Rochester - Biography - Women

Farley, Mrs. Ita P.
Koeth, Mrs. Christine
Gleason, Kate
Death of Mrs. Ita P. Farley
Recalls Long, Active Career

Took Part in Founding of Woman's City Club
Was Friend of Susan B. Anthony and Aided Numerous Worthy Causes for Years

Mrs. Ita P. Farley, who for more than half a century pioneered in club and civic welfare work in this city, died Saturday afternoon at the summer home of her daughter, Mrs. Frederick C. Bonney, Lake Road, Webster.

During the past fifty years, Mrs. Farley has been identified with numerous progressive programs, many of which had their beginnings in the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, of which she was a former president. In this organization she was among the enthusiastic group who sponsored the first vacation school 30 years ago at No. 9 School, to lay the foundation for the present Rochester playground system. It was Mrs. Farley, also, who assisted in the establishment and conduct of the open air school here, prior to its incorporation in the city school system. She served also on the committee of the Union which developed eventually into the Children's Service Bureau, and was a member of the Protective Committee which mothered the present Legal Aid Society.

Born at Pompey Hill

Mrs. Farley was born of Dutch parentage, Feb. 20, 1851, at Pompey Hill, southeast of Syracuse. The family home was on the site of a revolutionary grant made to her grandfather. She came as a young woman, Miss Ita Midler, to Rochester to teach in old No. 10 School, where she developed the interest in education programs and policies which she continued to manifest throughout a busy life. In 1880 she married Dr. Porter Farley, Rochester physician and Civil War veteran, and for many years they made their home at 1 Carthage Street, at St. Paul Boulevard.

To the family home came women active in the suffrage campaign, including Susan B. Anthony, a close personal friend of Mrs. Farley, whose daughters still recall the tea for 500 guests given in Miss Anthony's honor. But Mrs. Farley's interests were never primarily political. She devoted herself faithfully to the work of the Union, continuing to attend the meetings of the Salvage Shop committee of the organization until a few months ago, when ill health compelled her to take a more passive part in its doings.

Sunday School Director

The late Dr. Farley's family had been among the founders of First Unitarian Church of this city, and after her marriage, Mrs. Farley was also active in the work of the church, serving for several years as director of its Sunday school.

She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Bonney of Rochester, and Mrs. George H. Sickles of West Barrington, R. I.; two sons, Walter Lewis and William Peck Farley, both of Rochester; a brother, James Clinton Midler of Toledo; and a sister, Miss Kate Midler of Rochester. There are 11 grandchildren.

The funeral will take place from the home of her son, William Peck Farley, Lake Road, Webster, this afternoon at 2:30 o'clock. Interment will be in Mt. Hope Cemetery.
PIONEER CITY RESIDENT DIES AT AGE OF 90

Funeral of Mrs. Koeth, Who Witnessed Rochester's History, Tomorrow

In the passing of Mrs. Christine Koeth, 90, who died yesterday at her home, 165 Berkeley Street, Rochester loses a woman who lived through almost the entire period of its history, and in the city for more than 80 years. The funeral will be conducted tomorrow afternoon at her late home, followed by burial in Mount Hope cemetery.

When Mrs. Koeth first knew Rochester she had just come from Germany with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Schroth, from Wurttemberg, Germany, in a sailing vessel. Her parents lived opposite to where Andrews School, No. 9, now is in Joseph-Avenue, at Baden Street. Their homestead, a brick house, has been merged into the blocks now numerous in that congested section, but then a residential district.

Studied Assiduously

Christine, oldest of her parents' six children and two sons, left school early, and at 16 was married. While her school years were cut short, her education was continued. She read both German and English. Her husband, the late August M. Koeth, had been educated at college in Germany, and through association with him and by her own efforts and reading she acquired knowledge. She did what was quite unusual for a woman to do in those days, kept the books in her husband's office in Main Street West, about where the Rochester Savings Bank now stands.

Mrs. Koeth was the mother of five children. Two died in infancy; one, George Koeth, in early manhood, and two daughters are living. Mrs. Joseph A. MacAllister, of 165 Berkeley street, and Mrs. H. C. Whittlesey, of Stone Road.

Rev. Charles J. Keppel, minister of religious education at Salem Church, will officiate at the funeral. Rev. Dr. Frederick Franklin, minister, is out of town.

Mrs. Koeth had an unusual memory, relating current events of general interest with marked accuracy.

One memory she had of early Rochester days was when her family had to get all the water for their home, in Main Street West, either from a pump where the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railroad station now is or from another pump where the Burke Building is in Main Street East. They got their water for household uses in barrels.

Saw Strange Changes

A recollection now humorous to Mrs. Koeth's grandchildren was one of when the early horse cars were so heavy for the horses that the men all got out and walked up the hill from Front to St. Paul Street, then much higher. An extra horse was often added. Mrs. Koeth saw three kinds of illumination in connection with her father's family, made in their home: kerosene lamps and the electric bulbs. She knew the crude bridge that once spanned the Genesee in front of the present building of the Democrat and Chronicle. She attended Salem Church before it bore this name, at a building in Allen Street.

Mrs. Koeth was a remarkably preserved woman to the end. Until she took her bed about four weeks ago she cared for her own clothing, and, much against the protests of her daughter in the home with her tried to assist in other households. She visited a sister in the west end of the city some six weeks before her death. She used glasses only for reading and her skin bore hardly a wrinkle. This elderly woman had a lovable disposition that did not ruffle with years.

Mr. Koeth died 35 years ago.

Although his plans were indefinite at present, Doctor Kelley said the money would be used to help such needy persons with whom he came in contact personally. In no event, he explained, would it be distributed through organized charity. He is reputed to have ample private resources and his hospital in Eutaw Place here lists patients from all parts of the country.

In providing the $100,000 gift to Doctor Kelley, Miss Gleason's will directed that the money would be used for the benefit of the suffering poor, and terms made by Miss Kate Gleason, famous woman industrialist of this city by Miss Kate Gleason, famous woman industrialist of Rochester, N. Y., will be used for the benefit of the suffering poor. The noted surgeon and cancer specialist announced here today.

Baltimore Specialist Announces Plan to Have Sufficient Private Resources

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In providing the $100,000 gift to Doctor Kelley, Miss Gleason's will said "to whom I am grateful for his expert knowledge in the use of radium". It was explained here today that Doctor Kelley was a pioneer in the medical use of radium, particularly in treatment of cancer. His patients include many persons prominent throughout the United States.

- A mistake in Doctor Kelley's name in the making of the will, which referred to him as "Dr. Lorenzo Kelley" was rectified today in a communication from the executors of the Gleason estate.
KATE GLEASON is the busiest "retired" woman in the land. She is now engaged in developing a sea island off the South Atlantic Coast, in building houses at East Rochester, New York, for families with small incomes, and in erecting war memorials in France. Between times she has other projects to occupy her mind. She is, according to her own definition, "A lucky rover over the face of the earth"; but she earned the right to rove by years of brilliant salesmanship and management when she was actively connected with the famous Gleason Works of Rochester. She was one of the first women to go on the road as a traveling salesman, and the record she made is still fresh in the memory of her friends and her competitors.
Kate Gleason Dies; Made Name for Self In Business World

Miss Kate Gleason, 67, philanthropist, business woman, patron of the arts and a woman widely known in the industrial world died at 11:06 o'clock this morning in Genesee Hospital.

Miss Gleason was taken to the hospital Jan. 3. Her illness was diagnosed as pneumonia. She responded to treatment and her condition did not become critical until yesterday.

She maintained a residence, the Gleason Works, on East Avenue, and another house in France. Her time was divided between these places and Beaufort, South Carolina. She came to Rochester from the South for the Christmas holidays, apparently in excellent health.

Miss Gleason was born in this city, Nov. 25, 1865, the second child of William Gleason and Ellen McDermott Gleason. She was 11 years old when her eldest brother, Thomas, who had been his father's bookkeeper and in addition, was keeping up her school work so she finished high school at 16 and was ready to enter Cornell University in the engineering course. This course she never completed. She was recalled before the end of the first year to help her father build up the business he had founded.

From her experience in the office, Miss Gleason branched out as the first woman salesman of machine-tools. The very unusualness of this work proved an asset to her, she found.

In 1893, when depression swept the United States, the Gleason Works found little demand for machine-tools and Miss Gleason urged her father, who was a talented inventor, to perfect his gear-planing machine. Within five years after this machine had been patented and placed on the market the Gleason Machine Works discontinued the making of machine-tools and devoted itself exclusively to making gears and leasing the gear-planers.

Miss Gleason never was able to scotch the story she had invented the gear-planer, for which her father was entirely responsible. Her love and admiration for her father was such that she resented anything that might take away from his rightful glory as an inventor and a business man.

Stories of Work Enlarged

But in the '90s the very idea of a woman having anything to do with a machine factory was so novel that it was inevitable that the stories of her achievements in the new field should be embroidered and, many times, wholly invented. And since it was true that her constant study of machinery and engineering problems had given her knowledge surpassing that of many men in the business and led to her being elected the first woman member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers in recognition of her work in gear design, it is not surprising that these stories should have persisted.

Miss Gleason represented the Gleason Works on numerous trips abroad and remained actively associated with the firm until 1914, when she withdrew and undertook another unusual job, being appointee receiver in bankruptcy for a Rochester machine-tool shop that was in such condition it was expected to pay not more than 10 cents on the dollar.

By Aug. 1, 1917, under Miss Gleason's management, the company had paid its debts in full, had returned the stock-to the stockholders and was once more a going concern for the firm.

Financed Factories

The years that followed were busy ones for Miss Gleason. She engaged in building in East Rochester and assisted in financing eight factories in the town which did prosperous business during the war years.

In addition to the group of hotels which Miss Gleason built at Concrest, East Rochester, she laid out a golf course, built a club house and laid out a small park. During the war years she was appointed president of the First National Bank of East Rochester, being the first woman to hold such a position in a National Bank.

A few years after the war Miss Gleason arranged for others she need not be tied in any one place longer than she wished. She went to France and purchased the village of Septmont, near Soissons, with its historic tower dating back many centuries.

There she established a library as a memorial to the A. E. F. and, yearly by yearly, made improvements in the village, which provided work for her tenants in the village. In the same year, 1927, she undertook an extensive building project in California, a year or two later became interested in the development of the little town of Beaufort, S. C., in the Sea Island country, where she not only purchased property in the town, on which she created a hotel, but also many acres on the outlying Lady Island, which faces Beaufort, and the entire island of Dataw.

Develops Island

In 1932 she carried forward her plans for development of Lady Island, erecting a club house, building a sea-port and yacht wharf, laying out a golf course, and planning the erection of a group of homes to be known as Colony Gardens.

Although Miss Gleason maintained Clones, the beautiful Moorish house in East Avenue; and a home in Septmont; she had, in late years, called Beaufort her home town and had completely allied herself with the interests of its people, her building operations there giving work to hundreds during the depression years.

In 1939 Miss Gleason entered upon a deliberate plan to “unburden herself,” as she put it, by which she meant to dispose of her holdings or plan their disposal so that she might devote herself to the work in Beaufort which so appealed to her.

To this end she gave to Mechanics Institute her holdings in East Rochester and arranged for the disposal of her property in California for philanthropic purposes. Her Septmont home, she once said, would ultimately be used as a home for French parish priests, forced to retire from active service because of age or illness.

Throughout her life Miss Gleason was actuated by a generous spirit of helpfulness which was not restricted to the giving of money but extended to her own effort, time and sympathy. Her gifts to the usual funds for charity were generous, but she gave far more in ways which were known to but few of her relatives and close friends.

Aided Orphans

She made provision for a number of orphan children in homes where they had family care. She provided annuities for a number of persons, some of them friends of her earlier days, some of them personally unknown to her but commended to her by some condition or some act of service of which she had heard.

Like all wealthy people she was besieged by begging letter writers and she had little use for the professional beggar, but she found great happiness in helping persons who were worthy. She fre-
quently said that she was grateful for early experience of comparative poverty, which had taught her the value of small things in making others happy.

Although she was never able to complete her course at Cornell University and thus was not a graduate alumnus, Miss Gleason was a loyal friend of the university and gave generously to its needs. She filled the place of the college training she was forced to forego with extensive reading and study and was excellently informed on world topics and on history. She was a brilliant conversationalist, with a fine gift for story telling, in which her flashing Irish wit found play.

Throughout her life Miss Gleason had a talent for making friends. As a young woman she was a friend and warm admirer of Susan B. Anthony, Rochester's suffragist leader, who saw, in the girl forging her way in the field of mechanics, a shining example of her own theories that women needed but the opportunity to succeed in fields hitherto closed to them. Miss Gleason never forgot the encouragement and advice given by Miss Anthony and many times went out of her way to repay it through similar aid given to other women who were carving a niche for themselves in the business and industrial world.

Miss Gleason was several times chosen to represent the Society of American Engineers at world conferences. She was one of the group of American engineers which made a tour of inspection in England and the allied countries of Europe toward the close of the World War, and in 1930 she was appointed special representative of the Engineering Society to attend the World Conference on Power in Germany. She was also a member of the American delegation which made an invited tour of the Far East several years ago.

Survivors are two brothers, James E. and Andrew C. Gleason, and a sister, Eleanor Gleason.
GIVES FUND AS TRIBUTE TO TEACHER

Many Rochesterians Are Remembered in Noted Woman's Will

A bequest of $100,000 is made to the City of Rochester for the establishment of a memorial history alcove in the public library; $100,000 is left to Dr. Lorenzo Kelley of Baltimore, Md., widely known physician; $25,000 is bequeathed to the Rochester Engineering Society, and numerous bequests are made to personal friends, under the will of Miss Kate Gleason, of the Town of Pittsford.

The will was filed yesterday afternoon with Surrogate Joseph M. Feeley by Leonard C. Bacon, member of the law firm of Harris, Beach, Folger, Bacon & Keating, attorneys of the Lincoln-Alliance Bank & Trust Company, as executor. John W. Remington, trust officer of the Lincoln-Alliance, is acting for the executor.

Miss Gleason, philanthropist and pioneer woman industrialist engineer, died at Genesee Hospital Monday.

The total of specific bequests is $345,000, exclusive of gifts of real estate and personal effects, and a very considerable residuary estate remains, it is reported. No estimate is available at this time. Miss Gleason is reported to have made gifts of more than $1,000,000 in the last few years, in addition to the bequests under her will, and many of her gifts have not been made public.

The residuary estate is established in a trust fund, to be known as the Kate Gleason Fund, and Eleanor Gleason, sister of the testatrix; Henry T. Noyes and Carlton F. Bown, attorney, are named as trustees. Miss Gleason has left a memorandum concerning the use of the fund, and the trustees have broad discretionary powers.

Provides for Employees

It is understood that the substantial portion of the residuary of Miss Gleason's estate is represented by her large holdings in the Gleason Works and that her instructions in the memorandum to the trustees are to use these holdings for the welfare of the employees of the Gleason Works through their welfare fund and further to provide for increasing the number of employee-stockholders through the sale of stock to them on liberal and generous terms.

Eleanor Gleason receives all the jewelry, automotive equipment, books and all personal effects, other than those specifically bequeathed in the will, and in addition, Miss Gleason receives all of the preferred stock owned by her sister in the Gleason Works. The bequest of the $100,000 to the City of Rochester is for the establishment, equipment and maintenance of a history alcove or history department in the public library.

Continued on Page Two

the city, "which shall be a memorial for Amelia Bretelle, formerly a teacher of history in the Rochester high school to whom I am grateful for the inspiration given her to me in the study of history." I request that a memorial tablet or medallion be placed in such history alcove in commemoration of this said gift and of the said Amelia Bretelle.

Gift to Physician

In providing for the gift of $100,000 to Doctor Kelley, the will reads "to whom I am grateful for his expert knowledge in the use of radium." The document provides that if Doctor Kelley does not survive that the bequest goes to the corporation then maintaining the hospital in Baltimore of which Doctor Kelley is the "owner at the present time."

The bequest of $25,000 to the Rochester Engineering Society is in equal shares to the trustees or directors, at the time of Miss Gleason's death, with the proviso that the proceeds "be devoted by them to the use and for the benefit of the society."

Paragraph 13 of the will provides for the Kate Gleason Fund, which is believed to concern the larger part of the estate. This provides after the specific bequests that all the residue and remainder of the estate, both real and personal, is bequeathed to "my said sister Eleanor Gleason, and my friends, Henry T. Noyes and Carlton F. Bown, both of Rochester, in trust, for the following purpose:

Trust Fund Purposes

"To hold, manage and dispose of the principal and to pay out all of the income of said residuary property and estate and to and for such public charitable uses as they shall deem best in their absolute discretion for the purpose of assisting in the establishment of or of aiding any public, educational, benevolent or scientific uses and purposes in the United States or abroad, intending that any part of said funds may be paid to any charitable institution or institutions selected by my trustees and organized for any of such public charitable purposes or to any municipal corporation in trust for, or for the purpose of, any benevolent, recreational or educational uses, provided, however, that no such funds shall be so paid or distributed to any institution organized or operated for private gain; and I authorise and empower any said trustees of this residuary trust to incorporate or cause to be incorporated a charitable corporation with power to carry out one or more of such charitable purposes and to pay over to such corporation part or all of said trust funds for the uses of such corporation; all the powers and duties of the said trustees under this paragraph shall be performed absolutely in their discretion and as they shall deem
to be most in accordance with my wishes, for which purpose it is my intention to leave a memorandum with them."

Beyond indicating that the memorandum recited the interest of Miss Gleason in the employes of the Gleason Works and her desire that they benefit under the stock selling and welfare program, there was no announcement from the trustees as to the contents of the memorandum. It is pointed out that there is no prohibition on the part of the trustees to turn over portions of the trust fund to the city, if they so elect.

Provision is made in the will for the termination of the trust, measured on the life of the youngest child of Andrew C. Gleason, brother of Miss Gleason, or the youngest child of Rochester H. Rogers. Neither of these children have an interest in the trust, their names being mentioned to measure its tenure. At the termination of the trust the trustees, or their successors, are empowered to distribute absolutely the trust for such charitable, benevolent, educational and scientific corporations as they select, but having their principal places of operation or usefulness in Monroe County, or in Beaufort County, S. C.

Noyes Left $20,000

Mr. Noyes, who is one of the trustees, and who receives a specific bequest of $20,000, has for many years been a friend of Miss Gleason. Mr. Noyes also receives the real property known as the River Farm, situated on the east side of the Genesee River in the town of Brighton, together with all the contents, including all house and farm furnishings, equipment and animals.

Archbishop Edward J. Hanna of San Francisco receives all the real property known as Roca Cuadrada, situated at Sausalite, Calif, together with all the contents, except books and articles of personal use.

Elizabeth G. Sanders, of Montclair, N. J., a friend, receives all the lands and real property known as Dawtaw Island, South Carolina, together with the approaches and all real property adjoining the same, together with the contents, excepting books and articles of personal use.

Paris Post, No. 1, of the American Legion, receives all lands and real property known as Septmonts, situated in the Department of Aisne, France, and all lands and real property known as Bucy-le-Long, situated in the Department of Aisne, France, together with all furnishings, equipment and contents, with the exception of books, articles of the testatrix’s personal use.

Employees Remembered

Among the many bequests to individuals is that of $5,000 to Schuyler Earl, now or formerly employed by the Gleason Works, and $1,000 each to John J. Bethune, William J. Hughey, Leon Slade, George Hunter and William Lewis, all connected with the Gleason Works, and $1,000 to Mrs. Fox, the widow of Stanley Fox, formerly connected with the Gleason Works.

A trust fund of $10,000 is set up, with the Lincoln-Alliance Bank & Trust Company as trustee, for the purpose of providing an income for Margaret Dobmaier, "formerly my housekeeper." It is to be paid quarterly or more often at the discretion of the trustee, and at the death of the beneficiary, the $10,000 is to revert to the residuary estate.

Miss Gleason provides that neither the Lincoln-Alliance nor any of the three trustees of the Kate Gleason Fund be required to furnish a bond for the proper performance of their duties. The will was witnessed by Leonard B. Bacon, B. J. Hutchinson and Leonard Lee Bacon.
Ellen Gleason has thought to realization the vision of her sister, Kate, who died last January by completing the building of Colony Gardens (above) on Lady's Island, Beaufort, S. C., as a winter recreation colony for artists and writers.

Colony Gardens, with its 10 apartments and adjoining swimming pool, has been placed in charge of two Rochester girls, Ellen Gleason and Lois Jameson, Smith College alumnae of the Class of 1933.

Two Rochester Girls Direct S. C. Projects Of Late Kate Gleason

Niece and Friend Manage Colony Gardens on Ladies' Island, Beaufort, S. C., Designed to Spur Community as Winter and Summer Resort

Two Rochester girls, Ellen Gleason, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew C. Gleason of Ramsey Park, and Lois Jameson, daughter of Mrs. Adelaide Burke Jameson, now living in Northampton, Mass., but until two years ago a resident of this city, are in charge of the Colony Gardens development on Lady's Island, Beaufort, S. C.

Colony Gardens is one of the projects for Beaufort in which Miss Kate Gleason was interested at the time of her death last January. Work on the three buildings, which provide 10 furnished apartments of bedroom, living room, kitchenette, and bath, had just been begun by Miss Gleason when she came North last year to spend the Christmas in the famous Sea Island Cotton country, but its prosperity was shattered by the scourge of the boll weevil. Miss Kate Gleason believed the town could be rehabilitated as a recreational center and in planning Colony Gardens she had in mind, particularly, the provision of living and recreational facilities for artists, writers, and others, at a rental that would not be prohibitive. Her sister, Miss Eleanor Gleason, her niece, Ellen Gleason, and a young friend, Lois Jameson, are doing their best to bring her vision to realization.

By AMY H. CROUGHTON
Rochester Project in the South

Early in January she was stricken with pneumonia, and died. Jan. 9, in Rochester.

Rochester Project in the South

Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County · Historic Scrapbooks Collection

Boil Weevil Killed Industry

Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County · Historic Scrapbooks Collection