



## **THE JOHN THOMAS KILBRIDE APPRENTICESHIP PAPERS**

Available on cd-rom and hard copy at Greater New Haven Labor History Association Archives, 267 Chapel Street, New Haven, CT 06513

BACKGROUND OF JOHN THOMAS KILBRIDE APPRENTICESHIP PAPERS by Jay T. Doody (grandson)

John T. Kilbride was born on Jocelyn Square in New Haven, Connecticut, in June, 1896. He was the second oldest of 4 children born to Thomas and Mary Kilbride, whose parents were all born in Mohill, County Limerick, Ireland and came over during the famine. Thomas owned a grocery store on State Street. When he died in 1905, Mary ran the family, collecting rents on some properties owned by the family, and possibly by sewing fashionable women's clothing. John's older brother, Ben, went to the Connecticut Agricultural College. Therefore, the family decided that John must go to work after High School in order to support the family, hence the apprenticeship at Winchester. Subsequently, John's two younger sisters, Francis and Eleanor, went to college and both became teachers. If he chose to dwell upon it, it was a source of some bitterness that he was never able to attend college while all the others went to college. John had a long career as superintendent of various manufacturing shops in Bridgeport in the 1920's and 1930's, and opened his own machinery grinding plant in Stratford (union shop) from 1942-1952. It went bankrupt and he never worked after that. John died about 1961.

## **THE PAPERS**

This is a small collection, but evocative of one skilled worker's early experiences at the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, a leading manufacturer in New Haven in the early 20th century. It includes Kilbride's Apprenticeship Certificate (November 18, 1912- May 24, 1915); a four page agreement between the company and the apprentice (detailing many social as well as work related responsibilities expected to be fulfilled by the young apprentice); a portrait of Kilbride as a young man; his 1912 high school diploma from the Board School; and his class year book.

For access to the cd rom or paper copies, contact either Jay Doody (grandson); 49 Arlington Street; West Haven, CT 06516 [jjdoody@snet.net](mailto:jjdoody@snet.net) or Joan Cavanagh, Project Archivist, Greater New Haven Labor History Association, 267 Chapel Street, New Haven, CT 06511, [labor\\_history@hotmail.com](mailto:labor_history@hotmail.com). (The papers will soon be available on this web site as well.)