

LYMAN S. AYRES PAPERS, 1872-1922

Collection #
SC 2407

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Processed by
Charles Latham
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USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 2 folders

COLLECTION DATES: Inclusive 1872-1922; bulk 1896

PROVENANCE: Mrs. Philip W. Flynn, Nordland WA, 16 February 1994

RESRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: M 616, L. S. Ayres Co. Records

ACCESSION NUMBER: 94.0481

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lyman S. Ayres (1824-1896) was born on a farm near Oswego, New York. He left home early, and began his business career in northeastern Ohio as a peddler, carrying his pack of goods on his back. After five years he had accumulated

enough capital to buy into a general store in Chardon, Geauga County, Ohio. In 1864 he moved to Geneva, New York, and was a partner in the merchandising firm of Ayres and Thomas. In 1872 he purchased controlling interest in the Trade Palace in Indianapolis, a dry and fancy goods establishment operated by N. R. Smith at 26-28 West Washington Street.

For two years Ayres remained in Geneva, and served as senior partner and New York resident buyer for the store. In 1874 he assumed full ownership of the Trade Palace, and in the following year relocated to Indianapolis. He moved the store across the street to a three-storied structure at 33-37 West Washington Street. The operation continued to be a seller of "dry and fancy goods." The addition of modern shopping conveniences such as gas lighting in 1876 and an elevator in 1890 increased the store's reputation.

Ayres married Helen Murray, and had three children, Frederick M. (who continued and developed the company under the incorporated name of L. S. Ayres and Company), Emma Ayres Wheelock, and Katherine Ayres Williams Smitheram.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection, filling two folders, contains letters of condolence from 1896, and two clippings, one from 1872 and one from 1907. The letters of condolence are from business associates rather than personal friends, and give an idea of where the early Ayres store bought some of its merchandise.

CATALOGUING INFORMATION

MAIN ENTRY: Ayres, Lyman S., 1824-1896

SUBJECT ENTRIES: Ayres, Lyman S., 1824-1896

Trade Palace (Indianapolis, Ind.)

L.S. Ayres Co. (Indianapolis, Ind.)

Department stores--Indiana--Indianapolis

Mourning customs--Indiana--Indianapolis

END