

May 2, 1946

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DEPARTMENT STORE CREDIT

MARCH 1946

Instalment accounts outstanding at department stores at the end of March remained at the February level, but were nine per cent higher than a year earlier. Collections on instalment accounts increased 13 per cent, resulting in a collection ratio of 35 per cent, five points higher than in the previous month. Instalment accounts were collected in around four and one-half months, about the same average as for March 1945.

Charge accounts receivable showed substantially more than the usual seasonal increase, and continued well above last year's level. Collections on charge accounts showed little change, but the collection ratio increased four points to 64 per cent. Charge accounts were outstanding approximately 47 days as compared with about 46 days a year ago.

Cash and instalment sales at department stores rose substantially in March. The more marked increase in charge-account sales was probably attributable in part to early Easter shopping. Cash sales, now comprising only 59 per cent of the total, were up slightly over the volume of the preceding year. Both types of credit sales increased 15 per cent over the year-period.

Department Store Sales, Accounts Receivable and Collections

	Percentage change from:	
	February 1946 to March 1946	March 1945 to March 1946
Sales during month		
Cash	+22	+ 1
Instalment	+18	+15
Charge account	+33	+15
Accounts receivable, end of month		
Instalment accounts	0	+ 9
Charge accounts	+14	+18
Collections during month		
Instalment accounts	+13	+ 4
Charge accounts	- 1	+16
Ratio of collections during month to accounts receivable at beginning of month		
	Mar. <u>1946</u>	Feb. <u>1946</u>
Instalment accounts	35	30
Charge accounts	64	60
	Mar. <u>1945</u>	
Instalment accounts		36
Charge accounts		66

Note: Figures for March 1946 are preliminary and subject to revision.

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 REP. MONTH STORES - MARCH 1946

Cash and Credit Sales, by Federal Reserve Districts

Federal Reserve District	Indexes; 1941 average = 100								
	Cash sales			Installment sales			Charge-account sales		
	March 1946	Feb. 1946	March 1945	March 1946	Feb. 1946	March 1945	March 1946	Feb. 1946	March 1945
Boston	157	149	205	81	75	73	150	99	136
New York	210	163	190	94	77	85	144	100	122
Philadelphia	239	179	235	76	59	87	153	110	144
Cleveland	211	177	232	79	81	64	166	119	149
Richmond	117	133	229	99	63	77	166	131	149
Atlanta	227	298	324	93	111	85	206	149	182
Chicago	231	181	223	76	59	63	159	121	134
St. Louis	242	206	234	90	78	82	170	134	142
Minneapolis	226	224	261	125	97	87	169	122	144
Kansas City	212	273	306	102	100	75	162	135	145
Dallas	227	217	355	107	91	79	213	193	175
San Francisco	261	230	271	66	57	60	161	130	139
U. S. Total	243	191	290	85	72	74	162	122	141

Accounts Receivable and Collections, by Federal Reserve Districts

Federal Reserve District	Accounts outstanding, end of month						Collection ratios*					
	Indexes; 1941 average = 100											
	Installment			Charge accounts			Installment		Charge accounts			
	Mar. 1946	Feb. 1946	Mar. 1945	Mar. 1946	Feb. 1946	Mar. 1945	Mar. 1946	Feb. 1946	Mar. 1945	Mar. 1946	Feb. 1946	Mar. 1945
Boston	92	92	114	114	98	103	24	21	29	63	56	59
New York	43	43	146	109	81	89	32	28	20	57	53	56
Philadelphia	40	42	122	110	96	104	35	21	37	55	62	64
Cleveland	43	43	97	117	102	92	37	24	37	64	59	65
Richmond	48	47	47	110	88	85	21	25	31	37	53	58
Atlanta	47	47	47	117	104	100	24	30	33	54	50	56
Chicago	36	36	92	120	102	96	43	37	46	72	67	76
St. Louis	47	40	37	119	105	100	40	38	43	70	64	70
Minneapolis	55	51	59	110	91	91	44	46	42	79	75	81
Kansas City	46	46	41	105	96	92	38	36	48	75	70	73
Dallas	43	43	37	124	112	98	32	30	34	67	63	68
San Francisco	51	53	39	100	100	100	41	36	51	63	67	74
U. S. Total	45	45	40	111	100	96	35	30	36	64	60	66

* - Preliminary.

* - Collections during month as percentage of accounts receivable at beginning of month.

Note: These data are based on reports of about 175 large department stores reporting sales by type of transaction, more than 100 having charge accounts and about 200 having installment accounts. Back figures may be obtained on request from the Division of Research and Statistics.