

Inventory of the

Rockford Small Business
Rockford, Illinois

Collection

In the
Regional History Center

RC 57

INTRODUCTION

Hugh D. Hammerslag donated the Rockford Small Business Collection to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center on March 30, 1979.

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Linear feet of shelf space: 3.25
 Number of containers: 6 + 1 volumes
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SCOPE AND CONTENT

The records in this collection partially document the operations of eleven small businesses in Rockford, Illinois during the period 1906 to 1961: John Anderson Coal Company (1944-1950); Joseph Behr and Sons (1954-1958); David Goldman (1920-1958); Industrial Gages, Incorporated (1955-1960); Kettlewell Milk Company (1929-1930); Midway Amusement Company (1927-1938); Rockford Dairy, Incorporated (1929-1930); Royal Mantel and Furniture (1913-1938); The Tagit Company (1916-1961); Union Furniture Company (1906-1952); Winnebago Radio and Cabinet (1928-1932).

Although many of the daily records of these businesses have been lost, the records in this collection provide excellent information on the origin, operation, and dissolution of these eleven firms including articles of incorporation and dissolution, stock registers and capitalization reports, minutes of special board and stockholders meetings, legal documents, and information on product lines. Thus the researcher can construct a basic historical sketch for each of these businesses which could be filled in from other sources. Most of the records fall in the period between 1920 and 1950 and offer insight on the vicissitudes of commerce and manufacturing in Rockford during the Great Depression and World War II.

Researchers using these materials may wish to consult other manuscript collections held by the Regional History Center pertaining to Rockford business and industry: Rockford Mitten and Hosiery (RC 38); Rockford Chair and Furniture (RC 42); Smith Oil and Refining (RC 48); and National Chair Company (RC 59).

HISTORICAL SKETCH

John Anderson Coal Company

Martha E. Anderson, Esther C., and Roy A. Rolander organized the John Anderson Coal Company as the first stock subscribers and corporate directors on October 23, 1944. On September 5, 1950, the Skandia Coal and Lumber Company of Rockford purchased the Anderson Company's stock and fixed assets terminating Anderson's brief existence as a Rockford business.

Joseph Behr and Sons

Joseph Behr left Poland with his wife in 1903 and eventually moved to Rockford, Illinois where he began running a scrap yard for rags, paper, iron, and other metals. Behr also ventured into the field of manufacturing, turning out bottled ammonia, horse radish, and bluing. The scrap business, however, continued to be his main enterprise. In 1928, with a capital stock of \$30,000, the company was incorporated. It consisted of the iron and steel division, metals, and rags and paper division. Joseph Behr died in 1940 and his oldest son, Isadore, became president of the firm.

David Goldman

David Goldman came to Rockford in 1899 as a single man of 23 from Elgin, Illinois. He was born in Russian Poland in 1877, and came to the United States with his family. He remained with his parents until 1899, when he came to Rockford and started dealing in junk, handling all kinds, including paper and rags. By 1911, he had built a large and profitable business. David Goldman was a member of the Ohave Sholom Synagogue for over 50 years. Fraternally, he belonged to the Royal Arcanum.

Industrial Gages, Incorporated

Industrial Gages incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois March 5, 1955. The company's first Board of Directors included Gordon A. Cedarleaf, Homer B. Johnson, Everett C. Alex, Harry J. Rowley, and Clayton C. Andrews. The company sold precision gages and components and furnished inspection and maintenance service. In 1960, Industrial Gages changed its name to Orvac Products, Incorporated.

Kettlewell Milk Company

The Kettlewell Milk Company was organized under the laws of the State of Illinois in May 1929. The initial subscribers to capital stock in the Kettlewell Milk Company were Henry Carmichael, Eva A. Carmichael, Leroy C. Carmichael and William C. Peterson. The company manufactured, sold, and distributed milk, cream, ice cream, butter, and other dairy products.

Midway Amusement Company

C.W. Behlen, John Wester, Otto A. Milliorn, and Charles F. House organized the Midway Amusement Company on February 15, 1928, to operate the Midway Theatre, a motion picture house at 725 East State Street. The initial capitalization was \$25,000. After a brief nine years of operation, Rockford Enterprise, Incorporated, purchased the assets of the Midway Amusement Company in 1937 for \$1725.

Rockford Dairy Company

Carl G. Johnson, Mary V. Johnson, and Shelby Large organized the Rockford Dairy Company on May 20, 1929 with a capitalization of \$5600 to purchase, process, distribute, and sell dairy products. Dean Milk, a large Chicago-based dairy business, purchased the Rockford Dairy Company in May, 1929 for \$40,000 of Dean Stock and \$50,000 cash in deferred payments over a period of twelve months.

Royal Mantel and Furniture

The Royal Mantel and Furniture Company was incorporated on May 10, 1892 with a capital stock of \$100,000. The following officers were elected: R.C. Lind, president; J.P. Lundell, vice president; D.R. Peterson, secretary and treasurer. On July 6, 1938, the Royal Mantel and Furniture was dissolved.

The Tagit Company

F.L. Borchert, John McCanna, and George W. Sherer created the Tagit Company on January 12, 1916 with a capital stock of \$10,000. The business manufactured laundry and dry cleaning, marking tags, and tag affixing machines. A year after its creation, the company increased its capital stock to \$25,000, and for the next forty years it remained a small, successful, family-owned business. On March 25, 1961 the shareholders voted to dissolve the corporation and cease operations.

Union Furniture Company

Jonas Peters, John Erlander, John Pehrson, and James Sindquist created the Union Furniture Company in 1876. Soon after its beginning, one of Rockford's most important industrialists, P.A. Peterson, joined Union as corporate secretary, a position he held for over forty years. After the first factory burned in 1889, the company relocated to a large plot on Rockford's southeast side. By 1900 Union Furniture employed over 200 men. It proved to be not only one of Rockford's most important furniture manufacturers but also one of the longest lived, lasting over seventy-five years.

Winnebago Radio Cabinet Company

On July 28, 1928, C.J. Stuart, Elsie Broitzman, and Mrs. Marie Bowman incorporated the Winnebago Radio Cabinet Company with \$50,000 of stock "to manufacture, buy, and sell radio cabinets and other wooden case goods." The company changed its name to Rockford Period Furniture Company on December 10, 1932.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

John Anderson Coal Company
 Behr, Joseph
 Cabinet Work
 Carmichael Family
 Coal Trade
 Dairying
 Erlander, John
 Furniture Industry
 Goldman, David
 Industrial Gages, Incorporated
 Joseph Behr and Sons
 Kettlewell Milk Company
 Midway Amusement Company
 Midway Theater
 Peterson, P.A.
 Rockford
 Rockford Dairy Company
 Rockford Period Furniture
 Royal Mantel and Furniture
 Scrap Metals
 Skandia Coal and Lumber
 Tagit Company
 Theater
 Union Furniture Company
 Washing Machine
 Winnebago Radio Cabinet Company

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	John Anderson Coal Company: Certificate Incorporation, 1944
	2	Report, 1949
	1 vol.	Corporate Record Book, 1944-1950
2	1 vol.	Joseph Behr and Sons: Invoice and Shipping Book, 1954-1958
	1 vol.	David Goldman: Sales journal, 1953-1954
OVS	1 vol.	Shipping Book, 1920-1958
	1 vol.	Estate Records/Payroll, 1957
	1 vol.	Estate Records/Payroll, 1950-1956
3	3a	Estate Papers, 1956-1957
	3b	Photographs: David and Anna Goldman; Goldman Wrecking Sign, 1947, 1956 n.d. (4)
	1 vol.	Industrial Gages, Incorporated: Legal Documents, 1958-1959
4	4	Stockholder Meeting Minutes, 1957
	5	Corporate Report, 1956
	6	Corporate Record Book, 1955-1960
	1 vol.	Kettlewell Milk Company: Corporate Record Book, 1929-1930
5	1 vol.	Midway Amusement Corporation: Corporate Record Book, 1927-1938
	1 vol.	Rockford Dairy Company, Incorporated: Corporate Record Book, 1929-1930
	1 vol.	Royal Mantel and Furniture Company: Corporate Record Book, 1913-1938
5	1	By-laws, n.d.
	2	Resolution of Board of Directors, 1937
	3	Articles of Dissolution, 1938
5	4	The Tagit Company: Stockholder Meeting Minutes, 1916-1918, 1956-1961
	5	Articles of Dissolution, 1961
	1 vol.	Stock Register, 1916-1919
	1 vol.	General Ledger, 1933-1961

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	5	
6	1 vol.	Corporate Record Book, 1916-1956		
	1 vol.	Monthly Journal, 1954-1961		
			Union Furniture Company:	
	1 vol.	Corporate Record Book, 1943-1952		
	1	Stock Certificate, 1906		
	2	Offer to Purchase, 1946		
			Winnebago Radio Cabinet Company:	
	3	Stock Certificates, 1928		
	4	Articles of Incorporation, 1928		
	5	Amendments to Incorporation, 1932		
	1 vol.	Corporate Record Book, 1928		