

# Cumming Family Papers

Cumming Family Papers  
circa 1818 - 1992

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## Title Statement

Cumming Family Papers Cumming Family Papers finding aid MSS 6922

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## Publication Statement

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-03-05 17:46:46 +0000.

**Language Usage:** Description is written in: English, Latin script.

**Descriptive Rules:** Describing Archives: A Content Standard

## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

MSS 6922

**Unit ID**

[Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID**

/repositories/3/resources/1790

**Unit Date**

circa 1818 - 1992

**Language**

English

**Extent**

2.5 Cubic Feet 1 legal box, 3 letter boxes, 1 flat box, 4 scrapbooks/albums

**Condition Description**

Fair - fragile paper and photographs

**Repository**

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

## Administrative Information

### **Conditions Governing Access**

This collection is open for research use.

Some daguerreotypes have glass coverings that are cracked. Please handle with extreme care.

### **Conditions Governing Use**

This collection may contain some in-copyright material. Visit our Permissions and Publishing page (<https://www.library.virginia.edu/special-collections/services/publishing>) for more information about use of Special Collections materials. The library can provide copyright information upon request, but users are responsible for making their own determination about lawful use of collections materials.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Gift of Diane Untermeyer, 8 August 2020. Gift received during the pandemic in June 2020 and followed up to obtain the deed that occurred in August of 2020.

### **Processing Information**

The purpose of this collection guide is to describe the most recently acquired part(s) of this collection (2021-0153). Boxes listed in this collection guide do not start with Box 1 because previous acquisitions are listed in the library catalog (Virgo) and/or Archival Resources of the Virginias (ARVAS).

Box numbering begins at 84. Staff counted all of the boxes in earlier additions and then continued numbering boxes after that total.

### **Preferred Citation**

MSS 6922, Cumming Family Papers, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia.

## **Biographical / Historical**

Samuel Cumming, a purported former resident of Wigtownshire, Scotland, was born circa 1816 and died before 1916. After immigrating to Baltimore, Maryland around 1823, he moved to Virginia before August 13, 1868, to continue his profession as a stonemason at Fort Monroe. There, he married Diana Whiting Smith of Elizabeth City County and had at least two children, Samuel Gordon Cumming and Hugh Smith Cumming. In 1879, he established the Hampton Presbyterian Church, now known as First Presbyterian Church. He remarried after Diana's death to Margaret Cumming, and had several other children, including the Presbyterian Missionary, Calvin Knox Cumming. His son, Samuel Gordon Cumming, an attorney in Hampton, Virginia, died in 1920 after being shot by his wife, Elizabeth Bell Waller, following a divorce agreement. Marital ties expanded the Cumming Family to include members from the Waller, Booth, West, Whiting, Kendrick and Smith families.

Hugh Smith Cumming was born on August 17, 1869, in Hampton, Virginia. He attended high school at Baltimore City College and then matriculated at the University of Virginia to study medicine. In 1896, he married Lucy Almira Booth, whose grandfather, Edwin Gilliam Booth, was a noted Philadelphia lawyer and philanthropist to Confederate prisoners held in Northern prisons during the American Civil War. The couple had three children: Hugh Smith Cumming, Jr., Clara Diana Cumming (Kendrick,) and Lucy Booth Cumming, who died as an infant. His half-nephew, Samuel Calvin Cumming, was a Major General in the United States Marine Corps who served during the first and second World Wars and died in 1986.

He graduated from medical school at the University College of Medicine in Richmond, Virginia. A year later, in 1895, he began working as a physician for the United States Marine Hospital Service during which time he was stationed in San Francisco and Ellis Island, among other posts. During the World War I, he was then detailed to the U.S. Navy as an adviser in sanitation. In February 1920, he was appointed to be the fifth Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service by President Woodrow Wilson. He kept his position as Surgeon General until he retired in 1936 but continued working as director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau until his death in 1948.

Hugh Smith Cumming's son, Hugh Smith Cumming, Jr. was born March 10, 1900, in Richmond, Virginia, and married Winifred Burney West in 1935, with whom he had no recorded children. He graduated from Western High School in Washington, D.C. before attending the Virginia Military Institute and serving in the United States Army during the first World War. After graduating with a degree in law from the University of Virginia in 1924, he worked in the international department of the National City Bank of New York.

In 1927, Cumming, Jr., accepted a position at the United States Department of State as a clerk with the U.S. Legation in Peking, China. He was then transferred to Washington, D.C. and worked to assist diplomatic and economic relations between the U.S. and several Northern European countries, namely Sweden, and in 1936, he was appointed Executive Assistant to U.S. Secretary of State, Cordell Hull.

During the World War II, he represented the State Department during the Joint Anglo Swedish American Commission dealing with Allied Pilots downed in Neutral Sweden. After the war, he was a founding conference delegate to the United Nations, and from 1947 to 1950, was counselor of the U.S. Embassy in Sweden. From 1950 to 1952, he acted as counselor of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and briefly acted as its ambassador.

Cumming, Jr., was the Deputy Secretary General for Political Affairs of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO) before U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower nominated him for the position of ambassador to Indonesia, where he served in Djakarta from 1954-1957. After returning to Washington, he organized the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. He retired in 1964, after working as Counselor for the State Department.

He was a member of several social clubs, including the Alibi Club of Washington, D.C., and the Chevy Chase club of Chevy Chase, Maryland. He survived his wife by eight years and died in 1986.

Reference list:

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Priest, E. (2016, January 13). Samuel Cumming. FamilySearch.org. <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MFLR-N1Q?lang=en>

Washington Post. (1986, November 26). Hugh Cumming Jr. dies. Washington Post. <https://web.archive.org/web/20171227122650/https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1986/11/26/hugh-cumming-jr-dies/e58af8fc-ccb7-4c30-926e-7212c7c34208/>

## Scope and Contents

This addition to the Cumming family papers, includes correspondence, scrapbooks, photographs, newspaper clippings, memorabilia, and certificates related to members of the Cumming family, with most pertaining to United States Surgeon General, Hugh S. Cumming, Sr. (1869-1948) and his son, Ambassador Hugh S. Cumming, Jr. (1900-1986). Items include materials related to Hugh Cumming, Jr.'s service in the United States Department of State, and to Hugh S. Cumming, Sr.'s study at the University of Virginia, as well as Hugh S. Cumming, Jr.'s study at the Virginia Military Institute.

Most of the correspondence relates to the social and professional lives of Hugh S. Cumming, Jr. and his wife, Winifred Burney West Cumming. The periods covered include Cumming's time as United States Ambassador to Indonesia, but more broadly relate to his time in the United States Department of State. There is a small amount of correspondence relating to Hugh S. Cumming, Sr. and his career as Surgeon General of the United States, as well as travel documents and White House invitations mostly relating to Diana Cumming Kendrick and her husband, Manville Kendrick.

Many photographs include images of Hugh S. Cumming, Sr. and Hugh S. Cumming, Jr.'s public service careers along with portraits of members of the Cumming, Kendrick, Booth, and West families. Of particular interest is a series of inscribed and autographed regular and oversize photograph portraits of individuals involved in the careers of Hugh Cumming, Sr. and Hugh Cumming, Jr. Autographed portraits include those from Richard M. Nixon, Herbert Hoover, Lou Henry Hoover, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Cordell Hull, and Sukarno. There are eleven daguerreotypes of family ancestors and an included folder of commentary on their subjects by Hugh S. Cumming, Jr. Also, of note are photographs of the Department of State by Henry "Hank" G. Walker for Life Magazine.

Scrapbooks in this addition include Hugh S. Cumming, Sr.'s scrapbook (ca. 1900), which contains descriptions of his newborn children and photographs. An included copy of A.O Kaplan's "The Baby Biography," (ca. 1897-1898) describes the infancy of Lucy Booth Cumming and important events around the time of her birth, along with loose correspondence, parlor cards, and childhood photographs of her. This copy of "The Baby Biography" was filled in by her parents, Hugh S. Cumming and Lucy Booth Cumming. Diana Cumming's scrapbook (ca. 1918) holds pasted-in letters, ticket stubs, photographs, and illustrations, among other items. The memorial scrapbook regarding Winifred Burney West Cumming is an unbound second volume of a series of photocopied condolence letters to her widower, Hugh S. Cumming, Jr.

Printed materials and miscellaneous items comprise Hugh S. Cumming, Sr.'s 1893 copy of the University of

Virginia "Corks and Curls" Yearbook, newspaper clippings, and U.S. Department of State Commendations awarded to Hugh S. Cumming, Jr. It also includes a roster of the Virginia Military Institute's Class of 1921 and an etching by Don Swann of the University of Virginia's Rotunda. Oversize materials include a caricature and the official public service appointments of Hugh S. Cumming, Jr.

## Related Materials

The records/guides for this collection's original acquisition and other previous additions can be found in VIRGO, the Library's online catalog, as well as (in many cases) on the Archival Repositories of the Virginias (ARVAS) website.

For best results, search using the collection's Identifier/Call Number.

## Keywords

family papers

Cumming, Hugh S. (Hugh Smith), 1869-1948

United States. Department of State

Correspondence

photographs

## Arrangement

This addition to the Cumming Family Papers, the first series in this finding aid, is arranged into four files: Correspondence that relate to the personal and professional lives of members of the Cumming Family; Photographs which include portraits of family ancestors and famous individuals, as well as images depicting the professional lives of family members; Scrapbooks relating to Hugh S. Cumming's children, Winifred Burney West, and to Diana Cumming; and Printed and miscellaneous materials.

The folders in each of these files are arranged chronologically, except for undated photographs and a written commentary of various photographs. The undated photographs are arranged alphabetically by the subject's last name after the dated folders.

Arrangement is as follows:

Series 1- Cumming Family Papers addition ViU-2021-0153

File 1- Correspondence

File 2- Photographs

File 3- Scrapbooks

File 4- Printed and miscellaneous materials

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Cumming Family Papers addition (ViU-2021-0153)

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/273959

#### Correspondence

**Unit ID** [Archival Resource Key](#)

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/273960

**Mixed Materials [X032571075]** 84 (box)

**Container** 1-2 (folder)

**Mixed Materials [X032571076]** 85 (box)

**Container** 1-3 (folder)

## Photographs

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/278818

**Mixed Materials [X032571075]** 84 (box)

**Container** 3-6 (folder)

**Photographs [X032571088]** 86 (box)

**Container** 1-5 (folder)

**Mixed Materials [X032432813]** 87 (box)

**Container** 1 (folder)

**Mixed Materials [X032571077]** 88 (Flat\_Box)

**Container** 1-3 (Oversize\_Folder(Within\_an\_OSBox))

## Scrapbooks

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/278819

**Mixed Materials [X032571076]** 85 (box)

**Container** 5 (folder)

**Mixed Materials [X032652649]** 1 (Album)

**Mixed Materials [X032652650]** 2 (Album)

**Mixed Materials [X032432807]** 3 (Album)

**Mixed Materials [X032432808]** 4 (Album)

## Printed and miscellaneous materials

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival\_objects/278820

**Mixed Materials [X032571075]** 84 (box)

**Container** 7-8 (folder)

**Mixed Materials [X032571076]** 85 (box)

**Container** 5-6 (folder)

**Mixed Materials [X032571077]** 88 (Flat\_Box)

**Container** 4 (Oversize\_Folder(Within\_an\_OSBox))