Guide to the William H. Morris Collection on James Cunningham, Son & Company
Acc. # 1996.10

Processed by Sophia Cos
October 2019
Edited by Stephanie Ball
May 2023

Schuyler C. Townson Library
RMSC Museum & Science Center
657 East Avenue
Rochester NY 14607
585.697.1947
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William H. Morris collection on James Cunningham, Son & Co., 2
**Collection Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title</strong></th>
<th>William H. Morris Collection on James Cunningham, Son &amp; Company</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creator</strong></td>
<td>Morris, William H. (William Henry), 1915-1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dates</strong></td>
<td>1841-1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extent</strong></td>
<td>1.0 cubic feet (1 record carton)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rules</strong></td>
<td>Describing Archives: A Content Standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abstract</strong></td>
<td>This collection consists of materials gathered by Rochester, New York lawyer William Henry Morris surrounding his interest in and research on Cunningham cars and the Cunningham Car Company. In 1986, Morris published a booklet entitled “The Cunningham Car: Made in Rochester”, issued by the Institute of Fellows, Rochester Institute of Technology. The materials are dated between 1841 and 1989, with the bulk of the materials dated between 1970 and 1989. The collection is mainly comprised of correspondence, photographs, magazines, and newspaper clippings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition:

This collection was donated to the RMSC Museum & Science Center by Eleanor Morris in December 1995, accession #1996.10.

Custodial History:

The collection became the property of Eleanor Morris, William H. Morris' wife, following his death in 1992.

Preferred Citation:

William H. Morris Collection on James Cunningham, Sons & Company, [box#:folder#]. RMSC Museum & Science Center, Rochester, NY.
Restrictions

Conditions Governing Use:

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Conditions Governing Access:

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of this collection. Please contact Archivist for an appointment.
William Henry Morris (1915-1992) was a lawyer active in Rochester, New York in the 20th century. He married Eleanor Eisenhart, a granddaughter of Henry Bausch, in 1940. At some date prior to 1980, he retired from practicing law. During the 1980's, he indulged an enthusiasm for Cunningham automobiles and conducted extensive research, culminating in a self-published essay, “The Cunningham Car: Made in Rochester” in 1986. Morris was also instrumental in helping to acquire the 1936 Cunningham Touring Car currently in the RMSC Museum & Science Center collections. He died in 1992 at age 77.

The James Cunningham, Son & Co. was based in Rochester, New York. At its conception in 1836, James Cunningham, Son & Co. began manufacturing and producing carriages and coaches drawn by horse. In 1882, the business was incorporated. Four years later, James Cunningham died and his company was given to his son, Joseph. The company eventually made automobiles, tanks, and aircrafts. In 1931, their production of vehicles halted; however, James Cunningham, Son & Co. continued to create car bodies for other manufacturers. Despite this, they went out of business in 1936. James Cunningham, Son & Co. focused on elegance and luxury during their time of production.
Scope & Content

This collection was created through the research of William H. Morris on the James Cunningham, Son & Company. The collection is comprised of pamphlets, an essay manuscript, letters, newspaper clippings, magazines, photographs, correspondence, notes, and reference material. While the collection dates from 1841 to 1989, the bulk of the collection is from 1970 to 1989, when Morris was conducting the majority of his research. The collection covers the United States (Rochester, New York particularly). The majority of the collection covers the James Cunningham, Son & Company, specifically the history and manufacturing of Cunningham automobiles in the earlier half of the 20th century.
Arrangement
This collection consists of one box arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Related Materials
James Cunningham, Son & Co. Collection housed at the RMSC Museum & Science Center, Rochester, New York.


Processing Information
During processing, metal fasteners were removed and the collection was re-housed into acid-free materials/

Subject Headings
● Rochester (N.Y.)—History—19th century
● Rochester (N.Y.)—History—20th century
● Automobiles
● Antique and classic cars
● Automobile industry and trade
● Motor vehicle
● Automobiles
● Carriages and carts
● Hearses (Vehicles)
● Cunningham sports cars
● Photographs
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<th>Title, Dates</th>
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<td>Austin G. Morris, 1955-1961</td>
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<td>Automobiles-general, 1908-1986</td>
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<td>Bill James correspondence, 1989</td>
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<td>Biographies and obituaries, 1886-1987</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>Business records, 1841-1955</td>
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<td>Charlotte Whitney Allen car, 1964-1985</td>
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<td>Correspondence, 1849-1861</td>
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<td>“The Cunningham Car: Made in Rochester,” 1986</td>
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<td>Cunningham car rosters, undated</td>
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<td>Cunningham medallions, undated</td>
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<td>Disposition of cars (Harrahs), 1977-1986</td>
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<td>George Eastman, 1890-1985</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>Model H-S, 1910-1979</td>
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<td>Model V-1/V-2 1916/1917, 1916-1917</td>
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<td>Model V-3 1918-1920, 1919-1985</td>
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<td>Model V-4 1922, 1914-1922</td>
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<td>Model V-5 1922-1924, 1920</td>
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<td>Model V-6 1925, 1923-1986</td>
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<td>Peterson hearse and Sunderlin ambulance, 1968-1986</td>
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<td>Photographs-miscellaneous, 1893-1930</td>
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<td>Research presentations, 1987-1989</td>
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<td>Rochester Engineering Society newsletters, 1928-1938</td>
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<td>Rochester Institute of Technology, 1986</td>
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Appendix A: Legacy finding aid

Preliminary Inventory
Business-Cunningham, James and Son Company
Prepared by Katherine L. DeFazio- Intern SUNY Brockport
January 30, 1996


Booklet- The Pursuit of Excellence

Travel Booklet- Pioneer Auto Museum and Antique Town, Murdo, South Dakota
(photographs of antique cars, 1928 Cunningham)

Folder 1:
Correspondence concerning registration, restoration, ownership, location and general
gathering of information about Cunningham Cars, Photocopies of newspaper articles on
Cunningham cars, The Pursuit of Happiness: photographs of Cunningham cars; Obituary
of Albert Fosmike; Lists of different Cunningham models, serial numbers, present,
previous and original owners of cars; 3 photographs of Cunningham cars; 6 brochures of
"The Cunningham Car... Made in Rochester" used at the RIT Symposium of the Institute
of Fellows, May 5, 1986, The Classic Car- March 1986 Booklet; and the Manuscript:
The Cunningham Car-Made in Rochester

Folder 2:
Genesee Country Museum 1986 brochure, Photographs of Cunningham carriages, a
painting of J. Cunningham coach factory, and an un-named factory; Postcards of
Cunningham carriages at the Genesee Country Museum; and a Brochure from The
Carriage Trade event sponsored by the Strong Museum and the Pittsford Carriage
Association

Folder 3:
Negatives of Cunningham cars; 17 RIT May 1986 Symposium brochures; Postcard of
Cunningham "boattail" speedster; Newspaper clipping "Cunningham Museum Sold",
Manuscript- The Cunningham Car...Made in Rochester; Newspaper article "The
Cunningham: Wheeled Luxury, Finest in Carriages, Landaus, Barouches, Buggies and
Hearses" from the Democrat and Chronicle Sun. July 4, 1976 p. 27; Correspondence-
information, research ideas; letters sent between 5/17 and 5/19 1982

Folder 4: Bill Morris
Letters from RIT announcing William H. Morris' History of the Cunningham Car, May 5,
1986

Folder 5: WHM Cunningham Correspondence-General
Reactions to book, gathering information
Folder 6: RIT Talk and Book

Folder 7: Rosters
Rosters containing model year, model, cylinders, start date, serial numbers and owners of Cunningham cars

Folder 8:
Photocopy of "Just a Cunningham Ago..." by Everett L. Millard, printed in The Antique Automobile; Automobile Quarterly, winter 1965, vol. III, no. 4

Folder 9: Cunningham Reference Works
A metal insignia- Cunningham; Bibliography of sources; Photocopies of articles from various magazines about antique cars; Manuscript "House of Cunningham" by Walter M.P. McCall; Booklet- The Classic Car, summer 1963; Antique Automobile, Nov./Dec 1969, vol.33, no.6 and The Pursuit of Happiness

Folder 10: Fergusson Eng. Soc. Articles
The Rochester Engineer, volumes between 1928-1937.

Folder 11: Biographies
Obituaries of people connected to Cunningham cars; History of Rochester by James Cunningham and a photograph of unknown person.

Folder 12: Cunningham Corp. Material Dispositions
Correspondence seeking information about Cunningham cars; Records of "Disposal of various items from James Cunningham, Son & Co.; Newspaper clipping from Old Cars Weekly, December 18, 1986.

Folder 13: Hoskins
Correspondence about Cunningham Coach from Larry Hoskins, Jumer Hotels, IL

Folder 14: Family
Photocopied brief history of James Cunningham and how he started Cunningham and Co.; Brief genealogy of Rufus K. Dryer.

Folder 15: Corporate History
Photocopy of Rochester Journal September 17, 1926, "Rochester Industry Leads the World in Making Fine Cars", brief history of Cunningham Co.; Photocopied newspaper articles about Cunningham dated in 1920's, 1940's, 1950's and 1960's; Photocopy of 1886, 1852, 1887 and 1926 advertisements for Cunningham factory; Brief history of draftsmen, designers and engineers; Newspaper article about Cunningham dated 1986. Photocopy of 1909 letter to George Eastman from Rufus Dryer about Eastman possibly buying a
limousine from Cunningham and Co.; Photocopy of 1888 plat book map showing location of Cunningham factory; Letter giving name of former Cunningham Co. worker with 1885 photocopy of picture of workers in factory; Correspondence and research notes, and photographs (in plastic folders with black paper) of Cars, plane, truck and The Cunningham factory.

Folder 16: Classic Cars - General
Newspaper clippings about antique cars

Folder 17: Cunningham Autos - General
Photograph of 1st Cunningham automobile, the 1908 electric runabout style 731; Correspondence; Photograph of a tank; Two outlines for The Cunningham Car... Made in Rochester; Newspaper clippings about Cunningham cars; Announcement of the Cunningham Inherently Balanced Marine Motor.

Folder 18: A-F 1909-1910
Photocopy of Cunningham automobile ambulance; one photograph, photocopies of Cunningham cars.

Folder 19: H.S. 1910-1915
Photographs of Cunningham cars; Photocopies of Cunningham ambulance, hearse.

Folder 20: V-1 1916
V-2 1917
Correspondence about Cunningham; Correspondence and postcards: Photographs and photocopies of Cunningham cars.

Folder 21: V-3 1918-1920
Photograph of Cunningham cars; Photocopy of article "The Cunningham That Won't Retire"; Correspondence requesting/receiving information.

Folder 22: V-4 1922
Photographs- 1920's Cunningham cars; Correspondence requesting/receiving information.

Folder 23: V-5 1922-1924
Photographs of Cunningham cars; Correspondence requesting/receiving information.

Folder 24: V-6 1925
Cunningham cars- brochure/booklet with photographs in back; Correspondence requesting/receiving information; Photographs of Cunningham cars.

Folder 25: V-7 1927-1928
Car Collector and Car Classics Magazine, September 1981; Photographs, Correspondence and Newspaper clippings.
Folder 26: V-8 V-9  1929, 1930, 1931
Newspaper clippings; Photographs; Correspondence requesting/receiving information.

Folder 27: Hearses
Photocopied information on Cunningham automobile ambulance; The Professional Car Magazine, Summer 1981 and Fall 1984; Photocopied pictures; Newspaper clippings; Correspondence and Negatives of Cunningham cars.

Folder 28: Cunningham-Ford (CWA Car)
Two Photographs; Correspondence about transfer of ownership to RMSC of 1936 Cunningham-Ford car; Newspaper articles about the car and its first owner- Charlotte Whitney Allen from Rochester. Democrat and Chronicle January 1984.

Folder 29: Cunningham-Ford (Other)
Correspondence requesting/receiving information; Newspaper clippings.

Folder 30: G. Eastman
Clipping- George Eastman taking a flight on a Cunningham Hall Plane; Correspondence- any connection between Cunningham cars and George Eastman; Photocopies of correspondence between George Eastman and Cunningham & Co.; Photographs; Photocopy of photo of Eastman and cars.

Empty Folder V-10  1932-1934

Folder 31: Disposition of Cars Harrahs Edh. 14
Correspondence; Newspaper clippings on Harrah's automobile collection (early 1980's)

Folder 32: Porreca
Brief history of Porreca done in 1985.

Folder 33: (not originally in a folder)
May 28, 1987- Flyer of Rochester club luncheon, Bill Morris guest speaker; Correspondence; Fingerlakes chapter of Buick club of America newsletter.

Folder 34: AGM [Dr. Austin G. Morris]
Brief histories; three 8x10 photographs/portraits

Folder 35: (not originally in a folder)
Correspondence between Cunningham and Co. and George Eastman about a steamboat autowhistle George wanted put on his car; Article about Cunningham carriages.

Folder 36: Bill James
Correspondence between Bill Morris and Bill James (a Cunningham Car owner) 1989.
Folder 37: (not originally in a folder)
Newspaper article: "Dasher: We are Going to Have a (Harrah) Museum"; Postcard from daughter to William Morris; Two pages from The Classic Car magazine, December 1989; Photographs and negatives of Cunningham cars; Research notes "extra copies" clipped on front; Two envelopes with metal Cunningham emblems.

Folder 38: (not originally in a folder)
Two copies of "The Cunningham Car... Made in Rochester" by William H. Morris May 1986; The Pursuit of Excellence by Noel Hinrich; Photograph of "notable men in Rochester" with James Cunningham and Joseph T. Cunningham; empty envelope addressed to William H. Morris.

Folder 39: (not originally in a folder)
Three boxes of slides.