

# Arthur J. Morris memorabiliaMSS.97.3

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1884-1992



## Title Statement

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## Publication Statement

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**  
MSS.97.3

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

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

**Unit ID**  
[/repositories/4/resources/653](#)

**Unit Date**

1884-1992

**Language**

English

**Creator**

Morris, Arthur J., 1881-1973

**Extent**

2 Cubic Feet

**Repository**

Arthur J. Morris Law Library Special Collections

## Administrative Information

**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

This collection was donated to the Law Library by the Virginia Morris Kincaid Foundation in February of 1997. The addendums were donated by Virginia Morris Huschke, granddaughter of Mr. Morris, in 2012 and 2013.

## Biographical / Historical

Arthur J. Morris was born in North Carolina in 1881, but grew up in Norfolk, Virginia. His father, a strict Presbyterian, ran a general store for farmers. At sixteen, Arthur suffered an Achilles tendon injury during football practice and spent the next 29 months in a wheelchair, despite numerous operations on his heel. Through much trial and error, he invented a brace that enabled him to walk. In the fall of 1898 Morris entered the University of Virginia, where he studied English literature, moral philosophy, and economics. Having done previous work at a preparatory school, he received his B.A. in June 1899. That school year, he was awarded a handsome gold medal for his debating skills and the Phi Beta Kappa key for academic excellence.

For the next two years, he studied law. In his final year at the University, his father paid an unannounced visit to Charlottesville and caught his son playing poker. His father withdrew further financial assistance for the young man's education. Morris found odd jobs in order to stay in school, until his mother stepped in and agreed to support him through his law graduation in June 1901. He returned to his hometown to begin practicing law.

Early in his career, Morris encountered a number of clients who lacked the collateral they needed to borrow money from banks. If these wage earners could not borrow from family members, they were at the mercy of pawnbrokers or loan sharks. Morris, a firm believer in the solid character and dignity of the working class, loaned his own money to these clients. The experience made him cognizant of the need for a lending institution for middle and lower income workers. He applied to the Virginia Corporation Commission for a charter for such a bank, and received the following reply from its chairman, Judge Robert R. Prentiss:

Dear Arthur: I have carefully considered your application for a charter for your hybrid and mongrel institution. Frankly, I don't know what it is. It isn't a savings bank; it isn't a state or national bank; it isn't a charity. It isn't anything I ever heard of before. Its principles seem sound, however, and its purpose admirable. But the real reason that I am going to grant a charter is because I believe in you.

On April 1, 1910, with \$20,000 of his own and a few associates' funds, Morris opened the Morris Plan Bank. Soon there were eleven of these banks enabling the average American, with the "collateral" of earning power and good character, to borrow in order to buy a house, finance a car, or carry the family through a catastrophic illness. Morris found that there were few defaults because most borrowers were thrifty and eager to be debt-free.

It took some effort to convince the big financiers in New York to allow the Morris Plan to go nationwide. Morris later recalled the arguments he employed:

"I told them simply that America's strength was in mass production and the only way to insure mass production was mass consumption. And, like night follows day, we can't have mass consumption without mass credit. And, what's more, mass credit guarantees mass employment. That got them! The only thing I left out, but since have learned, was that mass credit would create a standard of living among Americans unequalled anywhere in the world."

Soon the Morris Plan was adopted by countless other banks. In 1917, he branched out and established credit life insurance.

In his later years, Morris was frequently honored for his enormous impact on life in twentieth-century America. His simple idea of installment credit, coupled with his faith in the average citizen, helped to

improve the standard of living for millions. And from the time of his graduation, Morris maintained close ties with his alma mater from which he received many awards of recognition and appreciation. Near the end of his life he gave a generous donation toward the construction of the law library in the new building at North Grounds. The library, bearing his name, opened in 1974, the year after Morris's death.

## Scope and Contents

This collection contains diplomas, certificates, photographs, newspaper clippings, a gold watch and a gold medal, a scrapbook, and many other pieces of memorabilia that belonged to Arthur J. Morris, class of 1901 and a benefactor of the University of Virginia Law Library.

## Keywords

Memorabilia

Scrapbooks

photographs

Morris, Arthur J., 1881-1973

## Description of Subordinate Components

### **Gold Medal presented by the Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia to Arthur J. Morris, Best Debater, Washington Society**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75159

Unit Date 1899-1900

Mixed Materials [35007008640462] 1 (box)

### **Gold Watch given to Arthur J. Morris after 18 years of service by Industrial Morris Plan Bank of Detroit**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75164

Unit Date 1938

Mixed Materials [35007008640462] 1 (box)

### **Arthur J. Morris Memorabilia [including a congratulatory letter signed by President Dwight Eisenhower]**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75165

Unit Date 1942-1992

Mixed Materials [35007008640462] 1 (box)

### **Scrapbook. Testimonial Dinner to Arthur J. Morris, University Club, New York**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75166

Unit Date 1948

Mixed Materials [35007008640462] 1 (box)

## **Bounded Correspondence "On the 50th Anniversary of Consumer Banking a grateful industry gives humble thanks to Arthur J. Morris its Founder and Champion"**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75167

Unit Date 1960

Mixed Materials [35007008640462] 1 (box)

## **Scrapbook Commemorating "The First Fifty Years" of the Morris Plan**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75168

Unit Date 1966

Mixed Materials [35007008640462] 1 (box)

## **Bankers Security Life Insurance Society Hall of Fame Award and Stand**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75203

Unit Date n.d.

Mixed Materials [35007008640470] 2 (box)

## **Arthur J. Morris 1987 Laureate Hall of Fame for Business Leadership Junior Achievement of Greater Hampton Roads, Inc**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75204

Unit Date 1987

Mixed Materials [35007008640470] 2 (box)

## **University of Virginia trophy made by Baccarat**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75205

Unit Date n.d.

Mixed Materials [35007008640470] 2 (box)

## **UVA, The Raven Award**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75169

Unit Date 1972

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Arthur J. Morris, 1987 Laureate Hall of Fame for Business Leadership, Junior Achievement of Greater Hampton Roads, Inc**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75170

Unit Date 1987

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Bankers security Life Insurance Hall of Fame Trophy**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75171

Unit Date n.d.

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Thomas Jefferson Society of Patriarchs given by the Alumni Association of UVA in recognition of more than fifty years of service as son active alumnus of the University**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75172

Unit Date n.d.

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Phi Beta Kappa Associates Fellowship in the Associates in recognition of Qualities and Achievements**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75173

Unit Date 1940

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Mounted Newspaper Clipping: "Arthur J. Morris: Banker to the Masses"**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75174

Unit Date 1954

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **The Raven Award Certificate**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75175

Unit Date 1964

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **University of Virginia Law School Distinguished Law Alumnus, Eminent Member of the Law School Association's Council, Benefactor of the Law Library**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75176

Unit Date 1969

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Mounted Newspaper Clipping: "Freedom from Control Urged Consumer Credit"**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75177

Unit Date 1969

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Mounted Clipping: "The Customer ...the most important person in this bank". The Morris Plan Industrial Bank of New York**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75178

Unit Date n.d.

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Two Copper Plaques Presented by American Industrial Bankers Association to Arthur J. Morris Founder of Morris Plan Banks, for his pioneering in the field of Consumer Instalment Credit**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75179

Unit Date n.d.

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **IAC [Industrial Acceptance Corporation Limited] Resolution recognizing Arthur J. Morris as "The Founder" and "The Father of Consumer Credit"**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75180

Unit Date 1969

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Certificate of Appreciation of The Washington International Horse Show Association, Ltd**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75181

Unit Date 1974

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Framed Version of "The Crow" by Arthur J. Morris. A Parody on "The Raven" by Edgar Allan Poe**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75182

Unit Date n.d.

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Committee of One Thousand, Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75183

Unit Date n.d.

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Schultz, Leslie P.: Bankers Security Life Insurance Society Corporate History 1917-1990**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75184

Unit Date 1989

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Poe, Edgar Allan, The Raven, New York, Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1884. Illustrated by Gustave Dore**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75185

Unit Date 1884

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **University of Virginia Certificate of Bachelor of Law**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75186

Unit Date 1901, June 12

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Certificate that licensed Arthur J. Morris as an Attorney and Counselor at Law**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75187

Unit Date 1901, Sep. 6

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Silver Tray Presented at the Testimonial Dinner given by friends and admirers in recognition for his "contribution to the American way of life and the National Economy through the funding of the Morris Plan of Consumer Banking", Feb. 23, 1948**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75188

Unit Date 1948

Mixed Materials [35007008640488] 3 (box)

## **Photographs**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75189

### **23 snapshots and some portraits of Arthur J. Morris with unidentified people**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75190

Unit Date 1940-1960?

**Photographs** Law Special Collections photographs cabinet

**Physical Location** Law Special Collections photographs cabinet

### **Morris Testimonial Dinner at the International Club, New York**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75191

Unit Date 1948

**Photographs** Law School, Basement, Special Collections Storage, Oversized Files Cabinet [Law Oversized Materials]

**Physical Location** Law School, Basement, Special Collections Storage, Oversized Files Cabinet [Law Oversized Materials]

## **Arthur J. Morris addressing student body of School of Consumer Banking at opening of first resident session August 11, 1952 at University of Virginia**

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

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75192

**Unit Date** 1952

**Photographs** Law Special Collections photographs cabinet

## **Addendum to the Arthur J. Morris Collection [a]**

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

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/75193

### **Scope and Contents**

This addition consists of two photographs one of Mr. Morris as a young man and a panoramic photograph of the First Morris Plan Bankers Convention that met in Cleveland, Oh. in October 14-16, 1919, the First Check of the Morris Plan Bank of Norfolk [n.d.] and a framed newspaper article: "The man that started it all,"@ Forbes October. 15, 1961.

### **Panoramic photograph of the First Morris Plan Bankers Convention that met in Cleveland, Oh. in October 14-16, 1919**

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

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180043

**Physical Location** Special Collections Oversized shelves.

### **Framed First Check of the Morris Plan Bank of Norfolk [n.d.]**

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

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180044

**Physical Location** Special Collections oversized shelves.

### **"The man that started it all," Forbes, October 15, 1961. Framed article.**

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

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180045

**Physical Location** Special Collections oversized shelves.

## **Addendum to the Arthur J. Morris Collection [b]**

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

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180046

### **Scope and Contents**

This addition to the collection was given to the Law Library in December of 2012 by Virginia Huschke, granddaughter of Mr. Morris. It consists of a few pieces of memorabilia and one photograph. The files were given to Special Collections by Elizabeth Leverage, Director of Trusts, Estates, and Gift Planning, Law School Foundation.

These files were added to existing box 2, all are in one folder.

### **Testimonial Dinner in Honor of Arthur J. Morris. February 23, 1948. University Club, New York. Program.**

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

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180047

**Physical Location** Added to box 2

**The Development of Consumer Credit in the United States ... a tribute to Arthur J. Morris. A speech given by Mr. Thomas C. Boushall, President of the Bank of Virginia, at the Testimonial Dinner in honor of Arthur J. Morris, University Club, New York, N. Y., February 23, 1948. Washington, D. C., Published by Consumer Bankers Association, [1948].**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180048

Physical Location Added to box 2

**The Morris Plan Corporation of America. Annual Report for the year 1955.**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180049

Physical Location Added to box 2

**Address by Arthur J. Morris to the Law Graduates, University of Miami, Miami, Florida, June 6, 1957.**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180050

Physical Location Added to box 2

**Fifty Years of Consumer Credit and its Potentialities. Address by Arthur J. Morris, Chairman of the Board, Financial General Corporation and Industrial Bank of Commerce at Consumers Bankers Association Annual Convention, White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, October 21, 1960.**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180051

Physical Location Added to box 2

**Invitation to attend the dedication of the Arthur J. Morris Law Library, November 1974**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180052

Physical Location Added to box 2

**Dedication of the University of Virginia Arthur J. Morris Law Library with a Tribute to Frances Farmer, Law Librarian, November 15, 1974. [Autographed dedicated to Virginia Earle Morris Huschke in memory of her grandfather].**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180053

Physical Location Added to box 2

**Photo of Arthur J. Morris with Mamie Eisenhower, when he gave the award for the National Horse Show, n. d.**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180054

Mixed Materials Law Special Collections photographs cabinet

## **Addendum to the Arthur J. Morris Collection**

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180386

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Transferred to the Special Collection in December of 2019.

### **Scope and Contents**

This addition to the collection was transferred Law Library in December of 2019 by Denise Forster. It

consists of a commemorative silver plate given to Arthur J. Morris by the Morris Plan Bank of Knoxville on January 20th 1941. The tray was given to the Law School foundation by Virginia Huschke, granddaughter of Arthur J. Morris with a few pieces of memorabilia and one photograph. The files were given to Special Collections by Elizabeth Leverage, Director of Trusts, Estates, and Gift Planning, Law School Foundation.

**Commemorative Silver Tray - "On January 20th, 1941, gratefully presented to Arthur J. Morris, founder of the Morris Plan System of Banking by the Morris Plan Bank of Knoxville on the 25th Anniversary, organized January 7th, 1916"**

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

**Unit ID** /repositories/4/archival\_objects/180387

**Unit Date** 1941-01-20