

**The New York Public Library  
Humanities and Social Sciences Library  
Manuscripts and Archives Division**

**Ward Family  
Papers, 1870-1953**

**Compiled by Stephen Greenberg  
April 1990**

## Summary

Main Entry: Ward Family

Title: Papers, 1870-1953

Size: 3.5 linear feet.

Source: Unknown

Abstract: Frank Edwin Ward (1872-1953), was an organist, composer and music teacher at Columbia University. His father, Cyrenus Osborne Ward (1831-1902), was a social reformer, historian, and author of *The Ancient Lowly* and other books on the history of labor. Papers include personal correspondence, coded research notes, and miscellaneous family and genealogical papers.

## Biographical Note

Frank Edwin Ward was born in Wysox, Pennsylvania on October 7, 1872, the son of Cyrenus Osborne Ward and Stella Owen Ward. He was educated in music at Columbia University and served as University organist from 1902 to 1913. He also played the organ for Temple Israel and the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Holy Trinity. He held the latter post for forty years (1906-1946). Ward also wrote organ and choir music, and taught music theory at Columbia. He was married to May Corby Ward; they had no children. Mrs. Ward sang soprano in many of the choirs led by her husband.

Ward was greatly interested in the history of his own family, including his uncle, the sociologist Lester Frank Ward, and his own father, Cyrenus Osborne Ward. Approximately half of the present collection comprises the papers of the father collected by the son.

C. Osborne Ward was born in western New York on October 28, 1831, the son of Justus and Silence Rolph Ward. When he was a small child, his parents moved to Illinois, where Cyrenus, the seventh of ten children, worked on the family farm until he set off on his own in 1848. Cyrenus Ward traveled much and studied much, both in the manual trades and in the humanities. He taught himself music (he played violin professionally), and studied history, botany, geology, and modern and ancient languages.

Rejected for service in the Civil War, Ward took a job in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where he became interested in organized labor. He began to write pamphlets and speeches, and traveled widely abroad, meeting such important international socialist leaders as Karl Marx, and researching the history of primitive laborers. In 1884, he was hired by the United States Geological Survey, and then by the Bureau of Labor, where he worked as a translator and librarian. He wrote several books, the most important being known variously as *A History of the Ancient Working People* and *The Ancient Lowly*, privately published in 1887. Long hours, extensive travel, and arduous labor in preparing a second volume wore him out, and he died in Yuma, Arizona, where he had gone for his health after the publication of volume 2 of *The Ancient Lowly* in 1900.

## Scope and Content Note

The current collection is clearly the work of Frank Ward in documenting his own life and the lives of his family, particularly that of his father. As such, many of the papers are the miscellaneous gleanings of an old and scattered family that could trace their ancestry to an Andrew Warde who came to America in the early seventeenth century.

The first series is Frank Ward's personal correspondence (including many letters to his mother), papers concerning the doings of family members (obituary notices, details on a patent for a spring-suspended wheel invented by an uncle, etc.) and a small collection of concert announcements and family photographs.

The second series contains the papers of Cyrenus Ward, including drafts of articles, notes, and a group of about sixty tightly wrapped scrolls covered with strange symbols, with only an occasional recognizable word in English. It is assumed that these are Ward's private research notes. Since he was writing on controversial subjects, there is every reason to suspect that he wished to keep some of his thoughts confidential by resorting to a private cipher. There are no references to the cipher in the collection, but the system is clearly Cyrenus' own.

Cyrenus Ward's correspondence is in too poor a condition to have been systematically studied, but the series does contain Ward's membership card in the International Workingman's Association, dated 1870 and signed by Karl Marx.

There are also small series of correspondence for Frank Ward's wife and mother, most of which concern the marriage of Frank and May Ward, and a few items (a death notice and some publishers' brochures) concerning Lester Frank Ward. Again, the poor condition of the collection has precluded systematic arrangement. The last part of this series contains a number of items whose provenance cannot be determined.

## Container List

### **SERIES I. PAPERS OF FRANK WARD**

- Box 1. Correspondence of Frank Edwin Ward
- Box 2. Family papers (mostly genealogical) collected by Frank Edwin Ward
- Box 3. Miscellaneous papers of Frank Edwin Ward

### **SERIES II. PAPERS OF CYRENUS WARD**

- Box 4. Correspondence of Cyrenus Osborne Ward
- Box 5. Manuscripts of articles (and books?) by Cyrenus Osborne Ward
- Box 6. Research notes [?] in cipher [?] by Cyrenus Osborne Ward

### **SERIES III. MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS**

- Box 7. Correspondence of May Corby (Mrs. Frank Edwin) Ward and Stella Owen (Mrs. Cyrenus Osborne) Ward
- Box 8. Miscellaneous papers of Lester Frank Ward
- Box 9. Items of unknown or unclear provenance