Descriptive Summary

Repository: Arnold Arboretum, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.
Call No.: IV A-1 JTD
Location: Archives
Title: Jackson Thornton Dawson (1841-1916), Papers 1861-2007.
Date(s): 1874-1911
Creator: Jackson Thornton Dawson (1841-1916)
Quantity: 2 linear feet
Language of material: English
Abstract: Jackson Thornton Dawson (1841-1916) was the first Propagator of the Arnold Arboretum. Dawson ran the greenhouse and was well-known for his incredible green thumb and the award-winning rose hybrids he grew. This collection includes Dawson’s writings, his Civil War-era letters, family photos, obituaries and other writings about Dawson, and some interesting ephemera including the medals he won and his Bible, complete with bullet hole from the Civil War.
Notes: Access to Finding Aid record in HOLLIS.
Preferred Citation: Jackson Thornton Dawson papers. Archives of the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University.

Processing Information
Processed initially by Mary Harrison, Library Volunteer, in October 1995. Reorganized and described by DJ Schuldt, Simmons University SLIS graduate student, Fall 2022.

Acquisition Information
Provenance: This collection was transferred from the Arnold Arboretum’s departmental holdings to the Arboretum’s Archives in 1984 when the Archive was created.

Terms of Access
Researchers seeking to examine archival materials are strongly encouraged to make an appointment. The Director, or an office of origin, may place restrictions on the use of some or all of its records. The extent and length of the restriction will be determined by the Director, office of origin, and the Archivist.

Terms of Use
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Biographical Note

Jackson Thornton Dawson (1841-1916), the first plant propagator and superintendent of the Arnold Arboretum, served 43 years and played a significant role in the growth of the Arboretum as a world-class institution. During these years he raised 450,718 plants and distributed 47,993 packets of seed throughout the world. He was known for his legendary skill at the propagation of plants, as the ultimate “green thumb.”

In his Annual Report for 1917, Charles Sprague Sargent memorialized Dawson as having ...

... a remarkable knowledge of plants and unequalled skill in their propagation. A large part of the plants now growing in the Arboretum were raised by him from seeds, and in the early days of the arboretum he raised here thousands of plants for the Harvard Botanic Garden at Cambridge. All the Chinese and Japanese plants introduced by the Arboretum were raised by him, and the fact that in the last sixteen years of his life he raised seedlings of 3367 numbers of American hawthorns shows his industry. Dawson produced here several important hybrid roses, and with more time at his disposal, he might have become one of the world’s great plant breeders. Dawson brought to the Arboretum industry, intelligence, imagination, and entire devotion, and much of its success is due to his labors.

As a child, Dawson lived with an uncle who was a nurseryman in Andover, Massachusetts, and had a fascination with plants from an early age. Although his formal education ended with commercial school, Dawson, a Civil War veteran, would become an active member of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, serving on committees, giving lectures and publishing papers. In 1911 he was awarded the Society’s prestigious prize for cultivation. His stature was such that in 1927 Massachusetts Horticultural Society established the Jackson Dawson Memorial Medal for “skill in the science and practice of hybridization and propagation of hardy woody plants.”

For further biographical information, see “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman” by Sheila Connor Geary and B. June Hutchinson, *Arnoldia* vol. 40 no. 2 (1980): 51-75.
Scope and Content
The Jackson Dawson papers range from 1861-2007 and include correspondence, annual reports, lists of hybridized plants, notes, diary and ledger entries, photographs, medals, a Bible, and books. There is also a history of Eastern Nurseries Inc, which was incorporated by Dawson’s son and managed by his wife. Additional biographical material and correspondence was researched and later added in the 1980s and again in the 2010s.

Related Collection
*Archives IV C 1.1 - Early Plant Accessions, 1872–1899:* This collection contains the earliest versions of the Arnold Arboretum’s plant record system that includes a standardized accession number assigned to every plant on the grounds for use in tracking its name and origin. These records were created between 1873 and 1899 principally by Jackson Thornton Dawson during his Arboretum career as plant propagator from 1873 – 1916.

Arrangement
The Jackson Thornton Dawson papers are organized into 3 series:

Series I: Biographical Records
A. Subseries 1: Jackson Dawson
   a. Vital Records
   b. Obituaries and Memorials
   c. Publications
      i. By JTD
      ii. By C. S. Sargent about JTD
      iii. About JTD
   d. Photographs
      i. Mounted Display Photographs
      ii. Pre-Arboretum Era Photographs and Negatives
      iii. Arboretum Era Photographs and Negatives
      iv. Glass Plate Photography by William F. Dawson
      v. Modern Color Photographs of JTD Descendants, etc.
   e. Ephemera
      i. Civil War Bible
      ii. Medals
      iii. Miscellaneous
B. Subseries 2: The Dawson Family and Friends
   a. Channing Dawson
   b. Charles W. and Margaret M. Dawson
   c. David E. Marcus
   d. Eleanor Fisher
   e. Elizabeth (Betty) Blossom Johnston
   f. Francis White
   g. James Frederick Dawson
   h. Katherine B. Shurcliff
   i. Laura Blanchard Dawson
j. Pauline H. Hodgson
k. Peter S. Ashton
l. Robert F. Dawson
m. Sheila Connor Geary (Note: For the purpose of this finding aid, the name “Sheila Connor Geary” is used as this the name used during the bulk of her correspondence. Her name is now Sheila Connor)
n. Thomas Blossom

Series 2: Civil War-era Correspondence and Records
   a. Correspondence
   b. Documents Concerning the Purchase and Transcription of JTD Civil War Letters

Series 3: Post-Civil War Correspondence
   a. Correspondence

Series 4: The Eastern Nurseries
   a. Correspondence
   c. Map
   d. Price List Catalogs
   e. Advertisements

Series 5: Finding Aid Creation Materials
   a. Rough Draft of 1995 Finding Aid

Series I: Biographical Materials

A. Subseries 1: Jackson Thornton Dawson

   a. Vital Records
      • Civil War Honorable Discharge paperwork. 1864.
         o Location: Digital file.
      • Special Schedule – Surviving Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines, and Widows, etc. document listing JTD as a survivor and includes his discharge date.
         o Location: Digital file.
      • Thornton and Dawson family census information.
         o Location: Digital files.
      • Transportation to United States information.
         o Location: Digital file.

   b. Obituaries & Memorials
      • “Dawson, head of Arboretum, dies suddenly.” Boston American (Boston, MA), Friday, August 4, 1916.
         o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Newspaper clipping and photocopy.
         o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Newspaper clipping and a photocopy.
         o Location: Digital file.
• “Jackson T. Dawson Dead.” Boston Post (Boston, MA), August 4, 1916.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Newspaper clipping and photocopy.
• “A Bostonian’s Legacy.” Boston Evening Transcript (Boston, MA), August 4, 1916.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Newspaper clipping and photocopy.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
• “Recent Deaths – An Authority on Horticulture.” Boston Evening Transcript (Boston, MA), August 4, 1916.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Newspaper clipping.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Two copies of the newspaper clipping and a photocopy.
• “Jackson Dawson, Plant Wizard, Has Passed Away.” Montreal Star (Montreal, Canada), August 8, 1916.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Newspaper clipping and photocopy.
• Obituary from The Florists’ Review, August 10, 1916.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Photocopy.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 2. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file (digital file includes the cover of the issue with a portrait of JTD).
  o Location: Box 1, folder 2. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file (digital file includes the cover of the issue with a portrait of JTD).
  o Location: Box 1, folder 2.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 2. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital folder.
• Obituary from Gardeners Chronicle 60, no. 1549 (September 2, 1916): 118.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 2. Two photocopies.
• Letter to the editor on the previously published obituary of Jackson Dawson from *Horticulture* 24, no. 13 (Sept. 23, 1916): 419.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 2.
  o Location: Digital file.

• “Horticulturalists Pallbearers.” *Boston Evening Transcript* (Boston, MA), circa 1916.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Newspaper clipping.

• Assorted obituary newspaper clippings of unknown origin.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 2.

  o Location: Box 1, folder 2. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file.

  o Location: Box 1, folder 2. Photocopy of pages 241-242.
  o Location: Digital file.

  o Location: Box 1, folder 2. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file.

• Wilson, E.H. “A Memorial to Jackson Thornton Dawson.” A resolution by the Horticultural Club of Boston to create and endow a medal in honor of Jackson Thornton Dawson, given in trust to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. (1920).
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1. Photocopy.

• Jackson Dawson Memorial Fund pamphlet. Circa early 1920s. Original.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 1.

• “Memorial to Jackson Dawson.” *Yearbook of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1924* (1924), 45.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 2. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file (includes portrait).

• An ode (poem) to the Scot’s Heather involving an incident with Dawson. Written by David E. Marcus, the Interim President of the Tewksbury Historical Society. Poem received by Sheila Connor at the Arboretum on October 1, 2014. Includes the poem and the original envelope.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 2.

c. Publications and other writings by or about JTD, excluding Obituaries & Memorials

i. Publications authored by JTD
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
• ------. “Shrubs that are Perfectly Hardy,” in *Transactions of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, for the Year 1889, Part 1*. Boston: W. D. Ticknor, 1890, 71-88.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 3. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 3. Photocopy and printout.
  o Location: Digital file.
• -----. “The Propagation of Trees and Shrubs from Seed,” in Year Book of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, 1924 (1924), 46-65. Reprint of the 1885 article with the same name. Also published with a memorial and portrait (see obituaries and memorials).
  o Location: Digital file.

ii. Publications authored by C. S. Sargent about JTD’s work at the Arboretum
  o Location: Box 1, folder 3. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 3. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file.
• -----. “The Arnold Arboretum,” in Annual Reports of the President and Treasurer of Harvard College, 1884-85. Cambridge, MA: Published by the University, 1886. 147-152.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 3. Photocopy of pages 150-151.
  o Location: Digital file.
• -----. “The Arnold Arboretum,” in Annual Reports of the President and Treasurer of Harvard College, 1885-86. Cambridge, MA: Published by the University, 1887. 122-124.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 3. Photocopy of page 124.
  o Location: Digital file.
• Location: Digital file.

• "The Arnold Arboretum," in *Reports of the President and Treasurer of Harvard College, 1916-17*. Cambridge MA: Published by the University, 1918. 207-209.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 3. Photocopy of pages 206-7.
  o Location: Digital file.

• "The First Fifty Years of the Arnold Arboretum." *Journal of the Arnold Arboretum* 3, no. 3 (1922): 127-171.
  o Location: Box 1, Folder 3. Photocopy of just pages 168-169 with a brief biography of JTD.
  o Location: Digital file (complete article).

iii. Publications about JTD

  o Location: Digital file.

  o Location: Digital file.

  o Location: Digital file.

  o Location: Digital file.

  o Location: Digital file.

  o Location: Digital file.

• “3200 Kinds of Plants: Guardian of All of These is Jackson Dawson.” *Boston Globe* (Boston, MA), May 26, 1895.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 4. Newspaper clipping and two photocopies.
  o Location: Digital file.

• “Attacked by Thugs.” *Boston Globe* (Boston, MA), November 4, 1898.
  o Location: Digital file.

• “Assailants of Mr Dawson.” *Boston Globe* (Boston, MA), November 5, 1898.
  o Location: Digital file.

• “Evidence Concluded: Case of Thomas F. Charlton for Murderous Assault.” *Boston Globe* (Boston, MA), November 18, 1898.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 4. Newspaper clipping and photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file.

• “Fourteen to 18 Years.” *Boston Globe* (Boston, MA), November 19, 1898.
- Location: Box 1, folder 4. Newspaper clipping and photocopy.
- Location: Digital file.

“Blossom—Dawson.” *Boston Globe* (Boston, MA), September 24, 1908.
- Location: Digital file.


- Location: Box 1, folder 4. Newspaper clipping.
- Location: Digital file.

- Location: Box 1, folder 4. Original newspaper clipping and two photocopies.

- Location: Box 1, folder 4. Newspaper clipping and photocopy.

- Location: Digital file.

- Location: Digital file.

“Minutes of the Horticultural Club of Boston for Feb. 4, 1914.”
- Location: Box 1, folder 5. Photocopy of a single page of the minutes.

- Location: Box 1, folder 5.
- Location: Digital file, also includes the cover of the issue with an image of the Viburnum Sargentii plant.

- Location: Box 1, folder 5. Photocopy.
- Location: Digital File.

- Location: Digital file.

- Location: Box 1, folder 5. Photocopy.
- Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Box 1, Folder 5. Two photocopies.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 5. Photocopy.
  o Location: Digital file.
• “Minutes of the Horticultural Club of Boston for April 4, 1917.”
  o Location: Box 1, folder 6. Photocopy of a single page of the minutes which discusses the creation of Jackson Dawson memorial.
• The Horticultural Club of Boston, letter to J. K. M. L. Farquhar concerning his appointment to the committee on the Jackson Dawson Memorial, June 19, 1920.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 6. Photocopy.
• Olmsted, F. L. [Jr.]. “James Frederick Dawson: January 13, 1874 - April 23, 1941.” Manuscript, Archives, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Brookline, Massachusetts. 1941.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 6.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 6. Photocopies of pages 4-5 of the Introduction.
  o Location: Physical copy of the full book can be found in the Arboretum Reading Room (Rc 73 W98a).
  o Location: Box 1, Folder 6. Photocopy of page 191 with a list of the winners of the Jackson Dawson Memorial Medal Award.
  o Location: Digital file of the full book, which also includes details on the winners of the Dawson Memorial Medal and an image of the medal following page 178.
  o Location: Box 1, Folder 7.
  ○ Includes:
    ▪ two copies of a family tree for JTD;
    ▪ a page of article title brainstorming; photocopies of pages from the Judd Diaries, 1913-1916;
    ▪ correspondence with Roger Bond about the car JTD is driving on the cover of *Arnoldia* vol. 40, no. 2 (Nov. 16, 1981);
    ▪ notes detailing the number of plants distributed, etc. by JTD;
    ▪ a photocopy of photograph of the Dawson family along with information on who is in the photo (there are two sets of handwriting here, one is Sheila Connor Geary’s and the other’s is unknown);
    ▪ a photocopy of the class report about Laura B. Dawson;
    ▪ photocopies of two pages from the *Constitution, By-Laws, and List of Officers and Members of the Gardeners and Florists’ Club of Boston* (1893);
    ▪ Photocopies of advertisement material on the Eastern Nurseries;
    ▪ Misc. typed pages of notes.
  ○ Location: Box 1, folder 7.
  ○ Location: Box 1, folder 7.
  ○ Location: Box 1, folder 8. Five copies of the full issue of *Arnoldia*.
  ○ Location: Digital file.
  ○ Location: Physical copy of the full book can be found in the Arboretum Reading Room (Bd Ar6 H32).
  ○ Location: Box 1, folder 6. Printout.
  ○ Location: Digital file.
  ○ Location: Digital file.
d. Photographs

i. Mounted Display Photographs

- Seven photographs of JTD mounted on six boards.
  - Location: Box 2, folder 2.
  - Location: Digital files.

ii. Pre-Arboretum Era Photographs and Negatives

- Civil War-era photographs (3) and negatives (2) of JTD.
  - Location: Box 2, folder 3.
  - Location: Digital files.

- Photograph and negative of JTD from September 1871.
  - Location: Box 2, folder 3.
  - Location: Digital files.

- Tintype of JTD in uniform, circa 1861. Originally stored with the Bible and therefore is kept with the Bible related materials.
  - Location: Box 2, folder 8.
  - Location: Digital files.

iii. Arboretum Era Photographs and Negatives

- Photographs (21) and negatives (20) by William F. Dawson, circa 1890-1915. Includes photos of the Arboretum grounds, portraits of JTD, a photograph of the Bussey Institution, and a photograph of the Eastern Nurseries living room. Gift of Charles Dawson, JTD’s grandson.
  - Location: Box 2, folder 1.
  - Location: Digital files.

- More photographs (2) and negatives (3) provided by Charles W. Dawson. Originally stored with correspondence from Charles W. Dawson from November 19, 2001.
  - Location: Box 2, folder 4.
  - Location: Digital files.

- Photographs (19) and negatives (2) of JTD, JTD’s family, and the Arboretum.
iv. Glass Plate Photography by William F. Dawson

- Glass plate autochrome positives (12) of photographs taken by William F. Dawson.
  - Location: Box 3.
  - Location: Digital files.
- Glass plate black & white negatives (9) of photographs taken by William F. Dawson.
  - Location: Box 3.
  - Location: Digital files.
- The original paper sleeves (19) of the glass plate photographs taken by William F. Dawson.
  - Location: Box 3.

v. Modern Color Photographs of JTD Descendants, etc.

- Photograph of Channing Dawson and family
  - Location: Box 2, folder 7.
  - Location: Digital file.
- Photographs (2) of JTD oil painting. See also: Correspondence of Francis White. The actual painting is in archival storage.
  - Location: Box 2, folder 7.
  - Location: Digital files.

e. Ephemera including Bible and Medals

i. Civil War Bible

- JTD’s Bible from the Civil War. According to JTD’s grandson, this “bible which stopped a bullet to save his life in the Civil War.” See Charles W. Dawson Correspondence to Peter S. Ashton from Sept. 16, 1980. Bible is in a specially made metal casing and then wrapped in linen.
  - Location: Box 4.
- Wooden case for storing the Bible. Under the top lid is an engraved piece of metal reading, “Battle of Frederisburg [Fredericksburg] / December 13th, 1862 / J. T. Dawson.”
  - Location: Box 4.
- Bible bookmark.
  - Location: Box 2, folder 8.
- Tintype of JTD in uniform, circa 1861.
  - Location: Box 2, folder 8.
  - Location: Digital files.
• Commercial invoice for the shipping of the Bible to the United States from Rachel Thorn in New Zealand to Barbara Murphy at the Arnold Arboretum. Dated Feb. 14, 2020.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 8.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 8.
• Photocopies of damaged pages from this Bible.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 8.

ii. Medals
• The Massachusetts Horticultural Society (MHS) Silver Medal. Awarded to JTD at the Spring Exhibition in March 1896.
  o Location: Safe.
  o Location: Digital files.
• The Newport Horticultural Society Bronze Medal. Awarded to JTD on September 13, 1913, for his white creeping rose, the Rosa rugosa repens alba.
  o Location: Safe.
  o Location: Digital files.
• The Panama-Pacific International Exposition Medal of Award. Awarded to JTD at the Exposition held in San Francisco in 1915. Medal has a diameter of 2.75 inches (7 cm) and is stored in a small round case.
  o Location: Safe.
  o Location: Digital files.

iii. Miscellaneous
• Scan of a Civil War recruitment broadside for the Massachusetts 19th Rifle Regiment.
  o Location: Digital file.

B. Subseries 2: The Dawson Family, including correspondence with Arboretum staff

a. Channing Dawson
• Correspondence to Sheila Geary about her article on JTD in *Arnoldia*. October 17, 1980.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 9.
• Correspondence to Lisa Pearson about a recent visit to the Arboretum. October 29, 2022.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 9.

b. Charles W. Dawson
• Correspondence to Peter S. Ashton thanking him for sending a copy of the article, “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman.” September 16, 1980.
This letter from JTD’s grandson mentions the “bible which stopped a bullet to save his life in the Civil War.”

Location: Box 1, folder 10.


Location: Box 1, folder 10.

Correspondence to Sheila Connor Geary about a recent visit to the Arboretum. There is also mention of an Arnold Rose postcard to be enclosed, but the whereabouts of the postcard is currently unknown. November 21, 1991.

Location: Box 1, folder 10.

Correspondence to Bob Cook (director of the Arnold Arboretum, 1989-2009) with a set of three pictures. The letter includes the names of the individuals in the first picture. Other pictures are of Sargent Pond. Signed by Margaret and Charles. June 14, 1996.

Location: Box 1, folder 10.

Correspondence to Sheila Connor Geary concerning a portrait of Dawson. Signed by Charles. June 14, 1996.

Location: Box 1, folder 10.


Location: Box 1, folder 10.

Correspondence to Sheila Connor Geary. Includes: a letter dated November 12, 2001; a large sheet of paper with photographs and handwritten notes concerning the opening of the Gerald D. Coorts Memorial Arboretum at the Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, TN; and maps of the Coorts Arboretum.

Location: Box 1, folder 10.


Photographs were included with the letter and can now be found in Box 2, folder 4.

Location: Box 1, folder 10.

Correspondence to Sheila Connor Geary concerning the Dawson/McKenna letters. Signed by Charles. Undated.

Location: Box 1, folder 10.


Location: Box 1, folder 10.

See also: discussion with Francis White, Charles W. Dawson, and Sheila Connor Geary on two audiocassettes.

Both cassettes are hand-labeled: “March 21, 1980 / S. Geary / Francis White, Charles W. Dawson / grandchildren of Jackson T. Dawson.”
o Location: Box 1, folder 14.

c. David E. Marcus

- Printed manuscript of a play titled *Scot’s Heather Follies of 1861: A True Tewksbury Story*, written by David E. Marcus. JTD is a character in the play.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 11.
- A handwritten note signed Dave Marcus accompanies the play.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 11.

d. Eleanor Blossom Fisher

- Correspondence to Sheila Connor Geary, accompanied by a photocopy of “My Most Unforgettable Character” by Elizabeth (Betty) Thornton Blossom (Johnston), an unpublished article about her grandfather, JTD. June 5, 1980.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 12.
- Correspondence from Sheila Connor Geary thanking Eleanor Fisher for the unpublished article by Elizabeth (Betty) Thornton Blossom (Johnston).
  o Location: Box 1, folder 12.
- Correspondence from Eleanor Fisher informing *Arnoldia* of the death of Thomas Blossom, the grandson of JTD. An obituary is mentioned, but it is no longer with the letter. September 9, 1992.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 12.

e. Elizabeth (Betty) Blossom Johnston

- Correspondence to Francis White. Sept. 12, 1957.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 13.
- See Eleanor Fisher for a copy of an essay written by Elizabeth (Betty) Blossom Johnston about her grandfather, JTD.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 12.

f. Francis White

- Essay by Frances [sic] Dawson White titled, “Jackson Thornton Dawson, Highlights” and dated April 15, 1925.
  o Three copies. Handwritten note on one copy states, “This material was collected by Mrs. White for a school – paper and was principally the reminiscences of her father, William Francis Dawson, Jackson’s oldest son.”
  o Location: Box 1, folder 14.
- Correspondence to Sheila Geary. Oct 13/18, 1980.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 14.
- Correspondence to Sheila Geary about the George Walter Dawson Memorial Medal. Undated.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 14.
- Discussion with Francis White, Charles W. Dawson, and Sheila Connor Geary on two audiocassettes.
Both cassettes are hand-labeled: “March 21, 1980 / S. Geary / Francis White, Charles W. Dawson / grandchildren of Jackson T. Dawson.”

See also: correspondence to Francis White from Betty Blossom Johnston. Sept. 12, 1957.

Correspondence to Sheila Geary about the unfinished oil painting of JTD. Undated.

Correspondence to Sheila Geary about the unfinished oil painting of JTD, including photos of the painting. Includes original envelope. Photos can be found in Box 2, folder 7. Undated.

James Frederick Dawson

Photocopy of biography of James Frederick Dawson. Unknown author.

Note: See Robert F. Dawson for a microcassette of Robert’s recollections of his father, James F. Dawson.

Katherine B. Shurcliff

Correspondence to Sheila Connor Geary thanking her for sending a copy of the article, “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman.” October 1, 1980.

Katherine Shurcliff’s grandfather had lived at 1090 Centre St. for a time, and her father-in-law worked with James Dawson at the Olmsted office.

Laura Blanchard Dawson


Radcliffe Alumnae Information questionnaire filled out by Laura Blanchard Dawson. (April 13, 1928).


Laura Blanchard Dawson Registrar’s records of classes taken at Girl’s Latin School, Boston. 1899-1903.

Radcliffe class photograph from Class Book, 1903. Image of Laura Blanchard Dawson in upper row, far left.
• Location: Box 1, folder 17. Photocopy.

• Throop, Suzanne Everett. Extract of writing with reference to L.B. Dawson, circa 1903.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 17. Photocopy.

  o Location: Digital file.

• Obituary from the *Boston Evening Transcript* (March 8, 1930).
  o Location: Box 1, Folder 17. Photocopy.

  o Location: Digital file.

j. Pauline H. Hodgson

• Correspondence to Sheila Connor Geary thanking her for sending a copy of the article, “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman.” September 29, 1980.
  o Pauline Hodgson worked at the Eastern Nurseries and Laura Blanchard had been her teacher.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 18.

k. Peter S. Ashton

• See correspondence to Charles W. Dawson for a letter by Peter Ashton in response to a letter sent by Charles on September 16, 1980. Multiple copies.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 10.

l. Robert F. Dawson

  o Location: Box 1, folder 19.

m. Sheila Connor Geary

• See also: correspondence from Thomas Blossom to Sheila Connor Geary requesting two copies of the article, “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman.” March 3, 1981.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 20.

• See also: correspondence from Thomas Blossom to Sheila Connor Geary in response to the article, “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman.” March 23, 1981.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 20.

• See also: correspondence from Pauline Hodgson to Sheila Connor Geary thanking her for sending a copy of the article, “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman.” September 29, 1980.
  o Pauline Hodgson worked at the Eastern Nurseries and Laura Blanchard had been her teacher.
• Location: Box 1, folder 18.
  • See also: correspondence from Katherine Shurcliff to Sheila Connor Geary thanking her for sending a copy of the article, “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman.” October 1, 1980.
    o Katherine Shurcliff’s grandfather had lived at 1090 Centre St. for a time, and her father-in-law worked with James Dawson at the Olmsted office.
    o Location: Box 1, folder 16.
• See also: correspondence from Francis White to Sheila Geary. Oct 13/18, 1980.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 14.
• See also: correspondence from Francis White to Sheila Geary about the George Walter Dawson Memorial Medal. Undated.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 14.
• See also: discussion with Francis White, Charles W. Dawson, and Sheila Connor Geary on two audiocassettes.
  o Both cassettes are hand-labeled: “March 21, 1980 / S. Geary / Francis White, Charles W. Dawson / grandchildren of Jackson T. Dawson.”
  o Location: Box 1, folder 14.
• See also: correspondence from Channing Dawson to Sheila Geary about her article on JTD in *Arnoldia*. October 17, 1980.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 9.
• See also: correspondence from Eleanor Fisher to Sheila Connor Geary, accompanied by a photocopy of “My Most Unforgettable Character” by Elizabeth (Betty) Thornton Blossom (Johnston), an unpublished article about her grandfather, JTD. June 5, 1980.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 12.
• See also: correspondence from Sheila Connor Geary to Eleanor Fisher thanking her for sending the unpublished article by Elizabeth (Betty) Thornton Blossom (Johnston).
  o Location: Box 1, folder 12.
• See also: correspondence from Judith Dawson to Sheila Connor Geary concerning the transcription of JTD’s Civil War Letters. October 3, 1996.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 31. Printed fax.
• See also: correspondence from Judith Dawson to Sheila Connor Geary concerning the transcription of JTD’s Civil War Letters. October 8, 1996.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 31. Printed fax.
• See also: correspondence from Charles W. Dawson to Sheila Connor Geary concerning a portrait of JTD. Signed by Charles. June 14, 1996.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 10.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 10.
• See also: correspondence from Charles W. Dawson to Sheila Connor Geary concerning the Dawson/McKenna letters. Signed by Charles. Undated.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 10.
n. Thomas Blossom

- Correspondence to Sheila Connor Geary requesting two copies of the article, “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman.” March 3, 1981.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 20.
- Correspondence to Sheila Connor Geary in response to the article, “Mr. Dawson, Plantsman.” March 23, 1981.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 20.
  o Location: Box 1, folder 20.

Series II: Civil War-era Correspondence and Records

a. Correspondence

- Fragment of a correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Includes one sheet of letter, the envelope, and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 9.
- Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Camp Benton on October 29, 1861. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 10.
- Correspondence from JTD to his mother. Sent from Camp Benton on November 13, [1861]. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 11.
- Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Camp Leander on December 23, [1861]. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 12.
- Correspondence from JTD to his mother. Sent from Camp Leander on December 23, [1861]. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 13.
- Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from General Hospital Judiciary [Square], Washington DC, Hospital Ward No. 10 on April 22, 1862. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 14.
- Correspondence from JTD to unknown recipient congratulating her on her recent marriage; may be Minnie McKenna. Sent from Washington [DC?] on June 16, 1862. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 15.
- Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Washington DC on June 26, 186[2?]. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 16.
- Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. No place or date is given, but is perhaps from Washington DC around early July, 1862. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 17.
• Correspondence from JTD to unknown recipient (probably Minnie from context). Sent from Washington DC on July 20, 1862. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 18.
• Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from General Hospital at Judiciary Square, Washington DC on September 11, 1862. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 19.
• Correspondence from JTD to unknown recipient (probably Minnie from context). Sent from Camp at Bolivar Heights, Virginia on October 29, 1862. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 20.
• Correspondence from JTD to unknown recipient (probably Minnie from context). Sent from Camp at Falmouth, [MA] on March 1, 1865. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 21.
• Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Mount Pleasant Hospital, Washington [DC?] on May 8, 1863. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 22.
• Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Campbell Hospital, Washington DC on January 13, 1864. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 23.
• Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Campbell Hospital, Washington DC on March 17, [18]64. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 24.
• Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Campbell Hospital, Washington DC on April 5, [1864?]. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 25.
• Correspondence from JTD to his mother. Sent from Campbell Hospital, Washington DC on April 11, 1864. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 26.
• Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Campbell Hospital, Washington DC on April 19, [18]64. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 27.
• Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Campbell Hospital, Washington DC on April 27, [18]64. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 28.
• Correspondence from JTD to Minnie McKenna. Sent from Campbell Hospital, Washington DC on August 10, 1864. Includes one sheet of letter and the transcript.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 29.
b. Documents concerning the Purchase and Transcription of JTD Civil War Letters
   • Statement concerning the purchase of Jackson Dawson’s Civil War Letters from Charles Apfelbaum: Rare Manuscripts and Archives in Watchung, New Jersey. Purchase is dated April 22, 1996. Statement is dated August 16, 1996.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 30.
   • Correspondence from Judith Dawson to Sheila Connor Geary concerning the transcription of JTD’s Civil War Letters. October 3, 1996.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 31. Printed fax.
   • Correspondence from Judith Dawson to Sheila Connor Geary concerning the transcription of JTD’s Civil War Letters. October 8, 1996.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 31.

Series III: Post-Civil War Correspondence

a. Correspondence
   • Correspondence from a Mr. Hibberd of Louisville, KY to JTD asking whether the Arnold Arboretum has a specific kind of rose. April 29, 1898.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 32.
   • Correspondence from John Dunbar to JTD introducing Robert ????, foreman of the greenhouses at Highland Park in Rochester, New York. August 31, 1910.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 33.
   • Correspondence from JTD to Harlan P. Kelsey in Salem, MA concerning Kelsey picking up seeds, or sending someone to pick up seeds, at JTD’s home. November 15, 1910.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 34.
   • Correspondence from Harlan P. Kelsey of Salem, MA to JTD. Kelsey confirms receipt of the Nov. 15 letter and identifies a date for the seeds to be picked up. November 16, 1910.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 34.
   • Correspondence from JTD to Mr. [E. H.] Wilson concerning family news, weather, and Wilson’s return to Boston. October 8, 1914.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 35.
   • Correspondence from JTD to Julia Dawson wishing her a happy new year. Undated.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 36.

Series IV: The Eastern Nurseries

a. Correspondence
     o Location: Box 2, folder 37.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 37.

b. Map
• Plan of Land in Holliston, Mass. belonging to Albert I. Fiske / July 20, 1904. Map created by White & Wetherbee – Civil Eng’rs. Boston and Braintree.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 37.
  o Location: Digital file.

c. Price List Catalogs
• A Word About Our Native Rhododendrons and Mountain Laurel by Eastern Nurseries. Opens with an essay about rhododendrons and mountain laurel. Rest of the pamphlet is a price list. Undated.
  o Location: Digital file.
• Everything for the Hardy Garden by Eastern Nurseries. Begins with a brief essay titled, “The Flower-Garden.” Rest of the pamphlet is a price list. Includes a hand-drawn map of the Eastern Nurseries on the inside cover, by unknown hand. Undated.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 37.
  o Location: Digital file.
• List of Phlox and Asters offered by Eastern Nurseries. Undated.
  o Location: Digital file.
• Silver Medal Roses Originated by Jackson Dawson by Eastern Nurseries. Photograph, description, and price for seven roses originated by JTD.
  o Location: Box 2, folder 37. Photocopy of two pages.
  o Location: Digital file.
• Price catalogs from 1908-1930.
  o Location: Digital files.

d. Advertisements
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
  o Location: Digital file.
Series V: Finding Aid Creation Materials

a. 1995 Finding Aid
   • Handwritten rough draft of the finding aid created in 1995 by Mary Harrison, Library Volunteer.
     o Location: Box 2, folder 38.
   • Final draft of the finding aid created in 1995 by Mary Harrison, Library Volunteer.
     o Location: Digital copy.

o Location: Digital file.