

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

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

REGISTER
RICH'S, INC. RECORDS

Processed by Sandra Berman
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Mss 114

Rich's Inc., was founded on May 28, 1867, as M. Rich Dry Goods by 20-year-old Morris Rich with only \$500 in capital. The first store was located on the Peachtree end of the Whitehall Street viaduct. Within the first year of operation the store generated a total sales volume of \$5,000. This successful beginning allowed the store to continuously move to larger quarters over the next several years, finally settling at 54-56 Whitehall Street in 1882. The store would remain at this location for the next 42 years.

In 1877 Morris' brother Emanuel entered the business and the name of the store was changed to M. Rich and Brother, followed by Daniel in 1884, when the store was again renamed as M. Rich and Brothers. Due to aggressive marketing and fairness to customers, the store continued to thrive while so many of their competitors failed.

On January 12, 1901, a charter for incorporation was granted, and the firm became M. Rich and Brothers Company. Morris Rich was elected president at a meeting of stockholders on January 18, 1901. Daniel Rich was named vice-president and treasurer, and a young accountant named David H. Strauss was made secretary. William Rich was elected to the Board of Directors.

In 1907, Rich's expanded the quarters on Whitehall Street into what the *Atlanta Journal* called "a paradise for shoppers." At this time, Rich's boasted five floors, an annex and two elevators. Sales volume was now a million dollars annually.

In 1924, fifty-seven years after the store's founding, Rich's moved to a new \$1,500,000 building on Broad and Alabama with 180,000 square feet of floor space. This was over 100 times the size of the original store. The *Atlanta Journal* described it as the "South's Greatest Department Store," and the public referred to it as "Rich's Palace of Commerce."

In 1943, the Rich Foundation was formed to distribute a large share of the store's profits to the Atlanta community. First among the recipients of continuing contributions was the School of Business Administration at Emory University.

Throughout the 1950s, the fame of Rich's spread throughout the country. National magazine articles paid tribute to Rich's policies that had won such customer loyalty: liberal credit, wide assortments, lowest price for comparable quality, and an understanding attitude about returns.

The late '50s and early '60s brought sweeping changes in the shopping habits of America. Rich's welcomed the development as an opportunity for further expansion and added suburban stores in Lenox Square, Belvedere, Cobb County, North DeKalb and Greenbriar shopping centers.

In 1961, Richard H. Rich became chairman of the board and Harold Brockey became president. Under his leadership, Rich's annual sales volume climbed to \$148,000,000. In 1976, Rich's Inc. merged with Federated Department Stores, Inc.

Rich's Inc Records, 1900-1986, consist of annual reports and financial records. The comparative sales figures are of special interest and are indicative of the growth and development of this Atlanta and southern landmark. The collection is arranged in alphabetical order and chronologically with each folder.

Restrictions: Available to the serious scholar

Number of containers: 4

Shelf space occupied: 1.6 cubic feet

Container

1 Files, A-F, 1938-1986.

Folder 1: Annual reports, 1962-1967 (1963 missing)

Folder 2: Annual reports, 1968-1973.

Folder 3: Annual reports, 1974-1977. (Beginning of Federated Department Stores)

Folder 4: Annual reports – Federated Department Stores, 1978-1982.

Folder 5: Annual reports – Federated Department Stores, 1983-1986.

Folder 6: Financial records – comparative sales, 1938-1949.

Container

2 Files, F, 1929-1980.

Folder 1: Financial records – comparative sales, 1949-1954.

Folder 2: Financial records – comparative sales, 1956-1963.

Folder 3: Financial records – comparative sales, 1959-1968.

Folder 4: Financial records – comparative sales, 1965-1974.

Folder 5: Financial records – comparative sales, 1971-1975.

Folder 6: Financial records – comparative sales, 1975-1980.

Folder 7: Financial records – comparative sales by department, 1929-1970.

Folder 8: Financial records – comparative sales by department, 1929-1970.

Container

3 Files, F, 1929-1973.

Folder 1: Financial records – comparative sales by department, 1929-1970.

Folder 2: Financial records – comparative sales by department, 1929-1970.

Folder 3: Financial records – comparative sales by department, 1929-1970.

Folder 4: Financial records – daily retail sales – period 1, 1958-1973.

Folder 5: Financial records – daily retail sales – period 2, 1958-1973.

Folder 6: Financial records- daily retail sales – period 3, 1958-1973.

Folder 7: Financial records – daily retail sales – period 4, 1958-1973.

Folder 8: Financial records – daily retail sales – period 5, 1958-1973.

Folder 9: Financial records – daily retail sales – period 6, 1958-1973.

Folder 10: Financial records –daily retail sales – period 7, 1958-1973.

Folder 11: Financial records – daily retail sales- period 8, 1958-1973.

Folder 12: Financial records – daily retail sales- period 9, 1958-1973.

Folder 13: Financial records – daily retail sales- period 10, 1958-1973.

Container

4 Files, 1900-1973.

Folder 1: Financial records – daily retail sales – period 11, 1958-1973.

Folder 2: Financial records – daily retail sales – period 12, 1958-1973.

Folder 3: Financial records – flash plan audited sales, 1960-1965.

Folder 4: Financial records – flash plan audited sales, 1966-1968.

Folder 5: Financial records – flash plan audited sales, 1969-1970.

Folder 6: Financial records – total sales, 1923 - 1925.

Folder 7: Financial records – total store net sales, 1900-1964.

Folder 8: Merchandise Budgeting and Control, 1963.