

Taken from The Educator October 1926

Francis Leon Tower

By Charlton V. Howe,
Howe Engrossing Studio, Philadelphia.

The subject of this sketch, Francis Leon Tower, first saw the light of day in the beautiful Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts in 1876, ADA, spent his boyhood days on a farm. His early education was obtained in the Public Schools of his native community. At the age of fourteen, he began the study and practice of penmanship and drawing, which included a special preparatory course in the hygienic principles of right; Under an eminent educator the late professor A. B., Pulsifer, who instilled In him an enthusiasm for becoming a teacher of penmanship.

In 1894 he studied and practiced penmanship and drawing under the personal direction of that able penman and teacher, S. E. Bartow of New York. Mr. Tower then taught penmanship and drawing as an itinerant teacher with decided success, organizing and teaching classes in these subjects in various towns and cities of Massachusetts and Vermont. Later, he took a special course in commercial training at the Bliss Business College of North Ad Mass., after which he attended the Zanerian College of Penmanship at Columbus, Ohio, pursuing special courses in plain and ornamental writing under the personal Supervision of those renowned authors, Messers. Zaner & Bloser of this institution.

On leaving the Zanerian in 1898, Mr. Tower accepted a situation as teacher of penmanship, bookkeeping and correspondence at the Berk shire Business College of Pittsfield, Mass. While at this institution he seized the opportunity of a life time by coming in touch with that famous penman and genius of revered memory, the late A.D. Taylor of Galveston, Texas, through whom he received rare training in the intricate execution of ornamental writing. After one year Mr. Tower resigned his position to record official records for the General Secretary in the Home Office of the B. & M. I. U. of North America located at North Adams. This office was eventually moved to Indianapolis, Ind., at which time Mr. Tower discontinued his connection as official recorder, and then attended the Pan-American Exposition in 1901 at Buffalo, N.Y., where he gave an extended exhibition in fancy writing for a period of over six months.

In 1904 Mr. Tower-pursued a special scientific course in advanced Engraver's Script under my personal direction, after which he secured a situation with the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company of Boston, where he ably served this company in the capacity of policy engrosser for a period of over twelve year. In 1917 he resigned this position, finding it necessary to escape the severity of the New England winters, and moved with his family into the great fruit belt, the "California of the East." southern New Jersey, where he now resides in a modest home at Hammonton

Mr. Tower has had much experience as a Practical, expert card writing, and has made a special study of penmanship in both its theoretical and practical aspects, as set forth in the .Published work of many authorities on advanced writing. In addition to this he has made extensive researches into the true merits of so called oblique penholders of various manufacture, as well as the Practical application of master positions of scientific pen-holding preferred by famous penmen.

Mr. Tower believes that through practical experience, students of penmanship could save much valuable time, energy and expense, if they would give more careful thought to the styles and uses of oblique penholders and to Vile correct application of scientific per -holding favored by master penmen as best adapted to the structure of the hand, which are important factors decidedly worth attention when the real commercial value of good writing becomes a matter for serious consideration in the advanced class.

Joe,

The following commentary is taken from the Tower Family Association from the web. I have also added a few pics.

Charles Osborne

Miner Tower had a twin brother, (Miles Tower). Twins are not uncommon in the Tower lineage. Miner's son, Frank Tower (in the genealogical publication he's Francis Leon Tower, but he refutes it in a 1959 letter - he claims he was born Frank Tower). The Town of Florida vital records prove him correct: Frank Tower was born in March, 1875, but no day is noted, although his entry is after a March 8 entry. There is no Francis Leon Tower or anyone else of that name born on March 10, 1875. Even genealogy books can be wrong! Frank lived in Medford, Mass., then Hammonton, New Jersey, and worked in insurance and was a calligrapher. He sold (and possibly made) Mitnik Oblique Penholders and penned diplomas for the Hammonton High School graduating class of 1959 among many other things. He penned the 1959 diplomas because in a letter that he wrote to my aunt, he said he had to deliver the diplomas that day. Frank Tower was the Treasurer of the Tower Family Association.