

IVEY'S COLLECTION, 1950, 1968

(Small Collections—Business Box 2) 3 folders

ABSTRACT

In February 1900, Joseph Benjamin Ivey, his brother, George Franks Ivey, and Reverend J.A. Bowles, became partners of the J.B. Ivey & Company firm. Their first store was located at 231 N. Tryon Street in Charlotte, North Carolina. By the 1920s, they were in competition with Belk and Efid's, also based in Charlotte. After merging with other companies in the 1930s, J.B. Ivey & Company became Ivey's, Inc., and began opening stores along the southern east coast. Ivey's approach to retail included a one-price system and installment buying.

In 1980, Ivey's was sold to the Marshall Field department stores, which was then purchased by Batus, Inc. in 1982. Dillard Department Stores, Inc. then acquired the Ivey's stores in 1990.

This collection includes documents and an artifact.

ACCESS

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PREFERRED CITATION

Cite as: Ivey's Collection, 1950, 1968, Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

ACQUISITION

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HISTORICAL NOTE

Joseph Benjamin Ivey was born to the Reverend George Washington and Selina Neal Ivey, on June 8, 1864, in Shelby, North Carolina. J.B. was the fifth of ten children. His father was a circuit rider minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, who served until his death in 1902. Ivey began attending Finley High School in 1876 alongside Governor Zebulon Vance's sons. The following year, the Iveys moved to Denver, and J.B. entered the Denver Seminary. Professor D. Matt Thompson was in charge at the time, and Ivey later said the Thompsons influenced his life more than anyone else, with the exception of his parents. He left the Denver Seminary in 1880, and did not pursue further educational ventures due to vision difficulties.

The Ivey family left Denver in 1880, and J.B. was apprenticed to a carpenter in Lenoir. He left after six months, and, through a family friend, obtained a job as a clerk in Captain L.J. Hoyle's country store in Belwood. The job eventually drew Ivey's curiosity, and he decided to become a merchant. He developed ideas for how to improve the merchandising, including establishing a one-price system, and charging a small, additional fee for those who wanted to buy "on time."

After four years, Ivey moved on to a store in Newton. He did not stay long however, and after eight months, he took a position at a store in Hickory. While at the Hickory store, one of the owners expressed the opinion that Ivey would never become a merchant, and fired him. Captain Hoyle then offered him a half partnership in his store along with a salary, and Ivey returned to Belwood in July 1885. He also continued to try out his merchandising ideas.

In 1893, Ivey accepted a job offer from S.B. Tanner, as manager of the dry goods department of the Henrietta Mills store in Rutherford County. He also married Emma Gantt of Cleveland County that year. They would have four children: George Melvin, Emma Virginia, Ella Marie, and Katherine Neal.

After a few years, Ivey decided that he would be most happy owning his own mercantile business in a city, and, along with his brother George Franks Ivey (1870-1952) and Reverend J.A. Bowles, began J.B. Ivey & Company on February 18, 1900, in Charlotte. This first store was located at 231 North Tryon Street, but moved to 13 West Trade Street at the end of 1900. David Ovens, for whom Ovens Auditorium on East Independence Boulevard was later named, joined the company in 1905. In 1914, the business again moved, this time to 13-15 North Tryon Street. On March 13, 1917, Emma Ivey died, and two years later, J.B. married Daisy Smith of Clio, South Carolina.

Competition with Charlotte-based department stores, Belk and Efid's, increased during the 1920s, but J.B. Ivey & Company kept up with them. Ivey's made its final move in 1924, when a new Ivey's building was built at Fifth and North Tryon Streets by architect William H. Peeps. This store was later renovated and enlarged in 1940. The first branch store opened in Asheville in 1937, and after merging with other companies, J.B. Ivey & Company became Ivey's, Inc., and began opening stores along the southern east coast. Ivey also continued his one-price system, along with installment buying. On April 4, 1958, J.B. Ivey died from heart disease, and was buried in Elmwood Cemetery in Charlotte.

In 1980, Ivey's was sold to the Marshall Field department stores, which was then purchased by Batus, Inc. in 1982. Dillard Department Stores, Inc. acquired the Ivey's stores in 1990.

REFERENCES

Swain, Steven. "The Ivey's Archive." *Livemalls* (blog). 26 December 2004. <http://livemalls.blogspot.com/2004/12/iveys-archive.html>

Williams, Wiley J. *Ivey's Stores*, 2006. <http://ncpedia.org/iveys-stores>

RELATED MATERIALS

Businesses—Ivey's Department Store. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

Ivey Family. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

Ivey, George Franks. *The Ivey Family in the United States*. Hickory, NC: The Southern Publishing Co., 1941. (CALL NUMBER: NCR 929.2 I 95 I 95g)

Ivey, George M. Jr. *Reminiscences*. Charlotte, NC: G.M. Ivey, 2003. (CALL NUMBER: NCR B I954g)

Ivey, Joseph Benjamin. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

Ivey, Joseph Benjamin. *The Home News: Letters from 1925 to 1963*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR ARCHIVAL COLLECTION)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Ivey's Collection is a small collection formerly from the Ephemera Collection. It consists of two advertisement mailings, a catalog, and a notepad. The advertisements date from 1968, and the catalog from 1950.

SERIES LIST

CONTENTS	BOX	FOLDER
Advertisements, 1968		
Envelope containing ads for Madame Alexander dolls, Bloomcraft fabrics, Taffette slips, Jane Holly blouses, Stroller print dresses, dresses for Junior Petites, and return envelope, August 1968.	2	14
Envelope containing ad and order form for Suddenly Slim long leg panty girdles by Olga for women, October 1968.	2	14
Catalogs, 1950		
Mail order catalog from Ivey's Department Store, 1950.	2	15
Ephemera, undated		
Ivey's promotional notepad, undated.	2	16