

Cass Gilbert Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2012

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm73022780>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc/mss/eadmss.ms012134>

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Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2012

Collection Summary

Title: Cass Gilbert Papers

Span Dates: 1841-1961

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1886-1934)

ID No.: MSS22780

Creator: Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934

Extent: 9,000 items

Extent: 30 containers plus 1 oversize

Extent: 13 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm73022780>

Summary: Architect. Correspondence, diaries, biographical material, financial papers, speeches, articles, poems, and memorabilia relating to Gilbert's family and his work as an architect. Includes letters addressed to Thomas Jefferson by William Thornton and typescript of a letter to Jefferson from James R. Dermott.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Blashfield, Edwin Howland, 1848-1936--Correspondence.

Butler, Nicholas Murray, 1862-1947--Correspondence.

Cope, Arthur--Correspondence.

Cox, Kenyon, 1856-1919--Correspondence.

Dermott, James R. (James Reed)--Correspondence.

French, Daniel Chester, 1850-1931--Correspondence.

Gilbert family--Correspondence.

Gilbert family.

Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934.

Gilbert, Cass, 1894- Cass Gilbert letterbooks. 1936-1941.

Gilbert, Julia Finch, 1862-1952--Correspondence.

Gilbert, Samuel, approximately 1865- --Correspondence.

House, Edward Mandell, 1858-1938--Correspondence.

Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826--Correspondence.

Jusserand, J. J. (Jean Jules), 1855-1932--Correspondence.

Moore, Charles, 1855-1942--Correspondence.

Root, Elihu, 1845-1937--Correspondence.

Thornton, William, 1759-1828--Correspondence.

Webb, Aston, Sir, 1849-1930--Correspondence.

Organizations

Arkansas State Capitol (Little Rock, Ark.)

Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America--Buildings.

Federal Courts Building (New York, N.Y.)

Minnesota State Capitol (Saint Paul, Minn. : 1905-)

New York Life Insurance Company--Buildings.

United States. Department of the Treasury--Buildings.

United States. Supreme Court--Buildings.

West Virginia Capitol Complex (Charleston, W. Va.)

Woolworth Building (New York, N.Y.)

Subjects

Architecture--Arkansas--Little Rock.
Architecture--Minnesota--Saint Paul.
Architecture--New York (State)--New York.
Architecture--United States.
Architecture--Washington (D.C.)
Architecture--West Virginia--Charleston.
Architecture.
Buildings--New York (State)--New York.
Public buildings--Arkansas--Little Rock.
Public buildings--Minnesota--Saint Paul.
Public buildings--New York (State)--New York.
Public buildings--Washington (D.C.)
Public buildings--West Virginia--Charleston.
World politics.

Places

United States--Foreign relations.
United States--Politics and government.

Occupations

Architects.

Provenance

The papers of Cass Gilbert, architect, were deposited in the Library of Congress by his granddaughter, Mrs. Walter A. Bastedo, in 1962. In 1967, Bastedo converted the deposit to a gift, and in 1971 she gave additional papers to the Library.

Processing History

The collection was processed in 1963 and reprocessed with an addition in 1972. The finding aid was revised in 1979 and 2012.

Transfers

Photographs, water colors, and drawings received with the Cass Gilbert papers have been transferred to the Prints and Photographs Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Other Repositories

Other papers of Cass Gilbert are at the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minn., chiefly relating to the Minnesota State Capitol Building. A collection of Gilbert's portraits, paintings, and sketch books is at the Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C.. The largest collection of Gilbert's papers is at the New-York Historical Society in New York, N.Y.

Copyright Status

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Cass Gilbert in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress was dedicated to the public, except that these rights were reserved to Mrs. Bastedo for her lifetime.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Cass Gilbert are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Cass Gilbert Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1859, 24 Nov.	Born, Zanesville, Ohio
1868	Moved to St. Paul, Minn.
1878	Attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass.
1880	Joined architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and Whiten
1883	Opened his own architectural firm, St. Paul, Minn.
1887	Married Julia T. Finch
1908-1909	President, American Institute of Architects
1913	Architect of the Woolworth Building, New York, N.Y.
1913-1914	President, Architectural League of New York
1919-1920	President, National Institute of Arts and Letters
1921	Completed work on the Detroit Public Library, Detroit, Mich.
1921-1923	Director, American Academy of Arts and Letters
1929	Received commission to design the United States Supreme Court Building, Washington, D.C.
1931	Completed work on George Washington Bridge, New York, N.Y.
1934, 17 May	Died, Brockenhurst, England

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Cass Gilbert (1859-1934) span the years 1801-1961, with the bulk of the papers dated between 1886 and 1934. The collection is organized into seven series: [Diaries](#); [General Correspondence](#); [Special Correspondence](#); [Speech, Article, and Poetry File](#); [Letterbooks of Cass Gilbert, Jr.](#); [Miscellany](#), and [Oversize](#).

There are letters sent and received by Cass Gilbert for the years 1880-1934 as well as correspondence of his wife, Julia Finch Gilbert; brother, Samuel Gilbert; other family members; and letterbooks of his son, Cass Gilbert, Jr. (born 1894). The [General Correspondence](#) mainly concerns his architectural plans for the Woolworth Building, the New York Life Insurance Building, the Federal Courts Building in New York, the United States Treasury Annex, the United States Chamber of Commerce Building, the United States Supreme Court Building, and state capitol buildings in Minnesota, Arkansas, and West Virginia. The correspondence also reflects Gilbert's interest in national and international political affairs. Among the principal correspondents are Edwin Howland Blashfield, Nicholas Murray Butler, Arthur Cope, Kenyon Cox, Daniel Chester French, Edward Mandell House, J. J. Jusserand, Charles Moore, Elihu Root, and Aston Webb.

The [Special Correspondence](#) contains two letters received by President Thomas Jefferson from William Thornton on June 9, 1802, and June 28, 1804, and a typescript copy of James R. Dermott's letter to Jefferson dated March 7, 1801. These manuscripts came into Gilbert's possession in 1915 when they were presented to him by W. R. Bixby.

The papers also include many of the diaries that Gilbert kept from 1890 to 1934 as well as speeches, articles, and poems in manuscript and printed form. A [Miscellany](#) file and [Oversize](#) series complete the collection.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in seven series:

- [Diaries, 1890-1934](#)
- [General Correspondence, 1841-1961](#)
- [Special Correspondence, 1801-1804](#)
- [Speech, Article, and Poetry File](#)
- [Letterbooks of Cass Gilbert, Jr., 1936-1941](#)
- [Miscellany](#)
- [Oversize](#)

Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1	<u>Diaries, 1890-1934</u> Diaries of Cass Gilbert. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 2-15	<u>General Correspondence, 1841-1961</u> Letters sent and received, including family letters. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 15	<u>Special Correspondence, 1801-1804</u> Three letters addressed to Thomas Jefferson. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 16-18	<u>Speech, Article, and Poetry File</u> Handwritten and printed writings. Arranged by type of writing or material.
BOX 19-20	<u>Letterbooks of Cass Gilbert, Jr., 1936-1941</u> Volumes of letters sent by Cass Gilbert's son. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 21-31	<u>Miscellany</u> Financial papers, biographical material, printed matter, and certificates and awards. Arranged by type of material.
BOX OV 1	<u>Oversize</u> Certificates and awards. Described according to the series and container from which the material was removed.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Diaries, 1890-1934 Diaries of Cass Gilbert. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1	1890-1934
BOX 2-15	General Correspondence, 1841-1961 Letters sent and received, including family letters. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 2	1841-1886
BOX 3	1886-1887
BOX 4	1887
BOX 5	1887-1890
BOX 6	1891-1903
BOX 7	1904-1908
BOX 8	1909-1914
BOX 9	1915-1919
BOX 10	1920-1924
BOX 11	1925-1926
BOX 12	1927-1929
BOX 13	1930-1932
BOX 14	1933-1934
BOX 15	1934-1961
BOX 15	Special Correspondence, 1801-1804 Three letters addressed to Thomas Jefferson. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 15	Letters to Thomas Jefferson, 1801-1804
BOX 16-18	Speech, Article, and Poetry File Handwritten and printed writings. Arranged by type of writing or material.
BOX 16	Speeches
BOX 17	Speeches
BOX 17	Articles
BOX 18	Poetry Notes
BOX 19-20	Letterbooks of Cass Gilbert, Jr., 1936-1941 Volumes of letters sent by Cass Gilbert's son. Arranged chronologically.

Letterbooks of Cass Gilbert, Jr., 1936-1941

Container	Contents
BOX 19	1936-1938
BOX 20	1938-1941
BOX 21-31	Miscellany Financial papers, biographical material, printed matter, and certificates and awards. Arranged by type of material.
BOX 21-22	Invitations
BOX 21-22	Calling cards
BOX 23	Financial papers
BOX 23	Biographical material
BOX 23	Certificates and awards <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 24	Specifications for American Insurance Co. Building
BOX 25-30	Printed matter
BOX OV 1	Oversize Certificates and awards. Described according to the series and container from which the material was removed.
BOX OV 1	Certificates and awards (Container 23)