



Agudath
B'nai
Israel
Synagogue
Lorain, Ohio

LORAIN DRY GOODS

The story of the Sachs and Statman families in Lorain begins with a journey and a dream. In the years after the First World War, when small American cities were growing and downtown streets bustled with shoppers, one young family arrived in Lorain, carrying with them hopes for a new life and a business that would help anchor a community.

A new family in Lorain

In the early 1920s, Albert Sachs and his wife, Leah Oppenheim Sachs, arrived in Lorain with their two young daughters, Edith and Geraldine, known as Gerry. They chose Lorain as the place where they would build both a home and a livelihood, joining the town's growing mix of families and shopkeepers. Their story quickly became intertwined with the life of Broadway, Lorain's busy commercial heart.

Lorain Dry Goods is born

Albert poured his energy into the Lorain Dry Goods Company, located at 316 Broadway, which came to life in the 1920s as a classic downtown department store. Its official Articles of Incorporation described an ambitious mission: to buy and sell dry goods, clothing, boots and shoes, groceries, furniture, and all the varied merchandise that made such a store the practical center of town life. In those years, the shop was not just a place of business, but a hub where neighbors greeted each other, news was exchanged, and the Sachs family's presence in Lorain became firmly rooted.

These Articles of Incorporation

— of —

The Lorain Dry Goods _____ **Company,**

Witnesseth. That we, the undersigned* all _____ of whom are citizens of the State of Ohio, desiring to form a corporation for profit, under the general corporation laws of said State, do hereby certify:

FIRST. The name of said corporation shall be The Lorain Dry Goods _____
_____ Company

SECOND. Said corporation is to be located at Lorain, _____
in Lorain _____ County, Ohio, and its principal business there transacted.

THIRD. Said corporation is formed for the purpose of buying, selling and _____
dealing in, at wholesale and retail, dry goods, clothing, boots _____
and shoes, groceries, furniture and such other lines of merchandise _____
as are usually sold in a department store, and the doing of all _____
things necessary and incident thereto. _____



A store on a busy street

Photographs from the 1930s show Lorain Dry Goods nestled beside Neisner's five-and-dime, another sign of a thriving commercial district. The storefronts along Broadway formed a continuous line of glass, brick, and painted signs that invited people inside with the promise of necessities and small luxuries. On the side of the Lorain Dry Goods building, the company name was painted high on the wall, a bold declaration that this was a permanent part of the city's landscape.

Disaster and resilience

That sense of permanence was tested in 1924, when an earthquake shook Lorain and caused severe damage to the Broadway business district, including the Lorain Dry Goods store. Postcard images of the destruction show shattered buildings and broken streets, with a portion of the store's name still visible in the upper right corner of the ruined scene, a ghostly reminder of what had stood there before. Nature's violence scarred the city, but the business, like Lorain itself, endured the blow.

Prosperity and hardship

Despite the devastation of the earthquake, the 1920s were good years for Lorain Dry Goods, as customers returned and the rhythms of daily trade resumed. Inside the store, fabrics, clothing, and household items passed from Albert's counters into the homes of families who were themselves building new lives in the city. But when the Great Depression arrived, the economic hardship that swept the nation reached Broadway as well. Sales slowed, belts tightened, and by 1936, the dry goods business that had once symbolized growth and optimism closed its doors.

Gerry's path beyond Lorain

Meanwhile, the Sachs children were growing up. Gerry graduated from Lorain High School in 1939, stepping out into a world that was again on the brink of war. After finishing school, she left Lorain for Fort Wayne, Indiana, where her older sister Edith was living. The move brought Gerry into a new city and a new circle of people, but her Lorain roots and family story traveled with her, shaping how she saw her future.

Love in wartime

During the war years, Fort Wayne became the setting for the next turn in the family's story. While stationed there as a young army lieutenant, Seymour "Sy" Statman met Gerry, and their paths intertwined. In a time of global uncertainty, their relationship offered a sense of hope and stability, the promise that life would continue after the war with families, homes, and new beginnings.

Returning home and building Statman Furniture

When the war ended, Gerry and Sy chose to return to Lorain, the city where Gerry's family story had begun and where her father had once run his bustling dry goods store. Back in Lorain, they started a family of their own, welcoming four children: Susan, Nancy, Alan, and Lois, who was later called by her grandmother's name, Leah. Sy, following in the entrepreneurial spirit of his father-in-law, established Statman Furniture, adding a new business to the city's commercial life. Just as Lorain Dry Goods had once supplied clothing and household items, Statman Furniture furnished the homes of local families, carrying forward a legacy of service, resilience, and deep connection to the community of Lorain.