
George B. Tatum papers
1900–1940

Abstract: The George B. Tatum papers comprise the reference files of a noted American architectural historian who compiled and organized numerous architectural plans, diagrams, black-and-white illustrations, tear sheets, articles, and selected photographs for the period 1900 to 1940.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 557


Title: George B. Tatum papers

Inclusive Dates: 1900–1940

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Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

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Shelving Summary: Boxes 1-6: Shelved in SPEC MSS record center cartons

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Biographical Note

George B. Tatum (1917–2008) was a nationally recognized architectural historian with special interest in the history of gardens and American architecture, particularly in the Philadelphia area.

Sources:

Biographical information supplied by the University of Delaware, University Archives.
Scope and Content Note

The George B. Tatum papers comprise the reference files of a noted American architectural historian who compiled and organized numerous architectural plans, diagrams, black-and-white illustrations, tear sheets, articles, and selected photographs of architecture from the period 1900 to 1940. The 6 linear feet of material is composed primarily of published articles and pictures from architectural magazines and journals such as American Architect, American Architect and Building News, American Architect and Architecture, Architecture, Architectural Forum, Architectural Record, Architectural Review, House Beautiful, and Pencil Points.

The materials are organized into five series. The first three series reflect the original order and arrangement established by Tatum, offering insight into his research and organization methods. Series I. Styles, brings together examples of a variety of architectural styles arranged roughly chronologically. Series II. Buildings, illustrates a variety of building types that Tatum arranged by function, such as residential, commercial, educational, industrial, and others. Series III. Architectural details, focuses on individual structural and decorative features from many different architectural styles. Tatum arranged these in alphabetical order by subject (such as corbels, fireplaces, fountains, keystones, organ cases, roofs, spires, urns, windows, etc.) and included a few broader categories, such as details of construction, engineering and equipment, and sketches and rendering.

The last two series do not represent Tatum's original arrangement. Although he gathered information about individual architects and historical properties, Tatum only loosely organized these materials. Series IV. Architects, brings together Tatum's clippings and articles about specific architects and architectural firms working in the United States during the 1920s–1930s. Arranged alphabetically by name, several of the firms and architects found here illustrate Tatum's special interest in American architecture and the Philadelphia region, including Day & Klauder; Edmund B. Gilchrist; Mellor & Meigs; R. Brognard Okie; and Verna Cook Salomonsky. Of particular note is Homsey Architects, Inc. of Wilmington, Delaware, the architectural firm of Victoine and Samuel Homsey (F207). Their projects included the Wilmington Drama League Theater, a housing development in Seaford, Delaware, a shooting box at Cat Island Plantation in Georgetown, South Carolina, the Robertson residence in Centerville, Delaware, and their own home in Hockessin, Delaware. Tatum also collected materials about architects of national and international acclaim, like McKim, Mead & White; Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson; Benno Janssen (Janssen & Abbott); John Russell Pope; Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens; and Eliel Saarinen.

Series V. Historic Properties, incorporates clippings and articles collected by Tatum about several individual works of architecture, including the monastery of Mont-Saint-Michel in France, Williamsburg and Mount Vernon in Virginia, selected Louisiana plantations and architectural views of New Orleans. Notably, Tatum collected many installments of Records of Early American Architecture, a monographic series providing detailed research, measured drawings, and photographs of early American architecture, especially houses (F224 and F225). Tatum also kept several brochures, booklets, and trade catalogs pertaining to 1920s–1930s suburban housing developments, like Merion Park in Lower Merion Township and Forest Hills Gardens in Forest Hills, New York (F226).
While the George B. Tatum papers represent an important resource for the study of pre-World War II architecture, they also offer special insight into the research methods and organizational structure of an important American author and teacher of architectural and landscape design history.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Abbott, Franklin.
Baum, Dwight James, 1886-1939.
Bullard, Roger H.
Eyre, Wilson, 1858-1944.
Gilbert, Cass, 1859-1934.
Gilchrist, Edmund B. (Edmund Beaman), 1885-1953.
Homsey, Samuel Eldon.
Homsey, Victorine Du Pont.
Janssen, Benno, 1874-1964.
Lindeberg, H. T. (Harrie Thomas), b. 1879.
Lutyens, Edwin Landseer, Sir, 1869-1944.
McGoodwin, Robert Rodes, 1886-1967.
Medary, Milton Bennett, 1874-1929.
Okie, R. Brognard (Richardson Brognard), 1875-1945.
Platt, Charles A. (Charles Adams), 1861-1933.
Pope, John Russell, 1874-1937.
Saarinen, Eliel, 1873-1950.
Wills, Royal Barry, 1895-1962.

Corporate Names

Albro & Lindeberg.
Carrère & Hastings.
Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson.
Day & Klauder.
Delano & Aldrich.
Homsey Architects, Inc.
Janssen & Abbott.
McKim, Mead & White.
Mellor, Meigs & Howe.

**Topical Terms**

Architects--United States--20th century--Sources.
Architects--20th century--Sources.
Architecture--United States--20th century--Sources.
Architecture, Modern--20th century--Sources.
Architecture--Study and teaching--United States--20th century--Sources.
Buildings--Designs and Plans--Sources.
Architecture--Details--Sources.
Decoration and ornament, Architectural--Sources.
Interior decoration--Sources.
Interior architecture--United States--20th century--Sources.
Landscape architecture--United States--20th century--Sources.

**Geographic Names**

Wilmington (Del.)--Buildings, structures, etc.--History--20th century--Sources.
Philadelphia (Pa.)--Buildings, structures, etc.--History--20th century--Sources.
Williamsburg (Va.)--Buildings, structures, etc.--History--20th century--Sources.
Le Mont-Saint-Michel (France)--History--20th century--Sources.
Mount Vernon (Va.)--Buildings, structures, etc.--History--20th century--Sources.

**Form/Genre Terms**
Clippings (information artifacts)
Arrangement

I. Styles

II. Buildings
   II.A. Residential buildings
   II.B Partly Residential Buildings
   II.C Educational Buildings
   II.D. Occupational Buildings
   II.E. Devotional Buildings
   II.F. Remedial Buildings
   II.G. Transportation Buildings

III. Architectural Details

IV. Architects

V. Historic Properties
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Group Houses [Box 1 F26]

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