

McGinness, Melvin, tailor shop ledger

Melvin McGinness tailor shop ledger
c. 1939-1969

Title Statement

McGinness, Melvin, tailor shop ledgerMelvin McGinness tailor shop ledger MSS 16929

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Notes

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

MSS 16929

Unit ID

[Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

/repositories/3/resources/1841

Unit Date

c. 1939-1969

Mixed Materials [X032762813]

1 (box)

Language

English

Creator

McGinness, Melvin, 1896-1970

Extent

0.25 Cubic Feet One legal-sized box, half-width

Repository

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was a purchase from Franklin Gilliam Rare Books to the Small Special Collections Library at the University of Virginia Library on 5 November 2025.

Preferred Citation

MSS 16929, Melvin McGinness tailor shop ledger, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia Library.

Biographical / Historical

McGinness graduated from Hampton College in 1914 and served in the First World War before marrying his wife, Charlottesville school teacher and principal Rebecca McGuinness in 1923. He relocated to Charlottesville and began to operate McGinness Tailor Shop at 273 West Main Street. This location was eventually demolished in early 1964 during the Urban Renewal razing of the Vinegar Hill neighborhood of Charlottesville. McGinness moved his tailor shop to 151 Brown Street in the Starr Hill neighborhood.

Content Description

This collection contains one ledger book kept by Melvin McGinness (1896-1970) for his tailor shop on 273 West Main Street in Vinegar Hill, Charlottesville, Virginia. Dates in the ledger indicate that the book was kept between 1964 and 1968, evidenced by two dated "Look-Rite Cleaners" receipts and a handwritten date by McGinness at the top margin of page 27. Earlier material is tipped in at the front and back endpages. This ledger records work completed by McGinness at this second tailor shop location, 151 Brown Street in the Starr Hill neighborhood, as evidenced by receipts throughout the book dated after the razing of Vinegar Hill.

Entries in the ledger include the account holder's name, their clothing size, the work they have commissioned, and the price of the work. Checkmarks indicate the closing of a transaction after the customer has paid. Laid in material throughout the ledger includes a Singer Sewing Machine Exchange advertisement, an advertisement pamphlet for incense oils, and a 1966 receipt for automobile work at Knauf's Auto Service Co. On West Main Street, a November 1939 program for the cornerstone laying ceremony of Trinity P.E. Church, handwritten notes from June 1969 about sending delegates to an unspecified state meeting, a ruler advertising Atlanta Thread & Supply Co., a Look-Rite Cleaners receipt from June 1969, a May 1964 Trinity Church program, a Virginia National Bank envelope, a Medicare Insurance Card informational sheet, an August 1968 Trinity Church program portion, several blank sealed envelopes, a Remington Shaver box, and a sheet cardstock with written ledger entries.

Related Materials

Rebecca Fuller McGinness papers MSS 12633

Keywords

African Americans -- Virginia

African American business enterprises

Ledgers (account books)

Charlottesville (Va.) -- History -- 20th century