

Moffett Food Service is one of the oldest family-owned businesses in Flint Michigan today; it is currently owned and run by the fifth generation of Moffett's. The Moffett family originated in Scotland. The founder, Samuel Moffett, arrived in Flint in 1865 when he was just nine years old. To earn some extra money, Sam peddled apples and peaches on the streets every day after school. Recognizing Samuels' uncanny ability and good judgment for values and prices, his parents soon delegated him in charge of buying all the household goods. This brought him in contact with the grocery merchants in the city. At the age of sixteen, Sam began to work with Van Epps, Baily & Company, and then Carmen & Smith Company.

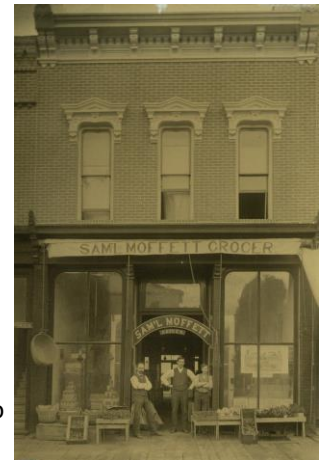


In 1879, after five years of experience, Sam leased the basement room of the F. W Judd building which had both front and rear entrance for the purpose of buying and shipping farm produce to lumber camps in Bay City and Saginaw. From this endeavor, he saved \$360 and with it formed a partnership with L.M. Bray to conduct a retail grocery business—Bray & Moffett. The partnership ended two years later, and Sam started his own store. He



moved several times but by 1903 he was firmly established in the wholesale and retail grocery business. By 1910, they discontinued the produce line and operated a grocery and coal business. At this time, the name of the business became Moffett & Sons, run by Sam Moffett and his two sons, Robert G. Moffett and Sam B. Moffett.

On January 9, 1012, the warehouse caught fire, becoming one of the largest fires in Flint's history with damages amounting to a total loss of \$84,000. The family was not finished yet, for in 1913 they built a new building between Brush and Harrison Streets.



In 1916, the firm joined Symons Brothers of Saginaw with the purpose of expanding the business. The firm's name changed again to Moffett Grocer Co in 1924. In 1928, the company became the largest wholesale grocer in the Midwest, having a total of 90,000 square feet of floor space. It remained Moffett Grocer Co. until 1952, under the leadership of the two sons Robert G. Moffett and Sam B. Moffett and into the third generation—Russell Moffett, Marge Moffett, and Robert S. Moffett.

In 1952, Robert S. Moffett bought out the family interest and changed the name to Iris Tea Company, becoming strictly a restaurant institutional wholesaler. The Name Iris Tea was chosen because R.G. Moffett had 250 plus varieties of Iris flowers at his home on Lake Fenton.

Robert developed the business until it outgrew its location at Lewis Street, and with the help of the fourth generation, Robert (Bruce) Moffett, Jeff Moffett, and Barbara Moffett-Boyles, the company moved to its present

location 145 W. Lakeview in 1972.

Currently the business is running strong due to the efforts of the fifth generation; Brian Moffett, Jennifer Moffett and Eric Moffett. Word of mouth spread of our fair prices, friendly customer service, and ability to deliver on time. Today we are looking to modernize our business and find ways to spread the word of our amazing history, customer service, and wholesale services.

