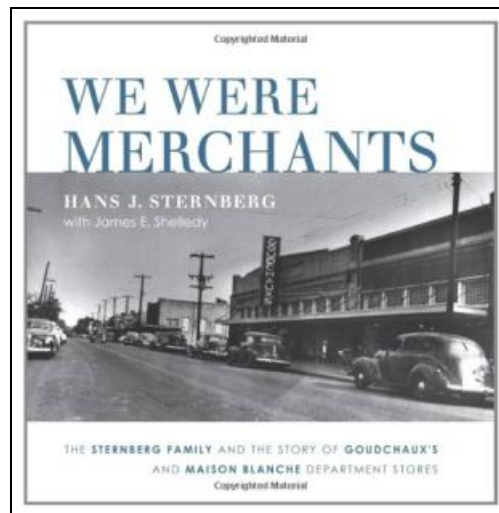


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Louisiana State University Press, United States, 2009. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 257 x 244 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. The words Goudchaux s/Maison Blanche conjure up a wealth of fond memories for local shoppers. At this landmark Louisiana department store, clerks greeted you by name; children received a nickel to buy a Coke and for every report-card A; families anticipated the holiday arrival of the beloved puppet Mr. Bingle almost as much as Santa; teenagers applied for their first job; and customers enjoyed interest-free charge accounts and personal assistance selecting attire and gifts for the most significant occasions in life -- baptisms, funerals, and everything in between. While most former patrons have a favorite story to tell about Goudchaux s/Maison Blanche, not many know the personal tale behind this beloved institution. In *We Were Merchants*, Hans Sternberg provides a captivating account of how his parents, Erich and Lea, fled from Nazi Germany to the United States, embraced their new home, and together with their children built Goudchaux s into a Baton Rouge legend that eventually became Goudchaux s/Maison Blanche -- an independent retail force during the golden era of the department store and, by 1989, the largest family-owned department store in America. With a mercantile line extending back five generations to a small shop in eighteenth-century Germany, the Sternbergs were born to be shopkeepers. In 1936, as Nazi harassment of Jews intensified, Erich smuggled \$24,000 out of Germany and settled in Baton Rouge. His wife and three children joined him a year later, and in 1939, Erich bought Goudchaux s and set about transforming it from a nondescript apparel shop into a true department store. He made buying trips to New York for quality fashions and furs, introduced imaginative sales promotions, and coached his staff in impeccable customer service,...

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