

RG 17

Second Capitol Building. Nebraska

Records: 1901-1917

Cubic Feet: 3

The capital of the Nebraska Territory was first located in Bellevue, but was soon moved to the rapidly growing new town of Omaha. Here, in 1855, the first capitol was erected at a cost of \$3,000. It was a two-story brick building, but quite inadequate. It was replaced in 1857-58 by a new building financed in part by the federal government at a cost of \$50,000 and in part by the city of Omaha.

A movement to relocate the capitol to the south of the Platte River led to the passage of the Removal Act of 1867 which transferred the seat of government from Omaha to Lincoln. A new capitol was built for the sum of \$75,817.50, the money being raised through the sale of lots in Lincoln. The building was so poorly constructed that it began showing signs of disrepair after only four years.

The need for another building led to successive attempts to remove the capital further west and north of the Platte River. These attempts failed, however, the legislature appropriated funds in 1879 for the construction of the west wing for the new building. Succeeding legislatures appropriated more funding for the rest of the buildings which was completed in 1888 at a cost of \$691,428.80.

By the turn of the century, there was some discussion about the need for a new capitol. It was not until 1919, when the second building had deteriorated so much that repairs were impractical, that the legislature made provisions for the construction of the present capitol. The third capitol building was designed by Bertram Goodhue. Goodhue selected Lee Lawrie as designer of tile and mosaic to assist him. Built of Indiana limestone, it is in the form of a cross in the square, with four interior courts. The base of the building, which is 437 feet square, is two stories high. From this base rises the tower, 400 feet high, crowned with the bronze figure of "The Sower" designed by Lawrie. A progressive form of ornamentation extends the principal entrance to the rotunda of the building, starting with the carved buffalo at the main entrance. The building, furnishings, and landscaping cost over ten million dollars. The money was secured by a special capitol levy, and the building was fully paid for when it was completed in 1932.

This collection consists of one series: 1) Capitol Vouchers, 1901-1907. These vouchers consist of various contractors and businesses who performed repairs or services on the second capitol building.

DESCRIPTION

SERIES ONE

Box 1-Capitol Vouchers, 1901-1902

Box 2-Capitol Vouchers, 1903-1904

Box 3, Capitol Vouchers, 1905-1907