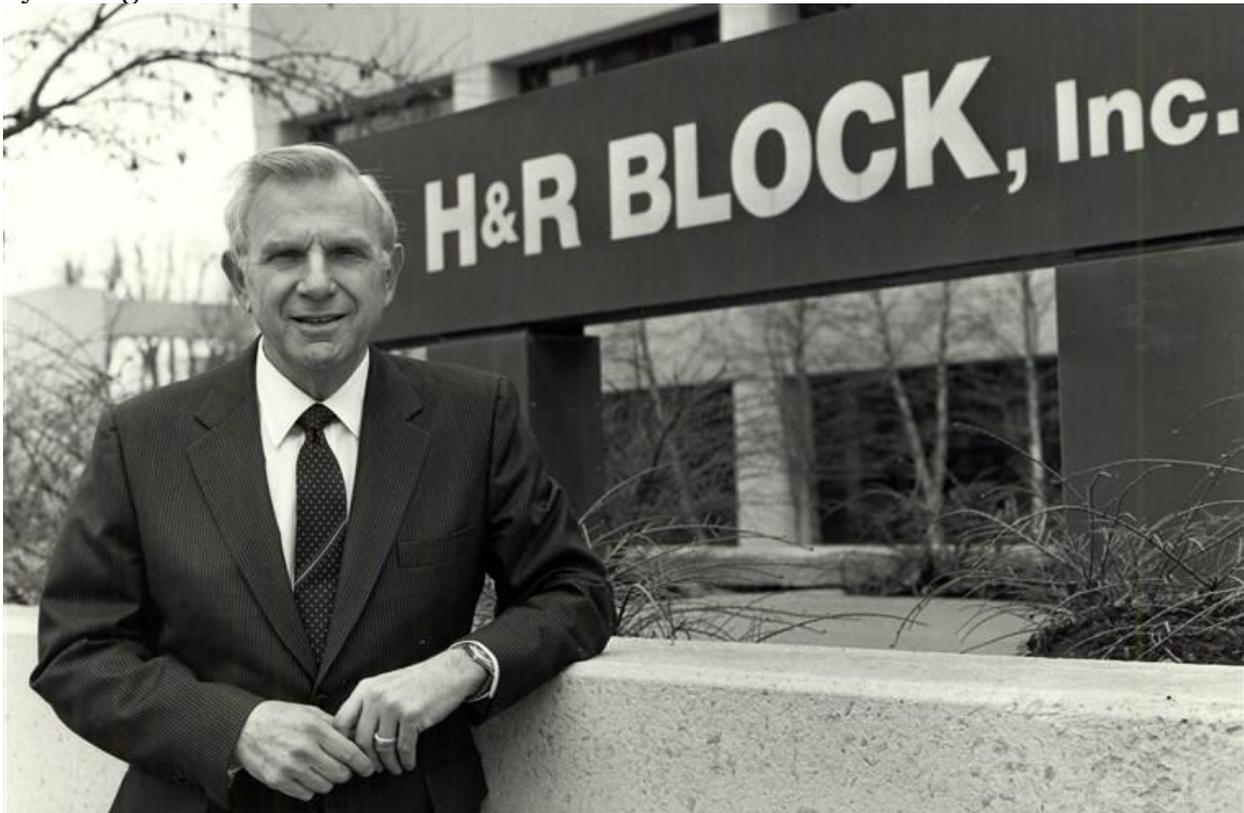




Henry Bloch, philanthropist co-founder of H&R Block, dies at 96

Bloch founded the tax preparation company with his brother Richard after serving with U.S. troops in Germany during World War II.



Henry Bloch in 1975. His family confirmed that he has died at age 96.

Courtesy H&R Block

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By Doha Madani - Doha Madani is a breaking news reporter for NBC News.

Henry Bloch, who along with his brother co-founded the tax preparation company H&R Block, has died.

He was 96.

In 1955, Bloch and his brother Richard founded the company, which thrived in what was once a niche industry, helping average Americans navigate a complicated tax system.

His four children released a statement [that was posted to a memorial website](#) Tuesday.

"Although most people knew Henry Bloch as a tremendous entrepreneur and philanthropist, we will remember him as a devoted father, grandfather and great-grandfather," the statement said. "Our Dad was passionate about his family and his community, and he will long be remembered for his benevolence, humility and fortitude."

Jeff Jones, president and chief executive of H&R Block Inc., said [in a news release Tuesday](#) that the company's co-founder embodied the spirit of American entrepreneurship and philanthropy.

"In so many ways, he was ahead of his time and a model for today's entrepreneur," Jones said. "His vision lives on through our H&R Block associates and the many philanthropic organizations that he supported."

Bloch, whose father was a prominent lawyer, was born in 1922 and grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, with his two brothers, Richard and Leon. After graduating from the University of Michigan with a degree in mathematics, Bloch joined the Army Air Corps.

He went on to join U.S. troops in Germany during World War II, flying 32 missions — three of them over Berlin — as a navigator on B-17 bombers.

Departing the Air Corps with the Air Medal and three Oak Leaf Clusters, Bloch went home to Kansas City in 1945 where he founded a bookkeeping service with his brothers.

Bloch and Richard, his younger brother, founded H&R Block a decade later when response to their \$5 federal and state income tax preparations began to overwhelm the rest of their services. H&R Block expanded outside Kansas City as the Internal Revenue Service began discontinuing free tax returns across the country, according to the company's website.

The company now boasts 12,000 offices nationwide.

A hometown hero, Bloch was known for his philanthropy throughout Kansas City. He and his wife, Marion, established the Marion and Henry Bloch Family Foundation in 2011.

The following year, Bloch donated to the University of Missouri-Kansas City, which built a home for the Henry W. Bloch School of Management's graduate and executive programs.

Bloch noted how much he enjoyed philanthropy, according to the company's website, and "in the process I have learned that true success is not measured in what you get, but in what you give back," he said.

In a 2016 interview with the Kansas City Star, [Bloch admitted that he didn't do his own taxes](#).

"Today, I couldn't fill out the simplest tax form. It's gotten so complex, and I'm so old," he said.