



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the United States Capitol Dome Drawings

NMAH.AC.1010

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April 2010

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	United States Capitol Dome Drawings
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.1010
Date:	1855-1862
Extent:	0.3 Cubic feet (1 box)
Creator:	Walter, Thomas Ustick, 1804-1887 History of Technology, Division of, NMAH, SI Work and Industry, Division of, NMAH, SI Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Division of [former name], NMAH, SI.
Language:	English Collection is in English.
Summary:	The collection consists of 146 salt-paper prints (structural and decorative details) of the United States Capitol Dome, between 1855 and 1862. Dimensions range from 6 ¾" x 9 ½" to 17 1/8" x 10".

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

This collection was purchased in 1984 by the Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering, National Museum of American History (then called the National Museum of History and Technology), from Walter Grossman.

Provenance

Transferred in 2007 to the Archives Center from the Division of Work and Industry (formerly the Division of Mechanical and Civil Engineering).

Location of Originals

The original drawings exist in the Office of the Architect of the Capitol. See: <http://www.aoc.gov/cc/capitol/dome.cfm>.

Processing Information

Kendra Ciccone (intern), April, 2010; supervised by Alison Oswald, archivist.

Preferred Citation

United States Capitol Dome Drawings, dates, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The collection is open for research use.

Unrestricted research access on site by appointment.

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Biographical / Historical

The United State Capitol dome is situated above the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The Capitol dome was designed by Thomas Ustick Walter (1804-1887), the fourth Architect of the Capitol. Walter was responsible for adding the north (Senate) and south (House) wings and the central dome of the Capitol from 1854 to 1866. The original dome, built in 1824, was made of wood. It was considered a fire hazard and was not big enough to complement the Capitol building's growing size.[1]

[1] <http://www.aoc.gov/cc/capitol/dome.cfm> (accessed on April 9, 2010)

Scope and Contents

The collection is comprised of 146 salt print photographic copies of original drawings of the United States Capitol dome. Salt print paper was the first and most common photo paper between 1839 and 1860. The prints document both structural and decorative details of the dome. The prints are arranged in chronological order.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged into one series.

Series 1, United States Capitol Dome Drawings, 1855-1862

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Architecture -- Washington (D.C.)
Domes

Types of Materials:

Copy photographs

Salted paper prints

Names:

History of Technology, Division of, NMAH, SI
Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Division of [former name], NMAH, SI.
United States Capitol (Washington, D.C.)
Work and Industry, Division of, NMAH, SI

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