

Mrs. Emily Gill Dies In Home, Aged 94; Leading Philanthropist

Had Given More Than \$1,000,000 to Schools, Colleges
and Various Charitable Undertakings; Widow of
Noted Art Dealer and Collector

Mrs. Emily Frances Lombard Abbey Gill of 29 Ingersoll Grove, well known philanthropist in the field of education and wife of the late James D. Gill, widely known art dealer and collector, died in her home yesterday afternoon. During her lifetime she gave more than \$1,000,000 to schools and colleges in the northeast United States and donated other large sums to charitable undertakings.

Nearly 95

Mrs. Gill would have been 95 years old on May 3. She was born in Worcester in 1855, the daughter of George Sumner and Mary Elizabeth Lombard. Following her father's enlistment in the Civil War she and her mother came to live in Chicopee. Her father was fatally wounded in battle in January, 1864.

She continued her education in the schools of Chicopee and was valedictorian of her class when she was graduated from Chicopee High School.



MRS. EMILY F. ABBEY GILL

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Later she became a teacher in the public schools of Chicopee and remained in this profession until her marriage to Charles Clinton Abbey in 1875.

Mr. Abbey was a prominent merchant in Chicopee and Springfield and was also a well known building contractor. His company built the Boston Arena, the largest arena in the world, which was the last building contract he completed before his death in 1919.

Married Three Times

A few years after Mr. Abbey's death his widow married James Gardner Dunning, a distinguished member of the Hampden County bar with offices in Springfield. After his death Mrs. Gill moved from Chicopee to Springfield and in 1927 married Mr. Gill, who died in 1937.

While a resident of Chicopee, Mrs. Gill became a member of the Third Congregational Church and was for a long time identified with civic and social activities. She was president of the Women's Society of the church and a teacher in the adult department of the Sabbath school for over 30 years.

Moving to Springfield in 1925, Mrs. Gill purchased the Joseph Wesson mansion on Federal St., since demolished, and in 1930 became owner of the palatial Lyman W. Besse home in Ingersoll Grove, where she resided, to devote a great part of her time to philanthropic and charitable work in this area and in widely scattered sections of the country.

various hospitals, the Boys' and Girls' Clubs and many smaller organizations both here and in other localities.

In consideration of her generosity to many institutions of learning, Mrs. Gill was voted an honorary member of the Springfield Club representing the various colleges she had endowed. She was also voted an honorary member of the New York City Abbot Academy Club and a member of the Federated Church of Chicopee.

On Many Boards

She was a trustee of Springfield College and of New Haven's Women's College; an incorporator and trustee of both Wesson Maternity and Springfield Hospitals and the Visiting Nurse Association; member of the board of managers of the Home for Aged Women; the SPCA; director of the Girls' Club; member of Mercy Warren Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution and of the Hampton Club and a charter member of the Chicopee Falls Women's Club.

Mrs. Gill attended South Congregational Church until prevented by ill health.

She is survived by a niece, Mrs. Roy S. Libby of Maine, and several nieces and nephews, living in California, and several grandnieces and nephews.

The funeral will be Thursday at Byron's funeral home and will be private. Rev. James Gordon Gilkey will conduct the service and burial will be in Fairview Cemetery, Chicopee.

Praised by Presidents of Mt. Holyoke and SC

Many Benefactions.

She began her large-scale giving to educational institutions in 1930, a substantial gift without restrictions to Mount Holyoke College, and in 1937 she gave the same college \$350,000 to build and maintain the Clinton Abbey Memorial Chapel. The following year she gave \$200,000 to Mount Holyoke to build Emily Abbey Hall, a residence building to house undergraduate students at the college.

In January, 1938, she gave \$100,000 to Smith College for its general scholarship fund to be used to aid students of high ranking who required financial assistance. In May, 1939, she gave \$50,000 to Connecticut College of New London to build a model residence co-operative dormitory. The preceding year she had given a similar sum to Abbott Academy at Andover, oldest registered girls' school in Massachusetts. In the fall of the same year she gave \$10,000 to Wesleyan University at Middletown, Conn., for a scholarship endowment and in 1939 added \$10,000 to create the Abbey Memorial scholarship fund.

Aided Springfield College

In 1928 she gave \$5000 to the scholarship fund of Springfield College and added another \$5000 for the same fund in 1940. Last year she gave \$150,000 to Springfield College to be used at the discretion of the college administration.

In 1910 she gave \$50,000 to Colby Junior College for the building of a dormitory and in the same year established the Emily Abbey Research Foundation at Vassar College.

In 1911 she gave \$10,000 to the Springfield Girls' Club toward their new building in Chestnut St. The following year she contributed \$13,000 to the \$200,000 Wesson Memorial Hospital fund campaign.

A "generous, consistent and fine friend of Mount Holyoke" and one of Springfield College's "most loyal friends and most generous benefactors" died yesterday.

This friend was Mrs. Emily Abbey Gill of 29 Ingersoll Grove. Presidents of the two colleges spoke tributes to her last night.

Dr. Roswell Ham of Mount Holyoke recalled the chapel she gave, "a very great contribution to the college," and a dormitory. He remembered she spoke at the chapel dedication and "used to come over here a good many times to various affairs."

"As we saw her here," he said, "we grew more and more fond of her."

"She was a very keen woman who managed to live to the verge of her 96th year with a mind that kept going very vigorously to the last minute."

Dr. Paul M. Lambert of Springfield College said:

"Mrs. Gill's outright gift of \$150,000 last June for the building of a women's dormitory at Springfield College will make it possible to erect on our campus a fitting memorial to one who on many occasions expressed her great interest in this institution."

He also cited a gift from Mrs. Gill some years ago to the college's endowment fund, "providing a number of scholarships to superior students from greater Springfield."

At SC's 1945 Commencement, former President Ernest Best gave Mrs. Gill a special citation for her many contributions to the cause of higher education.

Painters Join

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been held. He also said that the local had offered to accept local arbi-

Honored for Helping Schools

In 1945 she received a special diploma from Springfield College and was cited by the editors of Who's Who for her contributions of money in the field of education.

In addition to aiding the educational institutions mentioned, Mrs. Gill donated sums of money to American International College, the Springfield YMCA, Brown University, Providence, R. I., and Boston University.

She was also a contributor to different churches in Springfield and Chicopee, the Kings Daughters and

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