

## **Drexel Furniture Company** <sup>[1]</sup>

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Drexel Furniture Company, rebuilt two weeks after 1906 fire. Image courtesy of Burke County Public Library. <sup>[2]</sup>

The Drexel Furniture Company was incorporated on 10 Nov. 1903 and began making fine furniture in a small factory near Morganton in the foothills of the [Appalachian Mountains](#) <sup>[3]</sup>. In time, the company acquired other furniture plants, including the Table Rock Furniture Company in 1951 and the Heritage Furniture Company and Morganton Furniture Company in 1956. On 1 Dec. 1960 Drexel Furniture became Drexel Enterprises, Inc., and the following year it acquired the Southern Desk Company, manufacturer of a broad line of institutional furniture and equipment for laboratories, libraries, classrooms, dormitories, and churches.

In 1968 U.S. Plywood-Champion Papers bought Drexel Enterprises. As a subsidiary of Champion, the company became Drexel Heritage Furnishings, Inc. Champion sold Drexel Heritage to Dominick International Corporation, a private New York brokerage and investment banking firm, in August 1977. In 1986 Drexel Heritage became a wholly owned subsidiary of [Masco Corporation](#) <sup>[4]</sup>, which, by buying several other leading North Carolina furniture makers, became by the late 1980s the largest U.S. furniture manufacturer.

Drexel for many years sold home and institutional furniture both domestically and abroad. Many of the best-known hotels in the world purchased Drexel furniture, and contracts with the U.S. State Department and the General Services Administration placed Drexel furniture in American embassies and government offices all over the world. In 2004 [Drexel Heritage Furniture Industries, Inc.](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, as part of [Furniture Brands International](#) <sup>[6]</sup>, was based in [High Point](#) <sup>[7]</sup> and had 1,300 employees working at several facilities in North Carolina. It remained one of the nation's leading residential furniture manufacturers, producing a variety of wooden and upholstered furniture under several brand names.

#### **Additional Resources:**

Drexel Heritage Furniture Industries, Inc.: <https://www.drexel-furniture.com> <sup>[8]</sup>

#### **References:**

Allen C. Irvine, *Sixty Years of Progress in the Making of Fine Furniture: Drexel Enterprises, Inc., 1903-1963* [1963?].

Edward W. Phifer, *Burke: The History of a North Carolina County, 1777-1920* (1977).

#### **Image Credit:**

Drexel Furniture Company, rebuilt two weeks after 1906 fire. Image courtesy of Burke County Public Library. Available from [http://pictureburke.bcpls.org/places\\_3.htm](http://pictureburke.bcpls.org/places_3.htm) <sup>[2]</sup> (accessed July 3, 2012).

#### **Subjects:**

[Businesses](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

[Furniture industry and trade](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

#### **Authors:**

[Williams, Wiley J.](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

#### **Origin - location:**

[Burke County](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

[Guilford County](#) <sup>[13]</sup>

#### **From:**

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

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