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# Thomas G. Plant Company

Plant established his business in 1891 at the age of 32. By 1910, it was the largest factory in the United States and the largest shoe factory in the world, producing Plant's popular Queen Quality and Dorothy Dodd women's shoe brands. The factory produced 6 million pairs of shoes and \$8 million of revenue annually.



Plant employed over 5,500 workers at his state-of-the-art factory in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. The facility was highly productive and Plant's innovative business philosophy promoted this success.



Queen Quality shoe advertisement, 1899

## Queen Quality Shoes

Queen Quality shoes were incredibly popular and sold for around \$2.50 to \$3.00 in the early twentieth century. In today's money, this would amount to roughly \$75 to \$90.



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## Welfare Capitalism

One of Plant's keys to success was the attention he paid to his employees' personal wellbeing, with the ultimate goal of building their loyalty and increasing their productivity. Recreational facilities such as bowling alleys, a library, dance hall, on-site health care providers, and a beautiful outdoor "rest park" all encouraged a happier and healthier work force. Having come from a modest, working class background himself, the ideals of so-called "welfare capitalism" may have given Plant some personal satisfaction, but certainly were good for business as well.

## Retirement

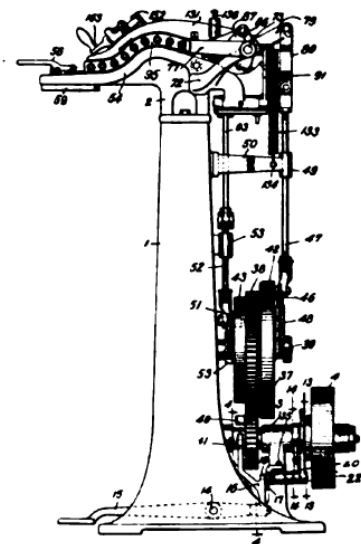
In 1910, following a drawn-out court battle over patent infringement claims, Plant sold his business (and the patents for his shoe machinery) to the United Shoe Machinery Company for \$6 million. At the age of only 51, he retired from the industry.



Above: Queen Quality boots, circa 1900; Castle in the Clouds collection.

Below: Thomas G. Plant Insole Covering and Reinforcing machine patent dated 1909.

965,342. INSOLE COVERING AND REINFORCING MACHINE. WILLIAM C. STEWART, Lynd, Mass., assignor to Thomas G. Plant, Boston, Mass. Filed Jan. 25, 1909. Serial No. 473,955.



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