

## **My Grandfather in Chicago, Illinois and Valparaiso, Indiana**

Dad moved to Chicago to set up a printing shop. We then moved out to a suburb of Chicago called Forest Park. We lived in a two-apartment house - downstairs. How my Father got all of these different jobs I don't know. I do know he was a genius with machinery of any kind and very inventive. He was a whiz at woodworking and metalworking and anything mechanical.



Their next move was to Valparaiso, Indiana, where my Father set up a custom-made shirt Factory. He had 3 or 4 girls working for him. He made the patterns himself - all brass bound fiber-board. He imported beautiful shirting material from England. Mother used to work beautiful monograms on the pockets for him. I loved to go to the factory which was upstairs in a large building. Across the hall from the factory was a dentist's office.

The dentist used what was then called "Laughing Gas." I remember hearing the patient's snickering away while they were having their dental work done.

I can remember being out for a walk with Mother and Daddy in Valparaiso and I would shout out "There's one of Daddy's girls." Mother would say "Shush! I never could understand why she was so concerned.

Mabel House & Friend



My Mother

The Brock Shirt Factory must have gone bankrupt, because the next thing I knew - we were moving up to Northern Michigan to a town called Cadillac. My Father became manager of the Kingly Shirt Company. This was a very large plant. I can remember seeing layers of material 5 or 6 inches high being cut into shirt pieces by a huge cutting machine. We lived in a rooming house and used to go across the street to a boarding house for our meals.

When we lived in Cadillac, Mother learned to drive our car, an old Stanley Steamer with running boards and side curtains which were snapped on if it was raining. I used to go down to the shirt factory after school to visit Daddy. One day, Mother was supposed to

pick us up. She drove up the street with a great flourish. Waved to us as she drove by and said, "Hi" and ran the car right up a telephone pole!

Our next move was to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where Dad worked for the Globe Knitting Plant. For a time he was head machinist and then eventually became an Efficiency Expert. He used to time the girls during their sewing and worked out various ways to improve their operations. The girls liked this because they were on "piecework" - so much money for so many garments sewed. The plant approved of this - because of the increase in their production.

Then came the big Stock Market Crash of 1929 and the beginning of the Depression years. The Globe folded and Daddy and Mother moved back to Canada. Although living in the U.S.A. all those years they had never taken out American Citizenship papers.