Guide to the

Gill Family Collection

1861 - 1936

.5 linear feet

Collection Number 254

Prepared by Kathie Bordelon
May 2009

CITATION: The Gill Family Collection, Collection No. 254, Box number, Folder number, Archives and Special Collections Department, Frazar Memorial Library, McNeese State University.

Archives and Special Collections Department
Frazar Memorial Library
McNeese State University
Biographical Sketch

Hardy C. Gill (H. C.) was best known in this area for his 12-year tenure as the Clerk of Court for Calcasieu Parish, serving from 1892 to 1904. He was also the first president of the Lake Charles Trust and Savings Bank, owner of a lumber mill and mercantile company, and property owner. He was a “popular and efficient public officer, always prompt, courteous, and accurate.”

Mr. Gill was born in Brookhaven, Mississippi on February 17, 1844. The family moved to Rapides Parish, Louisiana, when he was less than a year old. He attended country schools until 1860, when he enrolled in Mt. Lebanon University at the age of 16. When war broke out, he is said to have rushed home and joined the “Red Rebels” of Rapides Parish. He served with distinction and is said to have been the youngest officer to ever command a regiment on a field of battle.

Upon returning from the War, Gill moved to Calcasieu Parish and started a lumber business in the area known as Bagdad (now Westlake). Soon after, he married Martha Smart, daughter of fellow lumberman Nathan Smart. The couple had one son (O’ Jennings) and two daughters (Annie and Gussie). Gill’s first wife died when Annie was 5, and he married Lillian Atkinson in 1904, when Annie was 6.

Moving to Lake Charles, the family built a home on Front Street where it faced the lake. The residence was said to be “not only one of the largest in the city, but one of the most tastily arranged and picturesquely surrounded.” Mr. Gill family was described as “interesting and intelligent” and said to “enjoy an enviable position in the society of the lake city.”

Known for his oratorical skills, Mr. Gill was selected to deliver the address at the dedication of the Confederate monument given to the city by the United Daughters of the Confederacy on July 3, 1915. The address was said to be “permeated with the splendid spirit of sincerity and loyalty which were marked characteristics of Mr. Gill’s life.”

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of newspaper clippings and photographs regarding the Gill Family of Lake Charles, primarily H. C. Gill.

Container List

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<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Folder</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Photographs: T. G. Alfred, Gussie Gill, Annie Gill; Floyd Gill; Annie Gill Dudley; H. (Hardy) C. Gill; Jessie Gill Gossett; Marguerite Dudley; J. W. Eggleston; O. J. (Jennings) Gill</td>
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<td>Speech of H. C. Gill made at the unveiling of the Confederate Monument (1915); newspaper clippings concerning members of the family</td>
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