Indiana Bridge Company Architectural Records
1886-ca. 1978, bulk 1889-1922
DADA 020

Title: Indiana Bridge Company Architectural Records

Creator: Indiana Bridge Company

Inclusive Dates: 1886-ca. 1978, bulk 1889-1922

Extent: 125 cu. ft.

Containers: 4 card files, 1 flat storage box

Language of Materials: Materials entirely in English.

Preferred Citation:
Indiana Bridge Company Records, Drawings and Documents Archive, Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries

Administrative History:

Biographical Note:
The Indiana Bridge Company is Muncie’s oldest manufacturing firm, established in 1886. The company became the most important fabricator of iron and steel structures in the region and built a nationwide reputation. Originally, Indiana Bridge Company engaged primarily in bridge-building, but switched to the production and erection of architectural steel when concrete became the predominant material for new bridges.

Scope and Contents:
This collection contains records of the Indiana Bridge Company, iron and steel fabricators located in Muncie, Indiana. It covers the time period 1886 to approximately 1978.

The bulk of the collection consists of shop drawings created by Indiana Bridge Company engineers and drafters for several thousand structures dating from about 1889 to about 1922 (catalog number 20- 9). There are 200 rolls of drawings in the collection, covering Indiana Bridge Company contract numbers 222 through 8900. The earliest contracts are for bridges,
trestles, and bridge abutments, but the company soon began building other types of engineering structures and providing structural steel for buildings. The company had expanded its business beyond the borders of Indiana by 1890, and by 1896 it had clients as far away as Texas.

The company arranged the shop drawings in rolls and assigned roll numbers. That arrangement has been maintained. The archive holds portions of rolls 1-6 (only the drawings for projects located in Indiana) as well as rolls 7-78, 80-93, 93A, 94-112, 112A, 113-128, 130-144, 146-197, and 199-202. Rolls 7 and 8 are in two parts each: part A for Indiana projects, part B for out-of-state projects.

The commissions received by Indiana Bridge Company from its inception in 1886 to 1978 are listed on 4” x 6” index cards, filling twenty-six card drawers (catalog number 20-8). This card index has two sections: one arranged alphabetically by name of client, the other arranged by contract number. The two sets cross-reference each other. The contract-number cards typically give more details, including drawing numbers and roll numbers where applicable.

Some projects, especially small bridges and culverts, were not individually designed, but rather were executed from stock plans to which the only the dimensions had to be added. The archive holds several hundred letter-size and legal-size sheets of such stock plans, engineering tables, patterns and standards (catalog no. 20-6) as well as a bound book of “Standards” (approximately 60 blueprint sheets, catalog no. 20-5). The notations “book” or “std” which sometimes appear in the card index in lieu of a drawing number evidently refer to the book of “Standards” or to the sheets of stock details.

Conditions Governing Access:
This collection is open for research.

Copyright Notice: Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Drawings and Documents Archive, Archives and Special Collections, Ball State University Libraries, Muncie, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Drawings and Documents Archive.

Custodial History:
The Indiana Bride Company Architectural Records were received by Drawings and Documents Archive as a donation from the Indiana Bridge Company on 1987/4/6.

Accruals: No additions are expected.

Processing Information:
Collection processing completed
Finding aid created 1987/8/11 by Andrew R. Seager; revised 2011/10/20 by Julie Edwards and Carol Street.

Arrangement:
The Indiana Bridge Company Architectural Records are arranged alphabetically.
Controlled Access Headings:
  Drawings, engineering (visual works)
  Photographs
  Documents
  Muncie (Ind.)
  Architecture--Designs and plans--Working drawings
  Business records
  Blueprints