

HARRODS - 1

Harrods store occupies a prestigious 5-acre site on Brompton Road, Knightsbridge, London and is the world's leading luxury department store. It has 330 departments covering 1.1 million square feet of retail space, and is one of the largest and most famous department stores in Europe, if not the world.

But how did it all start? Well here is a potted history:-

It is generally accepted that Harrods first came into existence almost two hundred years ago in 1824 when Charles Henry Harrod started his first business as a draper at 228 Borough High Street, Southwark, London. Ten years later he founded a wholesale grocery store in Stepney, and then in 1849 Harrods moved to the Knightsbridge area of London near Hyde Park in order to take advantage of trade generated by the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Despite expansion & transformation by Harrod's son, Charles Digby Harrod from 1861 onwards, it was gutted by fire in 1883. This gave the family the opportunity to rebuild on a grander scale and this continued until 1889, when Charles Digby Harrod retired and shares in 'Harrods Stores Limited' were floated on the London Stock Exchange.



1906

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In 1894 the present building was started and it was completed 11 years later in 1905. Twenty years later Harrods Furniture Depository was built in Barnes near Hammersmith Bridge, and during this period right up until 1955 Harrods bought many other well-known department stores both in London and further afield within the UK.

In November 1898, Harrods debuted England's first "moving staircase" (escalator) in their Brompton Road stores; the device was actually a woven leather conveyor belt-like unit with a mahogany and "silver plate-glass" balustrade. Nervous customers were offered brandy at the top to revive them after their 'ordeal'. Obviously escalators have improved vastly since then, as shown later by a more recent model completed in 1997.



1910



1919

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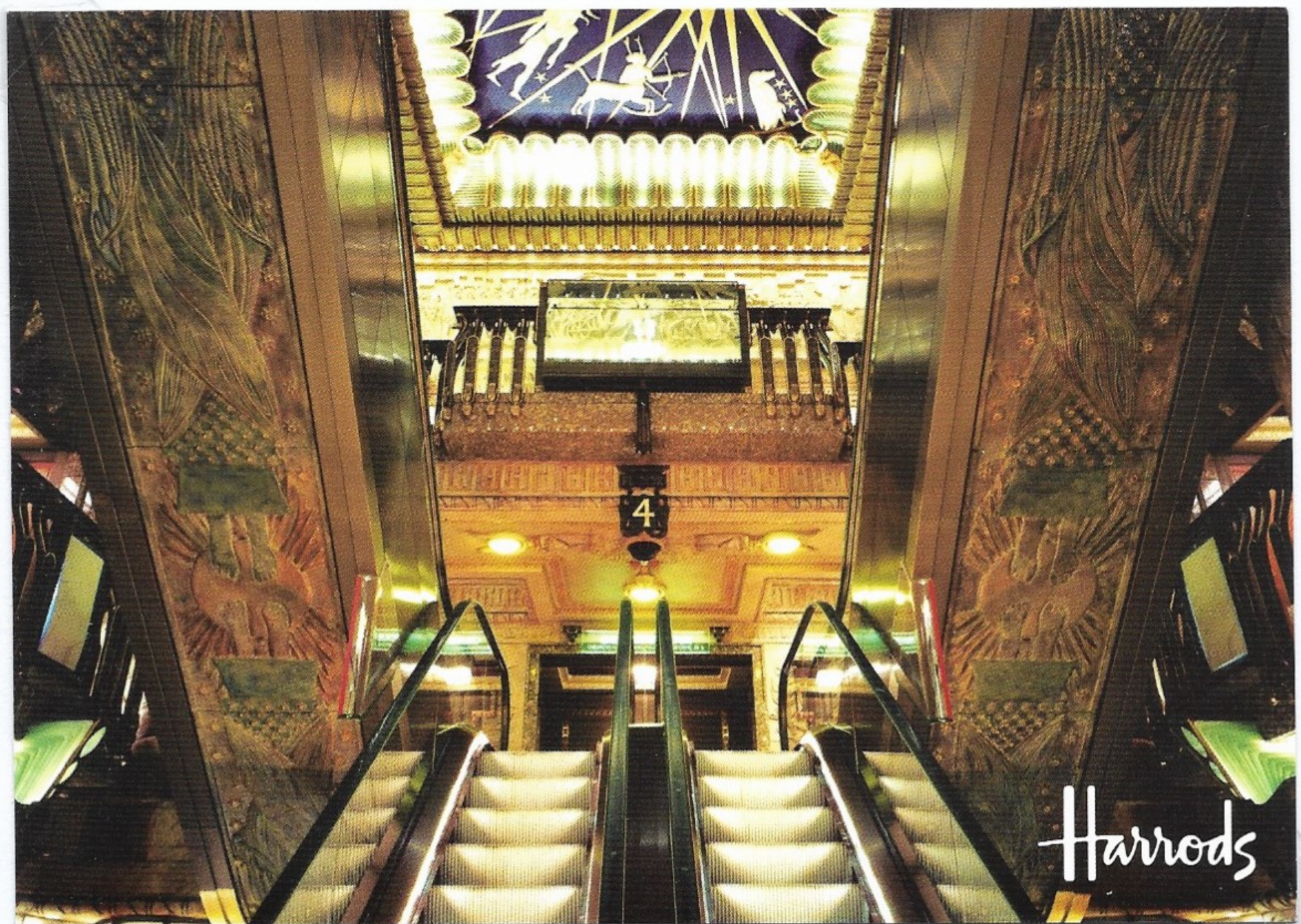
In 1959 the holding company House of Fraser bought Harrods itself, fighting off competition from Debenhams and United Drapery Stores.

In 1985 the Fayed Brothers bought House of Fraser including Harrods for £615 million.

In 1994 the Fayed Brothers broke their relationship with House of Fraser. Harrods stayed under the ownership of the Fayed Brothers, but House of Fraser is floated on the stock exchange.



1959



1997

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In 2010 Fayed sold Harrods to the Qatar Investment Authority, supposedly for £1.5 billion, in a deal signed early on 8th May 2010.

In 2012 the figurative sculptures that once adorned the Harrods food hall are consigned for sale at West Middlesex Auction Rooms. The two Mermaids supporting a giant Clam and the Stag and Boar sheltering under an English Oak are purchased by Greaves & Thomas for inclusion in an elaborate fountain for Ryde, Isle of Wight.

Returning to the store itself it has in the past held Royal Warrants, but they all ceased in 2010. Nevertheless the products on offer include the normal range of clothing for all ages, bridal wear, all food & drink, beauty & health items and much more together with services such as: a personal shopping assistance programme, private events planning & catering, bespoke picnic hampers, gift boxes & cakes and again much more.

Harrods has motto which is "*Omnia Omnibus Ubique*". This is Latin for "all things for all people, everywhere". It's a motto which Harrods does it's very best to live up to.



The Food Hall - originally built in 1902.