

McLean County Museum of History

Williams Oil-O-Matic Collection

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October 2008
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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	Two boxes
COLLECTION DATES:	1923-1947; 1994
PROVENANCE:	Gift
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	See also Eureka-Williams-Electrolux Collection
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	None

Brief History

Charles U. Williams came to Bloomington in the late nineteenth century. He was an itinerant photographer who decided to relocate to the area. He is later went into the picture postcard and later opened a successful auto dealership located at 207 E. Washington St. Due to the coal shortage caused by World War I, C.U. Williams and his son developed what would become known as the Oil-O-Matic, an oil-based heater for homes by reusing oil from cars serviced at the dealership. With the expansion of the heating business came other inventions such as the Ice-O-Matic, a compressor-operated refrigeration system.

In 1946 the company merged with the Eureka Company of Detroit and was renamed Eureka-Williams Corp., and the company began production of vacuum cleaners.

See also the Eureka-Williams-Electrolux Collection.

Folder Inventory

Box 1: Williams Oil-O-Matic Collection Box 1

Folder 1: Articles and Advertisements (*Pantagraph* unless otherwise noted)

- 1.1 "The Home of Today," September, 1929 (torn from book or pamphlet).
- 1.2 "Williams Representatives Here From Wide Territory," photograph from Sunday *Pantagraph*, January 7, 1934.
- 1.3 "Romance of Oil-O-Matic" by A. T. Simmons, Export Manger, Oil-O-Matic, January 5, 1934
- 1.4 July 13, 1921
- 1.5 August 22, 1921
- 1.6 September 28, 1921
- 1.7 September 17, 1922
- 1.8 October 9, 1923
- 1.9 January 31, 1925
- 1.10 January 15, 1926
- 1.11 February 26, 1926
- 1.12 May 22, 1926
- 1.13 Magazine advertisement from August 1926 (source unknown)
- 1.14 Magazine advertisement (source unknown; undated)
- 1.15 December 31, 1929
- 1.16 August 26, 1930
- 1.17 September 22, 1935
- 1.18 April 19, 1937
- 1.19 "Army Order to Williams; May Reach Two Millions," March 11, 1941, p. 3
- 1.20 "Ordnance Chief Visits Workers, Inspects Plant," May 21, 1942, p.8
- 1.21 "Oil-O-Matic Now Tooling Up For Army Work," June 2, 1941, p. 3
- 1.22 "Oil-O-Matic Goes on 24 Hour, Seven Day Production Schedule," May 23, 1942
- 1.23 "Every Williams Worker to See Ceremonies," September 6, 1942, p.8
- 1.24 "Williams Employees 100 Percent for Payroll Deduction Plan; Tenth of Wages at Plant Goes into War Bonds," September 6, 1942, p. 10
- 1.25 "First Oil-O-Matic Was Designed to Beat Coal-less Mondays of First World War; Trades-Labor assembly Letter of Congratulation Tops List; Baby 1917-18 Conflict Helping To Win This One," September 6, 1942, p.14

- 1.26 "3,500 Cheer as Williams War Plant Wins Army-Navy 'E,'" September 9, 1942, p. 12
- 1.27 "Williams War Plant Wins 3rd 'E' Award," March 29, 1944, p.3
- 1.28 "Sales by Williams Oil-O-Matic To Government Total \$8,911,748," April 13, 1944, p.9
- 1.29 "Williams Plant to Concentrate On 4 main products After War," April 13, 1944, p.9
- 1.30 "56 Women Start Work in Williams Factory," May 6, 1944, p.3
- 1.31 "Women Go To Work in War Plant." May 10, 1944, p.3
- 1.32 June 5, 1944
- 1.33 October 20, 1944
- 1.34 "Movie Star To Give Talk At Williams," November 6, 1944
- 1.35 "City's Part in Bombing Tokyo: B-29 Parts Made at Williams," November 24, 1944, p. 3
- 1.36 December 1, 1944 (B-29)
- 1.37 December 25, 1944 (B-29)
- 1.38 "Suicide Plane Defense," July 18, 1945, p. 3
- 1.39 "80 Oil-o-matic Sales in 30 days in Bloomington!!," no date, no source
- 1.40 "Williams Oil-O-Matic plant beat plowshares into swords," August 30, 2009, p. B4

Folder 2: Convention and meeting Materials

- 2.1 Financial Statement, October 31, 1927
- 2.2 Notice of Stockholders meeting, December 31, 1927
- 2.2 Fourth International Convention, June 25-26, 1928.
- 2.3 Fifth International Convention, June 3-4, 1929.
- 2.4 Sixth International Convention, Aug 18-19, 1930.
- 2.5 Williams Oil-O-Matic Heating Song Sheet.
- 2.6 Army E Navy Production Award including invitation to Buffet Supper and presentation.

Folder 3: Merger

- 3.1 Notice of Special Meeting of Shareholders on May 28, 1943, written May 7, 1945, including a Proxy statement and Proxy ballot with envelope.
- 3.2 Agenda for meeting.
- 3.3 Motion to adjourn to Friday, June 1, 1945.
- 3.4 Item 7(c) of Agenda second motion for the adoption of the resolutions.

Folder 4: Manual, 1932

- 4.1 Installation and Service Manual Williams Ice-O-Matic

Refrigeration July 1, 1932; includes instructions for installation and service, photographs, and schematics of the Ice-O-Matic; designed for dealers to completely understand electric refrigeration. (2 copies).

Folder 5: Manual, 1934

- 5.1 Williams Oil-O-Matic Heating, January 1, 1934; includes schematics, instructions, and photographs of the heating products produced by Williams Oil-O-Matic.

Folder 6: Manual, 1937

- 6.1 Williams Ice-O-Matic Refrigeration, January 1, 1937; includes schematics, drawings, and instructions for installation and service of Williams Oil-O-Matic products (2 copies).

Folder 7: Manual, 1937

- 7.1 Williams Oil-O-Matic Heating, February 1, 1937; includes schematics, photographs, and drawings of products and explanations of service and installation techniques.

Folder 8: Manual, 1940

- 8.1 Williams Hi-Pressure Oil Burner, February 1, 1940; includes instructions and schematics of the Hi-Pressure Oil Burner and photographs.

Folder 9: Service Manuals

- 9.1 Williams Oil-O-Matic Heating, Section K, Service, no date.
- 9.2 Code and Manual for the Design and Installation of Warm Air Winter Air Conditioning Systems by National Warm Air Heating & Air Conditioning Association, 1945.

Folder 10: Manuals and Photos

- 10.1 Notebook Manuals and Our Photos on Gas Burners & Gas Furnaces.

Folder 11: Courses and Notebooks

- 11.1 How Oil-O-Matic Works, Unit II of the Course in Oil-O-Matic Salesmanship, by Business Training Corp, 1926.
- 11.2 A Lecture Course on the Design, Operation and Servicing of

- Domestic and Small Commercial Refrigerating Units by Refrigeration Service engineers Society, 1940.
- 11.3 Basic Service Text on pressure Type Burners by G.T. Kaufman, Oil-Heat Institute of America, Inc., 1945.
 - 11.4 Fuel Conservation Handbook prepared by Williams Oil-O-Matic Division Eureka Williams Corp, 1947.
 - 11.5 Handwritten notes, diagrams, test sheets on Oil Gear Unit for Remote Control System.

Folder 12: Service Department Notebook

- 12.1 Notebook by L.B. Crusius, Service Department consisting of memos, specifications, tables, photos, blueprints, bulletins; arranged alphabetically.

Folder 13: Service Department Notebook

- 13.1 Notebook by L.B. Crusius, Service Department consisting of specifications, data, departments by name and number, parts. Large section on listing of service schools, where they were held, dates and enrollment. Arranged alphabetically.

Folder 14: Miscellaneous

- 14.1 Lawrence B. Crusius membership certificate in Refrigeration Service Engineers Society, 1945.
- 14.2 Birth announcement for Harriet Jane Kirwan, 1935.
- 14.3 "I Like The Depression," editorial by Henry Ansley in the *Amarillo Globe-News*, discovered and offered for your amusement and happiness.
- 14.4 "A Fighting Captain of Industry," article about William A. Matheson, president of Williams Oil-O-Matic Corp, in *Finance* magazine, February 25, 1945
- 14.5 Three page list of names, addresses and phone numbers.
- 14.7 Drawing of Method of Handling Crank Case Drainings
- 14.7 Draft of Process used in handling crank case drainings, August 4, 1925
- 14.8 Sales Campaign flyer for selling Williams Oil-O-Matic Heating Systems (undated).
- 14.9 Program for the Presentation of the Army Navy Production Award, September 8, 1942 (2 copies).
- 14.10 Digital image of P-47 purchased by employees, December 1942-April 1942.
- 14.11 Notice announcing sale of Oil-O-Matic products in Bloomington at Wissel & Christmas.
- 14.12 Williams Ice-O-Matic Recipe book, 31pp. 1933. 2 Copies.

- 14.12 Letter to Mike Matejka, June 23, 1999, from W.A. Matheson, Jr., uses Williams Oil-O-Matic as an example of the benefits of inventors/progress
- 14.13 “World’s Leading Oil Burner! Wiliiams Oil-O-Matic heating. Small notebook with advertising covers.

Folder 15: History

- 15.1 Company letterhead, two styles.
- 15.2 Inter-company correspondence, comparisons, analysis of performance on High-Lift Platform and Telescopic Fork-Type Trucks, 1944.
- 15.3 “Memories” spiral notebook, company involvement during World War II of company, employees, minutes of meetings.
- 15.4 History of Williams Oil-O-Matic Heating Corporation by W. A. Matheson, Jr., February 18, 1994.
- 15.5 Letter to Greg Koos, April 6, 1994, from W.A. Matheson, Jr., addendum to letter below
- 15.6 William Oil-O-Matic Heating Corporation by W.A. Matheson, Jr. — based on recall of stories shared by father and other employees. February 18, 1994

Folder 16: Trademarks & Patents

- 16.1 Williams Oil-O-Matic trademark (patented US, Canada, Great Britain, France, Belgium)
- 16.2 Trade-Mark registrations for various products
- 16.3 28 October 1931 Letter to Langdon Moore regarding copyright for Williams Oil-O-Matic burners

Folder 17: Employee Manuals

- 17.1 May 1945 “You, Your Job and Your Company” (3 copies)

Folder 18: Oil-O-Matic Data

- 18.1 Affidavit- Walter Williams, VP, regarding “Ice-o-matic”
- 18.2 1920-1932 advertising expenditures
- 18.3 Organization Data, undated, 28 pages.
- 18.4 Oil-O-Matic burner dealers in US and Canada data
- 18.5 Statistics 1920-1940

Box 2: Williams Oil-O-Matic Collection Box 2

Scrapbook: Oil-O-Matic History

Binder containing newspaper clippings, typed documentary histories, company materials, and corporate reports documenting the industrial history of the C.U. Williams Oil-O-Matic Company from 1929-1943. The collection of articles covers topics from 1929

contract for new buildings, WWI and WWII machinery production and shipping history, Army Navy “E” award for excellence.

Items of note include: plan for Eureka-Williams merger with witnesses and articles of agreement, dated 1945; interview with Charles U. Williams, dated 1920s; manual of product design descriptions with oil laws, dated 1930s; Oil-O-Matic Convention newsletter detailing first unit factory to open in Bloomington, IL, dated 1925; and a Oil-O-Matic Coat of Arms.

Scrapbook: CO (?) Air Cond-

This scrapbook is a binder containing mostly photographs of Williams Air-O-Matic installations, a diagram of an absorption conditioning unit, and promotional booklets for United Gas Company and Williams Air-O-Matic products and services. Included in the scrapbook are 25 black and white photographs including: Williams Air-O-Matic installations at the Public Service Company – Gas Appliances of Northern Illinois, Oak Park, Illinois (view of showroom and front window display); installation at United Gas Company, Monroe, Louisiana; installation at Baker’s Hamburger Inn; Bloomington, Illinois (view of building exterior and interior); installation at the James Sinclair Residence in Bloomington, IL. (outside view); installation at United Gas Company, Lake Charles, Louisiana; installation at United Gas Company, Beaumont, Texas; installation at Union National Bank, Bartlesville.

Items of note include: photograph of display booth at Air Conditioning Show in Cleveland, Ohio featuring Oil-O-Matic, Air-O Matic, and Ice-O-Matic units, dated 1940; photograph of first Air-O-Matic installation in service at Wahls Café in Chenoa, Illinois (exterior and interior views); and a booklet printed by Williams Air-O-Matic explaining air conditioning and uses for its produces (includes diagrams of its best-selling units).