Nassau Hall Iconography, 1760-2012: Finding Aid

Summary Information

Call number: AC177
Repository: Princeton University. Library. Dept. of Rare Books and Special Collections.
Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library.
Princeton University Archives.
65 Olden Street Princeton, New Jersey 08540 USA
Size: 12.66 linear feet
6 boxes and 1 oversized folder
Language(s) of Material: English
Abstract: The collection contains representations of Nassau Hall and other historic buildings of Princeton University. Most of them are reproductions, some photographic.
Location: This collection is stored onsite at the Mudd Manuscript Library.
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Built in 1756, Nassau Hall originally housed the entire College of New Jersey, as Princeton University was then named. Designed by Robert Smith and William Shippen, the building was named for King William III, Prince of Orange, of the House of Nassau. Today, Nassau Hall houses the president's and other administrative offices. A fire in 1802 left only the walls standing. Benjamin Henry Latrobe was engaged to rebuild it along its original lines. After an 1855 fire, John Notman, who was also the architect for Prospect House and Walter Lowrie House, made a number of exterior changes to the building, including the staircases at the ends of the building and the arched front doorway. The sturdy stone structure has survived bombardment during the American Revolution (a cannonball scar is visible on the exterior south wall of the west wing), occupation by troops of both sides during the war, and two fires. George Washington drove the British from Nassau Hall in 1777, and during the later half of 1783, it served as the Capitol of the United States. On August 26th of that year, Washington returned to Nassau Hall to receive the thanks of the Continental Congress for his conduct of the war, and on October 31st news arrived there that the Treaty of Paris had been signed, formally ending the American Revolution. The federal government has recognized its momentous early history, being given both national landmark status and acknowledged with a commemorative postage stamp that was issued to celebrate its 1956 bicentennial.

The first is a rendering of Nassau Hall by Dawkins, from New American Magazine, published in 1760, four years after the building was completed. This building was later seriously damaged during the American Revolution. Paintings by Peale, Polk and Trumbull depicting George Washington and the Battle of Princeton have Nassau Hall in the backdrop, thus reminding the viewer of Princeton's contribution to the Revolutionary cause and its subsequent sufferings.

Nassau Hall was severely damaged by fire several times in the course of the nineteenth century. Latrobe's sketch and floor plan were intended for reconstruction of the building after one such disaster of 1802. This remodeled building lasted and remained a favorite subject of painters' and engravers' until another fire in 1855 required yet another reconstruction. Drawings and engravings from the nineteenth century show the differences of these two designs.

The collection includes paintings and drawings of a few other buildings at Princeton. Stanhope Hall and Philosophical Hall were both built in 1803. While the former has housed the college library, class rooms and various administrative offices over time, the latter, where mathematics and natural philosophy classes were conducted, was razed in 1873 to make room for Chancellor Green Library. East College, an exact duplicate of West College, served exclusively as a dormitory for over ninety years before it was demolished in 1896. The plans of Nassau Hall and all these buildings reflect the nineteenth-century preference for a symmetrical quadrangle.

The folder labeled "Twentieth Century Renderings" contains several original items such as a pen drawing, a water color painting and a few prints, all of Nassau Hall. Also included are a blueprint of the first floor, Nassau Hall, (1936) and its reproductions.

Except for the folder labeled "Twentieth Century Renderings," most of the items in this collection are listed within chapter seven of Nassau Hall: 1756-1956. This volume was commissioned by the
Board of Trustees of Princeton University to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Nassau Hall. The information on the iconography included in Nassau Hall is based on research done by Varnum Lansing Collins. The commentary on each image listed in the book has been included with the respective image.

**Arrangement**

Series 1: Nassau Hall Iconography, Chronological, is arranged by the date of the materials; Series 2: Additions, is arranged in the order that the materials were donated or transferred to the library.

Series 1: Nassau Hall Iconography, Chronological, 1760 March-2999
Series 2: Nassau Hall Iconography, Additions, 1807-2012

**Access and Use**

**Access**

The collection is current out for digitization and is not available for research use. Collection is open for research use.

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**Related Materials**

**Related Archival Material**

Historical Subject Files - Grounds and Buildings (AC#109)
Nassau Hall Iconography (Box 7, Folder 10)
Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Nassau Hall Iconography, Box and Folder Number; University Archives, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

Processing Information


Encoding


Descriptive Rules Used

Finding aid content adheres to that prescribed by Describing Archives: A Content Standard.

Subject Headings

- Nassau Hall (Princeton, N.J.)
- Princeton University -- Architecture.
- Buildings -- New Jersey -- Princeton.
- College buildings -- New Jersey -- Princeton.
- Princeton (N.J.) -- Buildings, structures, etc. -- History.
- Photographs.
- Drawings.
- Princeton University
Series 1: Nassau Hall Iconography, Chronological, 1760 March-2999

Arrangement: The materials are arranged by their date of creation, from the earliest to the most recent.

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<th>Item</th>
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<tr>
<td>New American Magazine, Reproductions, 1760 March</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 1</td>
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<td>Doolittle after Dawkins, Reproductions, circa 1776</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Medals, Reproductions, 1784, 1788</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peale, Polk &amp; Trumbull, Battle Paintings, Reproductions, 1784-</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paintings by Unknown Artist, Reproduction after Dawkins, circa 1800</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latrobe Sketch, Floor Plan, Reproduction, 1802, 1803</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primitive Painting or Drawing, Reproduction, circa 1825</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description: After 1804/05: Shows Stanhope and Philosophical Halls; Before 1833: East College not shown. Size of trees indicates 1825.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commencement Ball Invitation, Reproduction, 1825</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bufford Lithograph Reproductions, circa 1838</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 9</td>
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<td>1831: Cut on 1831 Commencement Oration; 1832: Cut on Stationery; 1832: Cut from Magazine; 1836: Cut from &quot;the Casket,&quot; Savage (1833), 1830s</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 10</td>
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<td>Hornor-Gilbert. Same as Hornor-Gilbert Engraving Used in Catalogues 1840/41-1853/54, But without Names of Buildings in Caption, circa 1840</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nassau Monthly Cut Same as Letterhead, 1840s</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 12</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Description: Probably not used in Monthly before September 1845. By 1848, a cut of one of the Halls was being used.</td>
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<td>Wash Drawing, 1840</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 13</td>
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<td>J. R. Clark. Engraving; Used as Letterhead, circa 1844</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 14</td>
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<td>Cut on Map of Mercer County, 1849</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 15</td>
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<td>R.S. Gilbert, Reproduction, 1852</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hornor-Gilbert. Engravings Used as Front Pieces in Catalogues, 1840-1854</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description: Also Used, as Letterhead. Those dated 1840 &amp; 1841 have names of Hornor and Gilbert which the later ones lack.</td>
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<td>Cyclopaedia of American Literature, 1855</td>
<td>Box: 1 Folder: 18</td>
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<td>Lithograph, Unsigned, 1856</td>
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Series 2: Nassau Hall Iconography, Additions, 1807-2012

Arrangement: The materials are arranged in the order that they were added to the collection.

"A North West Prospect of Nassau-Hall with a Front View of the Presidents House in New Jersey," print of Nassau Hall as it existed circa 1775 mounted on wood, varnished and framed, circa 1894

  itemnumber: E54
  Description: Presented by Moses Taylor Pyne, Class of 1877.

Black and white drawing of Nassau Hall, possibly by Pennington Satterthwaite, Class of 1893, circa 1893

"Nassau Hallmark," Print of Pen and Ink Drawing of Nassau Hall, 1981

  accessionnumber: AR.2010.013
  Size: 2 prints
  Dimensions: 12 x 17 inches and 23 x 32.5 inches

"Nassau Hall," Print of the Painting by Dudley Morris, Published by The Little Gallery, Princeton, New Jersey, circa 1940-1958

  accessionnumber: AR.2010.014

Pall Mall Cigarette Advertisement Featuring Nassau Hall from The Country Life Press, circa 1910-1930

  accessionnumber: AR.2011.035
"Nassau Hall," by J.R. Mycack, circa 1972
accessionnumber: AR.2011.014

Image of Bufford Lithograph on Sheet Music Cover, circa 1890-1920
accessionnumber: AR.2010.133

"View of Nassau Hall," published by George Thompson, circa 1860
accessionnumber: AR.2011.019

Etching by James H. Fincken, 1906

Images of the Battle of Princeton, 1970 and undated

Etching of Nassau Hall Reflected in Cannon, printed by Huston, Ashmead & Co., Philadelphia, undated

Proof and Prints of Etching by Samuel Chamberlain, undated

Various 20th-Century Wood Block Prints, Etchings, etc., circa 1900-1970

"Princeton University, Nassau Hall, The P-rade" by John Hutton, Class of 1982, circa 2012
accessionnumber: AR.2012.110
Creator: Hutton, John

Silk-screen Print of Nassau Hall, 1985
accessionnumber: AR.2012.136
Creator: Hazen, Joseph

Description: One silk-screened print of Nassau Hall created by Joe Hazen '35 for the Class of 1935's 50th reunion.

"A Northwest Prospect of Nassau Hall with a Front View of the President's House in New Jersey.", 1807

Description: J. Fisher's 1807 oil copy of a 1764 engraving by Henry Dawkins.