

News Release from the office
of the late Dr. Tom Gill
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DEATH OF DR. TOM GILL
INTERNATIONAL FORESTRY LEADER

Dr. Tom (Thomas Harvey) Gill, 81, long a resident of Washington, D. C., died suddenly on May 21 in Sibley Hospital. He was a leader in American forestry and an internationally recognized authority on tropical forest resources and land utilization.

A native of Philadelphia, he received a B.A. degree at the University of Pennsylvania in 1913, and a Master of Forestry degree from Yale University in 1915. Entering the U.S. Forest Service as a forest ranger, he served on various western national forests until the United States entered World War I. For the duration of the war he was a flyer and pursuit pilot with the rank of captain.

Returning to the U.S. Forest Service, he rose to forest supervisor, then was transferred to Washington, D.C., where he was in charge of the Service's education program until 1925. In that year he was appointed association editor of the magazine AMERICAN FORESTS AND FOREST LIFE, published by the American Forestry Association, and in the following year went with the Charles Lathrop Pack Forestry Foundation, of which he was named Executive Director in 1952, retiring in 1961.

During his career as a forest ranger, he began writing fiction for national periodicals. Several motion pictures were made from his twelve novels. In addition, he wrote numerous technical and professional articles dealing with natural resources, together with two major books, TROPICAL FORESTS OF THE CARIBBEAN and LAND HUNGER IN MEXICO.

For the past quarter-century he had been active in international forestry, which took him around the world seven times. He helped set up the Forestry Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and was chairman of FAO's Committee on Unexploited Forests and the Committee on Forestry Development in the Tropics.

During the U. S. military occupation of Japan, he helped write the Japanese forestry law promulgated by the Emperor. The State Department employed him to help formulate forestry policies in Formosa and the Philippines. He served on assignments on forestry and land utilization in Helsinki, Rome, Singapore, India, and the Pacific area.

In recognition of his contributions to the conservation of natural resources, he was elected a Fellow of the Society of American Foresters and was recipient of its premier award, the Sir William Schlich Memorial Medal. The American Forestry Association presented him with the internationally renowned Bernhard Eduard Fernow Medal.

Honorary membership was conferred on him by professional forestry societies in Mexico, Japan, and the Philippines. His citations from foreign governments include the French Merite Agricole, the German Verdienstkreuz, and the Mexican Gold Medal for Civic Merit. In 1953, the University of the Andes, Venezuela, conferred on him an honorary doctorate, the first foreigner ever to receive the degree. The Mexican Institute of Natural Renewable Resources granted him its coveted Diploma of Honor. In 1966, at the VI World Forestry Congress in Spain, he was recipient of the Medal of Honor.

President of the International Society of Tropical Foresters, Dr. Gill was a founder and past executive director of the International Union of Societies of Foresters. He had the distinction of having

attended all six World Forestry Congresses in Rome, Budapest, Helsinki, Dehra Dun, Seattle, and Madrid, and was on the U.S. National Committee for the VII World Congress to be held in Buenos Aires in October 1972.

Dr. Gill was a member of the Army and Navy Club, the Cosmos Club and the International Club, all of Washington, D.C., and the Explorers' Club of New York.

A member of the Pacific Science Association, he was active in committee work for the National Academy of Sciences. He held membership also in the Commonwealth Forestry Association of England and the International Society for Tropical Ecology.

He had been married to the late Vivian Perry who died in 1966. His burial will be private in Arlington National Cemetery.
