

EDWARD GILLETT PASSES AWAY AT SOUTHWICK HOME

Naturalist and Specialist in Wild Flowers, Founder of Nursery Business, Dies at Age of 83

Southwick, April 21—Edward Gillett, 83, founder of wild flower nursery and considered America's foremost specialist in this line, died at his home at Southwick center at 1.30 this morning after a few weeks' illness.

Mr Gillett was born January 27, 1848, in this town and had always lived here. He conducted the Gillett Fern and Flower farm for 50 years. The nursery has grown in that time from a five-yard plot to more than 60 acres.

As a small boy he cared for ox-eyed daisies and ferns which had a great fascination for him.

Graduate of M. A. C.

After attending the local schools he entered Massachusetts Agricultural college at Amherst, where he specialized in botany, horticulture and agriculture. He graduated in the class of

'73. Returning to the house of his childhood, he spent much time analyzing the native flora, much to the amusement of neighbors, who consid-



EDWARD GILLETT

ered him rather eccentric. In years to come he proved to be the foremost fern and wild flower specialist in the country and founder of the largest business of its kind in America. In

1878 the inspiration and the accumulated knowledge in a commercial way came in the form of an order to collect some plants for a Pennsylvania nursery. A few years later the founder mailed his first catalog. The limited edition was written entirely by hand and it is a noteworthy fact that the first catalog contained a great many wild flowers which have since become so scarce that they no longer are offered.

Widely Known Through Advertising

Later he advertised and for nearly 50 years he did so uninterruptedly and has been represented in the foremost horticultural publications, with hardly a lapse. In the early days the founder did practically all the collecting of ferns and flowers himself. As the years went by he gradually confined himself to growing some seeds and letting others do the collecting. Plants were brought in by the collectors from all sections of the country. Such plants as became acclimated were part of the stock of his nursery.

From a small beginning in the side yard of his home at the original homestead through his first nursery, still known as Gillett's corner, he came to the present nursery adding acreage from time to time. About 35 years ago Mr Gillett during a trip south became impressed with the beauty and possible value to the north of azaleas and rhododendrons. He shipped some for experimental purposes and found them hardy and easily adaptable to the northern climate. That marked the beginning of dealings in this type of native shrub material, all previous efforts having been practically confined to ferns and native wild flowers. About 20 years ago the shipments of rhododendrons, kalmias, azaleas and others reached carload proportion. After proving this sort of stock a success in northern climates, greater quantities were collected to be converted into specimen stock through judicious pruning and intensive cultivation.

Today more than 50 acres are devoted to these natives, azaleas and laurels, the total number of plants amounting to nearly 250,000. The success of this rather decent development did not cause him to go back on his first friends the faithful ferns. They still are a most impressive item in annual sales, representing 45 varieties. Orchids and various shrubs handled in generous quantities all helped the business to grow to gratifying proportions.

After 50 years of service the business was taken over by his son, Kenneth E. Gillett, in 1928. Mr Gillett for many years was a member of the Congregational church and was much interested in the welfare of the town. Besides his widow, Mrs Jennie (Vining) Gillett, he leaves a son and a daughter, Kenneth of this town, and Mrs William F. Davis of Watertown, Ct., and four grandchildren.

The funeral will be held at the home Thursday afternoon at 3. Friends are asked to omit flowers. Burial will be in the Old Cemetery, in this town.

Forecasting Weather Conditions Months Ahead Seems Success

Smithsonian Institution Secretary Predicts Variations in Sun's Radiation With Good Results

Washington, April 21—(AP)—First attempts to forecast weather several months ahead, by predicting variations in the sun's radiation, apparently have succeeded. The results were made public today by Dr Charles G. Abbot, astronomer, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

He has predicted variations in the sun's radiation for 1931 and 1932 which so far have followed his forecast closely. H. H. Clayton, another scientist, has used the same method to forecast actual weather conditions with considerable success.

Abbot and Clayton long have believed that variations in the radiation, or energy, that the sun sends to the earth were the causes of major changes in the weather.

Predictions Come Close

Last December Dr Abbot predicted how the sun's radiation would vary during the next two years. His predictions have been carefully checked by observation of the actual variations. So far in 1931, Dr Abbot says, the radiation has varied very nearly as he predicted.

In February Clayton predicted cool weather and much rainfall for the drought area during the latter two weeks in March and the first week in April, basing his prediction on expected changes in the sun's radiation. The cool weather and rain occurred, as predicted, Dr Abbot says.

Variations in the sun's radiation can be predicted because they seem to occur in five regular cycles of 68, 45, 25, 11 and 8 months. There are

also shorter cycles not as regular, and there may be longer cycles, not yet discovered, perhaps lasting hundreds of years, Dr Abbot believes. He says the drought of 1930 may have been the result of a solar radiation cycle or combination of several long cycles coming together only perhaps about once in a century. By noting how the cycles have moved in the past, their movements can be predicted by observers of the future, he hopes, just as movements of the planets are predicted.

Dr Abbot's Theory

Dr Abbot is of the opinion that changes in the sun's radiation rule the weather by their effect on the movement of areas of high and low atmospheric pressure. Movement of these areas across country is known to be the immediate cause of weather conditions.

An increase or decrease in the sun's radiation may affect the weather differently in different places. Increased radiation may cause a rise in temperature, atmospheric pressure or rainfall at one point, but a drop elsewhere.

Dr Abbot says several more generations of observing solar variations will be necessary before such rare events as last year's drought can be predicted, but he hopes useful weather forecasts extending weeks, months and perhaps years in advance may soon be possible. With this end in view, extensive statistics are being computed to learn the influence of the sun on weather in individual regions of the earth.

sees in the future, even remotely, a need for further facilities in using its credit and resources at this time for such extensions. The New England Coal and Coke company, one of the best-managed and largest industries of New England, is spending \$3,000,000 at this time to improve its facilities. The telephone company and the power companies, foreseeing the need of future development, are using, so far as they are permitted to do so for extending their facilities, the cheap money now at hand, but the lessened cost of construction and the ability to get more for each dollar spent.

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GOV ELY'S PORTRAIT NOW AT STATE HOUSE

Artist H. A. Wolff Has Made Remarkable Likeness of Westfield Man

From Our Special Reporter

Boston, April 21—Reposing in the office of Secretary DeWitt C. DeWolf at the State House is a portrait in oil of Gov Joseph B. Ely, the work of Artist H. A. Wolff, who painted the portrait of Gov Frank G. Allen.

Artist Wolff painted this Ely portrait entirely from a photograph and his observations of the governor. It is a remarkable likeness in every way and seems to the unskilled eye to be quite perfect. It has pleased the governor, for whose observation it was sent to the State House.

The artist has painted several portraits of business and political leaders

ary 28, I, time and again, urged speed in the formation of this program, but it has become a fetish of politics at the expense of the commonwealth. As is known to every member of the ways and means committee, the governor was perfectly willing to increase the state tax \$1,000,000, provided the full building program outlined in the budget message should become law, but to increase the state tax \$1,000,000 with the meagre building program, which is the basis of the Senate bill, is asking too much. Not only is it asking too much, but it is entirely unnecessary.

Says Industry Is Spending

"The building program as outlined in the budget is sane, constructive, economical, and progressive legislation for the relief of unemployment. It will provide employment; it will construct needed buildings and it will save the commonwealth and her taxpayers money. To say that we cannot return to the policy of spending only our income is to say that we are too