



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Cass Gilbert Collection

NMAH.AC.0214

Robert S. Harding and David A. Stevens

August, 1986

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Cass Gilbert Collection
Date:	1897-1963 (bulk 1897-1936)
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0214
Creator:	Valentine, P. O. (33 Homestead, Park, Newark) Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934 (Creator) Belden & Company (45 Clinton Street, Newark, N.J.)
Source:	National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering
Extent:	15 Cubic feet (71 boxes)
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Gift of Emily Gilbert and Cass Gilbert, Jr. through Mr. Silvio Bedini, November 30, 1961, January 15, 1962, and later in 1962.

Provenance

Transferred to the Archives Center from the Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering (now the Division of Work and Industry) on July 2, 1986.

Five United States Supreme Court sketches returned to the United States Supreme Court in 2015; 11 United States Supreme Court sketches returned to the United States Supreme Court in 2020.

Related Materials

Materials at Other Organizations

Library of Congress

Cass Gilbert Archive, 1890-1939

Montana Historical Society

Cass Gilbert Papers, 1902-1910

Oberlin College Archives

Cass Gilbert Collection, 1903-1984, 2000

University of Minnesota, Archives and Special Collections

Cass Gilbert Collection, 1909-1910

United States Supreme Court, Office of the Curator

Processing Information

Collection processed by David Stevens and Robert Harding, 1986.

Preferred Citation

Cass Gilbert Collection, 1897-1936, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

Biographical / Historical

Cass Gilbert, 1859-1934, was a prominent American architect best known for his commercial and public buildings. Gilbert was born in Zanesville, Ohio and educated in St. Paul, Minnesota. After only a year of study at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and subsequent travels in Europe, he began working for the New York firm of McKim, Mead, and White in 1880. In 1883 he returned to St. Paul where he practised briefly with James Knox Taylor, a classmate at M.I.T., designing private homes, churches, and commercial buildings. His first major commission was the Minnesota State Capitol (1895), which he modeled after the National Capitol and the dome of St. Peter's, Rome. Gilbert returned to New York in 1899 when he won the prized commission for the design of the U.S. Customs House. This was followed by many other major projects. The most famous of these was the Woolworth Building in New York (1913); with its fifty-five stories and Gothic ornament it is considered Gilbert's greatest achievement. Firmly supportive of the European tradition and eastern academic architecture, Gilbert continued his numerous and successful designs until his death in 1934. Among his many familiar public buildings are the Treasury Annex and the Supreme Court in Washington, DC, the state capitol buildings of West Virginia and Arkansas, and the public libraries of St. Louis and Detroit.

Scope and Contents

The contents of the collection date from 1897 to 1936. The bulk of the collection consists of loose-leaf binders of photo prints of forty-one Cass Gilbert buildings under construction between 1908 and 1936. (This represents less than half of his firm's total output.) The volumes are arranged alphabetically by name of building. A few additional photo prints of buildings under construction are found in the unbound materials.

The collection also includes correspondence (1919-1932), contracts, statistical data, news clippings, booklets, and other miscellaneous Gilbert papers. There are three volumes of correspondence, specifications and blueprints, 1932-1935, for the construction of the U.S. Supreme Court Building, Washington, D.C. Also included are twenty pencil and pastel sketch books of Gilbert's travels in Europe, 1897 to 1932, and miscellaneous loose sketches (including photo prints and negatives of his studies for the George Washington Bridge. The photographic prints are mostly mounted on cloth in loose-leaf binders. Some of the photographers are identified, although many are not. Photographers included P.O. Valentine of 33 Homestead Park, Newark, New Jersey.

Arrangement

Collection arranged into six series.

- Series 1: Correspondence, 1919-1932
 - Series 2: Personal Papers, 1914-1963
 - Series 3: New York Life Insurance Building Contracts, 1934-1935
 - Series 4: Woolworth Building, 1911-1913
 - Series 5: Sketches and Sketch Books, 1897-1932
 - Series 6: Photoprints, 1908-1936
-

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Architects -- 1890-1940
- Architecture -- 1890-1940 -- United States
- Bridges -- 1890-1940
- Civil engineering -- 1890-1940 -- U.S.
- Civil engineers
- Commercial buildings -- 1890-1940 -- U.S.
- Engineering -- 1890-1940 -- U.S.
- Public architecture -- 1890-1940 -- U.S.

Types of Materials:

- Booklets
- Business records -- 1880-1950
- Clippings -- 1900-1950
- Contracts -- 1890-1940
- Correspondence -- 1900-1950
- Drawings -- 1890-1940
- Pamphlets
- Pastels (visual works)
- Pencil works
- Personal papers -- 1890-1940
- Photographs -- Black-and-white photoprints -- 1900-1950
- Sketchbooks -- 1890-1940
- Specifications
- Statistics

Names:

- National Museum of American History (U.S.). Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering
- New York Life Insurance Building.
- Seaside Sanatorium (Waterford, Conn)
- Supreme Court Building (Washington, D.C.)
- Woolworth Building (New York, N.Y.)

Container Listing

Series 1: Correspondence, 1919-1932

Box 1, Folder 1

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Series 2: Personal Papers, 1914-1963

Box 1, Folder 2	Biographical Materials
Box 1, Folder 3	Miscellaneous Papers found in Cass Gilbert's Desk, 1963 - 1963
Box 1, Folder 4	Statistical Data Book, 1914 - 1932
Box 1, Folder 5	Miscellaneous Statistical Data

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Series 3: New York Life Insurance Building Contracts, 1934-1935

Box 1, Folder 6 Contract: New York Life Insurance Company and Cass Gilbert, Inc., 1934-06-27 -
1934-06-27

Box 1, Folder 7 Construction Bid Proposals, 1935-12-21 - 1935-12-21

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Series 4: The Woolworth Building, 1911 - 1913

Box 1, Folder 8	T [?] by Montgomery Schuyler (1913), Cass Gilbert's signed copy
Box 1, Folder 9	New York Times Clipping about the Woolworth Building, 1911-05-07 - 1911-05-07

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Series 5: Sketches and Sketch Books, 1897-1932

Box 2, Folder 1	Holland; Germany, 1897-1898
Box 2, Folder 2	Assisi; Siena; Florence; Paris, 1898
Box 2, Folder 3	Italy; Mediterranean; Switzerland, 1902
Box 2, Folder 4	England, 1905
Box 2, Folder 5	France; Italy, 1905
Box 2, Folder 6	France, 1908
Box 2, Folder 7	Lubeck, France, 1910; U.S. Court House Studies, 1912-1913
Box 2, Folder 7, pages 12-13	<p>Part of a shrine in cathedral - Cologne, [France, sketch], July 19, 1910 1 Item (sketchbook.; Graphite on paper; 8.0" x 10.0") Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934 Language: English. Notes: AC0214-0000001 (AC Scan No.) Topic: Architectural design Shrines Genre/Form: Sketches</p>
Box 2, Folder 8	England; Germany; Switzerland ; Italy, 1912
Box 2, Folder 9	England; France, 1913
Box 2, Folder 10	Charleston, SC, 1916
Box 2, Folder 11	France, 1920
Box 3, Folder 1	England; France, 1921
Box 3, Folder 2	Venice, Rome, 1921 - 1921
Box 3, Folder 3	England, 1922 - 1922
Box 3, Folder 4	France; Miscellaneous, 1922 - 1922
Box 3, Folder 5	England, 1923 - 1924
Box 3, Folder 6	Italy; France, 1927 (with miscellaneous France), 1906 - 1906

Box 3, Folder 7	Normandy; Yucatan (with envelope of photos from Rome), 1929 - 1929, 1932 - 1932
Box 3, Folder 8	England, 1930 - 1931
Box 3, Folder 9	France and United Kingdom, 1932 - 1932
Box 4, Folder 1	American Academy of Arts and Letters Building, 1923-1927
Box 4, Folder 2	West Virginia State Capitol, 1922
Box 4, Folder 3	Hudson River Bridge (George Washington Bridge) sketches, 1925 - 1926
Box 4, Folder 4	Bayonne Bridge (Kill Van Kull Bridge) sketches, 1927 - 1927
Box 4, Folder 5	United States Chamber of Commerce sketches, undated Notes: Also includes sketches for an art gallery (1930) and an idea for a south entrance (1925).
Box 4, Folder 6	Nashville Moument, War Department and Nashville [capitol study?], 1922 - 1922
Box 4, Folder 7	Allentown Office Building sketches, 1926 - 1926
Box 4, Folder 7	Bayonne Bridge (Kill van Kull Bridge) sketches, 1927 - 1927
Box 4, Folder 8	Bridges, negatives and positives of sketches, 1926 - 1926
Box 4, Folder 9	Miscellaneous Loose Sketches (including photoprints and negatives of studies for George Washington Bridge)

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Series 6: Photoprints, 1908-1936

Subseries 6.1: Bound Volumes, 1908-1936

Box 5	American Academy of Arts & Letters, New York City, 1929-1930 Notes: Photographs by Eric Baker, added by David Haberstick, 2000-12-04, Auditorium, OIPP scan # 2000-11262.
Box 5	Auditorium, American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York : [photoprint], 1929-1930 1 Item (in loose-leaf album; Silver gelatin on paper, mounted on linen or canvas, punched for loose-leaf binder.; 7.5" x 9.6") Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934 Photographer: Thompson-Starrett Company, Inc. (250 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y.) Language: English. Notes: AC0214-0000010 (AC Scan No.) 2000-11262 (OIPP Scan) Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves. Photographic studio stamp on verso, along with stamp, "CASS GILBERT / RECEIVED / NOV 24 1930". Another stamp imprint, in red: "HEATING, PIPING AND / AIR CONDITIONING". "1187" in pencil. Names: American Academy of Arts and Letters Topic: Architectural design Architectural photography Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1900-1950
Box 6	American Insurance Building, Newark, New jersey 1923-1924
Box 7	Arkansas State Capitol Building, 1909-1914 Notes: See also Box 71, Folder 1
Box 8	Arkansas State Capitol Building, 1901-1914
Box 9	Arkansas State Capitol Building, 1901-1914
Box 10	Arkansas State Capitol Building, 1901-1914
Box 11	Arkansas State Capitol Building, 1901-1914
Box 12	Arkansas State Capitol Building, 1901-1914
Box 13	Arkansas State Capitol Building, 1901-1914

Box 14	Arkansas State Capitol Building, 1901-1914
Box 15	Army Supply Base, Brooklyn, New York, 1918-1919
Box 16	Atlantic Refining Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, circa 1920
Box 17	Bridgeport Peoples Savings Bank, Bridgeport, Connecticut, 1916-1930
Box 18	Bridgeport Peoples Savings Bank, Bridgeport, Connecticut, 1916-1930
Box 19	Chase Dispensary, Waterbury, Connecticut 1923-1924
Box 19	<p>Chase Memorial / From N.W. cor. looking S.E. / 10/27/23 / The Tracy Bros. Co [sic] Bldrs [photoprint], 1923 1 Item (in loose-leaf album; Silver gelatin on paper, 7-1/2 x 9-3/4 in., mounted on linen or canvas, punched for loose-leaf binder.)</p> <p>Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934 Photographer: Stone, Fred A. (Waterbury, Conn.,) Language: English. Notes: Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves. Construction photograph showing building foundation. Stamped on verso: "...Fred A. Stone, / photographer, / 32 Park Place, Waterbury, Conn." and Gilbert's "received" stamp, dated Nov. 1, 1923.</p> <p>Names: Chase Memorial. Topic: Architectural design Architectural photography Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1900-1950</p>
Box 20	<p>Chase Offices, Waterbury, Connecticut 1917-1919 Notes: Documentation includes interiors, such as a parking lot with cars. OIPP scan no. 2000-11261</p>
Box 20	<p>Chase Co. headquarters (completed building) [photoprint], 1918 - 1919 1 Item (in loose-leaf album; Silver gelatin on paper, mounted on linen or canvas, punched for loose-leaf binder.; 7.5" x 9.6")</p> <p>Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934 Language: English. Notes: AC0214-0000009 (AC Scan No.) 2000-11261 (OIPP Scan) Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.</p> <p>Names: Chase Co. Topic: Architectural design Architectural photography Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1900-1950</p>

Photographs -- 1910-1920 -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin	
Box 21	Federal Reserve Bank, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1921-1925
Box 22	Federal Reserve Bank, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1921-1925, 1921-1925
Box 23	First Division Memorial, Washington, D.C., 1923-1924 Notes: See also Box 71, Folder 2
Box 23	<p>First Division Memorial, Washington, DC [photoprint], 1923-1924 9 Items (Silver gelatin on paper.; approx. 8.0" x 10.0")</p> <p>Image(s) Image(s) Image(s) Image(s) Image(s) Image(s) Image(s) Image(s) Image(s)</p> <p>Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934 Language: English. Notes: AC0214-0000014 (AC Scan No.) AC0214-0000015 (AC Scan No.) AC0214-0000016 (AC Scan No.) AC0214-0000017 (AC Scan No.) AC0214-0000018 (AC Scan No.) AC0214-0000019 (AC Scan No.) AC0214-0000020 (AC Scan No.) AC0214-0000021 (AC Scan No.) AC0214-0000022 (AC Scan No.)</p> <p>Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves. Photographs showing various views and stages of construction.</p> <p>Topic: Architectural design Memorials Architectural photography</p> <p>Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1900-1950</p>
Box 24	Hotchkiss School, Dormitory "B" and Infirmary, Lakeville, Connecticut 1922-1923
Box 25	Hudson River Bridge (George Washington Bridge), New York City, 1928-1931
Box 26	Hudson River Bridge (George Washington Bridge), New York City, 1928-1931

Box 26	<p>Hudson River Bridge (George Washington Bridge) [photoprint], 1928-1931 1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 7.4" x 9.3") Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934 Language: English. Notes: AC0214-0000004 (AC Scan No.) Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.</p> <p>Names: George Washington Bridge (New York, N.Y.) Topic: Architectural design Bridges Architectural photography</p> <p>Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1900-1950</p>
Box 27	Interzone Building, New York City, 1922-1923
Box 28	James Scott Water Fountain, Detroit, MI, 1921-1932
Box 29	Kill Van Kull Bridge, Port of New York, 1928-1931
Box 30	Kinney Building Alterations, Newark, NJ, 1928
Box 31	Miscellaneous
Box 32	New Haven Station, New Haven, Connecticut, 1917-1919
Box 32, Number 85	<p>N.Y.N.H. & H. Station / New Haven, Conn. [black-and-white photoprint], December 31, 1919 1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 7.3" x 9.5") Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934 Photographer: Thompson-Starrett Company, Inc. (250 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y.) Language: English. Notes: AC0214-0000042 (AC Scan No.) Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.</p> <p>New York, New Haven and Hartford Station. Thomas Starrett Company, Building Construction. Interior of partially built station with a man on a ladder.</p> <p>Topic: Interior architecture -- Connecticut Architectural design Railroad stations</p> <p>Place: Connecticut -- 1900-1950 New Haven (Conn.)</p> <p>Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1910-1920 -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin</p>
Box 33	New York Life Insurance Building, New York City, 1925-1928

	Notes: See also Box 71, Folder 3. Photographs by P.O. Valentine, 33 Homestead Park, Newark, NJ. From Box 35, view of building from southwest, no. 190, OIPP scan # 2000-11264
Box 34	New York Life Insurance Building, New York City, 1925-1928
Box 35	<p>New York Life Insurance Co. Building, New York City (completed building) [photoprint], 1928</p> <p>1 Item (in loose-leaf album; Silver gelatin on paper, mounted on linen or canvas, punched for loose-leaf binder.; 9.9" x 7.8")</p> <p>Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934</p> <p>Language: English.</p> <p>Notes: AC0214-0000011 (AC Scan No.) 2000-11264 (OIPP Scan)</p> <p>Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.</p> <p>View from from southwest, showing figures on park benches in foreground. Imprint: "No. 190. TAKEN OCT"-17-1928... / STARRETT BROTHERS, INC., BUILDERS". Gilbert stamp on verso, dated received Oct. 25, 1928. Photographer unidentified.</p> <p>Names: New York Life Insurance Co. (New York.)</p> <p>Topic: Architectural design Architectural photography</p> <p>Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1900-1950</p>
Box 36	<p>Oberlin College Art Building, Oberlin , Ohio, 1915-1917</p> <p>Notes: (Administration Building facade, OIPP scan # 2000-11263)</p>
Box 37	Oberlin College Art Building, Oberlin , Ohio, 1915-1917
Box 37	<p>Administration Building, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio (completed building) : photomechanical reproduction of photograph, circa 1917</p> <p>1 Item (in loose-leaf album; Ink on paper, mounted on paper, then mounted on another sheet of paper, punched for loose-leaf binder.; 6.6" x 8.9")</p> <p>Image(s): Administration Building, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio (completed building) : photomechanical reproduction of photograph, ca. 1917.</p> <p>Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934</p> <p>Language: English.</p> <p>Notes: AC0214-0000013 (AC Scan No.) 2000-11263 (OIPP Scan)</p> <p>Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.</p> <p>Front view, with description and history of building printed on mount under picture. No stamp on verso. Photographer unidentified.</p> <p>Names: Oberlin College</p> <p>Topic: Architectural design Architectural photography</p>

Genre/Form: Photomechanical reproductions

Box 38	Oberlin College Theological Group, Oberlin, Ohio, 1930-1931
Box 39	Oberlin, Allen Memorial Hospital, Oberlin, Ohio, 1924-1925
Box 40	130 West 30th St. Building, New York City, 1927
Box 41	Prudential Bridges, Halsey St. and Bank St., Newark, NJ, 1927-1928
Box 42	Prudential Broad & Academy Building, Newark, NJ, 1926-1928
Box 43	Prudential Building, Newark, New Jersey, 1926-1928
Box 44	Prudential Building, Newark, New Jersey, 1926-1928
Box 45	Prudential Power Plant, Newark, NJ, 1926-1928
Box 46	Prudential Building, Newark, New Jersey, 1926-1928
Box 47	Prudential Building, Newark, New Jersey, 1926-1928
Box 48	Rodin Studios, New York City, 1917
Box 49	Seaside Sanitorium, Waterford, Connecticut, 1932-1934 Notes: See also Box 71, Folder 4
Box 50	St. Louis Public Library, St. Louis, Missouri, 1908-1912
Box 51	St. Louis Public Library, St. Louis, Missouri, 1908-1912
Box 52	St. Louis Public Library, St. Louis, Missouri, 1908-1912
Box 53	St. Louis Public Library, St. Louis, Missouri, 1908-1912
Box 54	Texas, University of, Education Building, Austin, Texas, 1916-1917
Box 55	Treasury Annex, Washington, D.C., 1919-1920
Box 56	U.S. Chamber of Commerce Building, Washington, D.C., 1922-1924
Box 57	U.S. Court House, New York, New York City, 1932-1936 Notes: See also Box 71, Folder 5
Box 58	U.S. Court House, New York, New York City, 1932-1936
Box 59	U.S. Court House, New York, New York City, 1932-1936

Box 60 U.S. Legations, Ottawa, Canada, 1928-1932

Box 60 US Legation Building, Ottawa Canada [photoprints], 1928-1932
19 Items (Silver gelatin on paper.; approx. 8.0" x 10.0")

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Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934
Language: English.
Notes: AC0214-0000023 (AC Scan No.)
AC0214-0000024 (AC Scan No.)
AC0214-0000025 (AC Scan No.)
AC0214-0000026 (AC Scan No.)
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AC0214-0000037 (AC Scan No.)
AC0214-0000038 (AC Scan No.)
AC0214-0000039 (AC Scan No.)
AC0214-0000040 (AC Scan No.)
AC0214-0000041 (AC Scan No.)

Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.

Photographs showing various views and stages of construction, including building site before demolition and architectural details..

Topic: Architectural design
Architectural photography
Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1900-1950

Box 61	Waterbury Club, Waterbury, CT, 1917-1918
Box 62	Waterbury Municipal Building, Waterbury, Connecticut, 1914-1915
Box 63	Waterbury Municipal Building, Waterbury, Connecticut, 1914-1915
Box 64	Waterbury National Bank, Waterbury, CT, 1920-1921, completed building Notes: OIPP scan no. 2000-11260
Box 64	Waterbury National Bank (completed building) [photoprint], August 16, 1921 1 Item (in loose-leaf album; Silver gelatin on paper, mounted on linen or canvas, punched for loose-leaf binder.; 7.9" x 9.8") Architect: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934 Language: English. Notes: AC0214-0000012 (AC Scan No.) 2000-11260 (OIPP Scan) Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves. Building looks completed, but has wooden fence around it with an office rental sign. Gilbert's stamp on verso, dated Aug. 25, 1921. Photographer unidentified. Names: Waterbury National Bank (Waterbury, Conn.) Topic: Architectural design Architectural photography Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1900-1950
Box 65	West Virginia Capitol Building, Charleston, West Virginia, 1924-1932
Box 66	West Virginia Capitol Building, Charleston, West Virginia, 1924-1932
Box 67	West Virginia Capitol Building, Charleston, West Virginia, 1924-1932
Box 68	West Virginia Capitol Main Building, Charleston, West Virginia, 1924-1932
Box 69	West Virginia Capitol Main Building, Charleston, West Virginia, 1924-1932
Box 70	Williams Warehouse, New York City (?), 1927-1928
Box 71, Folder 1	Postcards, Arkansas State Capitol Building under Construction, circa 1909-1914

Box 71, Folder 2	First Division Memorial, Washington, D.C., c. 1923-1924
Box 71, Folder 3	New York Life Insurance Building, c. 1925-1928
Box 71, Folder 4	Seaside Hospital, Waterford, CT, c. 1932-1934
Box 71, Folder 5	U.S. Court House, New York, c. 1932-1936
Box 71, Folder 6	Woolworth Building, New York City, ca. 1911-1913
Box 71, Folder 7	Snapshots of Construction of Woolworth Building, New York City
Box 71, Folder 8	F.W. Woolworth & Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert at Palm Beach, Florida, Spring, 1911
Box 71, Folder 9	Snapshots and negatives, New York City, July 1935

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