

Guide to the George Howard Snyder, Jr. diary SC 02028

George Howard Snyder, Jr. diary
1929

Title Statement

Guide to the George Howard Snyder, Jr. diary SC 02028

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 02028

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/10099

Unit Date

1929

Language

English

Extent

0.2 Linear Feet One diary, in one folder

Extent

Fair, first page ripped, back binding loose

Repository

Special Collections Research Center

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

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Preferred Citation

George Howard Snyder, Jr. diary, Special Collections Research Center, William & Mary Libraries.

Biographical / Historical

George Howard Snyder Jr. was born in 1908 to George H. and Mary Lever Snyder. His father, George Howard Snyder Sr., worked for the Midvale Steel Company for fourteen years before he left to start his own firm manufacturing paper boxes; he had one sibling, Allen T. (b. 1917). Snyder graduated from Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, in 1931, where he was a member of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity. In 1929, Washington and Lee University had a class size of 900 students from 37 states, Washington D.C., Brazil, China, Cuba, and Mexico. He took over his father's business upon his death in 1942. He passed away in 1990 and was buried at Whitemarsh Memorial Park in Ambler, Pennsylvania.

Wanamaker's was a chain of American department stores founded in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by John Wanamaker. The flagship Philadelphia store, located at 1300 Market Street, opened in 1911 on the site of John Wanamaker's former store, the Grand Depot, which was constructed over the abandoned Pennsylvania Railroad Depot. The building was designed by Chicago architect Daniel H. Burnham and featured twelve stories, a 150 foot Grand Court, a large Grand Organ consisting of 28,750 pipes, a 2,500 pound golden eagle, and 129 circular counters. William Howard Taft spoke at the store's dedication ceremony in 1911. It was the first private commercial enterprise to be dedicated by a sitting U.S. president. Wanamaker's was notable because it was one of the first department stores in the United States that offered fixed prices and themed sales. Wanamaker also sent buyers to Europe for the current styles. The chain expanded to 16 stores at the height of its popularity. The 16 chains were purchased by A. Alfred Taubman in 1986 and transitioned to Hecht's in 1995. In 2006, the Philadelphia store came under the ownership of Macy's Department Store until its closure in March of 2025.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of a Wanamaker Department Store-branded diary used by George Howard Snyder Jr., a student of Washington and Lee University in Lexington, VA in 1929. The writings are primarily about Snyder's college experiences including classes, studying, and outings with his friends and classmates. He took classes in Hygiene, Accounting, History, Economics, Politics, Engineering, and German. George often wrote letters to his mother and his girlfriend, Betty. On March 4th, he made note of Herbert Hoover's inauguration. He also remarked on traveling to Reeding, Pennsylvania with his father to see a new facility.

The diary entries are written in a Wanamaker Diary from the Wanamaker Department Store in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The pages contain advertisements for Philadelphia businesses, calendars, fields for recording phone numbers and household expenses, Philadelphia bus routes, posts offices, theaters, wards, and street guides. Includes full size fold-out map of Philadelphia car and bus routes to Wanamaker's Department Store.

Keywords

Diaries

Diaries -- Male authors

Washington and Lee University

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

American diaries

Philadelphia (Pa.)

Philadelphia (Pa.)--History--20th century

General

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Arrangement

Collection consists of a single diary.

Description of Subordinate Components

Diary

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/667719

Unit Date 1929

Mixed Materials Small Collections Box 136 (box)

Container 1 (Folder)