Inventory of the Board of State Capitol Commissioners Records, 1856-1860

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Inventory of the Board of State Capitol Commissioners Records, 1856-1860

Inventory: F3580

California State Archives
Office of the Secretary of State
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Introduction
It was not until 1854 that Sacramento became the permanent site of the state capital. The city allowed the state the use of its new county courthouse as a temporary capitol building to be used until a permanent structure could be erected. The Legislature occupied the building until December, 1869, when the current capitol building became suitable for use by the Legislature and State offices. (See series entry 19, ALTERATIONS AND USE OF THE SACRAMENTO COUNTY COURTHOUSE BY THE STATE, 1854-1855; note records in this series in no way relate to the Capitol Commission which was not established until 1856.)

On April 18, 1856, the Legislature of the State of California provided for the construction of a state capitol building to house the Legislature, Governor, state offices, and the State Library. It was to occupy a site provided by the city of Sacramento, bounded by Ninth, Tenth, I and J streets (the current site of City Plaza). The Act providing for its construction (Stats. 1856, Chap. 95, p. 110) included a provision for the establishment of a Board of State Capitol Commissioners (to be referred to as either the Commission or the Board in this study aid), whose duty it shall be to contract for and superintend the
construction of a state capitol.... The Commission, composed of the Secretary of State, ex-officio Superintendent of
Buildings, the Controller of the State, and Gilbert Griswold of Sacramento, was empowered to advertise for plans, to choose
the best architectural design, and to draw up specifications for contracts. To aid them in these functions, they were allowed
to appoint a professional architect to the position of superintendent, who would provide expert advice on the feasibility of
architectural plans, judge the quality of materials, and report on the progress of construction. The building was to be
completed on or before January 1, 1858 at a cost not to exceed $300,000.

Shortly after being created, the Commission accepted the design of Reuben Clark, who they then appointed to the position
of superintendent. Joseph Nougues of Sacramento, builder of the Sacramento County Courthouse, received the construction
contract. On December 4, 1856 ground was broken on the project, but work ceased eleven days later when the Commission
refused to issue bonds. The Board determined that a provision of the 1856 Act providing for a $300,000 indebtedness to
finance the project violated Article VIII of the State Constitution. The Board refused to proceed and all construction ceased.
Ownership of the capitol site reverted back to the City of Sacramento.

The State did not attempt to construct a capitol again until March 29, 1860, when the Legislature passed a new Act (Stats.
1860, Chap. 161, p. 128), superseding the never repealed 1856 Act. Again, the capitol was to house the Legislature,
Governor, state offices, and the State Library. A new Board of State Capitol Commissioners, composed of the Governor,
Secretary of State, State Treasurer, A. C. Monson, and Alfred A. Reddington, was empowered to construct and superintend
the work necessary to erect a state capitol on a tract of land bounded by L and N, 10th and 12th streets. The
responsibilities of the new Commission were essentially the same as those of the 1856 Commission, with the exception
that, while the 1856 Board was required to contract for construction, an 1862 revision of the 1860 Act (Stats. 1862, Chap.
276, p. 309) authorized the Commission to hire workmen and construct the building themselves. They were authorized to
appoint a superintending architect to aid them in judging the quality and durability of materials in the capitol, to oversee
workmanship, and to advise the Commission in all technical matters (the position was abolished in 1874, see Stats. 1873-74,
Chap. 449, p. 662). In order to obtain the land specified in the Act, the Commission was empowered to hold
condemnation hearings, with a judge in attendance, to determine land values and to compensate owners. The entire cost of
the construction was not to exceed $500,000.

With the exception of certain minor revisions, the Capitol was constructed under the provisions of the 1860 Act. On March
29, 1870, the composition of the Board was reduced by two members, leaving only the Governor, the Secretary of State,
and the State Treasurer (Stats. 1869-70, Chap. 338, p. 447). This remained the composition of the Commission throughout
the rest of its existence. In 1889, the Governor's secretary, who had always acted as unofficial secretary of the Board, was
made ex-officio Secretary of the Board of State Capitol Commissioners by a change in section 306 of the political code. In
an 1874 Act, revised in 1880 and 1889, the Commission was empowered to appoint a gardener and permanent ground's
laborers (see, Stats. 1873-74, Chap. 666, p. 937, Stats. 1880, Chap. 101, p. 107, and Stats. 1889, Chap. 287, p. 449). The
gardener was given general control over the Capitol grounds and was to superintend and control the planting and culture of
the vegetation, take direct control over the ground's laborers, and make arrests for criminal or disorderly conduct on the
Capitol grounds.

Under the provisions of the 1860 Act, the Commissioners chose the neo-federalist design of Miner Frederick Butler from
among seven proposed plans on May 19, 1860. Construction commenced on September 24, 1860 and the cornerstone was
laid on May 15th of the next year.

The Commission originally intended to leave the actual construction of the Capitol to contractors whose work would be
overseen by the superintending architect, who would make periodic reports to the Board. The first contractor, Michael
Fennell of San Francisco, however, lacked the funding to complete the Capitol's foundation and basement walls and his
contract had to be broken by a special act of the Legislature (Stats. 1861, Chap. 1029, p. 600). The Commission then let
the contract for the construction of the foundation and basement walls to George W. Blake and P. Edmund O'Connor, who
also proved incapable of completing the terms of their contract (see, Stats. 1862, Chap. 276, p. 309). After these two
failures the Board decided to construct the building themselves and hired laborers in 1862. Contracts were let to provide
materials only, rather than for the construction of portions of the building. The authority of the superintending architect was
increased by the Board to include, not simply oversight, but direction of the work done on the Capitol.

Work progressed slowly. The building was not initially occupied until December 4, 1869, and even then a great deal of
finishing work was left to be done. By February 8, 1874 the building could be considered essentially completed, except for
the attic and basement.

The responsibilities of the Commission involved more than simply the construction of the Capitol building itself. Its authority
was from time to time extended by the Legislature. The Board was responsible not only for the building, but for the
beautification and maintenance of the Capitol grounds as well. On April 4, 1870, the Commission was empowered to erect a
Governor's Mansion on a site to be purchased by the Commission. A lot bounded by L and M, 14th and 15th streets was
purchased for the purpose (see appendix at the end of this study aid). The then Capitol Architect, A. A. Bennett, was, in
addition, made architect for the Governor's mansion. Work commenced on August 26, 1870 and ceased in 1872. The building was never occupied by the Governor, it was deemed unsuitable for residence. In 1874, the Commissioners were ordered to convert it into a state printing office and state armory (see Stats. 1873-74, Chap. 649, p. 903). (For information on the maintenance of the State Printing Office after 1875 see record group, STATE PRINTING PLANT, ETC., BIDS AND PROPOSALS, 1875-1915; note, this record group does not relate to the State Capitol Commission, but to the operations of the Office of the State Printer.)

In 1872, the Commission was authorized to take possession of the blocks between L and M, 12th and 14th streets, and between M and N, 12th and 15th streets (Stats. 1871-72, Chap. 600, pp. 887-89). (See appendix at the end of this study aid). The new land was cleared and added to the Capitol grounds. As in 1860, the Commission was empowered to hold hearings, with a judge in attendance, to determine land values and to compensate owners. The Commission was required to remove the buildings on the land and plant and beautify it.

Throughout the 1880's and early 1890's the Commission was authorized to make a series of improvements to the Capitol grounds. These improvements included the construction of a fence around the Capitol grounds (Stats. 1881, Chap. 64, p. 37), the construction of a sidewalk around the Capitol Park (Stats. 1885, Chap. 12, p. 11), the construction of a new fence around the Capitol grounds (Stats. 1885, Chap. 13, p. 12), the addition of granite steps to the Capitol (Stats. 1889, Chap. 193, p. 224), the construction of footpaths in the Capitol Park (Stats. 1889, Chap. 196, p. 226), the improvement of 10th street between L and N (Stats. 1893, Chap. 35, p. 49), the installation of tile floors in the Capitol (Stats. 1895, Chap. 209, p. 277), and the improvement of certain streets running through the grounds (Stats. 1895, Chap. 212, p. 278).

In 1899, the Commission was again authorized to erect an executive mansion on the Capitol grounds for a total cost of not more than $50,000. Plans were adopted, but because of financial difficulties the building was never constructed. In its place, the Commission was authorized, on March 25, 1903, to purchase the home of Joseph Steffens on 16th and H streets, and to refurbish it as a Governor’s mansion (Stats. 1903, Chap. 279, p. 415).

The last major responsibility given to the Commission was for the renovation of the State Capitol (Stats. 1905, Chap. 183, p. 177; and Stats. 1907, Chap. 176, p. 205). The Commission was empowered to appoint an architect as supervisor to oversee the work. It chose Albert Sutton of Sutton and Weeks of San Francisco. The alterations occurred between 1906 and 1908 and cost $377,925.

On April 1, 1911, the Legislature created the position of Superintendent of Capitol Buildings and Grounds (Stats. 1911, Chap. 340, p. 571). Placed in charge of improvements, maintenance of buildings and the preservation of order in the Capitol grounds, the Superintendent was given all the major responsibilities of the Commission. While not explicitly eliminating the Board of State Capitol Commissioners, the Act specifically negated any section of any previous act which conflicted with it, which, in effect, eliminated the Commission. The Act was intended to replace both the Capitol Commission and the Superintendent of the Capitol Building (charged with the security, cleanliness, and the heating of the Capitol). The authority of the two agencies had always overlapped and the new superintendent assumed the responsibilities of both.

The Commission disbanded in 1911.

The Department of Finance assumed the duties and responsibilities of the Superintendent of Capitol Buildings and Grounds when it was created in 1921.


The Commission's Organization

Based on the records in the State Archives, very little can be said about the structure and administration of the 1856 Commission because very few documents have survived. The Commission met and decided on the architectural plan for the Capitol, drew up specifications, chose a contractor, and appointed a superintendent. It was ultimately responsible to oversee construction and to report to the Legislature on the state of construction (although it disbanded before it could report). The superintendent's function was to oversee daily construction and make periodic reports to the Commission. There is no evidence of any other employees beside the superintendent. None of the minute books, or reports of the commission exist. The records in the State Archives are composed almost entirely of contractor's proposals for the construction of the building.

Far more of the records of the 1860 Commission survived. During most of its existence the Commission was composed of the Governor, Secretary of State, and the State Treasurer. Meetings usually took place in the Governor's office. The Governor's secretary usually acted as the secretary of the Commission, receiving correspondence and filing papers. Since all the members of the Board were heads of far more important executive agencies that occupied most of their time, meetings were infrequent and short. There is no evidence that the Commission ever divided into subcommittees. With the
exception of a few papers from the 1860’s, the administrative records of the Commission are limited exclusively to the minute books. These books contain a fairly complete record of what occurred at Commission meetings and contain copies of much of the Commission’s correspondence. The minute books form the most valuable source of information in the collection and are the first source a researcher should examine.

The major responsibilities of the Commission included:
- Obtaining property for the Capitol and Capitol Park.
- Letting out contracts for materials.
- Oversight of construction.
- Making decisions on technical matters, based on the recommendations of the superintending architect.
- Taking legal action against contractors who failed to meet their agreements.
- Instructing the State Controller to disburse Capitol funds to pay bills and payrolls.
- Ruling on which bills should be paid, based on the advice of the superintending architect.
- Ruling on complaints from laborers and contractors.
- Receiving suggestions and opinions from the public.
- Obtaining reports from experts on the status of construction and the quality of materials; including regular monthly and special reports from the superintending architect and extraordinary reports from engineers on the condition of the building.
- Making reports to the Legislature on the progress of construction and the condition of the building; including a biennial report required by law, and special reports when requested by the Legislature.
- Proposing to the Legislature possible future projects on the Capitol or the Capitol grounds and estimating the probable cost.
- Beautifying and maintaining the Capitol Park.
- Maintaining the buildings within the Park, including the State Printing Office (before 1875) and the Agricultural Exhibit Hall.
- Granting permission for special uses of the Capitol Park, such as the holding of public concerts.
- Organizing special events relating to the construction of the Capitol such as the Cornerstone Ceremony (1861).

To aid it in the construction of the Capitol and the Executive Mansion (1870-74), the Commission was allowed to appoint a superintending architect. The Architect’s responsibilities included, a direction of construction, advising the Board on technical matters, making suggestions on how best to confront construction problems, oversight of the quality of work and materials, taking responsibility for the performance of workmen, making recommendations on the payment of bills, overseeing the day to day performance of contractors, and the making of monthly technical reports on the progress of construction. Underneath the Architect was a series of foremen responsible for the performance of workmen in departments, such as carpentry, masonry, etc. No documents exist relating to the foremen.

The following men held the post of superintending architect:
- Reuben Clark, July 17, 1860-September 4, 1865
- G. P. Cummings, (first term) January 2, 1866-January 22, 1870
- A. A. Bennett, October 7, 1870-December 5, 1871
- G. P. Cummings, (second term) May 8, 1972-February 8, 1874

The position was abolished in 1874, but the Commission occasionally granted the same responsibilities to supervisors of large construction projects. In 1881-1883, William H. Hamilton was made Architect for the construction of a sidewalk and fence around the Capitol; in 1889, C. E. Grunsky was made engineer in charge of improvements to the Capitol Park; and from 1906-1908, Albert Sutton of Sutton and Weeks of San Francisco, was Architect for Capitol renovation. The Architect’s monthly reports for the period between 1862 and 1872 provide the best source of information on the progress of Capitol construction. Although at various times the position of Architect was alternately referred to as supervisor, superintendent, architect, superintending architect, and engineer in charge, the position will be referred to in this study aid as Architect, and documents will be filed under that heading.

Also under the authority of the State Capitol Commission was the position of Capitol gardener, whose responsibilities included the care and beautification of the Capitol Park, the supervision of Park laborers, and the maintenance of order on the grounds.

He designed the floral displays in the Park, made purchases of plants, and advised the Commission on the need for future projects (such as the laying down of foot paths in the Park).
PART I: 1856 - Records of the Board of State Capitol Commissioners, 1856-1860

F3580:1-5

1. 1856 COMMISSION RECORDS. 1856-1860.
   Physical Description: 5ff.
   Scope and Content Note
   Arranged by topic in the following order; proposals, contract, warrant, letter, deposition. Proposals are further arranged in chronological order.
   Contains correspondence to the Commission, nineteen proposals to construct the Capitol, the contract for construction, and a warrant for expenses to H. C. Patrick. Very few records exist; most of the collection is composed of contractors' proposals to construct the Capitol.

   Of special interest is a deposition signed by Secretary of State, David F. Douglass, a State Capitol Commissioner, explaining why the Commission was unable to construct the Capitol under the legislative act (Stats. 1856, Chap. 95, p. 110) creating it (F3580:5).

   Certain contractors' proposals include a published set of specifications for the 1856 Capitol design. The proposals are arranged in alphabetical order by bidder.

PART II: 1860 - Records of the Board of State Capitol Commissioners, 1860-1911

Organizational Records

F3580:6-14.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS. 1860-1908.
   Physical Description: 6 vols. 3ff.
   Scope and Content Note
   Arranged chronologically.

   Minute books; resolutions and memoranda; oaths, affidavits, and resignations of Commission members and Architects. The minute books (F3580:6-11) are the most valuable source of information in the collection containing: a complete record of all debates and Commission votes; resolutions and memoranda of the Commission; the most complete record of payrolls in the record group; lists of pay certificates; selected correspondence from contractors, the Architect, and from the public (such as petitions to use the State Capitol grounds to hold concerts); the Architects' monthly reports on the state of Capitol construction; correspondence sent to and received from the Architect, including Commission instructions to the Architect, and letters from the Architect offering suggestions and describing construction problems; requests for information on the state of construction from the State Legislature; reports from contractors describing difficulties they were facing in fulfilling their contracts; lists of deeds and amounts paid for lands purchased in 1860 and 1872; lists of the expenses of the cornerstone ceremony of 1861; the State Controller's reports on the sale of surplus materials; large orders with merchants for materials; lists of bids for major contracts (such as the contract for the construction of the foundation and basement story walls, 1860); and notices to the public requiring condemned property to be vacated and announcing the acceptance of bids from the public for contracts.

   The oaths of office of many of the Commissioners are located in the record group, OATHS OF OFFICE, File No. 982.
3. CORRESPONDENCE OF COMMISSION. 1860-1898.

Physical Description: 1 vol., 13ff.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically, undated material filed in separate folders at the end of the series. Correspondence is filed in loose folders, with the exception of a press book (F3580:16) containing all outgoing correspondence for the years 1895 through 1898 in alphabetical order by the name of the receiver.

Contains all existing incoming and copies of outgoing correspondence of the Commission with the exception of correspondence from the Architect which is filed under series entry 4, CORRESPONDENCE OF ARCHITECT, 1860-1872.

Primarily contains correspondence from contractors regarding the terms of their contracts and problems in construction, petitions and complaints (primarily about wage rates) from laborers on the State Capitol payroll, requests from State agencies for furnishings in their Capitol offices or for repairs and improvements of buildings on the Capitol grounds (such as the State Agricultural Exhibit Hall), public requests to use the State Capitol Park for various public events and ceremonies (such as the planting of memorial trees and the holding of public concerts), and job applications and recommendations.

Of special interest are charges made by P. J. O'Connor against M. F. Butler, the designer of the Capitol, challenging the originality of his design (F3580:20); records relating to the 1861 cornerstone ceremony (F3580:21); and an 1865 report by the Union League of California charging the then Architect, Reuben Clark, with disloyalty to the Union (F3580:22).

Some of the correspondence from the contractors and most of the outgoing correspondence of the Commission were copied in the minute books. The minute books provide the most complete source of outgoing correspondence. See series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908.

4. CORRESPONDENCE OF ARCHITECT. 1860-1872.

Physical Description: 3ff.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged in chronological order, undated material filed in separate folder at the end of the series.

Includes correspondence sent by the Architect to the Commission, with the exception of the Architects' Monthly Reports which are filed under series entry 5, REPORTS, 1861-1911; his contractors' certificates which are filed under series 13, CERTIFICATES, 1860-1869; and his estimates which are filed under series entry 9, ESTIMATES, 1862-1896.

It also includes all correspondence sent to and received from sources other than the Commission--primarily contractors' letters regarding problems in construction. The Architects' correspondence with the Commission is composed primarily of suggestions on how best to proceed with construction.

Much of the Architects' correspondence with the Commission is copied in the minute books. See, series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908.
Organizational Records

5. REPORTS. 1861-1911.

Physical Description: 4ff.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically.

Includes reports sent by the Commission to the State Legislature, with the exception of the Commission's Annual (1861, 1862) and Biennial (1863-1911) Reports to the Legislature which appear in the Appendices to the Senate and Assembly Journals for the 16th through 32nd session of the Legislature; in the Senate Journal for the 32nd session, pages 14-16; in the Assembly Journal for the 33rd session, pages 32-33; and in the appendices of the Journals of the 34th through 39th sessions of the Legislature. In the period between 1875 and 1880 no Biennial Reports were written, but brief statements on the condition of the Capitol were made in the Governor's messages to the Legislature. Biennial Reports include a brief statement of work done by the Commission over the last two years, a statement of funds expended, suggestions as to future projects that should be considered by the Legislature and estimates of their probable cost, and (in some reports) a statement by the Architect on the progress of construction. The 1870/72 Report includes a report by the Architect on the progress in the construction of the Governor's Mansion, a list of amounts paid on payrolls on the project, a list of all expenditures made to that point, and an estimate of the amount needed to complete the project. The original drafts of the 1861 and 1862 Annual Reports are filed in this series (F3580:32). The 1865/67 Biennial Report became an exhibit in an 1868 Legislative Investigation, see, series entry 16, LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION, 1868. The 1890/94 Biennial Report is attached to the cover of the 1895-1899 minute book (F3580:11). See, series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908. The original drafts of the 1896/98 and 1904/06 Biennial Reports are filed in the record group, LEGISLATIVE PAPERS, LP9:40 and LP11:29.

Other reports of the Commission to the Legislature (other than Biennial Reports) became exhibits in a 1868 Legislative Investigation, see series entry 16, LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION, 1868.

Included in this series are the monthly reports of the Architect (F3580:33). These reports, dating from 1862 to 1872, provide the most valuable source of information in the collection on the progress in construction. Each month the Architect wrote a brief one or two page description of what progress had been made on the Capitol and what problems had been confronted in the previous month. Similar information on the progress of construction can be culled from the Architects' monthly certificates (often written on the same sheet of paper as the reports). See series entry 13, CERTIFICATES, 1860-1869.

Also included in this series are extraordinary reports by special consultants (such as professors of the University of California). The reports deal with the condition of the building, the state of construction, the quality of materials proposed for use in the building, and reports by the State Controller on the sale of surplus materials. Certain reports became exhibits in the 1868 State Senate investigation of the state of Capitol construction. See series entry 16, LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION, 1868. The State Controller's Reports are copied in the minute books. See series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908.

Related to Capitol construction is an 1874 supplement to a report to the Legislature on the acoustics in the Assembly Chamber, composed of full color drawings of the interior of the chamber and the movement of air within it. See record group, LEGISLATIVE PAPERS, LP6:37. This document relates to a report printed in the appendix to the 1874 Journal of the Senate and Assembly, 20th session.

Legal Records
6. CONDEMNATION AND PURCHASE OF PROPERTY. 1860, 1870, and 1872.

Physical Description: 2 vols. 3ff.
Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically.
Documents relate to the 1860 condemnation and purchase of blocks L through N from 10th to 12th streets, the 1870 condemnation and purchase of the block bounded by L and M, 14th and 15th streets, and the 1872 condemnation and purchase of blocks L through N from 12th to 14th streets and block M through N from 14th to 15th streets. (For a map of the purchases see appendix at the end of this study aid). Includes abstracts of title to the blocks purchased, assessments of the value of said property and the improvements on it, unpaid city tax assessments on the property from 1858 to 1873, Court orders requiring property owners to pay unpaid tax assessments, records of the condemnation of property in the 6th District Court of the City of Sacramento, lists of the amount paid to property owners, protests by property owners, and records of the amounts received for the sale of improvements on the property.
Records of the 1860, 1870, and 1872 property condemnation, lists of owners and claimants, the 1860 Court order empowering the Commission to take possession of property, notices to the property holders to vacate their property, and lists of the amounts paid to property holders appear in the minute books. See series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908.
See the records of the 1872 special condemnation commission created to establish property values for the blocks bounded by L through N from 12th to 14th streets and from M through N, 14th to 15th streets. The records include the minutes of the condemnation commission, a list of claimants, correspondence with the claimants, and a list of the property values decided on by the condemnation commission. Also included is an unattached letter from the condemnation commission to Louis Ramage, 6th District Judge, explaining the purpose, function, and the decisions reached by the condemnation commission, submitted in January of 1873. See also an unattached public announcement by the condemnation commission ordering all property claimants to appear before it and present their claims.

7. COURT ACTIONS INVOLVING CONTRACTORS. 1861-1862, 1873, 1881, 1893.

Physical Description: 7ff.
Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically.
Documents from court related actions cancelling contracts, suing contractors for failing to live up to the terms of their contracts, or ordering the Commission to withhold pay from a contractor deeply in debt.
Of special interest are the records relating to the cancellation of the Fennell and Blake and O'Connor contracts (mentioned in the introduction). Series includes a folder of Fennell's personal bills paid by the Commission as part of the settlement (F3580:41). Information relating to the cancellation of the Fennell and Blake and O'Connor contracts is available in the minute books, filed under series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908; in the Architects' correspondence, filed under series entry 4, CORRESPONDENCE OF ARCHITECT, 1861-1872; and in the Architects' monthly reports, filed under series entry 5, REPORTS, 1861-1911. Additional information is available in, William C. Frankhauser, A Financial History of California Public Revenues, Debts, and Expenditures (Berkeley: U. C. Pubs. in Economics, U. C. Press, 1913).
8. SPECIFICATIONS. 1860, 1862, 1867, 1869, 1881, 1885, 1889, 1893-94, 1897, 1905-06.

Physical Description: 7ff.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically, undated material filed separately in a folder at the end of the series.

These records spell out the requirements necessary for fulfilling specific contracts. Include detailed descriptions of the work to be done, the quality and amounts of materials to be used, and special restrictions (such as the requirement in specifications in the 1880's that no Chinese labor be used). The series includes a list of proposed statuary for the roof of the Capitol (F3580:53).

Certain specifications are filed separately with the blue-prints and architectural drawings. See series entry 18, SEPARATELY FILED SPECIFICATIONS AND CONTRACTS.

An 1861 list of specifications for the Capitol is copied in the minute books, see series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908.


Physical Description: 1f.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically.

Contain estimates of materials and labor needed and, in some cases, probable costs of various proposed construction projects. Prepared by the Architect and sent to the Commission.

Estimates by the Commission of the probable cost of proposed projects and the probable cost to complete the Capitol are included in the Biennial Reports. The 1870/72 Report includes an estimate of the cost to complete the Governor's Mansion. See series entry 5, REPORTS, 1861-1911.


Physical Description: 17ff.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically, undated material filed in a separate folder at the end of the series.

Primarily bids and proposals to provide materials, some are to provide both materials and labor. Contain a description of the service to be provided and the proposed price. In some cases bidders bonds are provided.

1870-71 folder (F3580:62) contains bids to provide land for the Executive Mansion. Often important bids (such as those for the contract to build the foundation and basement story walls, 1860, 1861) were recorded in the minute books. See series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908. The 1863/65 Biennial Report includes a list of bidders for a granite cutting contract, see series entry 5, REPORTS, 1861-1911.

Physical Description: 1 vol. 7ff.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically.

Usually contain a detailed explanation of materials and services to be provided, occasionally the time allotted to complete the project, and the price to be paid.

This series includes a bound volume (F3580:79) listing the materials and workmanship contractors were to provide in the construction of the Capitol dome.

Certain contracts have been filed with the blueprints and architectural drawings, see series entry 18, SEPARATELY FILED SPECIFICATIONS AND CONTRACTS.

Page 8 of the 1904/06 Biennial Report lists all the contractors for the 1906-1908 renovation of the Capitol. See series entry 5, REPORTS, 1861-1911.

Financial Records

12. YEARLY REPORTS. 1860-1911.

Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically.

Complete accounting of all funds disbursed by the Commission over a one-year period. The amounts paid to each individual contractor over the year-long period are listed. Only three such reports survive, May 9, 1860 - March 1, 1861, March 12, 1862 - July 31, 1863, and 1889-1890.

These reports were incorporated into the Annual (1861, 1862) and Biennial (1863-1911) Reports to the Legislature. The Annual and Biennial Reports include a complete annual and bi-annual accounting of all funds expended by the Commission between 1861 and 1911. Those before 1873 list individual contractors, while the reports from 1873 to 1892, from 1898 to 1904, and from 1908 to 1910 provide only brief financial statements. The 1870/72 Report lists the total expenditure on the Governor's Mansion to 1872. See series entry 5, REPORTS, 1861-1911.

For the period between 1862 and 1872, similar information on funds disbursed to contractors only by the month rather than by the year, can be found in the payrolls and in the bound volumes of orders on the Controller of the State. See series entry 14, PAYROLLS, 1860-1872; similar information is available in the minute books, see series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908.

13. CERTIFICATES. 1860-1869.

Physical Description: 8ff.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically, undated material filed separately in a folder at the end of the series.

Prepared each month by the Architect, each certificate is an itemized list of what materials and services have been provided by each contractor in that given month and is a recommendation of what amount should be paid each contractor. The certificates are closely related to the Architects' monthly reports. Consequently, certain monthly certificates may be found under series entry 5, REPORTS, 1861-1911.

Like the reports they convey some sense of the progress being made each month on the project. In the period between 1860 and 1861, they provide the only record of the monthly progress made on the Capitol.

This is a reasonably complete series.
14. PAYROLLS. 1862-1873, 1875, 1878-1881, 1889-1890.

Physical Description: 7 vols. 27ff.

Scope and Content Note
Arranged chronologically, miscellaneous payroll receipts filed at the end of the payrolls.

Payrolls are divided into separate sheets for each monthly pay period. Each sheet includes the name of the employee, not in alphabetical order; his skill, if any (i.e. carpenter, mason, etc.); it individually lists each day or half day the laborer worked; the pay per day, the monthly pay received; and the signature of the worker on the receipt of pay. Also, it includes the amounts paid to contractors for work accomplished in the fixed monthly pay period.

The information on the payrolls, with the exception of the signature, is duplicated in the bound lists of orders on the Controller, included in this series (F3580:89-93), and in the minute books. For the minute books, see series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908.

The Commission's expenditures on payrolls are listed by month in the Biennial Reports. The Reports for 1889/90 and 1890/92 include a list of employees and the amount each was paid in a given month. The 1870/72 Report lists expenditures for the Executive Mansion by month for 1870 through 1871. See series entry 5, REPORTS, 1861-1911.

Included in this series are the time books of the Commission for 1869 and 1872 (F3580:94, 95), which list the name of the worker and records for each day of the month whether the laborer worked a full day, a half day, or did not work at all. These records were compiled at morning and afternoon roll calls. No pay information is included.

The payrolls for the construction of the Executive Mansion for 1871 are filed in a separate folder, in chronological order—appearing after the Capitol payroll for 1871. One Controller's Order book (F3580:92), includes a complete list of all payrolls and all amounts paid to contractors and merchants for workmanship and materials provided in the construction of the Executive Mansion, from September 1, 1870 to December 1, 1871.

Teamster's certificates of work completed (1872) and Powers of Attorney authorizing persons other than the laborer or contractor himself to receive his monthly pay are included at the end of this series.

Note that the 1877 payroll came in the form of bills. When the laborer or contractor was paid, he signed a receipt, which is filed under series entry 15, BILLS AND RECEIPTS, 1860-1906.
15. BILLS AND RECEIPTS. 1860-1906.

Physical Description: 5 vols. 25ff.

Scope and Content Note

Arranged alphabetically by name of the contractor, laborer, vendor, or other claimant. Bills and receipts from contractors, merchants, newspapers, and shippers--for materials, services, and labor provided; from laborers for overtime and special services rendered (note the 1877 payroll came in the form of individual bills, when each laborer was paid he signed a receipt which is filed in this series); from specialists, such as legal clerks, engineers, and geologists, for special services, such as searching property roles, and preparing reports on soil conditions; and from other government agencies, such as the clerk of the 6th District Court of the County of Sacramento, for Court expenses in various legal actions.

Bills from contractors and merchants usually include itemized lists of materials purchased--usually listing the day of purchase. Although the collection is by no means complete, these bills provide a good sense of the sort of materials used in the project and the cost of various types of materials in the late 19th Century. Further, letter heads (prevalent after the mid-1860's) often include lithographic scenes of late 19th Century buildings in Sacramento and San Francisco, of value in historical preservation research.

Included are the Commission's account books for 1870-1871, 1878, and 1887 through 1898 (F3580:123-126), listing the monthly amounts paid to individual contractors. Larger accounts such as that of Huntington and Hopkins, and contractors' accounts are listed by monthly pay period in the payrolls (1862-1872), Controller's order books (1860-1872), and the minute books as well. Controller's order books through 1872 and the payrolls are filed under series entry 14, PAYROLLS, 1860-1872. For the minute books see series entry 2, ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, 1860-1908. These sources provide only monthly lists of the amounts paid various firms and not itemized lists of purchases.

In addition, Annual Reports (1861, 1862) and Biennial Reports (1863-1911) provide a listing by company of the yearly total paid to each contractor. The 1870/72 Report includes a list by company of the yearly total paid to each contractor on the Executive Mansion. See series entry 5, REPORTS, 1861-1911.

Controller's office receipts for the sale of surplus Capitol materials, shipping invoices for the year 1885, shipping receipts for the year 1896, and Sacramento property assessments for street repairs are included at the end of this series.

Arranged chronologically at the end of series are receipted claims for services provided in improving the streets around the Capitol under the provisions of an act of the Legislature (Stats. 1895, page 278). Each contains signature of Commission chairman and secretary, person or firm to be paid, and amount to be paid.

See also, Historical Documents Subject Index in card catalog under the heading Capitol, State and by subject thereunder. Lists original Controller's claims and warrants in the HISTORICAL RECORD GROUP. Warrants are arranged by warrant number listed in top left hand corner of card. Also see Historical Documents alphabetic file in card catalog listing warrants by name of contractor.
16. LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION. 1868.

Physical Description: 3ff.

Scope and Content Note

On February 7, 1868, the State Senate resolved, with the Assembly in concurrence, that the Committee on Public Buildings of the Senate should investigate; one, the suitability of Sacramento as a permanent location of the State Capitol; two, the money already spent on the State Capitol; three, the structural stability of the foundation; and four, the amount of work left to be done.

The records are composed primarily of the testimony of the Architect, structural engineers and mechanics, carpenters and other skilled craftsmen working on the building, as to the structural stability of the foundation, the stability of the soil under the Capitol, the quality of workmanship and materials, and the work left to be done. The exhibits of the investigation include the 1867 Biennial Report of the State Capitol Commission, a report on the structural strength of the foundation prepared by the Commission for the investigation, and reports prepared for the Commission in the early and mid-1860's on the soil conditions on the site and on the structural strength of the foundation, prepared by geologists and structural engineers.

All the above mentioned testimony of this investigation was printed in the Appendix of the 1868 Journal of the Senate and the Assembly, 17th session, Vol. 2.

Also of interest is an 1872 investigation of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds in relation to the construction of the Capitol. On March 11, 1872, ex-Architect G. P. Cummings charged that either peculation or mismanagement had occurred on the Capitol project since the Democratic Board of State Capitol Commissioners had taken office in 1870. Cummings, the then Architect A. A. Bennett, contractors, and workmen were called to testify as to precisely what work had been done on the Capitol over the last two years, how workers received their pay, and the work completed by individual contractors. This testimony is an excellent source of information on the hours laborers worked, the procedures whereby contractors were paid, how cost estimates were reached, and what checks and oversight procedures there were in the disbursement of funds. It provides detailed descriptions of the work being done on the Capitol and a clear insight into the role political patronage played in obtaining contracts and employment on the State Capitol project. The testimony of this hearing exists only in the Appendix of the 1872 Journal of the Senate and Assembly, 19th session, Vol. 4.

17. PLANS, DRAWINGS, AND BLUEPRINTS. 1860-1906.

Physical Description: 2 map folders.

Scope and Content Note

Include drawings of a proposed capitol design, of a never constructed executive mansion (1899), of details of walls and columns of the Capitol building, of a bandstand constructed on the Capitol grounds, and of the State Library then located in the Capitol. Plans include floor plans of the Capitol as it was constructed, as well as of electrical wiring and gas lighting in the building. The blueprints include plans of every floor of the Capitol and plans of the Capitol grounds during different periods of the 19th and early 20th Centuries.

Also includes six ink drawings of the 1870 Executive Mansion which was located in Capitol Park, including drawings of its exterior walls and floor plans. Located: MC2:10(1-6).

Physical Description: 1 map folder.

Scope and Content Note
Include specifications and contracts filed with the plans and blueprints in the map cases. The contracts include that of Fennell to build the basement and foundation of the Capitol (1860), and that of Blake and O'Connor to complete the basement and foundation (1861). The specifications include, the specifications for the basement story walls (1861), the specifications for the Executive Mansion (1899), those for plumbing and ventilating (1887), those for floors, water closets and urinals (1896), and those for electric wiring (1906).

This material relates to the material filed in series entry 8, SPECIFICATIONS, 1860-1906, and series entry 11, CONTRACTS, 1861-1906.

PART III - Records of the Alterations and use of the Sacramento County Courthouse by the State

F3580:156.


Physical Description: 1ff.

Scope and Content Note
Composed of a contract between the Secretary of State and Knox and Fargahasson for the fitting out of the Sacramento County Courthouse as a temporary capitol (Nov. 18, 1854), and an indenture between the state and the city of Sacramento leasing the County Courthouse on the block bounded by H and I, 6th and 7th streets for twelve months starting on June 1, 1855. (Note: the material in this series does not relate to the Capitol Commission which was not established until 1856. In both cases the Secretary of State, who was also ex-officio Superintendent of Public Buildings, acted for the State).