GRANDFATHER HEDDEN

Grandfather, David Hedden, was born in Newark, New Jersey, ??? Fifth, Eighteen Hundred Two. His father and his uncles, as well as his grandfather, were soldiers in the Continental Army, several of them were held captive by the British, and one died as the result of British imprisonment in the old "Sugar House Prison".

One of David Hedden's several brothers, Jared, came west and settled in Illinois just beyond the Indiana line; and David, as he began to grow, looked forward to the time when he might follow his older brother into the great Northwest Territory. In 1820 his opportunity came. A merchant was preparing to take a consignment of merchandise to the Mississippi valley and needed help, and young David agreed to help for a stipulated sum. It is almost impossible for us, in our "times", to realize the difficulties those early pioneers encountered in transporting goods into the new country. Loaded wagons must be drawn over the Allegheny Mountains, often where a blazed trail was the only roadway. When the headwaters of the Ohio River were reached, the bales and boxes and barrels were loaded on a flatboat, and with no other means of propulsion than the current, floated down the Ohio. Once launched on the flowing river their work was by no means ended, or even lightened. Davy, as he came to be called, and his "Boss", each armed with a stout pole, must be ever on the alert to steer the barge clear from the river bank – safely around river snags – free from hidden sand bars. At night they would tie up at some safe cove ashore and "bunk" on the flatboat. Even then they must be on the alert, for there were still some dangerous wild beasts in the forests, and roving bands of Indians on the woodland trails while, not all bloodthirsty, were thieving and mischievous. Not only were there <u>unknown</u> dangers in the river traffic, there were also <u>known</u> dangers that must be taken into account; and the greatest of these was the Falls of the Ohio. There was a fall of some 22 feet in the river between the little town of Louisville and the new village of New Albany, and through the lengths of those several miles the tortuous passage was a mélange of whirlpools and jagged rocks. Today the Portland Canal makes the passage easy and safe and the water impounded by the power dam covers even the aspect of danger; but in those days it was a skillful navigator indeed that dared to pilot a raft through that dangerous passage. The cargo that grandfather helped with seems to have arrived at New Albany safely. Not so with the helper however. He came down with yellow jaundice and "The Boss" had the barge tied up at the town landing hoping that his helper would recover enough to continue on the trip. One of the good women of the town had the boy taken to her home and she cared for

him, and "The Boss" (we have no record of his name), wishing to get along on his journey, paid the boy in full for the trip, satisfied himself that Davey would be well taken care of, continued alone. Davey remained to live in the town until his death more than 70 years later. Our progenitor had intended locating in Illinois – a chance illness seems to be responsible for his grandchildren being native New Albanians.

On his recovery he found work with a storekeeper named Robinson who had a small supply store near east Fourth and Main streets, and continued to board with the lady who had cared for him through his illness. The job, however, was not to his liking, as one of his duties was to see that each customer was served with a mug of liquor that he drew from a barrel that was always on tap in the rear of the store. The lady with whom he boarded was the wife of a prosperous merchant and when she found that he was dissatisfied, she persuaded her husband to take the boy in his store. The city in all its long history has probably known no more worthy citizens than this couple – Elias Ayers and Mary Ann Ayers, his wife. God fearing, cultured, industrious and charitable, they gave a fundamentally enduring atmosphere to the town that undoubtedly still influences its life. Probably the first piano to be carted over the mountains and brought to New Albany is still treasured in our family here as a legacy from Mrs. Ayers. Following the death of Elias Ayers, his widow married a Dr. Lapsley, and under that influence endowed a Presbyterian Seminary. That school, located at east Seventh and Elm streets, graduated ministers that carried the gospel to all parts of the land; later on it was moved to Chicago and today under the name of McCormick Theological Seminary is one of the leading seats of learning in the ecclesiastical world. Dates on the monument in Fairview Cemetery show that Elias Ayers was born in 1792 and died in the year 1842; his wife first saw the light of day in 1796 and departed this life some eighty-two years later in the year 1878.

A few years after David Hedden arrived in New Albany, a distant relative of the Ayers family, a young man by the name of Silas Day, came to New Albany and joined David Hedden in boarding with these good people. Both seem to have been subjected to conscientious maternal oversight by the good lady, for Grandfather chuckled whenever he told of her reprimanding them when they broke the Sabbath on one occasion. It seems that they started out to take a walk one Sunday afternoon; it being a delightful day, they walked to Jeffersonville and back. When Mrs. Ayers discovered that they had taken a "journey" on the Sabbath day she informed them that as long as they were inmates of her home they should not commit the misdeed again. There was another story that he loved to tell of an incident that happened in those days. He would shake the hand of one of his grandchildren

and then say "in the year 1826 General LaFayette revisited the United States and when he arrived in Jeffersonville I walked all the way up there and he shook me by the hand that is now shaking yours. You can always remember that you shook hands with a man who shook hands with Marie Jean Paul Marquis de LaFayette.

Mr. Ayers put both these young men (Silas Day and David Hedden) to work in his general store, which was then located near the corner of Pearl and High (Main) streets. They must have been acceptable helpers for a few years later, during the late eighteen twenties, when Ayers wanted to retire from active work he gave the two young men a fourth interest each in the business with the agreement that they were to manage the business and give him half the profits, dividing the other half equally between themselves. Again a few years later he witnessed an agreement, the original copy of which is still at hand, by which he permitted them to purchase his remaining half interest from the profits accruing. The firm name was changed to "Hedden and Day" and continued for many years evidently prospering considerably. Grandfather left many interesting records of life in New Albany during those years that followed. His letters tell of journeys to the markets of the east for the purchase of goods. The route generally was to Cincinnati, then by stage coach to Chillicothe, Ohio, on to Wheeling or Charleston, and over the mountains. He tells of times when the stage would get mired in the mud and passengers must put their shoulders to the wheels and help the horses. On one trip he tells how they must wrap up in the winter time; on one journey the stage coach overturned and "banged my head", and in a letter following from Baltimore he states that his head had given him trouble and he must stay over for a day or so until it healed. There were memoranda of merchandise he was to buy for the store – pins, dress goods, horseshoes, and some items for certain individuals – a certain fancy comb or particular piece of jewelry. He had joined the First Presbyterian Church and was named as an Elder in the congregation (1828). Some years later when a new Church was built he refused to act as elder because the majority of the officers insisted on charging "Pew Rent" and he held that the church should be "free" to any one who desired to worship there.

It was about this time that he married. In the late eighteen thirties Elizabeth Wood came to New Albany as a young teacher. She was born in upstate New York February 5, 1817, and many of her kith and kin still live in the neighborhood of Binghamton. One is a United States Appellate Judge, another an archaeologist, and others successful industrialists. Several of the family were ordained Presbyterian ministers. In 1840 Elizabeth Wood and David Hedden were married. Seven of their children lived long lives.

Theodosia born 1842 died 1921; David Walstein Hedden died in childhood; William Ayers Hedden (my father) born 1846 died 1826; Frances Mears Hedden b. 1849 d. 1919; Sarah b. 1852 d. 1920; Walter B. 1854 d. 1920; Anna White Hedden b. 1859 d. 1933, Ella Wood Hedden b. 1863 d. 1948. To take the place of the boy who died they adopted an orphan niece, Sarah Sanborn. Theodosia, Frances, and Walter went through life in "single blessedness". Sarah married William Baird, an editor, and moved away from New Albany. William A. married Jennie Mary Gebhart; Anna married Franklin C. Greene, a long-time dentist of our town. Their son, Frank Cook Greene, is a geologist, and has done important work with the Missouri State Department of Geology. Ella Wood married Frank R. Hardy, a native of Lexington, Indiana; of their three children, Frank Clinton Hardy now lives in California (d. 1950); Marguerite Wise in Fort Worth, Texas, and Gladys Rodgers (Mrs. Clarence Rodgers) resides in New Albany with her family.

When my father was born in 1846 the family lived on Bank street on the site of the First Presbyterian Sunday school building. About 1850 they bought the Epaphras Jones place on Dewey Heights. Jones himself was quite an interesting character. When he arrived early in this neighborhood he was awarded a tract of land on what is now Dewey Street. At that time it was almost a mile from the eastern limits of the City of New Albany. Situated on the heights overlooking the river "where every sight was pleasing", he was so enraptured with the location that he incorporated a town and recorded it on the County Books, naming it "Providence because God in his providence hath led me to this beautiful spot". The grant was deeded to him by the Government in lieu of payment for serving in the Continental Army under George Rogers Clark. It was not a "bonus"; it was the only pay many of Clark's soldiers received.

Jones was, from the start, jealous of the neighboring town of New Albany. It is said that every morning he would dress in his knee britches, silvered buckle slippers, colonial coat and cocked hat, and stand and gaze at the village to the west to see if it had grown any during the night. The route to Vincennes and the west brought travelers to Louisville, then ferry them to New Albany, then start them on their way west over the old Boiling Spring Road (now known as the Old Vincennes Road). Jones planned to divert this traffic to a route through his "New Providence". He built a ferry landing about where the K & I Bridge now stands (Springers Gut) – cut a way through the forest, making a roadway that was to lead to Vincennes. That roadway came to be Vincennes street as we know it today. The project was doomed to failure and he finally sold his home to Grandfather Hedden. The house was a long, low frame and log building and was replaced during the late sixties or

early 70s with the fine brick building that still stands. At that time there was no bridge across the river at that point and I have heard them tell many a time how they sat on the brow of the hill at the rear of the house and watched the river packets tie up at Tow Head Island. They were just across the river from Shippingport and much of the downriver traffic was loaded and unloaded at that point. *[Jones was (nob????) with George Rodgers Clark. He served in a Connecticut regiment. He bought the Dewey Street Property.]*

Grandfather knew our town in the early primitive days. He told of an immense sycamore tree that stood in the middle of High Street just east of Pearl street; how, annually, an itinerant preacher held a revival and preached under the spreading branches of the tree. The east half of what we know today as the Union National Bank building lot was occupied by a building that housed a grog shop, and the tree stood directly in front of this saloon. The proprietor of the establishment objected seriously to the preacher holding his services there, as it interfered considerably with his business while the "penitents were 'het' up". And so, one year, when the preacher was saying good bye to the flock and promising to return the next year, the tavern keeper called out lustily that he'd never allow another revival to be held under that tree… Straightway, when the crowd had dispersed, he laid the axe to the tree and felled it. But he had "reckoned without his host", for he had left the stump of the tree stand some four or five feet high there in the street; and when the preacher returned the next spring he was delighted that "our friend has furnished us with such a fine platform and pulpit to speak from". He mounted the tree, proceeded to preach "hell and damnation" and the chagrined tavern keeper retired amid the laughter of the congregation. When I first remember the building, it was occupied by some fine Jewish people named Maienthal and was known as the "Red Lion" store, taking its name from a life-sized, iron, red lion that always stood in front of the store.

During the late 1840s the firm of Hedden and Day dissolved. Grandfather bought the Old Red Mill at Corydon and operated it for quite a few years. One of his stories was of a white horse that he drove back and forth from Corydon. He would drive down on a Monday morning, stay a fortnight, and drive back on alternate Saturdays. He could sleep on the way if he pleased, as the horse knew the way home. On one trip home, he left his white horse and drove home with another gentleman. But the old white horse was not to be neglected thus; when he (grandfather) woke up Sunday morning the horse stood neighing at the stable gate, having jumped the stable yard fence in Corydon and made the journey to New Albany alone. One of the miller's agreements with the lady who "boarded" him in Corydon was that she was to make a fresh baking every day with samples of the

flour that the mill had turned out the day before, thus assuring him that his product was correct. It was this landlady who afterwards said, "Davy Hedden had the purtiest red hair I ever seed". About this time he also owned a mill over on Blue River for a time. He sold it one day to another party, had the signed contract, and payment was to be made the next morning. That night the mill burned; the next day the purchaser acknowledged that he was liable for the payment and offered it, but Grandfather refused to take payment as he said he could afford to lose it and the purchaser could not. About the time the Civil War broke out he sold the Corydon Mill and intended to retire. A little later, however, we find him tending the office for the Peter Mann mill on State street. At about that time he bought the property at the corner of State and Market streets, now occupied by the Kroger Company, and it still is owned by his grandchildren.

Shortly after the civil war he built the handsome old brick residence that still stands on the spot where the old Epaphras Jones house stood. In this house he lived when he retired from an active business career. From its tall windows he could overlook the terraced hillside facing the Ohio River on the south; on this southward slope he raised an endless variety of garden vegetables; on terraces he pruned a wide selection of grapevines; here he tended trees bearing a long seasonal succession of fruits. From the windows to the north he overlooked a long gravel driveway from the street, circling past the length of the house. Within the circle there stood a timeworn well sweep. Passersby were wont to stop and watch the slight form of the old man lean to the long-handled windless, draw the iron-bound oaken bucket, dripping, from the deep well and, from an old-fashioned dipper, drink a long draft of the refreshing water that he had loved for so long. He seemed to add a touch of dignity to the neighborhood as he strolled about the wide front driveway, always wearing a silk stovepipe hat and leaning lightly on a gold-headed cane, still wearing a stock for a collar as in early days. The fiery red burned out of his hair and left a snowy white crown of advancing winter. Here amid his family and friends he celebrated his eightieth birthday; another decade passed and toward its close, in November 1890, he and Grandmother celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Before another year had passed Grandmother passed to the Great Beyond [Dec. 1891]. He moved on past his ninetieth year with a keen mind; a mind that looked back over the span of almost a century; a century that had witnessed wonderful human achievements. His keen mind, even to the end interested itself in recalling these achievements. He came to New Albany before the first steam boat churned the waters of the Ohio river; he traveled across the Allegheny mountains before the first steam engine rumbled through its forests; he saw these modes of transportation bring hordes of settlers and cargoes of freight that built this western country

into a vast industrial empire. He was writing letters to his people in the East when the United States printed the first postage stamp; he was a middle-aged man when the telegraph instrument was first given to the world, and as an old man he talked over the first telephone to be installed in New Albany; he saw the tallow candle supplanted by the oil lamp, only in its turn to make way for Mr. Edison's new electric light; he saw the electric car replace the mule-drawn vehicle. Over his life's span our country grew from a few sparsely settled seaboard states to a mighty nation that stretched from Texas to Canada and from the rocky shores of Main to the golden strands of the Pacific Ocean. He appreciated the privilege that was his in living through that most wonderful of all centuries and was content to go when the time for his departure came in his ninety-third year.

My father, William Ayers Hedden, was born when the family lived on Bank street where the First Presbyterian Sunday School now stands, July 6th, 1846. His middle name was given him as a sign of the great esteem into which his father held his patron and friend in his early years in New Albany, Elias Ayers. He attended the New Albany schools, such as they were, and for a time attended the Anderson School on Park Place. His Uncle Alec (Alexander) Hedden lived on a farm near Greenville and, as a boy, Father spent time in the summers on the farm, walking the distance generally. He tells the story of a funeral he attended in Greenville that made an impression on him. The deceased was a notorious sinner. The itinerant preacher who conducted the service asked the Almighty to have mercy on his soul and prayed "O Lord! We hopes our departed brother ain't where we knows he is."

Schools practically closed when the Civil War began and, Father, not quite sixteen years of age went to work at the wholesale dry goods store of W. W. Culbertson and Son. He went to work Monday morning, slept in the third floor of the store, and returned home Saturday night. His duties were to take down the store window shutters in the morning, sweep out, make the beds for the other employes in the dormitory, run errands, do anything he was called on [to] do, and put up the shutters at night. For this he was paid the princely sum of ONE DOLLAR per WEEK. He always claimed that the training in that store was worth more than they could have paid him in money. He was called on to do almost everything in the workings of the store and learned to handle and treat people. He helped with invoicing, with billing, and with selling. The experience stood him in good stead all of his life. Mr. Culbertson, at that time, during the Civil War, lived at the corner of Pearl and Elm where the Elks Building now stands. A part of that house is incorporated in the Elks building. Mr. Culbertson had a pair of very fine black horses that he was proud of. He

knew Father had been raised where horses were kept, and evidently had confidence in Father's ability to handle them, and quite often, rather than let the horses stand in their stalls he would call out, "Willie! Maybe you had better go out home and "exercise the Blacks". Naturally nothing would please a boy of his temperament better. The result was that he was on pretty good terms with the "Blacks". When John Morgan's raiders crossed the Ohio River in July 1863 they rode through Corydon, on past Palmyra and stopped in Salem. Mrs. Culbertson (the first) received a telegram one morning that her brother, Charles Vance, had been shot by Morgan's Men in Salem. Mr. Culbertson told Willie to "harness The Blacks and drive Mrs. Culbertson to Salem". Of course, Willie was to be seventeen in a day or so, nevertheless it was a responsibility to drive a team for thirty miles, make good time, and still have a care for the horses. When they reached Salem they found Vance wounded in the thigh and after a few days nursing they left him well on the way to recovery.

In 1892, almost thirty years later, Father came home from a trip "EAST" with the interesting sequel to that earlier trip. He told us in this way – "I was sitting in the smoking compartment of the Pullman, coming out of Cincinnati on the (B & O) O & M and when we crossed the Miami river the conductor came through calling 'Lawrenceburg Indiana next'! A gentleman next to me asked 'are we really in Indiana'? On being assured that we were, he said 'the last time I was in Indiana I killed a man, and I have dreaded coming back ever since.' As he was evidently a fine gentleman we looked enquiringly and he went on to explain "I was with General John Morgan's raiders when we crossed Indiana in 1863. At a little town called Salem we had just a little ruckus with a few men of the town and, our officer ordering us to fire, we killed one man and then rode away. It has been on my conscience ever since'." Father replied, "I am certainly happy to be able to ease your conscience. The man was Charley Vance and I personally helped to nurse him back to health and he has just recently died." Needless to say the gentleman was happy to hear of the outcome. Also needless to say, Father took much delight in telling the story in the years following.

Father "got his growth" about that time and grew to "Man size" and Culbertson advanced him until he became one of the best known salesmen in town. In selling Dry Goods and Notions he came in contact with John Shillito of Cincinnati and in 1887 Shillito & Company persuaded him to join their sales force covering the state of Ohio. For something over two years he worked for them. In Cincinnati he had a room in a building next the Pike Opera House, and his room was separated from the stage only by a wall. He could lie abed

and hear such actors as Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett read their lines in the Shakespeare repertory – Joseph Jefferson make history with Rip Van Winkle – Sothern (the Elder) played "Our American Cousin" and some of the "Great" of all times trod the boards.

In eighteen sixty-nine John F. Gebhart took over the management of a small woolen mill out on Vincennes street. The venture had been a failure to that time and, in reorganizing, the owners had persuaded Mr. Gebhart, who had been a successful woolen manufacturer, to take charge. One of his first acts was to bring in Will Hedden to head up his sales force. He had a wide acquaintance with the trade in this territory during his Culbertson service and also with the Cincinnati trade territory. [NOTE: Mr. Gebhart, later to be my Grandfather, will be spoken of more fully in a subsequent part of this history.]

For a decade following, under Mr. Gebhart's direction and with his own initiative, Father helped build the New Albany Woolen Mills into the largest woolen manufacturing plant east of the Alleghenys. He traveled by river packet, by train, at times riding from one town to another by mule back. He not only sold blankets and skirtings – woolen fabrics – but he bought raw wools from the small general stores that acquired the fleeces in trade with the farmer customers. He traveled over the whole northern part of our country and sold goods to the men who were later to take place among the greatest merchandisers of our country – he contacted personally Mr. Marshall Field and Mr. John V. Farwell, when they set up offices in barns following their loss in the great Chicago Fire. He sold woolens to Mr. Montgomery Ward and Mr. Thorne when they had little more than an office for their whole business. He dealt with John Wannamaker in Philadelphia and H. B. Claflin in New York. He enjoyed the friendship of men who were making the frontier towns of Kansas City and St. Joe (Mo.) important supply points for the west. A clipping from *The New Albany Ledger* quotes a letter which he wrote them at the close of the year 1879 in which he said he had kept accurate account of his mileage and that he had traveled 236,559 miles in the eleven years from 1869 to 1879 inclusive.

He tells of having slept in three different beds in one night; went to bed in a hotel in an Ohio River town early in the evening; when the downriver packet blew for a landing, a porter wakened him and he boarded the boat, retired to one of the state rooms until time for next land; traveled some twenty-five or thirty miles down river, disembarked at the next town, and as it still lacked several hours of morning he proceeded to get some more sleep in still another hotel.

October 10th, 1878 he married Mary Jane Gebhart, daughter of J. F. Gebhart. His own Father owned the building at the Northeast corner of State and Market streets. Father had charge of the building and had been renting it to O. B. Littell who was running a Dry Goods store there. The day before Father's wedding Littell informed him that if he did not cut the rent he would move. Father said he was too busy getting ready to take a wedding trip and would not discuss the matter until he returned. Littell said he would not wait. Father's brother Walter and "the Phelps boys", Sam and Val (Cavalla), were clerking for Littell. Littell decided suddenly to move to Oregon and packed up what little stock he had and left. The three clerks saw an opportunity open up but they had no money. Thus it was that when Father reached New York with his bride there was a telegram awaiting him from a Louisville wholesale dry goods house asking if he would guarantee purchase of a stock of dry goods that the three clerks had ordered. Father wired back that he would guarantee anything up to $2,500.00. When he returned he found that he was President of the new "Hedden & Phelps". The firm later was changed to "Hedden Dry Goods Company" and conducted the business at State and Market for a good many years, with W. A. Beach as manager. In the meantime Father had evidently made quite a success of handling the sales end of the Woolen Mills. Lawrence Bradley, who represented the financial backers of the concern, had a nephew (Dave Dohl) and he wanted to put him over Father, and Father had too much "spunk" to stand for that. He quit during the year 1879.

Familiar as he was with the woolen business, Father knew that there was an opening for a good line of woolen hosiery in the territory and he enlisted the help of his Father-in-law, Mr. Gebhart, and bought a few knitting machines. They rented a building at State and Main streets (southwest corner) – brought Richard Gruener and John Geyer, two practical hosiery men, out from New Hampshire, and they began building a successful woolen hosiery business. Father did the selling and financing and Mr. Gruener ran the manufacturing end. They outgrew their first location and built a new mill on Ekin Avenue above Vincennes. They had to buy their yarns from the New Albany Woolen Mills and Bradley kept a watchful eye on them. Evidently the rumpus that occurred when Father left him still rankled and Father always thought that Bradley was so grasping that he always wanted more than his share of it. The upshot of the matter was that when Bradley saw the Hosiery Mills making money he made unjust demands on them in supplying them with yarns. When Father objected to the terms Bradley threatened to "break him". Father was not to be "broken". He had a wealthy cousin in Detroit who had offered several times previously to help and this was his opportunity. He loaned Father, personally, enough money to build a yarn mill, and told him to pay him back out of the profits. Father also turned to his old time employer, W.

S. Culbertson who, with Mr. Jesse Brown, was running the First National Bank. Mr. Bradley lost one of his best customers – and the New Albany Hosiery Mills started on a long period of usefulness to the town. The New Albany Hosiery Mills had the reputation of being the only factory that ran steadily year in and year out in our town. They made "lumbermen's socks" and wool boots for the northern logging trade; long woolen stockings in scarlet, blue and black, for ladies; woolen socks for both the Navy and the Army. New Albany Hosiery Mills wool socks were used as "the standard" for all Navy contracts for a good many years. When Mr. Gruener left the company during the early nineties, Father took over the entire management and continued the business until early in 1925. We have only to look at the hosiery that is worn today to understand why the woolen hosiery mill should cease operating. It is a far cry from the heavy woolen hose that women wore just before the turn of the century to the diaphanous silks and nylons that make so attractive the nether supports of the fair sex. As for the men, the time came when mankind had a heater in the home, in his means-of-transportation, at his work; light cotton hose sufficed for his needs. To meet the changed conditions would require abandoning the old plant, and building an entire new establishment, and it was time to quit. Mother died in 1921 when Father was seventy-five years old. I had worked with him for twenty-five years and I could see that when the Companion of his life passed away the motivating force of his life had ebbed out and vanished at the same time. Only once did he express his emotion to me – one day he suddenly closed the book he was working on, turned away, and said half to me and half to himself "What's the use, now!" He looked then for the end. Late in 1925 the machinery was disposed of and he turned the building over to a new concern. The last stroke of work that he did in the plant that he had "fathered" for so many years caused a double hernia. He concealed it just long enough for it to be fatal, and a fortnight later, January 1926, he followed the companion who had journeyed with him through so many years of his life. He had lived a long, useful life – a life from which he derived an unusual amount of satisfaction. Traveling much of the time during the seventies he became a voracious reader of the best in literature; for entertainment he sought out the finest offerings of the theatre and the concert stage. He attended early performances of the Theodore Thomas Orchestra – the Cincinnati Music Festival's first season – he had the satisfaction of showing his appreciation for the early help Mr. Gebhart gave him by helping Mr. Gebhart through the difficult years following the panic of 1893. He prided himself not on the amount of money his "Factory" had made but rather on the standards it set. He had shipped goods to Australia, South Africa, Russia, The Artic Zone, Terre Del Fuego, to most of the United States and to Canada. His often-reiterated aim was to "always deliver a little more than you have promised".

There always existed a close personal relationship between him and his "help" and there was never a suggestion of labor trouble in his mill. During the nineties he began to turn over more and more of the selling end to some of his assistants, but he held on to a few of the older contacts himself and, among others, he found great satisfaction in the fact that he, personally, had sold a bill of goods to the firm of Marshall Field & Company every year for fifty years. He left a record that his children could well strive to emulate.

In addition to this he attended, while still a young man, a six-weeks course at the old Houston Academy of Music. This was at the time that Lowell Mason was teaching at the Academy, and while Grandfather was not in any of his school classes, he did sing in the choir that Mason was directing. He told us that one Sunday Morning, during the sermon time, Mason sat in the choir loft and composed a setting for an old hymn, made several copies of it and at the close of the sermon the other choir rose and sang the hymn. David Ridgway Gebhart had one of the original copies but unfortunately it was destroyed in a fire some years ago. Grandfather must have derived a deal of good from his study those weeks in Boston, for from my own long experience with chorus directors in many organizations, amateur and professional, I have never known one who could get finer effects from a chorus. He married Susan Latchem and to them two children were born – Latchem Gebhart who died in childhood, and my mother, Mary Jane, who was born January 29th, 1854. Susan, the mother, died c. 1858 when my mother was four years old. The musical atmosphere must have permeated the entire family pretty thoroughly for we have a copy of an old program dated 1859 – a concert given in Columbia, Pennsylvania, in which "Little five year old Jennie Gebhart will be the soloist. Concert to begin at early candlelight".

One of our worst financial depressions struck the country in the late "fifties" and the eastern part of the country felt it first. The Gebhart woolen mill closed down and a friend of the family who was running a mill out in Illinois wrote John Frederick that if he would come next he could give him a place in his mill. However, by the time Grandfather reached Illinois the panic had already reached that part of the country and that mill was closed down also. Things looked pretty bad and Grandfather started off back towards Pennsylvania. He tells how, on his journey back, he arrived in New Albany on a Sunday morning, with only ten cents in his pocket. It was considered a sin to travel on Sunday, and he was rather up against it anyway. He stopped at the hotel that stood for many years at the corner of Main and Third streets and in talking to the hotel clerk asked where he would find the best music in town. The clerk said he understood the church across the street had the best choir (Second Presbyterian Church – now occupied by the Colored Baptist Church). He crossed

the street and attended the morning service. After the service he returned to the hotel and the clerk asked what he thought of the choir. He replied that the choir did very well but that the organ certainly needed some attention. Another gentleman standing nearby spoke up "What is the matter with the organ?" Mr. Gebhart replied that it needed tuning of course but it also needed "voicing". Grandfather was not only a woolen manufacturer, he was a musician and a mechanic, and he had had sufficient experience in caring for a pipe organ. He had confidence in himself and he needed some money to carry him back to his home in Pennsylvania. The gentleman who had addressed him was an official of the church. Added to this was the fact that organ servicemen were not readily available at that time. The result was that Mr. Gebhart was engaged for a week's work on the organ. And of course the story does not end there. The gentleman who engaged him was John H. Creed, a man who was a salesman of woolen goods and interested in their manufacture. Before the week passed, the two men naturally had become congenial friends and just as naturally the idea developed of starting a woolen mill. They needed a thousand dollars in cash to start. Creed had five hundred and Gebhart had none. A predominant characteristic in Grandfather's makeup was that a lack of money never phazed him. If there was a project to carry forth he was confident the money could be raised. That characteristic accompanied him through his whole career; it carried him through many successful enterprises; it came to his aid in the present one. If it was to take three months for machinery to be delivered he would have the cash by the time it was needed. He started five singing schools – one each in the small outlying towns – Corydon, Salem, etc., one night a week in each town – and by the time the first payment on machinery was due he was ready with his share. It was interesting to hear him talk of those old-fashioned singing schools; the kind that were later parodied in comedy. He told of the boorish bully that insisted on breaking up the "meeting" and how he eventually [grandfather was a six-footer himself] had to thrash the bully and then proceed with the school.

The thought comes to me here that neither of our Forebearers intended locating in New Albany. David Hedden started for the Illinois country; took sick and had to stop over in New Albany, and stayed to live out a long life. John F. Gebhart passing through was stranded, and stayed to become one of the cities progressive promoters. The mill that he and John Creed started was known as J. F. Gebhart & Co. The first building was located near State and the Pennsylvania R.R. and was successful in its way. Creed became involved in outside financial difficulties and could not help greatly, but each year showed a steady gain. It was enough of a success to attract the attention of the banking firm of McCord & Bradley and they started a mill of their own, thinking money could be made in the business.

They had plenty of capital available but no practical management in the woolen business. Gebhart had the "know how" but lacked capital. Each year the McCord & Bradley venture lost money, and each year the J. F. Gebhart & Co. plant made a little money. J. F. told us that they tried to hire him as manager but he refused to let John Creed "down", and in order to get the manager they bought the whole plant, "manager and all" and called the new plant the New Albany Woolen Mills. Starting with a small building at the corner of Vincennes and Woolen Mill lane (Locust Street) they gradually added machinery and equipment, until they occupied most of a ten-acre tract. Mr. W. C. DePauw joined the organization, and with the McCord and Bradley and DePauw money, and the Gebhart technical knowledge and business acumen, they built up the largest woolen mill west of the Alleghenys. They brought to the city a group of German workers from Pennsylvania and a group of English woolen weavers and carders from New England. Very few people today know anything of the name Gebhart, and of those few probably none realize what our town owes to that one man. He was a man of vision and was dauntless. Whenever a difficulty arose he could envision a remedy, and unafraid, he generally surmounted it. To transport workers to the factory he persuaded the street car company to enlarge their system so as to serve the whole town. The car line originally ran only on Main street as far east as upper Ninth. W. A. Hedden was selling agent for the mill and an eastern competitor was making such a good shade of scarlet flannels that we were losing some business. The only water supply came from pumps and wells, and Mr. Gebhart said the only way he could make better "scarlets" was to have a supply of soft water. It was a "must" with him. He brought Frank Scheffold, an engineer, here, set him to work on a water works system, enlisted the help of some of the moneyed men, and they built the first of the reservoirs on Silver Hills that still supplies our city with water from the Ohio River. Shortly after a group of scientists laughed at Alexander Graham Bell's new invention that was being demonstrated at the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia. Mr. Gebhart installed the first telephone system in New Albany. He needed a communication line from the Woolen Mills out on Vincennes Street to the salesrooms at Pearl and Main, so he, encouraged by my Father, installed a five-phone telephone line. The instruments at that time, of course, were hand-cranked, and one ring called the Woolen Mills, two rings the Woolen Mill Store, three rings for the Hosiery Mills, four rings called our house and five rings called the Gebhart home on Main Street.

Some years later the Ohio Valley Telephone Company installed a municipal phone system in town and absorbed our five-line system but credit for the first system goes to Grandfather Gebhart.

Industrial New Albany was having "growing pains" during the '70s. We had sufficient number of railroad lines to and from all directions, but they needed something more. The Monon railroad line from Chicago stopped at Pearl and Oak streets. End of the line was the building that still stands there. The Southern railroad (St. Louis Airline) from the west stopped at lower First street. The B & O (Ohio and Mississippi Valley) came through Watson and stopped at Jeffersonville. The JM & I RR (forerunner of the Penn. RR) had built a bridge across the river near Jeffersonville and a connecting line to New Albany and would not let any other roads cross its tracks. They had a monopoly on shipping going south and they were "throttling" the trade. The B&O threatened to build a bridge across the river above Jeffersonville that meant the B&O would not come to New Albany. The Woolen Mills needed the B&O very badly and New Albany needed it much more, so Gebhart got busy. One of the Mill's largest distributors was a man named Dillingham, in Louisville. Dillingham was a brother-in-law of Bennett H. Young, one of Louisville's leading financiers. Mr. Gebhart interested him in a bridge project. Grandfather did the foundation work in New Albany and Bennett Young handled it in Louisville – obtained franchises and enlisted public interest. The B&O agreed to run a line down from Watson if the bridge was available. The result was the building of the original Kentucky & Indiana Bridge spanning the river from New Albany to Shippingport. To carry the financial end the K&I needed the business from the other roads also, so the next move was to run a track for the Monon from the North Y in Fifteenth street, which was only a dirt roadway, to connect with the bridge. This meant that they could run passenger trains from Pearl and Oak around the "Y" and into Louisville, and the yellow trains trimmed in dark brown gained the nickname of "Daisy Line" that stuck with it for years. This still left the Air Line stranded at lower First street and nothing could induce the Pennsylvania RR to allow use of their tracks or right of way. To finish the job Mr. Gebhart had to contrive some means of connecting the Air Line with the K&I bridge. With the Penn. blocking the Water Street approach it seemed that the only other route would be to run the line around the lower end of Silver Hills and connect with the Monon out back of what is now Fairview Cemetery. He knew a keen disappointment when the engineers pronounced this definitely out of the question. But he was not the kind to acknowledge defeat. By chance he discovered that when the Scribners laid out the town they reserved right of way all along the river bank clear up to Water street so that Ferry Boats could not be interfered with, and a ferry company held the franchise. So he proceeded to "steal a march" on the Pennsylvania RR. He incorporated "The Belt Line" with himself and my father holding practically all the stock. They bought the Ferry Company which gave them the right of way up and down the river front. Engineers laid out a railroad track, largely on trestle

work, that skirted the south side of Water street and brought the Air Line up to the end of the Bridge. After all arrangements were made and it was time to put the money into the project they sold the "Belt and Terminal Railway" to the K&I bridge interests and they developed the present I&I Terminal Ry. Co. as we know it today. This all gave New Albany opposition as a railroad center, connecting it with lines radiating to all parts of the country, north, east, south and west, that was superior to almost any other center in the middle west. Father and grandfather had put practically no real money into the project, their main idea being to create good shipping facilities for their mills, and when they sold out Father turned over his share of the proceeds to mother and it was just enough to pay for the Steinway Grand Piano that she had dreamed of some day owning.

During the early nineties J. F. Gebhart built the Highland Electric Rail line up Silver Hills. The road bed still serves as a trail up the hill. It carried thousands of people to Camp Meeting and other thousands to gather autumn leaves along its line in the fall of the year. He, with Col. Tuley, platted the ground on the hill top – Ridgeway Avenue was named for his wife's family]

The Woolen Mill flourished for many years but when the panic of 1893 struck the country it went down. The DePauw family was the main financial backers by that time, and their interests were so involved in the general business debacle that there was no place to look for help. Mr. Gebhart, on his own responsibility, for the next few years, managed to keep the mill going in a very limited way. I know my Father helped him a good many times in emergencies. He managed to get a few government contracts on wools; he ran the cotton mill and the cotton warp mill when he could. Later on he interested the wool firm M. Sabel & Sons. They pulled out somewhere around 1904. Grandfather was then past seventy years of age, but he still had confidence that he could build it up again. Sure enough, the chance came early in 1907. Charles McCord, son of one of the original backers, had re-established in part the family fortune that had suffered the fate of others in the '93 panic, and he and Grandfather had made all arrangements to start the old Mill again. One of the Banks in the city, hearing of the plans, called Mr. Gebhart in and put some sort of pressure on him because of losses incurred with the mill account in the '93 troubles. We never knew what the threat was, but we did know that Grandfather came out of the conference a nervous wreck. He went home, had a sudden attack of some sort in the night, and died the next morning, March 1907. There was money to run the old Mill but no J.F.G. Charles McCord was unwilling to go ahead without Mr. Gebhart, and the project was dropped. The plant stood idle for a few years then a "fly-by-night" automobile company

occupied it for a short time and on March 23rd, 1917, the cyclone that hit the city practically destroyed the plant. Anders Rasmussen acquired the ground and turned it over to the School City as a site for our Senior High School. When the mill was running, boys in the east end of town could hardly wait to be transferred out of the fifth reader so they could go to work in "The Mill". Their parents worked there and they admired the man who ran it. He was the first to be in his place in the morning at six o'clock and the last to leave at night, often at nine thirty. On the site where those boys in the bygone days worked from dawn to dark carrying bobbins or warp, their grandchildren trudge through the halls of the high school and show a like eagerness to acquire a fuller living.

A statement of Grandfather's worth to the community would not be faithful if we listed only his achievements in the business of the town. His activities were varied. He was always a leader in musical activities. Early in the "seventies" he took charge of the choir at First Presbyterian Church. He gradually built it up until it ranked at the top of the choir work in the Falls Cities. Encouraged by a young minister who was installed in 1878 (Joseph W. Clokey) he was a pioneer in the "Song Service" movement, at a time when he was severely criticized for giving "concerts" in church. He lived to see the day that almost every church gave regular praise services and patterned them after his programs. He was an elder in the church for many years and superintendent both in Sunday School and in a Mission school. He gave the town many performances of the classic oratories and masses and conducted many amateur operas. It does seem rather pathetic that his name means so little today to the community that profited so greatly from his labors. And yet we cannot say that his influence is dead. His son Reuben spent most of his life with the American Woolen Company, carrying on as a manufacturer. A son, Ridgway was a prominent musical educator. Four of his grandchildren, John Curtis Crane, Paul Crane, Janet Crane, and William Earl Crane, have given their lives to the Christian Ministry, three working in the Korean Mission field and one here at home; several great-grandchildren now are serving in the medical mission field in Korea and in Africa. As for my own immediate family – my mother, who was the eldest of his children who survived – she followed in his musical tread. She had a beautiful soprano voice – flexible and appealing – was a wonderful accompanist and organist – organist for First Presbyterian Church for almost a half century – raised a family of four who have given of their musical ability to the churches of the community. "Blest are the departed; they rest from their labors and their works do follow them".

- Earl Gebhart Hedden, New Albany, Indiana, 1951