

The Newark Public Library
The Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center

John T. Cunningham Collection

- Extent:** 28 file drawers, 2 large boxes of rolled maps and posters, and 3 clipping scrapbooks. The rolled materials and volumes are not described in this inventory.
- Provenance:** Donated to the Newark Public Library in 2012 by the Cunningham family. In addition, hundreds of books from Cunningham's personal library were donated which were identified as a gift and processed separately.
- Scope:** The collection consists mainly of clippings, brochures, pamphlets, photocopies, and copies of images collected by John T. Cunningham for his many books and articles, primarily about New Jersey. It also includes typed copies of a few of his manuscripts, some notes for his books and articles, and the text of many of the talks he gave.

John T. Cunningham (1915-2012) journalist, author, and historian, was born in Newark, attended the Morristown schools, and graduated from Drew University in 1938. He joined the Newark News as a reporter in 1939 and went on to write more than 50 books and innumerable articles on New Jersey history. He and his wife Dorothy B. Cunningham had three children, Ruth, Jay, and Richard; the couple resided for many years in Florham Park, NJ. Cunningham served as a Captain in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. He was a member of the Morristown United Methodist Church.

Among his best-known publications are: "Made in New Jersey" (1954), "New Jersey: America's Main Road" (1966), "New Jersey: A Mirror on America," "Clara Maass: A Nurse, A Hospital, A Spirit" (1968), "Colonial New Jersey" (1971), "University in the Forest: The Story of Drew University" (1972), "Baseball in New Jersey: The Game of History" (1995), and "The Uncertain Revolution: Washington and the Continental Army at Morristown" (2007). His "Newark," which has become the standard history of the city, was published in 1966 and revised and reissued in 1988 and again in 2002. In addition to his published works he produced a number of audio-visual materials designed for use in schools. He founded Afton Publishing in the early 1970s as an outgrowth of his school curriculum work.

He was the recipient of nine honorary degrees and served as President of the New Jersey Historical Society and Chair of the New Jersey Historical Commission. He received four Awards of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History and won an Emmy Award for his film, "Dreams of Distant Shores."

John Cunningham died at Morristown Medical Center on June 7, 2012.

Arrangement:

The collection has been processed only minimally; the accompanying folder listing being a basic inventory. For the most part, the arrangement and folder titles are as Cunningham left them, alphabetical by subject. Materials for several of Cunningham's books (including railroads, *Mirror on New Jersey*, shore books) have been kept separate, as have materials meant specifically for education. They are housed in two filing cabinets. Cabinets 3 – 6 house the bulk of the collection, alphabetically by subject, with a few changes made to some folder headings for consistency. In addition, some biographical information can be found in Cabinet 3. Cabinet 7 contains Cunningham's county binders as well as special editions of newspapers.

Related Material:

John T. Cunningham Photography Collection
Books by John T. Cunningham

Inventory:

The Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center has a file drawer and folder listing of the collection in spreadsheet format.