

Raymond R. Anderson, 79; founder's son turned Anderson-Little into retail giant

DELRAY BEACH, Fla. — Raymond R. Anderson, 79, under whose leadership the Anderson-Little Co. grew from a small wholesale clothing business to a retail chain spanning the East Coast, died Aug. 22 at Boca Raton Community Hospital. He was the husband of Vivian (Stanford) Anderson.

Mr. Anderson's father, Morris "M.B." Anderson, a Russian immigrant who had managed several small clothing companies in the Boston area, teamed up with Albert A. Little, a clothing designer, in 1920 to open a wholesale clothing manufacturing business in Watertown, Mass.

In 1936, with Raymond Anderson now a company officer, they moved their business to vacant textile mill space in Fall River, Mass. But the Depression left retailers unable to buy, prompting Anderson-Little to sell directly to the public. More branches followed in the 1930s in Providence and New Bedford, with Fall River remaining the central factory.

By 1966, Anderson-Little had 17 stores, all in New England. But in that year, it was acquired by Richmond Brothers, a Cleveland-based company that ran 270 clothing stores throughout the country and

was making its first move into New England. Richmond Brothers was later acquired by F. W. Woolworth Co.

Under the acquisition, Raymond Anderson remained president of the Anderson-Little division, which retained its own identity and virtual autonomy including deciding where to open new stores. In 1971, Anderson-Little had 37 stores; a decade later, 108 stores bore its name.

Mr. Anderson retired in 1977 as Anderson-Little's president and chief executive officer and moved from Barrington to Florida.

Born in Brookline, Mass., he was a son of the late Morris and Sophie Anderson. He graduated from Boston University and attended William and Mary College, Williamsburg, Va.

Mr. Anderson was a vice president of the former Yankee Communications, a cable television company, and was a member of the Woolworth board of directors. He was a recipient of the Boston Business Award in 1964.

Besides his wife, he leaves a daughter, Ruth Lawler of Alaska, a son, Peter Anderson of Indiana, and nine grandchildren.

The funeral and burial were in Delray Beach on Aug. 25.

*Anderson,
Raymond*

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