

Title: Milwaukee County Courthouse Collection

Reference Code: Mss-1590

Inclusive Dates: 1867 – 1970

Quantity: 000.8 cu. ft.

Location: LM, Sh. 087

Abstract: The first Milwaukee Courthouse was built in 1836 on the north half of Courthouse square which was bounded by Oneida Street (now E. Wells), Biddle Street (now E. Kilbourn), Jackson, and Jefferson Streets. The first Courthouse was razed and the second Courthouse was erected on the same site. Building of the second Courthouse commenced in 1870 and was completed in 1873. Construction of the third and present Courthouse began in 1929 and ended in 1931 except for remodeling. This Courthouse sits on property bounded by Ninth, Tenth, Wells, and State Street.

Scope and Content: The collection contains pamphlets, memorandums, drawings, specifications, reports and other ephemera related to all three of Milwaukee's courthouses.

Access and Use: No restrictions

Language: English

Notes: The collection was processed by Steve Daily, September 11, 1993, and added to by Kevin Abing on August 28, 1999.

Original newspapers and books that were placed in a lead box in the second Milwaukee County Courthouse in 1870 and were turned over to MCHS by Lawrence J. Timmerman, Chairman of County Board. A portion of these materials, which previously comprised box 3 of this collection, were deaccessioned in 2025 due to their extremely poor physical condition and lack of unique value. Those materials are listed, as best could be identified, at the end of this finding aid.

Arrangement:

Folder Heading	Box #	File #
First and second buildings: -Specifications on New Courthouse, 1867-1872 booklet -Articles and poem on 1st and 2nd Courthouse. -Resolution, n.d.	1	1
Survey-Second Courthouse, 12-13-1912. EXTREMELY FRAGILE--HANDLE WITH CARE	1	2
Third building: -"Where shall Milwaukee's New Courthouse be Located?" pamphlet, n.d.	1	3

- "Programme of Competition for the Selection of an Architect for the Courthouse of Milwaukee County", Dec. 1926. - "Know your Courthouse...Its Roots!" pamphlet, n.d. - Courthouse ground breaking and cornerstone ceremony, 1929-1930 - "The Courthouse, Annex and Safety Building Guide Book," n.d.		
Third Building--Remodeling--Jury Assembly Room: - Memorandums and drawing, 1964-1966	1	4
Third Building--Remodeling--Four Small Courtrooms: - Memorandums and drawing, 1966-1968	1	5
Third Building--Remodeling--Seventh Floor Furnishings: - Memorandums, 1968	1	6
Third Building--Remodeling--Sixth Floor Equipment, etc.: - Memorandums, bid information, and drawings, 1966-1970	1	7
Third Building--Remodeling--Sixth Floor: - General correspondence, memorandums, and drawings, 1968-1970 - Blueprint; Electrical revisions, 2-6-70	1	8
"Specifications for the Milwaukee County Courthouse Milwaukee, Wisconsin" Oct. 15, 1928.	1	Loose
"Report of Committee on Construction of New Courthouse Milwaukee County, Wisconsin" 1913. 2 copies. (Includes pictures and floor plans of courthouses from all over the United States, including Milwaukee's first and second buildings.)	1	Loose
SECOND COURTHOUSE CORNERSTONE CONTENTS		
"Rules, List of Members, and Standing Committees of the Board of Supervisors of Milwaukee County, 1870"	2	9
"Charter and Ordinances of the City of Milwaukee...Common Council, 1852"	2	10
"Edwards' Milwaukee Directory, 1865"	2	11
Facsimile of 1847-48 Milwaukee City Directory	2	12
<i>Star of Bethlehem</i> newspaper vol.1, no.12, 1870	2	13
<i>The Detector</i> -A journal published by the Protective and Collective Bureau of Milwaukee, vol.1, no. 2, Sept. 8, 1870	2	14
"Twelfth Annual Statement of the Trade and Commerce of Milwaukee, 1870"	2	15
*Separated to Unpublished Manuscripts: "Old Courthouse Tales from Milwaukee Journal, March 20, 1932" (#262)(MISSING)05/2015		

SECOND COURTHOUSE CORNERSTONE CONTENTS DISCARDED DUE TO CONDITION
1870 Milwaukee city directory
<i>Charter and Ordinances of the City of Milwaukee</i> , 1853
<i>Chronicles of the City of Milwaukee</i> by A. C. Wheeler (date not determined due to poor condition)
Fragment of newspaper (neither identified nor date determined due to poor condition)
<i>Inaugural Address of the Mayor, Hon. Edward O'Neill</i> , Apr. 20, 1869

Northwestern National Fire and Marine Insurance Company card, undated
<i>Proceedings of the [missing] Grand Lodge of [missing] Accepted Mason of the [missing] Wisconsin</i> (neither fully identified nor date determined due to poor condition)
<i>Religion und Fortschritt: Ein Vortrag (Religion and Progress: A Lecture)</i> by Jens L. Christensen, February 1889
September 7, 1870, edition of <i>Der Herold</i> (newspaper)
September 8, 1870, issue of <i>The Detector</i> (newspaper)
Wisconsin yearbook or almanac (neither fully identified nor date determined due to poor condition)