennan, 25 <sup>th</sup> M.V.I., August 31, 1864. [1995.160.106]
1	3	1995.160.2.3	Receipt. Pension claim filed by James M. Drennan, January 17, 1881. [1995.160.109] 3aEnvelope.
1	3	1995.160.2.4	Letter. Department of Interior, Pension Office, to claimants, June 1, 1881, re supporting evidence for pension claims. [1995.160.104] 4aEnvelope.
1	3	1995.160.2.5	Statement. Supporting evidence for pension claim by James M. Drennan, from Charles H. Whitney, M.D., September 27, 1881. [1995.160.99]
1	3	1995.160.2.6	Memorandum. Department of Interior, Pension Office, November 1882, requirements for affidavits for pension of James M. Drennan. [1995.160.101]
1	3	1995.160.2.7a-b	Letter, with cover sheet, February 28, 1883, re additional information needed for pension approval for James M. Drennan. 2 p.
1	4	1995.160.2.8	History. 95 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Worcester Light Infantry, June 1898. Typescript, 4 p.[1995.160.90] 8aEnvelope.
1	4	1995.160.2.9	Letter. Col. J.M. Drennan from James Logan, May 25, 1898, re Worcester Light Infantry personnel. [1995.160.93] 9aEnvelope.

Series 2, continued

1	4	1995.160.2.10	Letter. Col. James M. Drennan from F.G. Stiles ... [et al.], re dues and expenses for Worcester Light Infantry Veteran Association. [1995.160.92]
		10a	Envelope.
1	4	1995.160.2.11	Envelope, no contents.

Drennan, James M., Papers  
 1995.160  
 Series 3, Police-related documents

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	5	1995.160.3.1	Petition. To Mayor and Police Board from residents re establishing a regular police patron on Plantation, Orient, Shale Street area. 2 p. Aqp. [1995.160.97] 1aEnvelope.
1	5	1995.160.3.2a	Warrant for Arrest, for Rosanna Houston for Drunkenness. [1995.160.125]
		2b	Statement of Mrs. Houston. [1995.160.126]
		2c	Envelope.
1	5	1995.160.3.3	Letter. James M. Drennan, Chief of Police, from James Winn, Sup't. Of Police, New Haven, Conn., March 4, 1898, re police pension laws. [1995.160.91] 3aEnvelope.
1	5	1995.160.3.4	Letter. James M. Drennan, Esq., Chief of Police, from Reuben R. Baker, Chief of Police, Providence, R.I., March 1898, re pensions to retired police. [1995.160.89] 4aEnvelope.
		4b	Envelope.
1	5	1995.160.3.5	Letter. Jas. M. Drennan, Chief of police, from W.L. Robinson, Clerk, Department of Police, Worcester, re police promotions. [1995.160.103] 5aEnvelope.
1	5	1995.160.3.6	Memorandum. Special Order #4, concerning duty instructions, May 29, 1893. [1995.160.88]
1	5	1995.160.3.7	Proclamations. To be used in Court when Cryer is needed. Nd. [1995.160.96] 7aEnvelope.

Series 3, Continued

1	6	1995.160.3.8a	Notice. Missing person Karl Jansson, June 6, 1898. [1995.160.119]
		8b	Sketch, missing person Karl Jansson. [1995.160.121]
		8c	Cabinet card. Albumen print of Karl Jansson, December 8, 1887, (Davis, Main & Park Sts., Worcester) [1995.160.120]
		8d	Envelope.
1	6	1995.160.3.9	John Scanlon from James M. Drennan, Chief of Police, re complaint, June 8, 1898. [1995.160.116]
		9a	Envelope.
1	6	1995.160.3.10	Memoranda. Investigation of domestic dispute, June 3, 1898, 2 p. [1995.160.117-118]
		10a	Envelope.
1	6	1995.160.3.11	Letter. Chief of Police from D.A. Matthews, April 6, 1898, re gambling in Commonwealth Hotel. [1995.160.110]
		11a	Envelope.
		11b	Envelope.
1	6	1995.160.3.12	Letter. James M. Drennan from "a true citizen", April 15, 1898, re gambling at Commonwealth Hotel. [1995.160.111]
		12a	Envelope.
1	6	1995.160.3.13	Memorandum. Notes on complaint against Special Police Officer, June 4, 1898. [1995.160.122]
		13a	Envelope.
1	6	1995.160.3.14	Memorandum. Changes in laws dealing with junk, second-hand, and Pawn Brokers. [1995.160.123]
1	7	1995.160.3.15	Memorandum. Investigation of house fire on Perry Avenue, March 5, 1898. 3 p.
		15a	Envelope.
1	7	1995.160.3.16	Memorandum. Complaint against Police Officers by resident, march 4, 1898. [1995.160.107]

Series 3, continued

1	7	1995.160.3.17 17a	Memorandum. Complaint of non-support, June 7, 1898. [1995.160.98] Envelope.
1	7	1995.160.3.18a-d	Notes on investigation of stubborn and disobedient girl, May 1898. 4 p. [1995.160.112-115]
1	7	1995.160.3.19	Memorandum. License request (1 <sup>st</sup> class) for Louis A. Lucier, March 16, 18—. [1995.160.105]
1	7	1995.160.3.20	Envelope, empty. Notation “Victualers license revoked.”
1	7	1995.160.3.21 21a	Memorandum. Investigation in case of infidelity, March 12, 18—. [1995.160.100] Envelope.
1	7	1995.160.3.22 22a	Memorandum. Notes on electrical system for call boxes. Nd. [1995.160.124] Envelope.
1	7	1995.160.3.23a-e	Documents in investigation of case of Bigamy against Jesse Fountain, January 1898. (a) Telegram, re whereabouts of Jesse Fountain. (b) Letter. James M. Drennan from L.J. Cloyer, Chief of Police, Cambridge, January 31, 1898, re Fountain. [1995.160.94] (c) Letter. Chief Drennan from Wm. Stone, February 1, 1898, re Fountain’s employment record. [1995.160.94] (d) Clipping. S.l., Evening Post, January 31, 1898, re charge of Bigamy against Fountain. (e) Envelope.

Drennan, James M., Papers  
1995.160  
Series 4, Clippings

<u>Box #</u>	<u>Folder #</u>	<u>Accession #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	8	1995.160.4.1a-v	Clippings, 1917-1918, children's bedtime stories, with envelope. 22 items. [1995.160.27]
1	8	1995.160.4.2	Clipping. S.l., s.n., nd, "Seven new (police) officers.
1	8	1995.160.4.3	Clipping. S.l., s.n., nd, Establishment of G.A.R. post in Worcester.
1	8	1995.160.4.4a-c	Clippings. S.l., s.n., nd. Article re curfew for young. 2 p. and envelope.
1	8	1995.160.4.5	Clipping. S.l., s.n., nd, Worcester Light Infantry 95 <sup>th</sup> anniversary.
		5a	Envelope.
1	8	1995.160.4.6a-c	Clippings. S.l., s.n., nd, Treatment of veterans. 2 p. and envelope.
1	8	1995.160.4.7a-d	Clippings. S.l., s.n., nd, Legality of trading stamps. 3 p. and envelope.
1	8	1995.160.4.8	Clipping. S.l., s.n., January 24, 1898, re annexation of Hawaii.
		8a	Envelope.