

Thomas J. Watson Library, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Francis Blackwell Mayer: Correspondence, 1822-1888

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Examined April 2013

During the recent trip to New York, I was able to examine the F.B. Mayer Papers at the Thomas J. Watson Library, which were photocopied and organized into three binders: volumes 7-9, Photocopy Belfer Shelves. The Chief Librarian, Kenneth Soehner, informed me that the Mayer papers are being scanned as part of an effort to make their entire manuscript collection available through their website. Unfortunately, I only had access to photocopied manuscripts and was unable to view Mayer's sketches, reproductions of his works (14 pages), and his illustrations from American periodicals. I have emailed Mr. Soehner inquiring when these images will be made available online.

These papers include correspondence, undated notes, poems, sketches, and biographical manuscript notes on Mayer. The majority of the correspondence consists of personal letters to friends and family, as well as letters in French from his time spent in Paris from 1862-1870. Only two letters from the collection relate to the State House: Annapolis, February 22, 1884: Six page letter to F. Matthews Lancaster, Senator from Charles County and Chairman of the Committee for Public Buildings, Re: Suggestions for the improvement of the Maryland State House and other State Buildings Annapolis, July 20, 1886: Letter to J.G. Hopkins Re: Rejection of design for State House Annex

In 1973, Jean Jepson Page examined the Mayer Collection at the Metropolitan Museum in preparation for her 1981 article in Maryland Historical Magazine, "Notes on the Contributions of Francis Blackwell Mayer..." In February of 1990, Page sent a partial transcription of Mayer's letter to F.M. Lancaster to Dr. Papenfuse. I have updated this transcription to include pages 3-5 of the letter (see attached) and added an image of the photographed copy to mdstatehouse.

Additional items examined from the Met's Collections:

"Drawings and paintings," by Francis B. Mayer. Baltimore, E. Balch, 1872.

Included 30 mounted photos of various works on paper.

Location: Watson Library Stacks, Call No. 192M45 M45

Scrapbook of proofs of wood engravings. 1842.

Misc. engravings of people and landscapes

Location: Drawings & Prints, Accession No. 36.39.1