



Smithsonian Institution Archives

National Museum Building
Commission Records, 1879-1882

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Smithsonian Institution Archives
Washington, D.C.
Contact us at osiaref@si.edu

Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Historical Note.....	1
Descriptive Entry.....	1
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	3

Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	National Museum Building Commission Records
Identifier:	Record Unit 71
Date:	1879-1882
Extent:	5.89 cu. ft. (6 document boxes) (4 half document boxes) (4 12x17 boxes) (2 oversize folders)
Creator::	United States National Museum
Language:	Language of Materials: English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 71, United States National Museum, National Museum Building Commission Records

Access Restriction

Deteriorating letterpress may prevent any reproduction.

Historical Note

In 1876 the Board of Regents requested an appropriation from Congress to build a new museum, a necessity because of the incoming collections from the International Exhibition in Philadelphia. Congress complied and made an appropriation in 1879. The Regents appointed a building commission consisting of resident members of the Regents' Executive Committee and Secretary Spencer F. Baird. Cluss and Shulze of Philadelphia were made superintending architects. Construction began in April 1879 and was completed in 1881.

Descriptive Entry

These records fully document the construction of the 1881 National Museum Building; included are fiscal records, specifications, bids and contracts, correspondence with the architects, and records of the Building Commission itself, including minutes of meetings. See also record unit 92.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Architectural design
- Museum buildings
- Museums -- Administration
- Smithsonian buildings

Types of Materials:

- Architectural drawings
- Manuscripts
- Sketches

Names:

- Arts and Industries Building (Washington, D.C.)
- Baird, Spencer Fullerton, 1823-1887
- Centennial Exhibition (1876 : Philadelphia, Pa.)
- Cluss and Schulze
- National Museum Building Commission
- Smithsonian Institution. Board of Regents

Container Listing

	Box 1	
Box 1 of 14		Folders 1-6 Numbered Correspondence, 1-779, April 1879-July 1886: Numbers 1-465
	Box 2	
Box 2 of 14		Folders 1-4 Numbered Correspondence, 1-779, April 1879-July 1886: Numbers 466-779
	Box 3	
Box 3 of 14		Folders 1-7 Bids and Contracts, 1879-1881
	Box 4	
Box 4 of 14		Folder 1 Carpenters Time Book, December 1900-January 1901
	Box 5	
Box 5 of 14		Folder 1 Outgoing Correspondence, April-October 1879
	Box 6	
Box 6 of 14		Folder 1 Minutes of Meetings, 1879-1880
	Box 7	
Box 7 of 14		Folders 1-2 Ledger, 1879-1882
	Box 8	
Box 8 of 14		Folders 1-4 Minutes of Meetings of the Commission, 1879-1881
	Box 9	
Box 9 of 14		Folder 1 Ledger, 1879-1882
	Box 10	
Box 10 of 14		Folder 1 Outgoing Correspondence, 1879-1882
	Box 11	
		Correspondence
Box 11 of 14		Folder 1 Baird

Box 11 of 14 Folders 2-2A Cluss
Box 11 of 14 Folder 3 Meigs
Box 11 of 14 Folder 4 Sherman
Box 11 of 14 Folder 5 Leech
Box 11 of 14 Folder 6 Parker
Box 11 of 14 Folder 7 Gleason and Himber
Box 11 of 14 Folder 8 Unidentified Correspondence
Box 11 of 14 Folders 9-14 Miscellaneous Correspondence

Box 12

Subject Files

Box 12 of 14 Folder 1 Inaugural Ball, March 4, 1881 (some original documents moved to
oversize)
Box 12 of 14 Folder 2 Elevations of New National Museum (not as built), 1884
Box 12 of 14 Folder 3 Legislation
Box 12 of 14 Folder 4 Advertisements Placed and Receipts of Payment
Box 12 of 14 Folder 5 Building Committee
Box 12 of 14 Folder 6 Museum of Natural History
Box 12 of 14 Folder 7 Regents
Box 12 of 14 Folder 8 Report of the Building Commission, 1879-1881, Report of the
Architects and Plans and Views of the "Castle"
Box 12 of 14 Folder 9 Pictures
Box 12 of 14 Folder 10 Regents' Memorandum to Congress, February 5, 1877
Box 12 of 14 Folder 11 Elevations of Smithsonian Institution
Box 12 of 14 Folder 12 "Spencer F. Baird and His Collectors," by William Deiss
Box 12 of 14 Folder 13 Memorandum on Museums, Library of Congress - Estimate
Box 12 of 14 Folder 14 *Harper's Weekly* (original documents moved to oversize)
Box 12 of 14 Folder 15 Plat

Box 12 of 14	Folders 16-17 Plan
Box 12 of 14	Folder 18 Bell System
Box 12 of 14	Folder 19 Felt
Box 12 of 14	Folder 20 Electrical
Box 12 of 14	Folder 21 Bricks
Box 12 of 14	Folder 22 Cement
Box 12 of 14	Folder 23 Doors
Box 12 of 14	Folder 24 Drainpipe, Drainage
Box 12 of 14	Folder 25 Floors
Box 12 of 14	Folder 26 Iron
Box 12 of 14	Folder 27 Lamp Black
Box 12 of 14	Folder 28 Lumber
Box 12 of 14	Folder 29 Models of Rosettes
Box 12 of 14	Folder 30 Shelving
Box 12 of 14	Folder 31 Steam, Heating and Ventilation
Box 12 of 14	Folder 32 Copper, Tin, Iron Cornice and Trimmings
Box 12 of 14	Folder 33 Painting
Box 12 of 14	Folder 34 Photographs
Box 12 of 14	Folder 35 Plastering
Box 12 of 14	Folder 36 Plumbing and Steamfitting
Box 12 of 14	Folder 37 Roofing
Box 12 of 14	Folder 38 Stone
Box 12 of 14	Folder 39 Ventilators - Window Glass
Box 12 of 14	Folder 40 Tiles
Box 12 of 14	Folder 41 Cut and Stone Work
Box 12 of 14	Folder 42 Coping, Stone

Box 12 of 14 Folder 43 Windows

Box 13

Box 13 of 14 Folders 1-26 Alphabetic Correspondence

Box 14

 Technical Reports

Box 14 of 14 Folder 1 Draft Reports of Commission to Regents

Box 14 of 14 Folder 2 Memorandum of January 31, 1877

Box 14 of 14 Folder 3 Contract Dispute with Gleason and Humber

Box 14 of 14 Folder 4 Memorandum re: Fireproof Building

Box 14 of 14 Folder 5 Memorandum re: Proper Position of New Building

Box 14 of 14 Folder 6 The New Building for the National Museum

Box 14 of 14 Folder 7 Permits

Box 14 of 14 Folder 8 Bids

Box 14 of 14 Folder 9 Bids, Comparison Sheet - Heating Apparatus

Box 14 of 14 Folder 10 Building History

Box 14 of 14 Folder 11 Articles of Agreement

Box 14 of 14 Folder 12 Estimates

Box 14 of 14 Folder 13 Voucher Forms

Box 14 of 14 Folder 14 Vouchers

Box 14 of 14 Folder 15 Articles Chosen from Catalogue

Box 14 of 14 Folder 16 Request from Neighbors on B Street for Plaque

Box 14 of 14 Folder 17 Specifications

 Oversize

 Materials removed from Box 12

Oversize Folder 1 Inaugural Ball, March 4, 1881

Oversize

Folder 2 *Harper's Weekly*