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Hudson's: Hub of America's Heartland

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Jean Maddern Pitrone : Hudson's: Hub of America's Heartland before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hudson's: Hub of America's Heartland:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Hudson's: Hub of America's HeartlandBy P. BarkeyThis is a great book for anyone wanting to know the history of J.L. Hudson's Department Store. It's a must-have for Hudson memorabilia collectors. Written in 1991 it stops short of the last seven years of the great building's life as it sat empty while city government, historic preservation groups, developers and citizens discussed it's demise.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful historyBy Diane M.Born and raised in Detroit, Hudson's was THE place to shop. Great to obtain the entire history of the firm and it's demise.

This is a great book for anyone wanting to know the history of J.L. Hudson's Department Store. It's a must-have for Hudson memorabilia collectors. For generations, it was as synonymous with Christmas and fashion as it was Detroit. The store at Woodward and Gratiot avenues was absolutely massive, evolving with the Motor City until it became the tallest department store in the world. By the time it finished growing, the store's size almost defied belief. The store was 2,124,316 square feet, making it second in size among department stores to only Macy's in New York. Even then, Macy's is only 26,000 square feet bigger. The store was spread out over 32 floors: 25 floors, two half-floors, a mezzanine and four basements. At 410 feet, Hudson's was the tallest department store in the world. The building had 51 passenger elevators, 17 freight elevators, eight employee elevators and 48 escalators. Its largest freight elevator

could accommodate a semi trailer. The store had 39 men's restrooms, 50 for women and 10 private ones for executives. The largest was a women's lounge on the fourth floor that had a whopping 85 stalls. Joseph Lowthian Hudson and his father were running a men's clothing store in the lumber town of Ionia, Mich., when the Panic of 1873 struck. When the sawmills were shuttered, their customers couldn't pay their bills. Then Hudson's father died. Three years later, Hudson went bankrupt, paying his creditors 60 cents on the dollar. Hudson dusted himself off and started over in Detroit. On April 2, 1881, Hudson opened his first store on the ground floor of the old Detroit Opera House. In 1888, he was so successful, he looked up all the creditors he had shorted in the bankruptcy proceedings 12 years earlier and paid them in full - with compound interest.