

Fisher Bros. Paper Company

Founded: 1882

Location: East Berry Street, Fort Wayne (1882–); 23 East Columbia Street (1887); 125 Calhoun Street (1893, 1899); 1005 Clinton Street (–1903); 1007 Calhoun Street (1903–6); 130-132 West Columbia Street (1906–14); 118–122 West Columbia Street (1914–); 4115 Paper Place (1971, 1995); 4415 Hartman Road (1996–)

In 1882 Samuel S. Fisher purchased the interest of Meyer L. Graff in the Webb & Graff paper firm in Fort Wayne. Samuel was the son of Isaac Fisher, a German-Jewish immigrant butcher, and he worked in his father's meat market as a young man. After his initial investment, Samuel Fisher rapidly assumed control of Webb & Graff. In March 1882 he bought out A. M. Webb and less than two months later purchased the interest of Harry Graff. Samuel's brother Max B. Fisher then joined him in the business, which was located on East Berry Street. Like his brother, Max had worked at his father's meat store and there, supposedly, had had the inspiration to sell the wrapping paper that the store used to wrap meat for delivery. Early on, the brothers sold wood dishes, trunks, raincoats, and umbrellas in addition to paper, but the firm, which came to be known as Fisher Bros., ultimately developed into a wholesaler of assorted paper products.

Samuel and Max's brother Edwin J. Fisher later joined the partnership. The firm was located in various buildings, moving from East Berry Street to East Columbia Street and later to Clinton and Calhoun Streets. In 1906 the company, then located at 130–132 West Columbia Street, became the Fisher Bros. Paper Company. In 1914 Fisher Bros. Paper Company constructed a new plant at 118 West Columbia Street. Samuel's son, Roger I. Fisher, began working for the company in 1910. He became the firm's secretary after the death of his uncle, Edwin, in 1916. In 1922 Samuel died, and Roger assumed

the additional office of vice president. Upon the death of Max in January 1933, Roger became president of the firm. By the late 1940s Fisher Bros. Paper Company sold products throughout Indiana and neighboring states and employed fifty-five people.

Roger remained president of the company through the 1960s and later served as chairman of the board. Max Fisher's two sons-in-law, Hal Rehrer and Clarence R. Levy, had also gone to work for the family firm, and Thomas M. Rehrer later became president. In January 1996 the owners of Fisher Bros. Paper Company sold its assets and converted it into a real estate development company. The move was rooted in the family's history, for early in the century the three Fisher brothers had purchased and developed much valuable property in the growing city.