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Finding aid for the Globe Knitting Works collection Collection 062

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections
Department

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Summary Information

Repository:	Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department
Title:	Globe Knitting Works collection
ID:	Collection 062
Date [inclusive]:	1900-1920s
Physical Description:	0.42 Linear Feet Two boxes
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Globe Knitting Works was a clothing manufacturer established in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1897. The collection contains primarily photographs. Some exterior views exist, but most views are interiors, including various departments involved in the knitting process. Images begin with the drying and cutting processes through to the final stages of packaging and shipping. A 7-paged typed history also accompanies the photos. Published documents have been added to the collection for additional context and history.

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Biographical / Historical

The Globe Knitting Works, established in Grand Rapids on October 27, 1897, produced underwear with an improved fit and appearance. This was accomplished by cutting and sewing fabric to fit the body. Mr. Snitseler of Voigt-Herpolsheimer Co. was the first buyer for the newly formed company. Employing 8 persons at the onset, Globe eventually expanded into a number of different buildings and employment grew to over 100 employees. The founder, Mr. Eilert Alfred Clements, involved his two sons in the company until the year 1952, when the company was sold to Active Industrial Corporation of New York. They moved the entire company to the south.

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Scope and Contents

The collection contains primarily 4x5 photographic contact prints and 8x10 original photographs. Some exterior views exist, but most views are interiors, including various departments involved in the knitting process. Images begin with the drying and cutting processes through to the final stages of packaging and shipping. One interior shows a women's softball team. A 2003 gift adds an image of a post-war 1940s men's baseball team, as well. An album contains twenty-one (21) original 8x10 photographs, taken by Hesselink & Phillips studio of Grand Rapids, each with a paragraph description.

A 7-paged typed history accompanies the photos. Published documents have been added to the collection for additional context and history. The early history of The Globe Knitting Works chronicles the early days of Mr. Eilert Alfred Clements who founded the business; the history describes his experiences that lead him to establishing Globe. It describes the strong market for the newly conceived underwear design that Mr. Clements developed. It also presents a fairly detailed account of the company's early expansion leading up to its production of underwear for the armed services during WWI and WWII. The individuals who made up the Board of Directors, including Mr. Clements two sons, are also described.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Nellie Clements Mead; Gerry Thornton, 2003. Accession numbers 1985.017, 2003.017, 00.[2589].1, 00.[2527].1

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Controlled Access Headings

- Underwear industry -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids -- History
- Clothing trade -- Michigan -- Grand Rapids -- History
- Grand Rapids (Mich.) -- History
- Clements, Eilert Alfred
- Globe Knitting Works

Collection Inventory

Series I. Documents

Title/Description	Instances	
History	Box 1	folder 1
E.B. Fisher "History of Grand Rapids & Kent County" Datasheet. "Industries" for "Globe Knitting Works." 00.[2589].1, formerly in Vertical File	Box 1	folder 1.5
Ca. 1950s? PR flyer, with letter on first page, images of factory and workers as centerfold. 00.[2527].1, formerly in Vertical File	Box 1	folder 2

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Series II. Images

A. Contact Prints

Title/Description	Instances	
Contact prints corresponding to original Album photos in Box 2. (21)	Box 1	folder 3
Exterior views of plant (8)	Box 1	folder 4
Interior views of plant (47)	Box 1	folder 5
Offices (10)	Box 1	folder 6

B. Original Photos

Scope and Contents

Set 1. Album of 21 original, linen backed photos, 8x10, with 2 holes at left margin. Album was disbound 11/10/2003. The description on the back of the photos is not the description for that photo, but for the image that

previously faced the description within the album. These descriptions have been photocopied, and each photo now sits in its own folder, with the correct description. A "Do not use" note, in pencil, on the old label, warns users.

Title/Description	Instances	
Album Image #1 Exterior	Box 2	folder 1
Album Image #2. Yarn Cleaning Dept.	Box 2	folder 2
Album Image #3. Winding Room.	Box 2	folder 3
Album Image #4. Latch Needle Knitting Dept.	Box 2	folder 4
Album Image #5. Knitting Dept.	Box 2	folder 5
Album Image #6. Spring Needle Knitting Dept.	Box 2	folder 6
Album Image #7 Cuff Knitting Dept.	Box 2	folder 7
Album Image #8. Washing, Dyeing, Bleaching Dept.	Box 2	folder 8
Album Image #9. Drying Dept.	Box 2	folder 9
Album Image #10. Cutting Dept.	Box 2	folder 10
Album Image #11. Seaming Dept.	Box 2	folder 11
Album Image #12. Inspection Dept.	Box 2	folder 12
Album Image #13. Pressing, Folding, and Boxing Dept.	Box 2	folder 13
Album Image #14. Shipping Department.	Box 2	folder 14
Album Image #15. Stock Room.	Box 2	folder 15
Album Image #16. Office interior.	Box 2	folder 16
Album Image #17. Yarn Storage Dept.	Box 2	folder 17
Album Image #18. Engine Room. Two Ames Unaflo engines.	Box 2	folder 18
Album Image #19. Boiler Room. Page-Burton water tube boilers, 550 horse-power, equipped with Jones stokers.	Box 2	folder 19
Album Image #20. Dining Room of Cafeteria for Midday (Noon) meal.	Box 2	folder 20
Album Image #21 Album Image #21. Globe's Indoor Base Ball Team. City league. Women's (girls) baseball/softball team.	Box 2	folder 21
Exterior views, original photos.	Box 2	folder 22
Interior view, exhibit, Grand Rapids Textile Machinery Co. "Shield Method of handling cloth.	Box 2	folder 23
Interior view of a later generation of mechanized factory.	Box 2	folder 23

New Photo accessions

Title/Description	Instances	
Men's baseball team, ca. postwar 1940s. Copy photo. 2003.017	Box 2	folder 24

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