

# Missouri State Archives

## Finding Aid RG 998.457

### Manuscript Collections

#### Missouri State Penitentiary Collection

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*Abstract:* Non-governmental records of the Missouri State Penitentiary, located in Jefferson City and in operation from 1836 through 2004. Currently, the collection consists of postcards, photographs, and inmate artwork.

*Extent:* 0.021 cubic ft.

*Record Description:* Paper, postcards.

*Alternative Formats:* TIF.

*Location:* Missouri State Archives.

### Administrative Information

*Access Restrictions:* No special restrictions.

*Publication Restrictions:* Some records contain copyrighted material. Researchers bear sole responsibility for following applicable copyright laws. Items reproduced for online or physical publication should carry the credit line: Courtesy of the Missouri State Archives.

*Preferred Citation:* [Item description], [Date]; [Box and Folder]; [Series]; Missouri State Penitentiary Collection, Record Group 998.457; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

*Acquisition Information:* Purchase: Accession #2004-0108. Deeds of Gift: Accession #2023-0071 and #2025-0082.

*Processing Information:* Processing completed by EW on 03/07/2018. Last updated by EW on 04/14/2025.

### Historical and Biographical Notes

The Missouri State Penitentiary (MSP) was the first penal institution west of the Mississippi River. It opened in 1836. Over the next 170 years, the Penitentiary grounds grew until the facility eventually closed in 2004. The buildings are now open for tours. Hundreds of thousands of inmates have passed through the gates of “The Walls.”

The artwork by two Missouri State Penitentiary inmates was obtained by Curtis Crawford from Missouri State Highway Patrol Lt. Howard M. Fenimore's (1916-2004) son. Crawford then gave the drawings to Brenda Raymer who donated them to the Archives.

## Additional Descriptive Information

### Bibliography

"Acid & Ink." *Time*. Vol. LXXX No. 3 (20 July 1962): 78. The Archives maintains a photocopy of the article in the MSP Vertical File.

Harry A. Henke/Hanke's MSP Register can be found online here:

<https://s1.sos.mo.gov/records/archives/archivesdb/msp/Detail.aspx?id=50645>.

### Related Material

From the Missouri State Archives:

[MS297 Mark Schreiber Collection](#)

[MS329 Alice Fast Postcard Collection](#)

[MS360 Dr. Arnold G. Parks Jefferson City Postcard Collection](#)

[MS369 Bob Priddy Collection](#)

[MS390 Ann Noe Collection](#)

[MS398 Missouri Postcard Collection](#)

[MS433 Dr. Joseph Summers Collection](#)

RG114 Department of Corrections

RG133 Office of the Adjutant General

RG213 Missouri State Penitentiary

[1954 Missouri State Penitentiary Riot Flickr album](#)

Missouri State Penitentiary Museum: <https://www.missouripentours.com/museum>.

The Missouri History Museum in St. Louis maintains the following collection: [#P0141 Penal Institutions](#)

The State Historical Society of Missouri has many collections concerning the Penitentiary: <https://shsmo.org/>.

### Series

The records are organized into the following series:

Artwork, 1954

Photographs, 1914-1917

Postcards, 1923-1931

## Artwork, 1954

*Extent:* Seven drawings, 0.01 cubic feet.

*Arrangement:* Alphabetical by artist.

### Scope and Content

Seven pieces of artwork created by two Missouri State Penitentiary inmates in 1954. The first drawing is by Samuel N. Reese, inmate no. 62676 (09/06/1949-04/30/1951) and inmate no. 69652 (04/08/1955-07/06/1976), serving life sentences for two murders. Reese was featured in the July 20, 1962 issue of *Time* magazine because of his artistic ability and work with the Penitentiary's newsletter *Jeftown Journal*.

All other drawings were created by James W. Thompson, inmate no. 65113 (09/14/1951-02/23/1954) and inmate no. 68331 (04/14/1954-05/04/1957) who signed his drawings with the 68331 number. Subject matter for the first five is the September 1954 Missouri State Penitentiary riot, to which Thompson was an eye witness. Historical accuracy was up to the artists.

A Missouri State Archives and Local Records conservator removed tape from these drawings, mended and stabilized the artwork in April 2023. Before and after treatment TIF scans are available in-house on the Z Drive.

### Container List

Location	Box	Folder	Contents	Date
	OB64	1	Reese's pencil (graphite) portrait of Kenneth Boyd, an inmate who was executed on July 10, 1953. Reese drew the sketch from a photograph of Boyd. Measures 10.875"x13.5."	05/22/1954
	OB64	1	Thompson's pencil (graphite) sketch on thin yellow paper: two State Troopers armed with guns each standing in an MSP hallway. Measures 11.125"x8.5."	c1954
	OB64	1	Thompson's pencil (graphite) sketch on thin yellow paper: MSP courtyard, two buildings. Inmates form a pile at the corner of one building (A Hall?), some are wounded. Two inmates lie dead on the ground and a third is in the process of being shot by State Troopers who are on the other side of the yard. Measures 11.125"x8.5." Again, historical accuracy was up to the artist.	c1954

Location	Box	Folder	Contents	Date
	OB64	1	Thompson's pencil (graphite) sketch on thin yellow paper: lone State Trooper at an MSP building next to block windows, some of which are broken. The Trooper holds a rifle and a holstered pistol and smokes a cigarette. Measures 8.5"x11."	c1954
	OB64	1	Thompson's pencil (graphite) sketch on thin yellow paper: three State Troopers armed with two guns each standing on a second floor MSP hallway. Measures 11.125"x8.5."	c1954
	OB64	1	Photocopy on white copy paper of Thompson's pencil sketch portrait of a State Trooper. Measures 8.5"x11."	c1954
	OB64	1	Thompson's pencil (graphite) sketch on thin yellow paper: two inmates driving a stolen MSP truck riddled with bullet holes. Unknown what event this depicts, if any. Measures 11.125"x8.5."	c1954

## Photographs, 1914-1916

*Extent:* Ten photographs, 0.01 cubic feet.

*Arrangement:* Chronological.

### Scope and Content

These are copy print photographs on letter-sized cardstock made from originals belonging to Jo Herren, great-niece of former Deputy Warden of the MSP James Albert Dunstan. Subjects are the old C Hall, McClung Hall, McClung Park, and a portrait of Dunstan. All photos are digitized and available in-house on the Z Drive.

### Container List

Note: the folder also includes a typed description of the history of the old C Hall and related buildings from the donor Mike Lear.

Location	Box	Folder	Contents	Date
	345	1 (A)	Caption reads, "Old C Hall Erected 1836 MO State Prison." The date of the caption is incorrect; this was actually the third cell block on the MSP grounds and was erected between 1846-1848. Exterior view with three men standing in front, Warden McClung on the right. The top of Centennial Hall is visible in the background.	c1914
	345	1 (B)	Caption reads, "Old C Hall Erected 1836 MO State Prison." The date of the caption is incorrect; this was actually the third cell block on the MSP grounds and was erected between 1846-1848. Warden McClung stands out front. The top of Centennial Hall is visible in the background.	c1914
	345	1 (C)	Caption reads, "Interior Old C Hall Erected - 1836 MO State Prison." The date of the caption is incorrect; this was actually the third cell block on the MSP grounds and was erected between 1846-1848. Warden McClung stands in the cell block, which is three levels. The short iron doors to each narrow cell are swung open.	c1914

Location	Box	Folder	Contents	Date
	345	1 (D)	Caption reads, "Interior Old C Hall Erected - 1836 MO State Prison." The date of the caption is incorrect; this was actually the third cell block on the MSP grounds and was erected between 1846-1848. This is an interior view taken before the building was demolished.	c1914
	345	1 (E)	Caption reads, "Destruction of Old C Hall Erected - 1836." The date of the caption is incorrect; this was actually the third cell block on the MSP grounds and was erected between 1846-1848. Exterior view showing prisoners in striped uniforms clearing rubble. There are several teams of mules with carts in front of the building. Three men stand in the mid-foreground; Warden McClung is one of them.	c1914-1915
	345	1 (F)	Caption reads, "McClung Hall Erected 1916 MO State Prison." MSP Warden Dickerson Clark McClung stands in front of the brand-new west wing of McClung Hall. The building was erected in the space formerly occupied by the third C Hall.	1916
	345	1 (G)	Caption reads, "Interior McClung Hall MO State Prison." This is an interior view of the brand-new west wing of McClung Hall, named for MSP Warden D.C. McClung.	1916
	345	1 (H)	A large picnic on the grounds of Jefferson City's newest park, McClung Park. The park was built using inmate labor and was named for MSP Warden D.C. McClung.	c1916
	345	1 (I)	Three men monitor a large barbecue pit where they roast meat under an arbor. This is Jefferson City's newest park, McClung Park. The park was built using inmate labor and was named for MSP Warden D.C. McClung who is pictured here on the right.	c1916
	345	1 (J)	Studio portrait of James Albert "Ab" Dunstan who was a guard then later Deputy Warden (1921-1925) of the MSP. Photo by B.S. Cooper, California, MO.	n.d.

## Postcards, 1923-1931

*Extent:* Four postcards, 0.001 cubic feet.

*Arrangement:* None.

### Scope and Content

This small series contains postcards featuring exterior and interior images of the Missouri State Penitentiary. All images have been digitized as TIFs and are available on Manuscript DVD #7 in Reference as well as in-house on the Z Drive.

### Container List

Location	Box	Folder	Contents	Date
	203	66	Colorized postcard captioned, "Lower Dining Hall and Kitchen, Missouri State Penitentiary, Jefferson City, Mo." Shows one inmate in striped pants next to a table. All the tables have been set. A few African American cooks are visible in the background. Printed by TC Co., Chicago. Published by Sam'l H. Smith & Co., Jefferson City, MO.	n.d.
	203	67	Colorized postcard captioned, "Entrance Missouri State Prison, Jefferson City, Mo.—2." Shows the main entrance on Lafayette Street. The hospital building (red) is visible on the left behind the wall. Published by E.C. Kropp Co., Milwaukee, WI. (See also MS369 Bob Priddy Collection MS369_P133.)	c1923
	203	68	Colorized postcard captioned, "Dining Hall and Grounds, Missouri State Penitentiary, Jefferson City, Mo.—4." View of the dining hall on the grounds of the MSP. Part of the courtyard is visible. The pathways are lined with flowers and there is a water feature on the left. Published by E.C. Kropp Co., Milwaukee, WI. (See also MS369 Bob Priddy Collection MS369_P136.)	n.d.

Location	Box	Folder	Contents	Date
	203	69	Black and white picture postcard captioned, "MO. STATE PRISON CELL. H. A. HENKE 29737." Image shows a highly-decorated cell containing curtains, furniture, a photograph, typewriter, bed, rugs and more. Inmate Harry A. Hanke (Henke) was convicted of first-degree murder in St. Louis County in 1926. He was sentenced to 20 years, but only served until 1931. Photographer unknown.	1926-1931