

Biography

Frank Waller was born in New York in 1842, the son of Joseph Fernando Waller, a drygoods merchant, and his wife Martha Brooks Waller. He studied drawing at the New York Free Academy (the future City College of New York) from about 1857 to 1861. Clara Erskine Clement and Laurence Hutton state that “Between the years 1863 and ‘68 he was in business in his native city, drawing with pen and ink, and painting in oil in his leisure hours.” He first exhibited at the National Academy of Design in 1870, and later that year he went to Rome and studied with John Gadsby Chapman (1808-18). Waller returned to New York in 1871, and the following year embarked on a tour of Egypt with Edwin White (1817-1877). Thereafter he became noted for his Egyptian landscapes, especially romantic views of the Nile. Waller served as a local honorary secretary of the Egypt Exploration Society from 1897 to 1902, and of the Ur Exploration Society.

Waller studied at the National Academy of Design with Lemuel Wilmarth (1835-1918). In 1875 he became one of the founders of the Art Students League and served as its first president, was treasurer in 1876, corresponding secretary in 1879, and served a second term as president in 1881. In 1878 Waller returned to Europe and visited a number of art academies. The following year he published his *Report on Art Schools*

Clara Erskine Clement and Laurence Hutton, *Artists of the Nineteenth Century and Their Works* (Boston, 1889), vol. 2, p. 331. *Who's Who in America* 12 (Chicago, 1922-1923), p. 3187. Obituary, *New York Times*, March 10, 1923, p. 13. *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* 23 (New York, 1933), p. 146. Amy L. Walsh in Natalie Spassky et al, *American Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Volume II. A Catalogue of Works by Artists Born between 1816 and 1845* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 575-579.