

THE IDA PEARLE AND JOSEPH CUBA ARCHIVES AND GENEALOGY CENTER
OF
THE WILLIAM BREMAN JEWISH HERITAGE & HOLOCAUST MUSEUM
1440 SPRING STREET
ATLANTA, GA 30309
www.thebreman.org

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

REGISTER:
JULE AND ROSE ESSERMAN LEVIN

Processed by Demece Harvey
October 2007

MSS NO: 162

The Esserman family settled in Rome, Georgia, in the early 1890s. In 1896, Pressley I. Esserman founded Esserman & Company, a retail clothing company. Mr. Esserman married Anna D. Friedman in May 1898. Mr. and Mrs. Esserman had six children: Hyman, Ben, Mildred, Edna, Faygie, and Rose. Rose Esserman Levin was born in Rome on December 18, 1914, the youngest of the six children. Anna Esserman died in 1928; Rose was fourteen years old.

Rose attended Rome public schools and Shorter College. She worked for many years as a salesperson and buyer at Esserman and Co. Rose was a leader and active member of the Rome Jewish community. She taught Sunday school at Congregation Rodeph Sholom for many years, and, studying on her own, she developed a curriculum for students of the religious school. During World War II, Rose worked as a volunteer with the American Red Cross.

Jule Levin was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on March 6, 1913 to Hyman and Celia Levin. Jule attended Woodward High School and the University of Cincinnati, College of Law. At the age of eighteen he was one of the founders of the Jewish Community Center in Cincinnati, and served as its secretary and first membership president. While Jule was traveling on business in the South (selling dresses) he met Rose Esserman. In November 1940, they married and settled in Rome, Georgia. In 1942, Jule Levin purchased partnership in the Esserman and Co. Jule and Rose had two daughters, Ellen and Ann.

Jule and Rose were very involved in the Jewish community and the community of Rome. The Levins were strongly committed to civil rights and were involved in the 1950s and early 1960s in efforts to achieve racial equality and integration throughout the South. The Levins worked to ensure that the African-American community attained rights, privileges and opportunities that were denied them or made difficult to achieve. They worked with others in the Civil Rights Movement to ensure peaceful desegregation of schools, lunch counters and other public

facilities. Esserman & Co. was the first retail store in Rome to desegregate its restrooms, water fountains and fitting rooms, and the first to employ Blacks as sales clerks.

Jule Levin was a Rome businessman and civic leader for more than two decades and a past president of the Rome-Floyd County Chamber of Commerce. He was the first Jewish president of the Chamber of Commerce, the United Appeal and the Jaycees and founder of the Rome Junior Chamber of Commerce. He was president of the United Givers, the Merchandise Association, and Rodeph Sholom Congregation. He also served on the boards of the Boys' Club, the Red Cross, the USO, the Rome Girls' Club, and was on the executive board of the Rome-Floyd County Council of Social Agencies. As president of the Rome Chamber of Commerce in 1962, Levin worked with members of the Black community to organize and obtain local funding for the Rome Girls' Club, a social service group for young Black women. He initiated the first Career Day at the then all-Black high school to provide employment information for prospective graduates.

Rose Levin was a founding member of the Rome chapter of the Georgia Human Relations Council, an organization that supported human rights and racial equality.

In 1963, Mr. Levin and his family moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, so that he and his twin brother could fulfill a life-long dream of being business associates of the I.C. Elman Company, which later became Elmex Inc., a national toy wholesale company. The family joined Isaac M. Wise Temple. There they continued serving on boards of trustees and working with the congregation's youth group.

The Jule and Rose Esserman Levin Papers, 1920-2002, are arranged in alphabetical order by subject and chronologically within each folder. Of special interest in this collection are the personal stories, and history of Rose Esserman Levin while growing up in Rome. The collection includes a brief history into the life of the Esserman Family, how Esserman & Co. became a successful clothing business and their many contributions to the community. One can also get a brief look into individual family members.

The Levin's were very involved in the progression of the Civil Rights Movement. The collection contains papers written by students after participating in the sit-in demonstrations.

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|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Restrictions: | Available to the serious scholar. |
| Number of containers : | 5 |
| Oversize flat items: | none |
| Photographs: | Removed to the visual arts collection |
| Shelf space occupied: | 1.8 cubic feet |

CONTAINER

- 1 Subject files, 1901 – 1963, includes a Masters Thesis on the Civil Rights activities in Rome, 20 student papers written on the sit-in demonstrations in 1963 and some history of the Esserman family life and business.

Folder 1: Adler, Ellen Levin wedding, 1969.

Folder 2: Anderson, Laura Caldwell paper: “We’ve Had a Peaceful Relationship Between the Races Here”, 2002.

Folder 3: Beeferman, Ann Pressley Levin wedding 1972.

Folder 4: Civil Rights Letters, 1960 – 2002.

Folder 5: Civil Rights, sit – in papers, 1963.

Edwards, Rosa
Farmer, Eula Mae
Ferguson, Glenda
Hamilton, Harry
Hardy, Ender
Hayes, Robert
Haynes, Robert
Hill, Mary Louise
Hoke, Eleanor Elaine
Holland, Hubert Jr
Houston, Eleanor
Hunter, James
Kinnebrew, Mattie Lucretia
Lyons, Vicki
Malone, Lonnie
Reynolds, William
Smith, Daisy
Thomas, Mary Joanita
Thompson, Bobbie Jean
Ware, Sharon A.

Folder 6: Desegregation, 1960 – 2005.

Folder 7: The Elmax Corporation, 1970.

Folder 8: Esserman & Co, 1901 – 1990.

- Folder 9: Esserman & Co. closes, 1987.
- Folder 10: Esserman, Andrea Lee Weiss, undated
- Folder 11: Esserman, Anna D. Friedman, condolence cards and letters, 1928.
- Folder 12: Esserman, Ben, 1920 – 1989.
- Folder 13: Esserman, Edna, 1930 – 1983.
- Folder 14: Esserman, Fay, 1942 – 1975.
- Folder 15: Esserman, Hyman, 1943 – 1989.
- Folder 16: Esserman, Joseph Charles, 1973.
- Folder 17: Esserman, Pressley I., 1898.

CONTAINER

- 2 Subject files, 1928 – 1988, Esserman, P. – Jewish Community Center. Container includes condolence card and letters for Pressley Esserman, memorabilia from Rose's young adulthood, community support and other correspondence.

- Folder 1: Esserman, Pressley I., condolence cards and letters, 1944.
- Folder 2: Esserman Realty Company, 1948.
- Folder 3: Esserman, Rose, Autograph Books, 1928 - 1932.
- Folder 4: Esserman, Rose, High School Diploma, 1932
- Folder 5: Esserman, Rose, High School Papers, 1929 - 1932.
- Folder 6: Esserman, Rose, Report Cards, 1923 - 1932.
- Folder 7: Family Tree, 1981
- Folder 8: Farewell letters, 1962 - 1963.
- Folder 9: Feinbloom, Mildred Esserman, 1928 – 1982.
- Folder 10: Freidman, Jacob Rev. 1938.

- Folder 11: Golden, Harry, correspondence, 1959.
- Folder 12: Hannah and Bill, 1989.
- Folder 13: Herst, Roger E. Dr., A Roman Incident (on the death of John F. Kennedy), 1999.
- Folder 14: Jewish Community Center, 1974 - 1994.

CONTAINER

- 3 Subject Files, 1944 – 1994, Kirschner – Levin, Rose. Container contains an article on the Levin family taken from the American Israelite, condolence cards and letters for Jule and Rose’s birth certificate.

- Folder 1: Kirschner, Ida Friedman, 1988.
- Folder 2: Letters – miscellaneous, 1945 - 1993.
- Folder 3: Levin Family Photo and article.
- Folder 4: Levin, Jule, Community Service papers, 1944 - 1978.
- Folder 5: Levin, Jule, Condolence cards and letters, 1994.
- Folder 6: Levin, Jule, Eulogies, 1994.
- Folder 7: Levin, Jule, Obituaries, 1994.
- Folder 8: Levin, Jule, Oral history transcription on Civil Rights, undated.
- Folder 9: Levin, Rose Esserman, Birth certificate, 1963.

CONTAINER

- 4 Subject Files, 1920 – 2002, Levin, Rose –The Roman. Container contains condolence cards and letters on the death, Rose’s writings and The Roman Yearbook 1921 – 1932.

- Folder 1: Levin, Rose, Condolence cards and letters, 2002.
- Folder 2: Levin, Rose, Eulogies and Obituary, 2002.

- Folder 3: Levin, Rose Esserman, Memories, undated.
- Folder 4: Morris and Jule Levin Endowment for Children at the Jewish Community Center, 1993.
- Folder 5: Rodeph Sholom, 1920 – 2001.
- Folder 6: The Roman, 1921 – 1924.
- Folder 7: The Roman, 1925.
- Folder 8: The Roman, 1926- 1928.

CONTAINER

- 5 Subject Files: 1933-1995. Rome – World War II
 - Folder 1: The Roman, 1929 – 1932.
 - Folder 2: Rome, Floyd County: History of Rome and Floyd County with Georgia's Rome a Historical Coloring and Activity Book, undated.
 - Folder 3: Rome-Floyd County Library, donated materials, 1993 – 1994.
 - Folder 4: Rome High School, Class of 1932 50th Reunion, 1982.
 - Folder 5: Rose Esserman Levin and Jule Gordon Levin Fund for Social Justice, 1993 - 1995.
 - Folder 6: Schechter, Sandra Lynn Esserman, 1970.
 - Folder 7: Shorter College, 1933.
 - Folder 8: Vini, Vidi, Vici, *Voice of Protest*, 2007.
 - Folder 9: Wachsteter, David, 1985.
 - Folder 10: Wachsteter, Paula Ann Esserman, 1968.
 - Folder 11: Wolf, Richard Dr., Interview with Jule and Rose Esserman, 1984.
 - Folder 12: World War II Correspondence, 1945.

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