Charles Richter, Is Dead

Funeral Today for Former Proprietor of Anthony's Store



CHARLES RICHTER: He catered to more discriminating cigar smokers.

Charles Richter, known to hundreds of Rhode Island tobacco users as the proprietor of the former J. M. Anthony store here, died this morning at the Jewish Home for the Aged, on Hillside avenue, where he had lived since 1939. He was in his 90th year.

Starting in New York city, Mr. Richter spent a lifetime in the tobacco business as a buyer, manufacturer and seller.

Reminiscing on his past a few years ago, Mr. Richter recalled he once was superintendent and part owner of three cigar factories in Massachusetts, owned a home in Westfield and a summer place in the Berkshires that could accommodate 25 week-end guests, and had "something over $50,000 in the bank."

With his wife, the late Fannie D. (Mosler) Richter, who died in 1939, Mr. Richter took over the business of J. M. Anthony about 30 years ago, after Mr. Anthony's death. They conducted the store on Westminster street, next to the Union Trust building, and then moved to the Tribune building on Weybosset street. Later they conducted a retail business in Exchange place.

Mr. Richter had made cigars for years for the late Mr. Anthony and he and Mrs. Richter were able to serve in the days when smokers apparently were more discerning in their tastes and the trade patronized stores devoted to handling tobacco goods alone.

After the last war, business for Charlie Richter began to fall off; money dwindled away and eventually he went out of business.

A native of Germany, Mr. Richter came to this country as an infant. When but a boy he went to work in the tobacco business and was believed to have been one of the first persons in this country to have made cigarettes by hand. After working for Phinney Brothers in New York for a number of years, he travelled for a tobacco house and his work took him into the tobacco fields of the South, where he became an expert buyer.

During his years in New York, he worked side by side with the late Samuel Gompers, former president of the American Federation of Labor, and remembered him chiefly for the strong cheese Gompers ate for lunch.

Friends of Mr. Richter in Providence were unable to recall today just when he entered cigar manufacturing in Massachusetts, but they knew that at one time he was the employer of 350 workers and was an important figure in the business in this section of the country.

Three years ago, Mr. Richter told how he happened to enter the business.

"I grew up with a pretty tough bunch," he said. "I wasn't too interested in work when I was a young fellow, but I finally took a job in a cigar factory and found I could make a pretty good cigar. That started me in the business I still follow." Although out of formal business he still peddled cigars to a few customers.

Mr. Richter was a member of St. Elmo Lodge, No. 85, of Westfield.

He leaves a sister, Mrs. Jennie Reimann, and a brother, Max N. Richter, both of New York City.

Funeral services were to be held at 3 o'clock this afternoon from the Sugarman funeral home on Hope street. They were to be conducted by Isaac E. Feinstein, superintendent of the Jewish Home for the Aged. Burial was to be in Lincoln Park Cemetery.