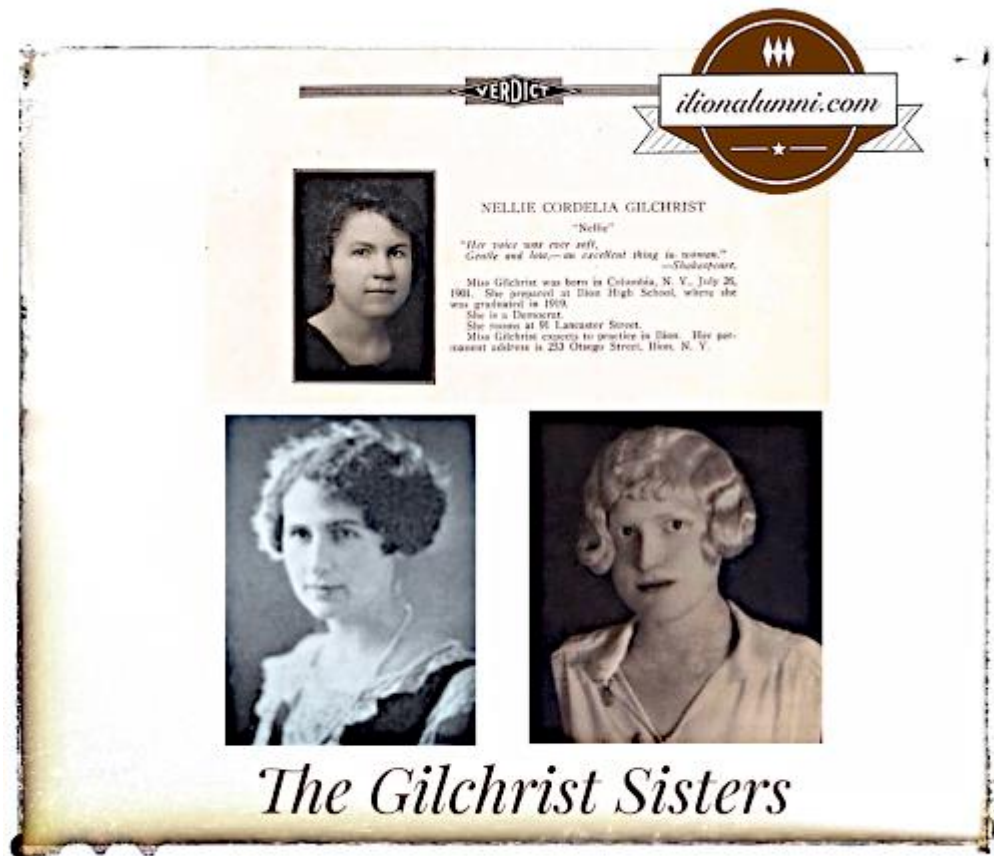


The Gilchrist Sisters



Nellie, Mary and Almira Gilchrist

IHS 1919, 1921 and 1922

November 2021



A yearbook page for Nellie Cordelia Gilchrist. At the top center is a banner with the word "VERDICT" in a stylized font. To the right is a circular logo with three vertical bars and the text "ilionalumni.com" below it. On the left is a black and white portrait of Nellie. To the right of the portrait is her name "NELLIE CORDELIA GILCHRIST" and the nickname "Nellie". Below the name is a quote: "Her voice was ever soft, / Gentle and low,—an excellent thing in women." attributed to Shakespeare. Further down is a biographical paragraph: "Miss Gilchrist was born in Colerada, N. Y., July 25, 1901. She attended at Ilion High School, where she was graduated in 1919. She is a Democrat. She resides at 92 Lancaster Street. Miss Gilchrist expects to practice in Ilion. Her permanent address is 23 Otsego Street, Ilion, N. Y."



The Gilchrist Sisters

Ilion High School Classes of 1919, 1921 and 1922 Nellie, Mary and Almira Gilchrist

The Gilchrist Family

James Gilchrist was born on May 18, 1866, in Taberg, NY. He was the eldest son of James Gilchrist Sr. and Mary (Prosser) Gilchrist. He was a graduate of Madison Union School and Clinton Grammar School. In 1889, he graduated from Hamilton College in 1889. He married Cora Reynolds, of the Town of Columbia, in 1898. He was a public-school teacher, in Ilion, for 7 years.

James studied law in the offices of Sayles & Searle, Rome, C. D. Thomas, Herkimer, and Arleigh D. Richardson, Ilion. James was admitted to the Bar in 1905. James Gilchrist practiced law for over 50 years, of which 30 years were spent in his Ilion law office with his daughter, Nellie. His sister, Jennie Gilchrist was married, in 1901, to Adelbert Mills in Oriskany Falls. Adelbert died in 1914. Jennie worked as a stenographer for many years, for her brother, Attorney James Gilchrist, in Ilion. She later remarried Carl Bailey in 1928. Jennie Gilchrist Bailey died July 27, 1971 at the home of her niece, Mary Gilchrist Cooley, East Herkimer.

1907-1908 Sensational Gilchrist Divorce

James and Cora Gilchrist made their home at 253 Otsego Street. They were the parents of three extremely intelligent daughters, Nellie, Mary, and Almira. However, all was not so happy in the Gilchrist home.

In November 1907, James Gilchrist brought a case against Ilion Police Officer, Joseph R. Durrenbeck, in which alienation of his wife's affection was charged. Mr. Durrenbeck was arrested and posted bail. Six other actions, alleging conspiracy against members of the Ilion police department, were also filed by Mr. Gilchrist. The defendant in this case, Joseph Durrenbeck, was also an Ilion Policeman. Mrs. Gilchrist brought a

case against Mr. Gilchrist for separation and divorce. An examination before trial was held on December 2, 1907 and reported in The Ilion Citizen. On December 5, 1907, Frank C. Johnson was named as Co-respondent and testified.

"Hon. A. B. Steele and Frank A. Schmidt represented the plaintiff and Gilchrist appeared in his own behalf. It was alleged that Johnson entered the Gilchrist house one night and committed certain acts. Witness examined by plaintiff's attorneys, denied all allegations, that he had ever been in the Gilchrist home, but had seen Mrs. Gilchrist in the yard when he had passed to the barn in the rear, where he had kept his horses. He denied ever having been intimate with plaintiff. Cross examined by the defendant, witness denied that he had ever made the remark that defendant had been adjudged insane, though he had said that he must be crazy."

Another hearing on the divorce case was held on December 12, 1907, where there were charges and counter charges of infidelity. At the conclusion of the hearing, the case was adjourned until the 14th. The court suggesting that the parties try to agree on a separation before that time.

The divorce case went to trial by jury in June 1908. Cora took the stand on June 3 and stated that her husband accused her of infidelities. She said that on one occasion she heard three shots out into the darkness when her husband said that he had shot at the fellow's body. She testified "...she had left her husband and gone to her father's house, but pleading of Mr. Gilchrist had returned to him only, she declared, to be with new offenses."

The Utica Herald Dispatch reported the testimony given by James Gilchrist on Friday, June 5, 1908.

The defendant, James Gilchrist, who was on the stand yesterday afternoon, said he was 38 years of age, and had been a lawyer in

Ilion since 1904. He denied ever telling his wife that he was going to California, but said that he told her he wanted the children brought back from her mother's. He admitted shooting a revolver out the window October 16, 1906, but said he only fired once. He had been to bed previously. He denied pushing his wife out of the house. Relating the conversation with his wife that took place, he said he state to her: "Cora, you have been deceiving me, and when I called your attention to the suspicions I had, you would only leave off one thing to do another." He stated that he told her he could not think so much of her as formerly, but that for the sake of avoiding a scandal and because of the children, he was willing to have some settlement. He told her, he said to "cut out" the idea of crazy proceedings. She replied, he said, "I know you have caught me, and I have nothing to say." He told of the proceedings at the engine house and police station the night of October 13, substantially as related by Officers Durrenbeck and Meehan, and also of giving up the gun to Officer Durrenbeck. He asserted that he had helped his wife pack the things in the house that she declared that she was going to get out of the house, and said that she had talked to him about getting a woman to come in and stay with her, and that he had said that he would pay a reasonable amount if someone was obtained. He said that he had never told her she would have to get out or that he would not support her. He denied that Mrs. Hayes had ever had her arms around his neck, or that he told his wife he was teaching Mrs. Hayes to write on the typewriter, or that he heard Mrs. Hayes say of him to his wife, "This man belongs to me." Mr. Gilchrist then told about the employment of detectives.



The Syracuse Herald June 12, 1908
Gilchrist Divorce Verdict

The jury began deliberating on Tuesday June 9. They were out all night. On June 10th, they returned with a verdict in favor of Mrs. Gilchrist "...in every particular."

On June 12, Attorney Frank A. Schmidt made a motion in Supreme Court at Herkimer for dismissal of four cases. These cases, cases 27, 28, 29 on the court calendar, were those of James Gilchrist against Ilion police department members, Elliott Lester, W. H. Stitt and Albert J. Meehan. Case 11, James Gilchrist vs. Joseph Durrenbeck, was also dismissed with costs, order of arrest vacated and set aside, the defendant was discharged, and the bond canceled.

In December of 1908, the Grand Jury indicted Alice Hayes due to her testimony given on behalf of Mr. Gilchrist in the divorce proceedings. She was arrested and charged with perjury.

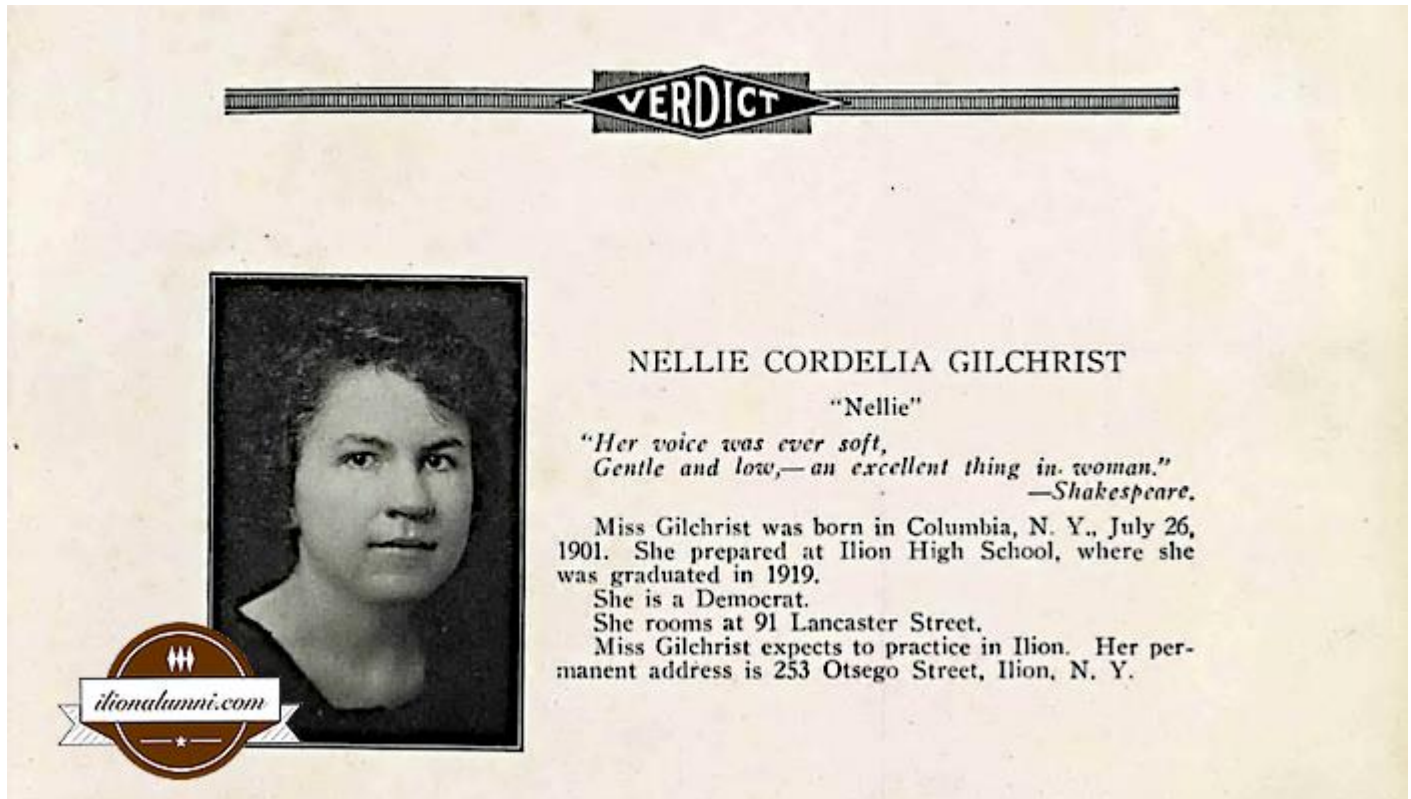
Father and Daughter - Attorney Partners

Years later, James was joined in his law practice with his daughter, Nellie, who was admitted to the bar in 1923. That was a fortunate event because on March 26, 1924, James Gilchrist was suspended from practicing law for one year in a disciplinary proceeding. Attorney James Gilchrist was charged with collusion in a divorce suit and with unethical calendar practice in two other suits. The alleged collusion resulted from his being Attorney for Mrs. Maud Lamphere when she sought grounds for divorce from Lloyd Lamphere, and then as acting for the husband when he instituted a divorce suit against his wife.

James Gilchrist, of 21 W. Main St., died on November 24, 1953, at the age of eighty-seven. He died at his home after a prolonged illness. He was survived by his wife, Cora and his three daughters, Mrs. Nellie Gilchrist Darling, Ilion, Mrs. Mary Alice [Ernest] Cooley, East Herkimer, and Mrs. Almira [Charles] Hyne, Evansville, WI. He was a member of Ilion IOOF Lodge, Ilion Masonic Lodge, Knights of Pythias and the Ilion Fish and Game Club. He was Director Colonial Fire Ins. Co., Utica, NY and a partner in Gilchrist & Post, fire ins, etc., Ilion NY. He was a member and stockholder Deer Spring Park (Adirondack Club). He was once a Democratic candidate for school commissioner but defeated in election. He was a Methodist and a member of the National Protective Legion and other fraternal organizations. The Rev. Clyde Wolf, of the Herkimer Baptist Church, officiate, at his internment in Cedarville Cemetery.

Cora Gilchrist died on January 21, 1959, at the age of 89, after a long illness. She was born in the Town of Columbia on June 23, 1869, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gaylord Reynolds. She married James Gilchrist in 1898. They were divorced in June 1908. She was survived by her three daughters, Mrs. Nellie Gilchrist Darling, Ilion, Mrs. Ernest Cooley, East Herkimer, and Mrs. Charles Hyne, Evansville, WI. Her internment was in Cedarville Cemetery. She left her entire estate, of over \$1,000, about equally real and personal property, to Nellie who was also the executrix of the estate.

Nellie Gilchrist Darling IHS 1919




VERDICT

NELLIE CORDELIA GILCHRIST

"Nellie"

*"Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle and low,—an excellent thing in woman."
—Shakespeare.*

Miss Gilchrist was born in Columbia, N. Y., July 26, 1901. She prepared at Iliion High School, where she was graduated in 1919. She is a Democrat. She rooms at 91 Lancaster Street. Miss Gilchrist expects to practice in Iliion. Her permanent address is 253 Otsego Street, Iliion, N. Y.



Iliion High School Class of 1919 - Nellie Gilchrist Darling
First Female Attorney in Herkimer County
Photograph from 1922 Albany Law School Yearbook

Nellie Gilchrist was born in Cedarville, NY on July 26, 1901. Nellie graduated third in the Iliion High School Class of 1919 with an average of 92.2. She then attended Albany Law School and graduated in 1922. She was admitted to the NY State Bar in 1923 and joined her father's law practice in Iliion. She was the first female attorney in Herkimer County. According to a May 6, 1950, article in The Evening Telegram, Nellie was the only woman lawyer in Herkimer County until Mary Panarites, IHS Class

of 1938, earned her law degree from the University of Colorado and was admitted to the bar in 1950. Helen Brady Monogham IHS 1929 was the second female from Iliion High School to earn a law degree.

Nellie married Floyd Darling on September 5, 1939, when she was 38 years old. Before World War 2, Remington Rand Inc. employed her husband. He later went to work for the Library Bureau Division of Remington Rand in Herkimer and worked there 23 years. They became parents to their only child, Fred Darling, in Philadelphia, Pa., on July 11, 1940. Floyd Darling died after a brief illness, on January 6, 1969, at the age of sixty-three. Floyd's burial was in the Cedarville Cemetery.

Fred "Rockabilly" Gilchrist

In the 1960s, Nellie could be seen driving around town in her station wagon. Her adult son, Fred, was often in the back seat rocking back and forth. Hence, he became known in Iliion as "Rockabilly". The obviously crazy story shared among Iliion kids was that his mother tied him to a rocking chair, when he was a small child, and that is why he rocked all the time. Sadly, the more likely reason may have been that Fred suffered from a severe case of autism. He spent most of his life in Iliion at the family home at 253 Otsego Street. Fred Darling died, one month after his father, on February 28, 1969, in his home. He was 28 years old. His burial was in the Cedarville Cemetery.

Neglected Properties in Disrepair

NOTICE OF TAX SALE
VILLAGE OF ILION, NEW YORK



NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that, pursuant to a resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Ilion, Herkipo New York, passed at a meeting thereof held on the 25th of January, 1967, the undersigned, Treasurer of the Village of Ilion, New York, will sell at public auction in the manner provided by law on the 15th day of March 1967, at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon at the Village Clerk's office in the Municipal Building in the said Village of Ilion, so much of each of the following parcels of real estate upon which Village taxes remain unpaid as will be sufficient to discharge the tax, fees, interest and charges which may be due thereon respectively at the time of such sale, and shall continue the same from day to day until said sale shall be completed.

Each purchaser at such tax sale shall pay the amount of his bid to the Village Clerk within 10 days after the same, and upon such payment, the clerk shall give to the purchaser a certificate in writing describing the real property purchased and the sum paid therefor.

The following is a list of the lots, pieces and parcels of real estate to be sold, together with a statement of the amount of the tax, interest and charges thereon and the record owner thereof.

MAYNARD L. CHAPIN
Village Clerk

NAME	ADDRESS	AMOUNT
DeLuca, Dominick & Madeline	109-113 Central Avenue	109.41
Gilchrist, Nellie	80-82 Central Avenue	121.86
Gilchrist, Nellie	84 Central Avenue	121.86
Jewell, Edward & Adelaide	47 E. Clark St.	88.80
Gilchrist, James Est.	186 E. Clark St.	82.34
Gilchrist, Nellie	112 W. Clark St.	65.87
Gilchrist, James Est.	22 Elm Street	125.15
Carroll, Joseph & Jean	9 English St.	103.41
Darling, Nellie Gilchrist	27-29 First St.	115.28
Gilchrist, Nellie	18 Fredrick St.	82.34
Gilchrist, James Est.	7 Harrison Ave.	82.34
Gilchrist, James Est.	Harrison Ave.	6.58
Bala, John and Ida	37 High Street	115.28
Potter, Concetta	36 Highland Ave.	102.10
Gilchrist, Nellie	290 E. Main St.	24.86
Gilchrist, Nellie	292 E. Main St.	115.28
Gilchrist, Nellie	298-300 E. Main St.	62.57
Gilchrist, Nellie	302 E. Main St.	105.39
Gilchrist, Nellie	306-308 E. Main St.	92.22
Gilchrist, Nellie	310 E. Main St.	79.01
Gilchrist, Nellie	312 E. Main St.	75.75
Gilchrist, Nellie	318 E. Main St.	69.17
Seakan & Karam	41-43 W. Main St.	494.01
Day, Charles J.	197-199 W. Main St.	128.44
Day, Charles J.	203-205 E. Main St.	148.21
Beers, Russell & Olive	8 Montgomery St.	72.45
Seakan, Raymond & Fred Karam	11-13 Morgan St.	75.75
Gilchrist, Nellie	99 Morgan St.	92.14
Gilchrist, Nellie	101 Morgan St.	105.79
Upton, Floyd	E. North St.	3.30
Upton, Floyd	93 E. North St.	92.22
Gilchrist, Nellie	146 W. North St.	85.63
Gilchrist, Cora Est.	253 Otsego St.	118.56
Lucy, William Est.	379 Otsego St.	128.44
Gilchrist, Nellie	114 Otsego St.	118.88
Gilchrist, James Est.	Park St. (both sides)	23.06
Gilchrist, Nellie	9 Pleasant Ave.	65.87
Gilchrist, Nellie	13 Pleasant Ave.	23.06
Watson, Raymond & Eileen	W. Rand St.	138.32
Lucy, William Est.	34-36 River Dr.	131.74
Lucy, William Est.	River Dr. (6 lots)	6.58
Hibbert, William & Rosemary	79 E. River St.	105.79
Gilchrist, James Est.	1-3-140 E. River St.	96.75
Gilchrist, James Est.	148 E. River St.	105.39
Gilchrist, James Est.	148 1/2 E. River St. (rear)	56.70
Perkett, Ellery & Mary	42 N. Third Ave.	98.80
Darling, Nellie Gilchrist	12 View Terrace	82.34
Madigan, Lena	79-31 West St.	111.98
Shineman, Ralph	116 West St.	197.61

T— February 22, March 1 and 8, 1967

The Evening Telegram March 1, 1967
Ilion Nellie Gilchrist Back Taxes

Nellie, and her father James, were owners of many rental properties in Iliion and Mohawk. It is unknown how they managed to obtain so many rental properties. Going as far back as 1952, these properties were listed for sale by Herkimer County for arrears in taxes. James Gilchrist owned properties that were also subjects of codes violations as early as 1948. After Nellie's father died in 1953, she was responsible for all rental properties. These properties continued to be the subject of codes violations and past due property taxes. Some of the properties were considered unfit for human habitation. In 1967, they were eventually razed after being acquired by the Village of Iliion for unpaid taxes. Nellie filed a lawsuit in response but lost.

Village health officer, Dr. Donald Davidson was instructed to inspect the property of Mrs. Nellie Gilchrist Darling, 253 Otsego St., in the near future. The board had received several complaints on the property.

Miss Panarites said the Darling property contained seven junked cars, water tanks and heaters, furniture, beds and bedsprings.



The Evening Telegram March 1, 1967
Iliion Nellie Gilchrist Back Taxes

Nellie's own Gilchrist family home, at 253 Otsego Street, also became a subject of codes complaints. Ironically, Mary Panarites, the second female attorney practicing in Herkimer County, represented the Village of Ilion against Nellie, the first female attorney practicing in Herkimer County.

"Village health officer, Dr. Donald Davidson was instructed to inspect the property of Mrs. Nellie Gilchrist Darling, 253 Otsego St., in the near future. The board had received several complaints on the property. Miss Panarites said the Darling property contained seven junked cars, water tanks and heaters, furniture, beds and bedsprings."



Site of Gilchrist Family Home - 253 Otsego Street, Ilion NY
November 2021

By 1978, Nellie had abandoned her family home on Otsego Street. It was often vandalized by kids and became a nuisance to the neighbors. The house eventually was destroyed by a fire in 1978. All its overflowing contents were destroyed. In September 1978, Supreme Court Justice John Conway ruled that the fire-ravaged house be demolished. Nellie had already moved to Herkimer, NY.

Attorney Nellie Gilchrist Darling passed away Tuesday, November 19, 1985, at the Little Falls Hospital. Funeral Services were managed by the Holleran-Enea Funeral Home in Herkimer. There was no mention of her surviving sisters in her obituary.

Valedictorian Sisters - Mary Alice and Almira Gilchrist



Almira

Mary Alice

Mary Alice Gilchrist and Almira Gilchrist at Cornell University
Photographs courtesy of David Reynolds, grandson of Almira Gilchrist Hyne

Mary Alice Gilchrist Cooley IHS 1921



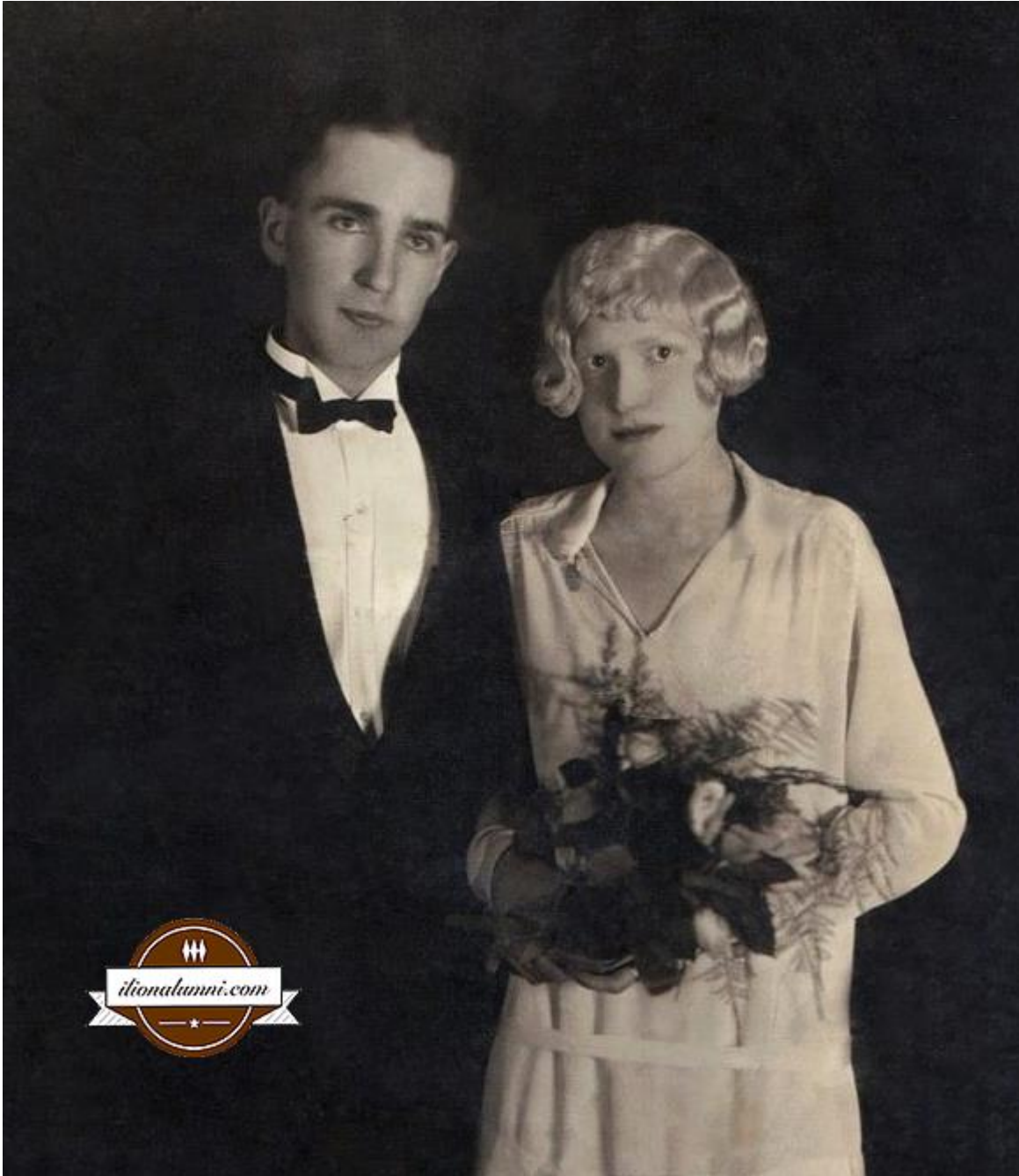
Ilion High School Class of 1921 - Mary Alice Gilchrist Cooley

Mary Gilchrist was born May 18, 1903 in Ilion. She was Valedictorian of the Ilion High School Class of 1921. Her Valedictory essay was "An Unpaid Part of Our War Debt". Five of the 13 university scholarships awarded by the State, in 1922, for Herkimer County were from Ilion. Each scholarship carried a state grant of \$100 per year for four years and the winner could attend any registered college in the State, except that the student was not allowed to pursue professional course. Mary was a recipient of this scholarship. The Ilion students and averages were Miss Mary Gilchrist, 92.36, Miss Hilda Shaul, 90.76, Miss Mildred Pearl Jenne, 87.13; James Norris Wilfort, 78.79, Fred J. Gerber, 76.46.

The state education department announced the list of 150 high school graduates, who have been awarded state scholarships for Cornell university, as the result of a competitive examination held on June 4, 1921. The scholarships were distributed based on one for each assembly district. Mary Gilchrist was one of the sixteen students in the Capitol District awarded the scholarship. Mary entered Cornell University in the fall of 1921. Her sister Almira joined her in 1922.

Mary Gilchrist Cooley died on October 7, 2002, at the age of 99. She was a lifelong resident of Herkimer County. She was a pioneer for the education of women, earning her bachelor's degree from Cornell University in French Language Arts, in the year 1924, and her master's degree in English Language Art. Mary authored a book, "Aspects of Character Study in the Work of Marcel Proust", which was published by Cornell University in 1927. She taught English and French in area schools. Mary G. Cooley shared her life and times with her husband of 55 years, Ernest L. Cooley, a house builder, and contractor well known in the area. Ernest Cooley died in 1982. Together they raised four well accomplished sons, Dr. William S. Cooley of Remsen, Dr. James K. Cooley of Delanson, Dr. Daniel J. Cooley of Herkimer and Lake Pleasant and Thomas R. Cooley, pharmacist, of East Herkimer and Morgantown, W.Va. She devoted her life to love of her grandchildren and love of her God.

Almira Gilchrist Hyne IHS 1922



Wedding portrait at NBC Studios in NYC.
Charles and Amira Gilchrist Hyne - 1927
Photograph courtesy of David Reynolds, grandson of Almira Gilchrist Hyne

Almira Gilchrist was born on June 4, 1905. She was the Iliion High School Class of 1922 Valedictorian. Her Valedictory address was on "The Value of Higher Education." The State Education Department issued the list of high school pupils who became entitled to the college entrance diploma during the 1922 school year. Students were subsequently eligible to receive a university scholarship amounting to \$100 a year for four years at any registered college in the state. Herkimer county earned five of these scholarships. Almira was one of those students. The following is the list of Iliion names made for the county: Fatanitia L. Schmidt, 92.15; Almira Gilchrist, 90.66, Clara L. Wasmer, 88.13; B. Leila Roberts, 85.63, Helen E. Rauscher, 84.55; Mary Helen E. Rauscher, 84.55; Helen M. Paddock, 83.00; Phyllis S. Miner, 83.24, Burrill M. Getman, 82.67.

Almira Gilchrist was awarded a Cornell University competition scholarship based upon an examination that was held in Herkimer, on June 3, 1922. The scholarship covered tuition at Cornell University for a period of four years and had a value of \$1,000. The year before, her sister, Mary Gilchrist, captured similar honors and was also Valedictorian of her class. Almira Gilchrist accompanied her sister, Mary, to Cornell University in the fall and pursued an arts course.

Almira met her future husband, Charles Hyne, at Cornell University. They brought George Washington Carver to Cornell to speak on race relations as they were active in the civil rights movement. Charles and Almira Gilchrist were married in the NBC Studios, in New York City, in 1927. Charles was a manager of the Utica Jubilee Singers who appeared regularly on NBC radio. They honeymooned in Europe. They moved to Evansville, Wisconsin, in 1939, where Charles operated Hyne Realty Company and an insurance agency for many years. Almira also taught in France for a few years. They were parents to a son, John, Evansville; and two daughters, Nancy, Janesville, and Mrs. David (Shelia) Cooney, Point Pleasant Beach, N.J. Charles W. Hyne died at the age of 76, Evansville,

June 4, 1974. Almira Gilchrist Hyne died November 14, 1987, at 82 years old. She had been residing in Evansville, Wisconsin.

The Gilchrist Graves



Gilchrist Family Grave - Cedarville Cemetery

There are no head stones for Floyd, Fred, or Nellie Gilchrist Darling

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[Thomas Reynolds Cooley](#) - son of Mary Gilchrist Cooley - Morgantown, Monongalia County, West Virginia - findagrave.com

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