



Frederick C. Gunn Papers (K0305)

Collection Number: K0305

Collection Title: Frederick C. Gunn Papers

Dates: 1874-1986

Creator: Gunn, Frederick C., 1865-1959

Abstract: The collection contains the papers of the Kansas City architect Frederick C. Gunn. These papers generally consist of personal papers and diaries, family papers relating to Gunn's parents, Major Otis Gunn and Mary Gunn, and papers related to Gunn's architectural business.

Collection Size: 2.5 cubic feet
(55 folders, 19 photographic images)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at kansascity@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

Restrictions on Use: The Donor has given, assigned, and transferred to the University all copyrights, and associated rights the Donor may possess in the materials.

Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Frederick C. Gunn Papers* (K0305); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Kansas City].

Donor Information: The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Evelyn Gunn Fisher on October 10, 1992 (Accession No. KA0718).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Frederick C. Gunn Papers can be found in the following collections:

Missouri Valley Chapter-Society of Architectural Historians (MVC-SAH) Architectural Records Collection (K0006)

Missouri Architectural Collection (K0009)

Processed by: Processed by Mimi Loran, October 2017. Finding aid format updated by Mimi Loran, July 2018.

Historical Note:

Frederick C. Gunn was a notable Kansas Citian and son of Major Otis B. Gunn and Mary Helen Crosby Gunn. Major O. B. Gunn was a prominent civil engineer who worked primarily on railroads and bridges that helped in the development of the Midwest.

His father, Major Otis B. Gunn, worked on the Rochester and Niagara Falls Railroad when he married Mary Helen Crosby in 1853. They moved to Wyandotte County, Kansas, in 1856 and lived there during the Civil War. Otis Gunn was the first member of the Kansas Senate elected from Wyandotte County, later became a major in the fourth Kansas Volunteers, and served on the staff of the war governor, Charles Robinson. Major Gunn acted in the capacity of chief engineer in the building of Kansas City's Union Depot, played a leading role in the construction of the Hannibal Bridge over the Missouri River, and took an active part in the railroad development of the Midwest. Otis and Mary had five children together, but only Vara Helen Gunn Whitehead, Frederick C. Gunn, and Ellen Gunn Howard lived to adulthood. Charles Gunn and Lucy Gunn died as children.

Frederick C. Gunn studied architecture at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, before returning to Kansas. In the early 1890's, Frederick Gunn was in partnership with architect Louis Curtiss. Together they designed buildings such as the Missouri State Building for the 1893 World's Colombian Exposition in Chicago and the Progress Club House. They, together with F. E. Hill, planned Oak Hall for William Rockhill Nelson. Later in his career, Frederick Gunn planned and helped design several Kansas City buildings such as General Hospital No. 1 and 2, the City Market (1938), the Jackson County Court House (1934), the Mercantile Building, and the headquarters of the Church of the Nazarene.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following seven series and three subseries. The materials in the series have been arranged alphabetically:

Personal Papers

Diaries

Family Papers

Mary Gunn

Major Otis B. Gunn

Family Photographs

Business Papers

Visual Materials

Artifacts

Oversize

Scope and Content Note:

Personal Papers

This series contains newspaper clippings related to Gunn and his work, and ephemeral material. The Diaries subseries contains the daily dairies of Gunn from the 1890s to the 1950s and includes information like the addresses of clients and friends, Gunn's daily calendar, notes, sketches, and expenditures.

Family Papers

This series contains material related to Gunn's parents, Otis B. Gunn and Mary Gunn. The Mary Gunn subseries includes newspaper clippings and a ledger containing the contents and wishes regarding her estate. The Major Otis B. Gunn subseries contains material related to his trip to Mexico, scrapbooks related to his civil engineering work with the American Bridge Co., and four copies of his book "Bullion v. Coin." In addition, there is historical information on the town of Tescott, Kansas, and Otis Gunn's influence on the town.

Family Photographs

This series contains five black and white images of the Gunn family including Mary, Otis, and Frederick, along with other members of the extended Gunn family.

Business Papers

This series contains material related to Frederick C. Gunn's architectural business and work. This series contains architectural pamphlets related to work that Gunn did around greater Kansas City, building codes, the many business cards of both clients and contractors that Gunn kept throughout the years, a map of the General Hospital layout, and newspaper clippings related to Gunn's work.

Visual Materials

This series contains identified ambrotypes, daguerreotypes, and tintypes of Gunn family members.

Artifacts

This series contains two medals awarded by the American Institute of Architects and the Business District League of Kansas City for his contributions to architecture in Kansas City.

Oversize

This series contains plans for the Gunn family cemetery plot, concept drawings for architectural works by Gunn, and family photographs.

Container List:

f. 1-19	Personal Papers
Box 001 f. 1-5	Diaries, 1895-1956
Box 002 f. 6-10	Diaries, 1895-1956
Box 003 f. 11-15	Diaries, 1895-1956
Box 004 f. 16-17	Diaries, 1895-1956

f. 20-30	Family Papers
Box 005	f. 20-21 Mary Gunn
	f. 20 Newspaper Clippings, 1913-1919
	f. 21 Will and Estate, 1918-1928
	f. 22-30 Major Otis B. Gunn
	f. 22 Mexico Trip, 1896
	f. 23 Scrapbook One, 1874-1875
	f. 24 Scrapbook Two, 1892-1895
	f. 25-29 Silver Question, 1894
	f. 26-29 "Bullion vs. Coin," 1895
	f. 30 Town of Tescott, 1986
f. 31	Family Photographs
	f. 31 Photographs, 1908-1933
f. 32-38	Business Papers
	f. 32 Architectural Pamphlets, 1932-1934
	f. 33 Building Code, 1927
	f. 34 Building Department, 1915-1916
	f. 35 Business Cards, 1900-1959
	f. 36 General Hospital Map No. 1, no date
	f. 37 Newspaper Clippings, 1930
	f. 38 Receipts, 1897-1902
f. 39-50	Visual Materials
	f. 39-40 Ambrotypes, no date
	f. 41-48 Daguerreotypes, 1852
	f. 49-50 Tintypes, no date
f. 51-52	Artifacts
	f. 51 American Institute of Architects Honor Award, 1935
	f. 52 Business District League, Best New Building, 1928
f. 53-55	Oversize
	f. 53 Concept Drawings, no date
	f. 54 Plans, no date
	f. 55 Photographs, 1908-1947

Index:

Index Term	Folder	Image
American Bridge Company. Engineering Department	23-24	Yes
Architecture	32-38	
Civil engineering	22-30	Yes
General Hospital No. 1, Kansas City, Missouri	32-42	
General Hospital No. 2, Kansas City, Missouri	32-42	
Gunn, Frederick C., 1865-1959	1-19, 31-54	Yes
Gunn, Mary	20-21, 43-54	Yes
Gunn, Otis B.	22-30, 43-54	Yes
Hannibal Bridge, Kansas City, Missouri	22-30	
Jackson County Courthouse--Kansas City	32-40	
Union Depot	22-30	

