

Guide to Six mounted photographs of the Library of Congress by Levin C. Handy C0420

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circa 1890s-1900s

Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

C0420

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/694

Unit Date

circa 1890s-1900s

box

1

Language

English .

Abstract

Six mounted photographs of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., by photographer Levin C. Handy.

source

Handy, Levin C. (Levin Corbin), 1855-1932

Creator

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Extent

.25 Linear Feet 1 box

Physical Location

R 71, C 1, S 5

Repository

George Mason University. Libraries. Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no access restrictions.

Use Restrictions

Public Domain. There are no known restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Purchased from Charles B. Wood in November 2006.

Processing Information

Processing and finding aid completed by Meghan Glasbrenner in January 2024.

Preferred Citation

Six mounted photographs of the Library of Congress by Levin C. Handy, C0420, Special Collections Research Center, George Mason University Libraries

Biographical and Historical Information

Levin Corbin Handy was born on August 10, 1855 in Washington, D.C. to Samuel S. and Mary A. Handy. In 1867, he began work as an apprentice to photographer Mathew B. Brady at his Washington, D.C. studio and by 1871 had established his own photographic business in the city. In 1880, Handy began a business partnership with fellow photographer Samuel C. Chester and in 1882 they opened a studio in Cape May, New Jersey, along with establishing a partnership with Brady to sell images from the American Civil War. Handy would continue to maintain a successful practice in Washington, D.C., the L.C. Handy Studio, which offered both traditional photographic services, particularly for the Library of Congress and other governmental agencies, and duplication services for Library patrons and members of the United States Congress. Between 1880-1896 his studio also documented the construction of the Library of Congress' new building, known today as the Thomas Jefferson Building. Handy passed away at his home in Washington, D.C. on March 23, 1932.

The Library of Congress began in 1800 and was initially located in the west center building of the United States Capitol. Despite several attempts at enlarging and remodeling, the Library never had adequate space to store its collections properly. In 1871, Librarian of Congress Ainsworth Rand Spofford suggested the construction of a new, separate, Library of Congress building, but it wasn't until 1886 that the project was authorized. Based on the Paris Opera House, this new building was viewed at the time as an example of "Italian Renaissance" architecture, but today is considered an example of the "Beaux Arts" style, defined by its heavily ornamental and theatrical features. The new Library of Congress building opened on November 1, 1897 and was known simply as the Library of Congress or Main Building until it was named for Thomas Jefferson in 1980.

Scope and Content

Six mounted photographs of the Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building in Washington, D.C., by photographer Levin C. Handy. Locations and details depicted include the following: Building Exterior, Reading Room, North Stairway - Main Entrance Hall, Gallery Floor - Main Entrance Hall, Stair Hall Reading Room Gallery - Main Entrance (including view of "Mosaic of Minerva" by Elihu Vedder), and the Main Entrance Hall. Each photograph measures 8" x 10" and mounting board adds approximately 2-3 inches of matting.

Related Materials

The Special Collections Research Center holds other photograph collections featuring architecture including the Randolph Lytton historic Washington, D.C. postcards and photographs collection and the Jacob Ruben Newburgh, New York photographs.

The Library of Congress' Digital Collections include the Brady-Handy Collection and the Archives at Yale hold the Mathew B. Brady and Levin Corbin Handy Photographic Studios Collection.

Keywords

Photographs

Photography

Washington (D.C.)

Architecture

Library of Congress

Handy, Levin C. (Levin Corbin), 1855-1932

Bibliography

"Digital Collections: Brady-Handy Collection." n.d. Library of Congress. Accessed January 23, 2024. <https://www.loc.gov/collections/brady-handy/about-this-collection/>.

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Mason, Matthew Daniel. 2007. "Collection: Mathew B. Brady and Levin Corbin Handy Photographic Studios Collection." Archives at Yale. September 2007. <https://archives.yale.edu/repositories/11/resources/769>.

"Thomas Jefferson Building." n.d. Architect of the Capitol. Accessed January 23, 2024.

<https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/buildings-grounds/library-of-congress/thomas-jefferson-building>.

Arrangement

This is a single box collection.