



Smithsonian
*Freer Gallery of Art and
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery*

Dwight William Tryon Papers

Chiaki Sekiguchi Bems

2011

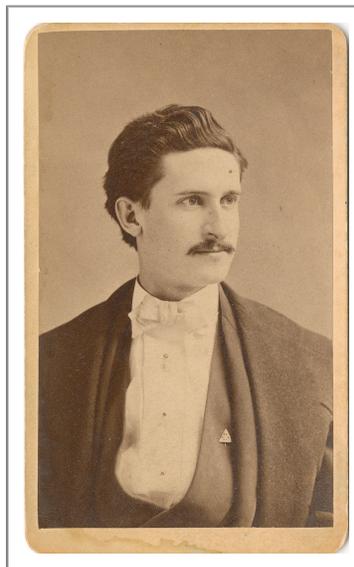


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Collection Overview

Repository:	Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives
Title:	Dwight William Tryon Papers
Date:	1872-1930
Identifier:	FSA.A1989.02
Creator:	Tryon, Dwight William, 1849-1925
Extent:	4 Linear feet
Language:	English .
Summary:	Dwight William Tryon (1849-1925) was a noted American landscape painter whose painting style is associated with American tonalism. His paintings gained international recognition from the 1880s through the 1920s. Charles Lang Freer was his primary patron. Tryon taught art at Smith College and became head of the Art Department. The Tryon papers, dating from circa 1872 to 1930, document Tryon's professional and personal life and include correspondence, photographs, a sketchbook, and newspaper clippings.

Administrative Information

Provenance

An anonymous donor and Linda Merrill donated Tryon's papers to the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives in 1989.

Location of Originals

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Related Material

Charles Lang Freer papers housed in the Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery Archives include Tryon's correspondence.

Nelson and Henry C. White research material housed in the Archives of American Art include Tryon's correspondence, notes, and photographs.

Alfred Vance Churchill Papers housed in Smith College Archives include Tryon's correspondence.

The Freer Gallery of Art and Smith College Museum of Art are major repositories that house Tryon's work.

Processing Information

Processed by intern Chiaki Sekiguchi Bems. Additional processing by archivist Rachael Cristine Woody on June 24, 2008.

Preferred Citation

Dwight William Tryon papers, FSA.A1989.02. National Museum of Asian Art Archives. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Gift of an anonymous donor and Linda Merrill, 1989.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

American landscape painter Dwight William Tryon was born in Hartford, CT on August 13, 1849. When Tryon was about 2 years old, his father Anson Tryon was killed in a hunting accident and he was raised at his maternal grandparents' home. At the age of fourteen, Tryon began work as a machinist at Colt's Firearms Factory in Hartford to support his mother and himself. He enrolled in evening classes at Hannum's Business School and developed calligraphic skills which supplemented his income.

In 1864 Tryon became a bookkeeper and clerk at Brown and Gross, the finest booksellers in Hartford and a gathering place for local literary people such as Harriet Beecher Stowe and Mark Twain. During his ten-year appointment there, Tryon self-studied art using the bookstore's large stock in art books and made weekend sketching trips to the Connecticut River. In 1872 Tryon was appointed Secretary of the Hartford Art Association and began exhibiting his works. In 1873 he exhibited at the National Academy of Design in New York. In that year he married Alice Hepzibah Belden whom he had met in the bookstore.

In December, 1876, the Tryon family moved to Paris, France to pursue art with financial support from the Cheney family, wealthy silk manufacturers in South Manchester, CT. Tryon received formal training under Jacquesson de la Chevreuse, a Barbizon painter Charles-Francois Daubigny, and others. He also attended the École des Beaux-Arts.

On returning to the United States in 1881, Tryon took a studio in New York and taught for several years. In the following year, he became a member of the Society of American Artists. Throughout the 1880s when the Barbizon paintings were highly regarded, Tryon's French-inspired American landscape paintings received international as well as national acclaim, winning him numerous medals and awards. In 1899, Tryon was awarded the Webb prize by the Society of American Artists for *The First Leaves*, a recognition given annually to the best landscape painting by a young American artist. In the same year, Tryon sold his first painting to Charles Lang Freer (1854-1919), a Detroit industrialist and collector, who became Tryon's principal patron.

From 1886 to 1923, Tryon taught at Smith College, MA, as Professor of Art and took charge of the Art Department. He advised on the college's art collection and acted as the department's representative in the New York art world. Tryon resigned from the College in May 1923, and in June of the same year he received an honorary Master of Arts degree from Smith College.

In 1887, the Tryon family built a house ("The Cottage") in Padanaram, a coastal village in South Dartmouth, MA, where they would spend every year from spring to autumn until his death. In Padanaram, Tryon made sketches which he developed into paintings in his New York apartment during the winter months. Tryon also took immense pleasure in fishing and sailing in Padanaram.

In 1904, the Montross Gallery in New York held a one-man show on Tryon's painting, and in 1913 they launched Tryon's Retrospective Exhibition. In 1923, the Freer Gallery of Art opened in Washington, D. C., including a permanent collection of Tryon's paintings.

Tryon died of cancer at his summer house on July 1, 1925, at the age of 75. Upon his death, Tryon bequeathed a large number of his works to Smith College. In September of the following year, the Tryon Gallery at Smith College opened.

1849, August 1st

Born, Hartford, CT. Son of Anson Tryon and Delia O. Roberts Tryon

<i>[1851-1852]</i>	Anson Tryon is killed in a hunting accident
1863	Machinist at Colt's Firearms Factory, Hartford
1864	Begins work as a bookkeeper and clerk at Brown and Gross, Hartford
1872	Appointed Secretary of the Hartford Art Association
1873	Exhibits at the National Academy of Design
1873	Marries Alice Hepzibah Belden
1876-1881	Studies art in Paris with Jacquesson de la Chevreuse, Charles-Francois Daubigny, and at the École des Beaux-Arts
1881	Returns to the United States and settles in New York
1882	Becomes a Member of the Society of American Artists
1886-1923	Professor of art at Smith College, Northampton, MA
1889	Awarded the Webb Prize for <i>The First Trees</i> by the Society of American Artists
1889	Sells his first painting to Charles Lang Freer
1891	Elected Associate of the National Academy of Design
1913	Retrospective Exhibition
1923	Freer Gallery of Art opens, including a permanent collection of Tryon's paintings
1923	Retires from Smith College and is conferred an Honorary degree of M.A.
1925, <i>July 1st</i>	Dies at his summer house in South Dartmouth, MA
1926	The Tryon Gallery at Smith College opens

Scope and Contents

The Dwight William Tryon papers span circa 1872 to 1930 and measure .5 linear feet. The collection contains: nineteen photographs, a sketchbook, a letter, and five newspaper clippings.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into 4 series: Series 1: Photographs, circa 1872 - 1915, no date, Series 2: Sketchbook, 1887-1888, no date, Series 3: Correspondence, June 17, 1895, Series 4: Newspaper Clippings, 1923, 1925, 1930, no date

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Art, American
Landscape painting

Types of Materials:

- Cartes-de-visite
- Clippings
- Letters
- Photographs
- Sketchbooks

Names:

- Freer, Charles Lang, 1856-1919

Places:

- Hartford (Conn.)
- Japan
- New York
- South Dartmouth (Mass.)

Container Listing

Series 1: Photographs, circa 1872-1915, undated

Scope and Contents: This series consists of nineteen photographs divided in three folders. The folders are arranged by subject groups: Tryon portraits, family and domestic scenes, and leisure activities.

Box 1, Folder 1	Tryon Portraits, circa 1872-1915, undated
Box 1, Folder 1	Albumen carte de visite of Tryon, circa 1872 10.6 cm x 6.4 cm.
Box 1, Folder 1	Albumen cabinet card of Tryon, circa 1890 16.6 cm x 10.6 cm.
Box 1, Folder 1	Albumen cabinet card of Tryon 16.4 cm x 10.6 cm.
Box 1, Folder 1	Photograph of Tryon standing in front of a building 11.7 cm x 7.6 cm.
Box 1, Folder 1	Photograph of Tryon wearing a hat 17.3 cm x 12.3 cm.
Box 1, Folder 1	Photograph of Tryon 16.2 cm x 12.5 cm. The photograph is cut in an oval shape.
Box 1, Folder 2	Family and Domestic Scenes, circa 1872-1915, undated
Box 1, Folder 2	Albumen carte de visite of Tryon's mother 10.5 cm x 6.2 cm.
Box 1, Folder 2	Albumen photograph of Dwight and Alice Tryon in Padanaram, 1888 August 30 13.8 cm x 17.7 cm.
Box 1, Folder 2	Photograph of Tryon's summer house "The Cottage" in Padanaram. 13.0 cm x 17.8 cm. Mounted on cardboard.
Box 1, Folder 2	Photograph of Tryon's Harperley Hall apartment, New York, after 1910 9.0 cm x 14.6 cm. The painting on the wall is <i>The Wave</i> .
Box 1, Folder 2	Photograph of Tryon's apartment in New York

11.4 cm x 7.0 cm.

Box 1, Folder 3	Leisure Activities
Box 1, Folder 3	Photographic postcard of Tryon in Alice, circa 1910 8.3 cm x 13.3 cm.
Box 1, Folder 3	Photographic postcard of Tryon in Alice 8.3 cm x 13.3 cm.
Box 1, Folder 3	Photographic postcard of Tryon fishing 8.3 cm x 13.3 cm. "D. W. Tryon waiting for a big catch."
Box 1, Folder 3	Photographic postcard of Tryon fishing, circa 1910 8.3 cm x 13.3 cm. "D. W. Tryon. A Critical Moment"
Box 1, Folder 3	Photographic postcard of Old Bridge at Padanaram, 1915 8.3 cm x 13.3 cm.
Box 1, Folder 3	Photographic postcard of Tryon holding a fish and a fishing rod in front of a house 13.7 cm x 8.9 cm.
Box 1, Folder 3	Photograph of Tryon fishing 10.8 cm x 16.1 cm.
Box 1, Folder 3	Photographic postcard of The First Leaves 8.8 cm x 13.8 cm. "The First Leaves - D.W. Tryon Hillyer Gallery - Smith College"

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Series 2: Sketchbook, 1887-1888, 1887-1888, undated

.5 Linear feet[Image\(s\)](#)[Image\(s\)](#)

Creator: Tryon, Dwight William, 1849-1925

Language: In English

Scope and Contents: This series comprises a sketchbook and a sketch on a separate sheet of paper.

Contents:

Leather covered, bound. Inscribed: "D W Tryon Hartford" 44 leaves (gathered matter components) ; Graphite on paper ; 12.3 cm x 19.0 cm x 1.3 cm. The sketchbook contains marginal notes and mnemonic notations for colors in Tryon's hand. Depicted: nature, farms, villages, harbors, ships, and boats. Also include a loose sketch of ships at harbor Graphite on paper 11.5 cm x 17.5 cm. The back side of the sketch shows a fragmentary image of seashore in watercolor

Sketchbook

Local Numbers: FSA A1989.02 2

Arrangement: The collection is arranged into 4 series: Series 1: Photographs, circa 1872 - 1915, no date, Series 2: Sketchbook, 1887-1888, no date, Series 3: Correspondence, June 17, 1895, Series 4: Newspaper Clippings, 1923, 1925, 1930, no date

Biographical / Historical: American landscape painter Dwight William Tryon was born in Hartford, CT on August 13, 1849. When Tryon was about 2 years old, his father Anson Tryon was killed in a hunting accident and he was raised at his maternal grandparents' home. At the age of fourteen, Tryon began work as a machinist at Colt's Firearms Factory in Hartford to support his mother and himself. He enrolled in evening classes at Hannum's Business School and developed calligraphic skills which supplemented his income.

Names: Freer, Charles Lang, 1856-1919
Tryon, Dwight William, 1849-1925

Topic: Art, American
Landscape painting

Place: Hartford (Conn.)

Genre/Form: Sketchbooks
Drawings

Box 1, Folder 4	Sketchbook, 1887-1888 44 Leaves (gathered matter components) (Graphite on paper; 12.3 cm x 19.0 cm x 1.3 cm.) Leather covered, bound. Inscribed: "D W Tryon Hartford" Notes: The sketchbook contains marginal notes and mnemonic notations for colors in Tryon's hand. Depicted: nature, farms, villages, harbors, ships, and boats.
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Box 1, Folder 4	Sketch of ships at harbor
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11.5 cm x 17.5 cm.

Graphite on paper

Notes: The back side of the sketch shows a fragmentary image of seashore
in watercolor.

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Series 3: Correspondence, June 17, 1895

Scope and Contents: This series comprises a letter from Charles Lang Freer to Dwight William Tryon written on June 17, 1895.

Box 1, Folder 4

Scroll Letter from Charles Lang Freer to Tryon, June 17, 1895

Handwritten and signed by Freer.

Notes: Written at Ama-no-hashidate, Kyoto, Japan. The letter mentions Freer's aesthetic views, his trip, and contemporary Japanese paintings. A transcript of the letter is available for researchers to consult.

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Series 4: Newspaper Clippings, 1923, 1925, 1930, undated

Scope and Contents: This series contains five newspaper clippings including obituaries.

Box 1, Folder 5	Obituary. The Boston Herald, "Dwight W. Tryon Leaves to Smith College Fund for an Art Gallery", July 22, 1925
Oversize 1	Book Review Article. The Sunday Standard (New Bedford, Mass.), Minna Littmann, "PADANARAM REAL HOME OF D. W. TRYON, ARTIST", November 16, 1930 Notes: The article is an appreciation of The Life and Art of Dwight William Tryon by Henry C. White.
Oversize 1	Obituary. "Noted Painter Dies Today", 1925
Oversize 1	Obituary. "SMITH RECALLS BENEFACTOR AS UNASSUMING PROFESSOR", 1925
Oversize 1	Article. The Sunday Standard (New Bedford, Mass.), Minna Littmann, "A MAN WHO DISAPPOINTED MARK TWAIN", August 19, 1923 Notes: The article contains Tryon's opinions on art and art education.

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