

Howell Lewis Shay, 1884-1975

A Finding Aid for
Papers and Architectural Records, 1902-1962
in
The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania

Archival Description

Descriptive Summary

Title: Papers and Architectural Records, 1902-1962.

Coll. ID: 290.

Origin: Howell Lewis Shay, (1884-1975) architect.

Repository: The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania
102 Meyerson Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6311
(215) 898-8323

Indexes: This collection is included in the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project, a searchable database of architectural research materials related to architects and architecture in Philadelphia and surrounding regions:
<http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org>

Biographical/Historical Sketch

Howell Lewis Shay was born in Washington, DC, the son of Aurelius K. and Julia Stanford (Lewis) Shay. Soon after his birth his parents moved to Seattle, WA, where the young Shay attended public schools; however, he returned to the East Coast to enter the University of Pennsylvania; and he was awarded his B.S. in Architecture in 1913. In Seattle he had gained office experience in the firms of W. D. Kimble, James A. Shack, and A. W. Spalding, and had also spent a summer in New York City as office boy for McKim, Mead & White. The summer before his graduation from the University found him in the office of [John T. Windrim](#); and upon his graduation he worked for [Horace Trumbauer](#), with whom he would remain until 1918. While in Trumbauer's office he was credited with facilitating the design of the Philadelphia Museum of Art by aiding the firms involved to agree on the final design. He worked independently approximately one year before establishing a partnership with [Verus T. Ritter](#) under the name [Ritter & Shay](#). Ritter had already achieved some reputation for his design of schools; and hailing from the western part of Pennsylvania, he brought with him contacts in Bloomsburg and other parts of Pennsylvania. Shay's Beaux-Arts-influenced design experience added immensely to Ritter's contacts. The firm was successful, not only in the design of school buildings, but also in office buildings and hotels.

After Ritter & Shay dissolved around 1936, Shay continued to practice successfully on his own, establishing in 1948, with his sons [Howell Lewis Shay, Jr.](#) and [William Dixon Shay](#), the firm of [Howell Lewis Shay and Assocs.](#), architects and engineers. Considerable work was accomplished during these later years in the area of academic and institutional buildings, continuing the successful school practice which Ritter & Shay had begun.

Shay received a number of awards during his college years, including the Arthur Spayd Brooke prize in 1912, first and second medals from the Beaux-Arts Society in 1912 and 1913. He was a member of the AIA, the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA, the Pennsylvania Society of Architects, and the T-Square Club. He served on the managing committee for the John Stewardson Memorial Scholarship from 1944 to 1948. He served the City of Philadelphia in a variety of ways, including as a consulting architect for the Philadelphia Board of Education from 1937 to 1940, and as technical advisor for the Philadelphia Housing Authority from 1938 to 1941.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access: This collection is available for research by appointment only.

Preferred collection citation: Howell Lewis Shay Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

Acquisition: Gift of Beth Conron, 2006, 2007.

Processing: The collection was processed and the finding aid prepared by William Whitaker and Nancy Thorne, with the assistance of student name.

Container list

Series I. Papers.

Call#	Descriptive Title
290.1	Student scrapbook
290.2	Miscellaneous unattached materials

Series II. Architectural Records.

Call#	Descriptive Title
290.3	Club House of Colonial Dames of America, Philadelphia, PA, 1921. (2 photoprints)
290.4	The Packard Building, Philadelphia, PA, 1924. (6 photoprints)
290.5	Howell Lewis Shay Residence, Rose Valley, PA, 1926. (13 photoprints)
290.6	The Drake Apartment and Hotel Building, Philadelphia, PA, 1928. (2 photoprints)
290.7	First National Bank and Office Building, Philadelphia, PA, 1928. (1 photoprint)
290.8	Market Street Bank and Office Building, Philadelphia, PA, 1929. (2 photoprints)
290.9	Admissions Building, Norristown State Hospital, Norristown, PA, 1932. (2 photoprints)
290.11	Maximum Security Building for Male Patients, Norristown State Hospital, Norristown, PA, 1947. (2 photoprints)
290.12	Semi-Disturbed Male Patients Building, Norristown State Hospital, Norristown, PA, 1949. (1 photoprint)
290.13	Medical and Surgical Building, Norristown State Hospital, Norristown, PA, 1949. (3 photoprints)
290.14	Lawncrest Recreation Center, Philadelphia, PA, 1949. (1 photoprint)
290.15	Remodeled Office Building for Pennsylvania Co. for Banking and Trust, Philadelphia, PA, 1949. (5 photoprints)
290.16	Franklin Spencer Edmonds Public School, Philadelphia, PA, 1949. (2 photoprints) William L. Sayre Jr. High School, Philadelphia, PA, 1950. (5 photoprints)
290.17	Morris Library, University of Delaware, Newark, DE, 1963. (1 newsclipping)
290.18	Other office and project-related materials.
290.19	Shay interview, 1966 (3 audiocassettes, and transcription [2007] of tape 1)
290.20	Additional material: Alison Building 1805 Walnut Street, Philadelphia PA, 1950 (1 photoprint)

Appendix A

Project Index

Club House of Colonial Dames of America

National Society of Colonial Dames

1620 Latimer St, Philadelphia, PA

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1921.

holdings:

[290.3] 2 photoprints.

The Packard Building

Pennsylvania Company for Insurances on Lives and Granting Annuities

1430 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1924.

Edmund Beaman Gilchrist

holdings:

[290.4] 6 photoprints.

Howell Lewis Shay Residence

Rose Valley, PA

notes: Howell Lewis Shay. Built 1926.

holdings:

[290.5] 13 photoprints.

The Drake Apartment and Hotel Building

1512 Spruce St., Philadelphia, PA

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1928

holdings:

[290.6] 2 photoprints.

First National Bank

First National Bank; Peat Marwick Mitchell & Company

1500 Walnut St., Philadelphia, PA

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1928.

holdings:

[290.7] 1 photoprint.

Market Street National Bank

1320 Market St., Philadelphia, PA.

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1929.

holdings:

[290.8] 2 photoprints.

Admissions Building

Norristown State Hospital

Norristown, PA

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1932.holdings:

[290.9] 2 photoprints.

United States Customhouse and Appraisers' Stores

U.S. Treasury Dept.

200 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1933.holdings:

[290.10] 2 photoprints.

Maximum Security Building

Norristown State Hospital

Norristown, PA

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1947.holdings:

[290.11] 2 photoprints.

Semi-Disturbed Male Patients Building

Norristown State Hospital

Norristown, PA

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1949.holdings:

[290.12] 1 photoprint.

Medical and Surgical Building

Norristown State Hospital

Norristown, PA

notes: Ritter and Shay. Built 1949.holdings:

[290.13] 3 photoprints.

Lawncrest Recreation Center

Philadelphia (City of), Department of Public Works

Rising Sun Ave. And Comly St., Philadelphia, PA

notes: Howell Lewis Shay Architects. Built 1949holdings:

[290.14] 1 photoprint.

Remodeled Office Building

Pennsylvania Company for Banking and Trusts

15th and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia, PAnotes: Howell Lewis Shay Architects. Alterations and additions 1949.holdings:

[290.15] 5 photoprints.

Franklin Spencer Edmonds Public School

Philadelphia (City of), Board of Public Education
Sedgwick St. and Williams Ave., Philadelphia, PA

notes: Howell Lewis Shay Architects. Built 1949.

holdings:

[290.16] 2 photoprints.

William L. Sayre Jr. High School

Philadelphia (City of), Board of Public Education
58th and Walnuts Streets, Philadelphia, PA

notes: Howell Lewis Shay Architects. Built 1949.

holdings:

[290.16] 5 photoprints.

Alison Building, Alterations & Additions

client not identified

1805 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA

notes: Howell Lewis Shay Architects.. Addition of 3 floors, street-level alterations. Photograph of presentation drawing, signed WLP 50. Built.

holdings:

[290.20] 1 photoprint.

Morris Library

University of Delaware

Newark, DE

notes: Howell Lewis Shay Architects. Built 1963.

holdings:

[290.17] 1 newsclipping