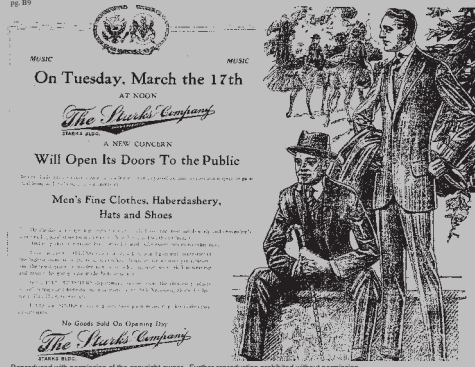


THE BEGINNING

The Starks Company Men's Haberdashery store opens on March 17, 1914 in the new Starks Building. World War I begins three months later. John Starks Rodes and William H. Rapier are hired to operate the business, and the company is renamed Rodes Rapier. W. Reed Embry joins the firm as president a year later.

1914

Display Ad 99 - No Title
 Courier-Journal (1859-1922), Mar 15, 1914.
 Project: Historical Newspapers, Louisville Courier Journal (1830 - 1922)
 Pg. 10



1937

The Rodes-Rapier Company survives the Great Depression and the 1937 Louisville flood. Rodes then endures World War II by selling U.S. Army uniforms at Fort Benjamin Harrison (Indiana), Fort Knox and Camp Taylor (Audubon Park). During this time, all fabric is used for the war effort so piece goods for "civilian" clothing are scarce.



The Rodes Starks Building store expands to 25,000 square feet on two floors to accommodate the increased demand for tailored men's and boy's clothing during the post-World War II boom. Rodes introduces some of the best U.S. clothing brands such as Hart Schaffner Marx, Hickey Freeman and Oxxford to Louisville. In 1954 Reed Embry Smith joins the company as bookkeeper, eventually becoming a buyer and later secretary-treasurer.

1954



1984

In 1984 both Rodes and the Starks Building undergo major renovations as part of the development of the Starks Court Atrium, which connects the building to the neighboring Galleria Mall (now 4th Street Live). Rodes acquires Schupp & Snyder, a "traditional" men's clothing store located in the Starks Arcade, in 1987. As the economy thrives Rodes decides to become a regional player and opens stores in the Fayette Mall, Lexington in 1988 and in the Bellevue Center in Nashville, Tennessee in 1990.

1981

ECONOMIC UPSWING

In 1981 Lawrence Smith becomes president of Rodes. In 1983 he purchases his mother's (Elizabeth Embry) shares in the firm and those of her two cousins, Jack and Clif Rodes, becoming sole owner. In 1984 Lawrence "Larry" Smith, Jr. joins Rodes as manager of the Columbus, Indiana store. Larry represents the fourth generation of family in the company.



After five prosperous years, Rodes-Rapier quadruples its store size and moves to the corner of the Starks Building at 4th & Walnut Streets, downtown.



THE NEXT GENERATION RETAIL AND UNIFORMS

In 1931 W. Reed Embry brings his son-in-law, Hanford Smith, into the business during the Great Depression. Hanford becomes president, then chairman. John S. Rodes, Jr. begins his Rodes career in the shirt collar department in 1932 and later becomes senior vice president. "Jack" serves the company for over 50 years, retiring in 1982.

In 1962, at the direction of Hanford Smith (who is part of the commission to build the first enclosed mall in Louisville) Rodes opens its second store in Kentucky's first enclosed mall (which is now The Mall St. Matthews).



Reed E. Smith's son, Reed Smith, begins working at the Oxmoor location as a sales associate in 1971. In 1979 Lawrence L. Smith "Rabbitt", son of Hanford Smith, joins the firm as operations manager.



3rd GENERATION, MALL EXPANSION

As the mall concept takes hold in America, Rodes continues to open new stores: a third location in Oxmoor Center in 1971 and a fourth location in Columbus, Indiana in 1975. Rodes also makes its first foray into the women's business in 1977. The downtown store dedicates floor space to women's tailored suits and blouses, and Hermes scarves.

BACK TO UNIFORMS

In 1990, Lawrence L. Smith, Sr. asks his daughter Susan Smith-Vogt and son-in-law Howard to move home and join the family business which is now comprised of seven stores.

1990



Simultaneously UPS chooses Louisville as its worldwide air hub and thus Rodes gets back into the uniform business, winning the contract to provide UPS pilot uniforms. In 1991 Howard is asked to run the newly formed "Rodes Professional Apparel". The uniform division gains traction throughout the decade as "RPA" garners contracts with DHL, TWA, Continental, PAN-AM, Southwest, Clinique and the Americas Cup.

During the next nine years, Rodes history repeats itself. The retail landscape is changing quickly with the advent of international brands and the introduction/acceptance of luxury European clothing. To fund the growth of the uniform business and begin its metamorphosis toward selling luxury brands in fewer locations, Rodes closes many of its stores as mall leases expire.

1997

In 1997 Rodes introduces Zegna and Canali to Louisville. Also during the 1990s it becomes clear that stores/chains worldwide are ramping up "brand" selling. In order to survive and compete stores can no longer be "everything to everyone" but have become more specialized and focused.



A NEW BEGINNING
Rodes returns to its retail roots, selling Rodes Professional Apparel to Cintas in January 2000. In 2001 The Oxmoor Center location closes after the lease expires and Rodes is operating its Starks building location and Schupp & Snyder.

2000



After 2 years with Cintas, Lawrence asks Susan and Howard to return to Louisville and reinvigorate Rodes. Simultaneously, in 2002 Rodes risks it all by getting into the women's business after Jacobsen's closure at Oxmoor Mall. And so Rodes For Her is born. Later that year, after 90 years downtown, the decision is made not to renew the Starks building lease. Rodes For Him & For Her moves to its present location on Brownsboro Road.

2002

Now here we stand 100 years later... on March 17, 2014, we celebrate our centennial milestone! Here's to the next 100!



2010

In 2010, thanks to our great customers, Rodes climbs back from the crash of 2008 and continues to add world-class brands and associates. In 2013 Rodes For Him renovates, creating two shop-in-shops, featuring exclusive lines to this region: Ermenegildo Zegna of Italy and Eton of Sweden. Additionally, Rodes is awarded "The Gold Standard" by *Esquire Magazine* as one of the top 35 specialty stores in the United States.

2008

The company merges with She of Louisville and is now firmly fixed as the premier women's store in Kentuckiana. Ten years later, Rodes For Her accounts for over 50% of the business.