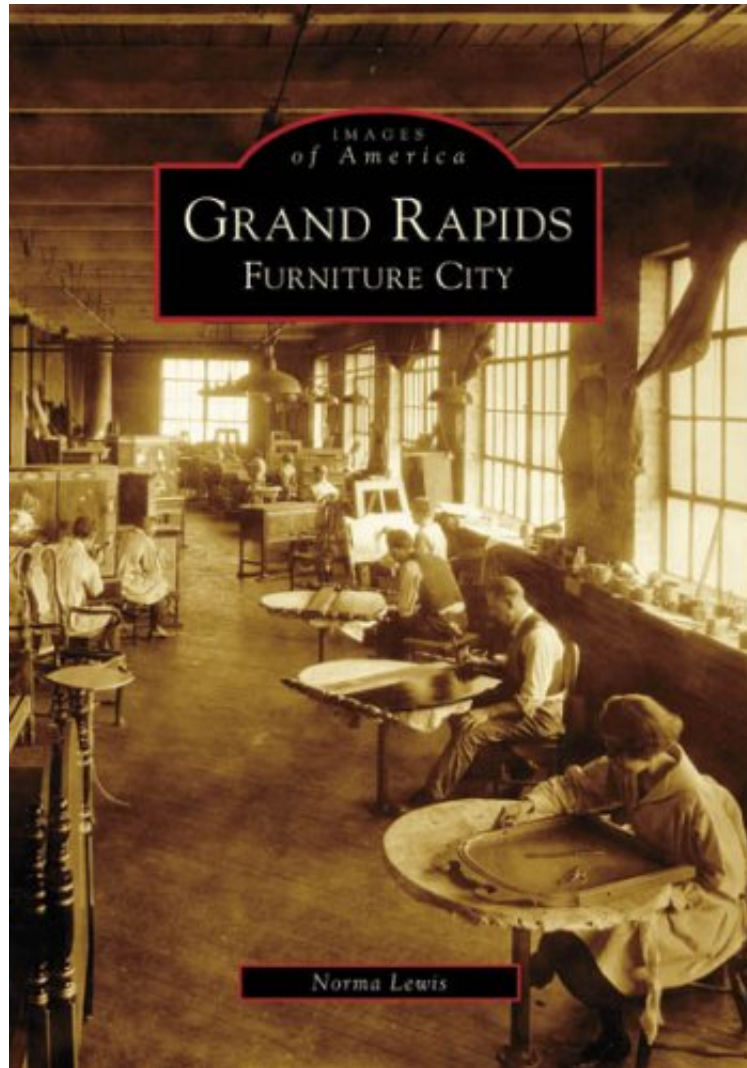


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Grand Rapids: Furniture City (Images of America: Michigan)

Norma Lewis

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Norma Lewis : Grand Rapids: Furniture City (Images of America: Michigan) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Grand Rapids: Furniture City (Images of America: Michigan):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. would have been nice - making this book more inclusive By R. M. Rogers A book that leaves out several firms in the suburbs of Grand Rapids. A chapter or two on the firms, such as Forslund Furniture, would have been nice - making this book more inclusive. Otherwise, an historical read.

William Haldane opened a cabinet shop in 1836, 14 years before Grand Rapids incorporated. Other furniture

companies followed: Berkey and Gay, Widdicomb, Sligh, Hekman, and Phoenix were among those taking advantage of the Grand River for transportation and power, the areas abundant hardwood supply, and a growing immigrant labor pool. The furniture soon attracted national attention. In 1876, the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition proved conclusively that a river town in Michigan had indeed earned the title Furniture City. Presidents Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, and Dwight D. Eisenhower all worked at Grand Rapids made desks. Fifteen manufacturers joined forces to build 1,000 Handley Page bombers during World War I. The Japanese Instrument of Surrender was signed on September 2, 1945, at a table made in Grand Rapids. Despite fires, floods, strikes, depressions, and wars, Grand Rapids led the industry until the 1950s and 1960s, when the factories began moving to North Carolina. Today the area, along with nearby Holland and Zeeland, dominates the office furniture industry.

About the Author Norma Lewis lives in a Grand Rapids suburb, where she writes humor, travel, and feature articles for national and regional magazines. She enjoys historic research and is the author of *Going for the Gold*, a juvenile account of the 1898 Yukon gold rush. Images in this book came from corporate archives, the Grand Rapids Public Library, the Public Museum of Grand Rapids, and private collections.