

K Convention Halls and Municipal Auditorium Scrapbook, 1899-1954
0938 0.25 cubic feet
NSA

DIGITIZED MATERIALS

This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri-Research Center, Kansas City](http://www.shsmo.org). If you would like more information, please contact us at kansascity@shsmo.org.

INTRODUCTION

The collection consists of a scrapbook of documents and photographs related to the Kansas City Convention Hall and Municipal Auditorium from 1899-1954.

DONOR INFORMATION

The scrapbook was donated to the University of Missouri as part of the collection of the Native Sons of Greater Kansas City on 7/17/1990 (Accession No. KA0590).

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HISTORICAL SKETCH

The Kansas City Conventional Hall served as an event space for Kansas City, Missouri, hosting the 1900 Democratic National Convention and 1928 Republican National Convention. It was designed by Frederick E. Hill and built at the corner of 13th and Central. The Convention Hall opened on February 22, 1899, with a performance by John Philip Sousa and his band. The original Convention Hall was destroyed in a fire on April 4, 1900, and rebuilt in 90 days in an effort that was called "Kansas City Spirit." The building was torn down in 1936, and the space became a parking lot for the new Municipal Auditorium.

Municipal Auditorium is a multi-purpose facility located in Kansas City, Missouri. Municipal Auditorium opened in 1936, replacing the old Convention Hall. The facility has hosted numerous important events, including many sporting events.

The stage production of "The Miracle" was presented in Kansas City at the Convention Hall, running from November 22, 1926, to December 11, 1926. This religious pantomime based on a Christian legend was originally staged and produced by Max Reinhardt. The show originated in London in 1911 and played to 16 cities all over Europe before coming to the United States. It was produced in the United States by Morris Gest with set designs by Norman-Bel Geddes. For the performance of "The Miracle," the Convention Hall was transformed into a medieval cathedral, and the audience was incorporated into the setting. The cast included 600 performers and there

was a large choir, an orchestra, a pipe organ and bells and chimes. There were reportedly 4,500 people in attendance on opening night, with an overall attendance of 88,000. The music was written by Engelbert Humperdinck, using a foundation of mostly hymns and folksongs.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of a scrapbook of documents and photographs related to the Kansas City Convention Hall and Municipal Auditorium from 1899-1954. The scrapbook is split into two sections – the first section titled “Two Convention Halls”, containing various documents related to both convention halls and Municipal Auditorium, and the second section containing documents concerning the 1926 performance of “The Miracle”.

The first half of the scrapbook contains news articles, ephemera, financial documents, correspondence, and photographs from 1899 to 1954. The news articles include various event summaries, event announcements, and performance reviews; the ephemera includes a Democratic National Convention guest ticket from 1900, a Republican National Convention guest ticket from 1928, stock share certificates, and programs for the formal opening of the Convention Hall in 1899; the correspondence includes typewritten letters written by Louis Shouse concerning business related to the Convention Hall; and the photographs include images of the Conventional Hall after the 1900 fire, images of the Republican Convention of 1928, and an image of Louis Shouse, Secretary of the Kansas City Convention Hall for about 30 years.

The second half of the scrapbook contains news articles, ephemera, correspondence, promotional materials, and a photograph related to the 1926 performance of “The Miracle” at the Kansas City Convention Hall. The news articles consist of summaries and reviews of “The Miracle”; the ephemera consists of programs, business cards, a ticket order form, and an agreement to lease the Conventional Hall for the performances of “The Miracle”; the correspondence consists of typewritten letters and cost summaries; the promotional materials include news advertisements and typewritten promotional letters; and the photograph is a signed 1926 image of the stage setting of “The Miracle”.

An index of terms is also included for the entire scrapbook.

PREFERRED CITATION

Specific item; box number; folder number; *Convention Halls and Municipal Auditorium Scrapbook (K0938)*; The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-KC].

INVENTORY

- f. 1 Scrapbook, Two Convention Halls, 1899-1954
- f. 2 Loose items from Two Convention Halls, 1899-1954
- f. 3 Scrapbook, “The Miracle” Contracts and Promotion, 1926

f. 4 Loose items from "The Miracle" Contracts and Promotion, 1926

LOCATION NOTE

The collection is stored onsite. Some materials from the scrapbook have been digitized. Contact the research center for additional information.

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