

Skinner, H. H. Papers

H. H. Skinner Papers

1907-1917



Title Statement

Skinner, H. H. PapersH. H. Skinner Papers, 1907-1917 Ms.1988.061

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Profile Description

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Revision Description

2020-08-24 Finding aid notes updated to new department standards. juliags

2021-03-25 LM Rozema added missing notes for an unprocessed collection, added FA title and filing titles, added FA date from EAD, and added component with instances previously attached to collection level.

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1988.061

Unit Date

1907-1917

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

Papers of Herbert Harold Skinner, an engineer/salesman employed by the Narragansett Electric Lighting Company of Providence, Rhode Island in the early 20th century, including notes, reports, photographs, and printed materials, largely relating to electric vehicles and the marketing thereof.

Creator

Skinner, H. H. (Herbert Harold)

Extent

0.7 Cubic Feet 2 boxes

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Concerning Access

The collection is open to research.

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Source of Acquisition

The H. H. Skinner Papers were purchased by Special Collections and University Archives in 1988.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the H. H. Skinner Papers commenced in May, 2022 and was completed in June, 2022.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], H. H. Skinner Papers, Ms1988-061, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

Herbert Harold Skinner, son of Herbert and Martha Montgomery Skinner, was born in Rome, New York on September 16, 1886. The 1900 federal census lists the Skinner family as residents of Bristol, Massachusetts. By August 10, 1909, when the younger Herbert Skinner married Marguerite Merrill Gorham in Bristol, Rhode Island, he was employed as an "expert illuminating engineer" for the Narragansett Electric Lighting Company. The Skinners appear in the 1910 federal census as residents of Providence, Rhode Island. He continued to work for the same company as late as 1917, according to his 1917 World War I draft registration card, and in the 1920 census, Skinner is listed as an electric company manager. By 1925, Skinner was living in Poughkeepsie, New York with second wife Beulah Doolittle Skinner (1898-1996) and working for the Central Hudson Gas & Electric Company. The Skinners appear to have moved a few times during in the next two decades, with Herbert Skinner working in utility sales for different companies. City directories list the couple in Dayton, Ohio in 1929, and in Fall River, Massachusetts in 1933. By 1941, the Skinners were living in Newtonville, Massachusetts, while Herbert owned a business--perhaps an appliance store--in Boston. References to Skinner & Company can be found as late as 1960. Herbert H. Skinner died in Newton, Massachusetts on August 2, 1971, and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, Fall River (Bristol County), Massachusetts.

Scope and Content

This collection contains the papers of H. H. Skinner, an engineer/salesman with the Narragansett Electric Lighting Company of Providence, Rhode Island during the early 20th century. The collection contains reports, correspondence, photographs, and printed materials, relating largely to the company's venture into the marketing of electric vehicles.

Included in the collection are three salesman's handbooks, containing notes on pricing and technical specifications of electricity and electrical goods, as well as photographs of electric vehicles. Documenting the company's marketing of electrics are a number of reports and studies relating to the performance of the vehicles, their history, operation, and cost-effectiveness. Promotional materials in the collection include addresses made by Skinner and others, photographs of electric vehicles, and printed material (trade journals

and pamphlets) relating to electric vehicles and the power industry. (The July 1913 edition of *Board of Trade Journal* (Providence) contains an article by Skinner, The Field of the Electric Vehicle."

Keywords

Science and Technology

Electric vehicles

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Description of Subordinate Components

Salesman's handbooks

Unit Date 1908-1916, n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 1-2 (folder)

Customer file

Unit Date 1912-1914, n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Extent [3 folders]

Electric Vehicle Report: the Shepard Company

Unit Date 1912

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Electric Vehicle Report: J. Samuels and Bros.

Unit Date 1912

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Electric Vehicle Report Showing New Methods of Selling Electricity (Sales Dept., Narragansett Electric Lighting Co.)

Unit Date 1913

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Correspondence and forms

Unit Date 1914-1915, n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Reports, essays, and addresses

Unit Date 1912-1913, n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Photographs: Baker Electric

Unit Date 1907-1913, n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Extent [2 folders]

Photographs: other manufacturers

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 10-11 (folder)

Anderson Transportation Company (Detroit Electric)

Automatic Transportation Company

Buffalo Electric Vehicle Company

Church-Field Motor Company

Eldridge Manufacturing Company

Lansden Company

M. & P. Electric Vehicle Company

Voltz Bros.

Unidentified manufacturers

The Electrical Solicitors' Handbook

Unit Date 1910

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 12 (folder)

Board of Trade Journal (Providence, Rhode Island)

Unit Date 1913-07

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Bulletin (Electro Dynamic Company)

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Extent [5 items]

Electric Vehicles

Unit Date 1913-1917

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Extent [5 items]

Unit Date 1913-11

Unit Date 1915-12
Unit Date 1917-07
Unit Date 1917-08
Unit Date 1917-11

Electrical Merchandise and Selling Electricity

Unit Date 1915-03
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 4 (folder)

Electrical Progress (Electric Vehicle Number)

Unit Date n.d.
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 5 (folder)

White Bulletin (White Steam Car)

Unit Date 1907-09
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 6 (folder)

Pamphlets

Unit Date 1913-1915, n.d.
box-folder 2 (box)
Container 7 (folder)

**"A Complete Plan for Establishing and Operating a Vehicle Section, and -- How We Will Help"
(Baker Motor Vehicle Company)**

Unit Date n.d.

"Constitution," rev. 1911; amended 1915 (Electric Vehicle Association of America)

Unit Date [1915?]

**"Constructive Criticism of the Electric Vehicle" (E. R. Davenport / Narragansett Electric
Lighting Co.)**

Unit Date 1913

"Edison Alkaline Storage Batteries" (Edison Storage Battery Company)

Unit Date n.d.

"The Story of the Electric Commercial Vehicle" (Electric Vehicle Association of America)

Unit Date n.d.

"Storage Battery Railway Cars" (J. G. Brill Company)

Unit Date 1912

"Storage Battery Railway Cars" (The Electric Storage Battery Company)

Unit Date 1912

**"Technical Session: the Electrical Vehicle and the Central Station" (John F. Gilchrist and A.
Jackson Marshall / Electric Vehicle Association of America)**

Unit Date 1915

Automobile and automotive products advertisements and periodical extracts

Unit Date 1906-1919, n.d.

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 8 (folder)