

The Historic American Buildings Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record

— Prints and Photographs Division
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Introduction

The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) are collections of documentary measured drawings, photographs, and written historical and architectural information for over 23,000 structures and sites in the United States and its territories. The U.S. Department of the Interior is responsible for the administration of these surveys and creates the records which are transferred to the Library of Congress for service and preservation. The American Institute of Architects and the American Society of Civil Engineers, for HABS and HAER, respectively, serve in an advisory capacity. Architectural and engineering structures and sites of almost every type, including residential, commercial, public, monumental, religious, military, and industrial, have been recorded and are part of these collections. Various building technologies and materials, as well as periods and styles from the 17th to the 20th century are represented.

Access

Records which have been completed and transferred to the Library are in the custody of the Prints and Photographs Division as part of the Architecture, Design, and Engineering Collections. Readers can consult the records in the Division's Reading Room (see address noted above). The materials are organized by state, and then by county and city or vicinity, with additional access by subject and name of architect or engineer. Reference service by mail and telephone for specific requests is provided.

Catalogs and Other Publications

A list of printed catalogs of the collections is available, as well as a list of publications which are well-illustrated by materials from the surveys. Copies of the catalogs and publications listed can be obtained by mail from the addresses listed or may be consulted in the Prints & Photographs Reading Room. Many of these publications are available in city and university libraries.

Reproduction of Records

Copies of all HABS and HAER materials which have been transferred to the Library may be obtained through the Library's Photoduplication Service. A list of current reproduction costs is available.

Publication Rights

The records were created for the U.S. Government and are generally in the public domain. Occasionally material of a historical nature is copied for the Survey or Record and it is usually necessary to receive permission from the owner of such material before it can be published. In all cases the courtesy of an acknowledgment is requested if material is used in a publication. A suggested credit line is: (name of photographer or draftsman), HABS (or HAER), Library of Congress.