

## Wolf Corporation

Founded: 1873

Location: 76 Clinton Street, Fort Wayne (1873–75); 125 Calhoun Street (1875– ); 33–35 Clinton Street; 619–621 South Clinton Street (ca. 1900–1980s); factory on 708–714 Schick Street; 3434 Adams Center Road (late 1980s– )

Paul E. Wolf emigrated from Germany in 1871 and settled in Fort Wayne. A skilled upholsterer, he initially began working as an interior decorator and paperhanger. After briefly living in Chicago, Wolf returned to Fort Wayne and established an upholstery and bedding business at 76 Clinton Street in partnership with William Kettler. Two years later he was in business for himself at 125 Calhoun Street—manufacturing and selling upholstered furniture, laying carpet, hanging curtains and paper, even repairing church cushions. Wolf soon began to manufacture mattresses. Near the turn of the century he was operating the Fort Wayne Carpet-Beating Works, Furniturer, and Upholsterer at 619–621 Clinton. He also sold awnings and tents.

Wolf was active in politics, serving on the city council as a Republican. In 1910 he incorporated the Paul E. Wolf Bedding Company, with his sons Erwin as treasurer and Robert as secretary. Wolf died in 1937. His son Erwin began working in his father's business at the age of twelve; in 1935 Erwin became president. Several of Paul Wolf's children became active in the family business, both before and after his death. The 1946 city directory, for example, contains entries for the Wolf Bedding Company, headed by Erwin, with offices on South Clinton Street and a mattress factory at 706 Schick Street; the Wolf Tent & Awning Company, managed by Paul E. Wolf, Jr., at 107 East Superior; and the Wolf Carpet Cleaning Company, managed by Herbert T. Wolf, another son, located at 714 Schick Street.

In 1961 the Wolf family formed the Wolf Corporation. By the late 1980s the Wolf Corporation employed forty workers and manufactured mattresses, box springs, and fiber products. It combed out cotton for use in upholstery padding and produced unwoven fabrics. Erwin's son Richard was president of the company but several other family members were involved, including Richard's brother, Donald. In the late 1980s the company moved to 3434 Adams Center Road.