

Inventory of the

**Forest City Wholesale Grocery  
Company**  
Rockford, Illinois

Records

In the

Regional History Center

**RC 132**

## INTRODUCTION

Mr. Scott Webster of Roscoe, Illinois donated the Forest City Wholesale Grocery Company Records to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on February 15, 1981.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There is no restriction on access to the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: .75  
Number of containers: 2  
Northern Illinois Regional History Center  
Collection 132

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Forest City Wholesale Grocery Company Records partially document the history of a regional grocery wholesaler from 1907 to 1974. Although the collection lacks materials describing the company's organization in 1902, a nearly complete set of Directors'/ Stockholders' meeting minutes (1907-1974) reveal corporate policy throughout most of the company's existence. The minutes contain information on elections of officers, stock issues, dividend payments, and the annual financial condition of the business. A general ledger provides additional financial data, detailing company income and expenses just prior to the firm's sale to Consolidated Foods Corporation in 1966. Finally, a stock certificate book (1907-1953) lists stockholders and issue dates.

Researchers should note that Box 1, File 1 contains company historical information. Also, researchers may wish to consult the Central Market Records collection (RC 72) held by the Regional History Center for further information regarding the grocery industry in northern Illinois.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

Mr. O. L. Fredricksen and Mr. Gust Anderson organized the Forest City Wholesale Grocery Company of Rockford, Illinois in 1902. Five years later, the company incorporated and Anderson, J. G. Sherman, and Fredricksen served as president, vice president, and secretary--treasurer, respectively. Around 1909, the firm constructed a new storage facility with approximately 30,000 feet of floor space at 725 Seventh Street in Rockford.

After fifteen years of operation, Fredricksen and Anderson sold the firm to A. W. Wheelock in 1917 but continued their ownership of the property. Mr. Wheelock needed an experienced manager to run the business and recruited Homer Z. Webster of Madison, Wisconsin to manage the company. In 1928, Webster purchased the business and hired his son,

Scott, as a warehouseman in 1934. Twelve years later, after working as a salesman, buyer, and treasurer of the company, Scott Webster became the firm's president, serving until 1966.

By the 1940's, the firm required a larger storage and distribution center and purchased the Green Brothers Box Company Plant in 1949 at a cost of \$60,000. The new warehouse and buildings provided about 50,000 square feet of floor space with a newly designed conveyer system for greater efficiency in movement of goods. In addition, the new facilities provided easier servicing of Forest City's cash and carry wholesale houses in Rockford, Freeport, Sterling, and DeKalb, Illinois

After sixty-four years of independent operation, the company sold its assets to Consolidated Foods Corporation in 1966. Besides retaining its personnel and cash and carry wholesale business, Forest City established beauty aids and fresh produce services as part of Consolidated's expansion program. Forest City Wholesale remained part of Consolidated Foods until the firm's directors and stockholders permanently dissolved the company in 1974.

#### SUBJECT TRACINGS

Consolidated Foods Corporation  
Forest City Wholesale Grocery Company  
Grocery Trade  
Rockford (Ill.)

#### COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Historical Information, 1950, 1960
	2-5	Directors'/Stockholders' Minutes, (1907-1974)
	6	Stock Certificate Book, (1907-1953)
2	1-2	General Ledger, 1960-1966
	3	Warehouse Floor Plan, 1955