

# Anniversary Sale!

1919 to 1985



Sixty-five years ago, Phillip Levinsky drove his horse & team from Fort Williams to his barn at Oxford Street, laden with surplus overcoats, leggings and breeches, purchased from the military. Once at Oxford Street, he'd sort and display his goods in barrels and packing crates, ready for sale at competitive prices.

His 19-year-old son, Jacob Levinsky, then became interested in the surplus business. The exact spot where the store is now, their apartment on Congress Street, became his new store, with the barn on Oxford Street remaining as a warehouse.

The business survived the Depression, and following World War II, blizzards into one of Portland's leading military surplus merchants. After the war, Jacob's son, Phil Levinsky joined the business at a wage of \$15 per week. Even though the store had expanded into the rear and another apartment was being used for storage, it was still only a "one-and-a-half man store." In 1985, a salesman from Texas arrived at Levinsky's offering a new "chino" pant. The pants were distinctive, sturdy and the Levinsky's were impressed. The pants were called "Dickies" and Levinsky's became the Texas Manufacturer's first New England retailer. Many were sold to Bowdoin College students for \$3.99 a pair.

Gradually, the store expanded its clothing line and began to look more like a haberdashery, selling silk ties, blazers and trench coats. It had always been a men's store until 1967 when "bell-bottom blue jeans" became popular for women as well. Army fatigues, jackets and even painter's pants, which had been basic on the shelf since the 20's, became the style of the 60's.

It was then that Phil Levinsky realized that going back to the original Army Navy image would be best. The haberdashery faded into the past. People were dressing casually, rather than dressing up.

Phil Levinsky is convinced that the evolving women's trade was responsible for the store's growth. The styles of the sixties brought them in. The store didn't have to change its product line, just expand it. More apartments were converted to sales or storage space and several more employees were added to the payroll. Levinsky's gave the public what it wanted and shoppers got used to opening the door at 278 Congress Street.

Today, Levinsky's is spread over more than 11 levels with warehouses constantly feeding the supply. With their new addition on Congress Street and modern checkout area, Levinsky's keeps up with the present without losing any of its traditional charm. Levinsky's is Portland's largest retail employer, with over 100 employees.

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## SAVE 20-50%

...ON FAMOUS MAKER APPAREL  
FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY,  
FROM OUR FAMILY...



### The Photos:

TOP LEFT: Jacob Levinsky (left) was 9 years old when he and a friend shined shoes and swept decks on the Casco Bay Ferris. He saved enough money to buy a horse and buggy and worked from his family's home on Oxford Street. BOTTOM RIGHT: Jacob at 20 years, when he started working in the family business. BOTTOM LEFT: Jacob (left) and employee, Arthur Lumbhart, Jr. pose with their wares in the early 1940's. TOP RIGHT: Familiar faces? Here are two satisfied Levinsky customers from years ago. Customer service has since become a tradition at Levinsky's.



278 Congress St.,  
EAST  
PORTLAND  
Take Exit 7 off I-295

# LEVINSKY'S

OPEN  
Mon.-Sat.

8:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

PORTLAND, MAINE