

## Charles & Elizabeth Smith Trust



Charles and Elizabeth Smith were the quintessential Westfield couple during the late 1800's and throughout the first three decades of the next century. Pillars of the community, they were valued members of numerous local organizations and clubs. They had power, prestige, and wealth, but Charles and Elizabeth found their greatest reward in helping their community. This scholarship is a living testament to that belief, and it is perhaps their greatest legacy to Westfield.

Born in 1871, Charles Gilbert Smith was the son of Clara and Henry B. Smith, co-founder of the H.B. Smith Company in Westfield. Charles attended local schools and graduated from Westfield High School. Before going to college, he completed a

post-graduate year at Williston Academy. A gifted athlete, Charles was a renowned pitcher for the Westfield High and Williston baseball teams. At the age of 17, he won the New England Roquet Championship and went on to win the National Roquet Championship which was held in Martha's Vineyard. Roquet was a game similar to croquet and was quite popular in those days.

Charles entered Amherst College in September 1890. Throughout his four years there, he established himself as one of Amherst's greatest baseball pitchers. Charles was credited with many collegiate wins during the early 1890's. He was a member of the Amherst College baseball team which participated in intercollegiate games at the Chicago World's Fair at that time. Charles completed his studies at Amherst College and graduated in 1894.

He returned to Westfield and began his career at H.B. Smith Company. Charles' first position there was as paymaster and he then advanced into the sales department. At the time of his death in 1936, he was the assistant sales manager for H.B. Smith.

Committed to Westfield, Charles was actively identified with many local organizations. Additionally, he was a lifelong member of the First Congregational Church and served as a deacon, moderator, and on numerous parish committees. Charles was a charter member of the Tekoa Country Club and for many years, he served as president of their corporate organization. He played a good game of golf, too! Charles was a member of the Kiwanis Club, Delta Kappa Epsilon Fraternity, and he was treasurer of the Sarah Gillett Home for Aged People in Westfield.

Not to be outdone by her husband, Elizabeth (Bush) Smith invested an enormous amount of her time and energy into community activities. She was very active with the Girl Scouts and was instrumental in helping to secure Camp Mishqua for them. Elizabeth was a prominent member of the following organizations: Westfield Women's Club, Hopefully Well-Affected Club, Tekoa Country Club, Mercy Warren Chapter, D.A.R., the Springfield Wellesley Club, and the Board of Managers of the Sarah Gillett Home.

Elizabeth was in poor health herself when Charles died on October 12, 1936. He was the last surviving member of the H.B. Smith family, and he and Elizabeth never had children. Both of them were lifelong residents of Westfield, so Elizabeth began to think about the legacy she could leave to their beloved hometown. Elizabeth Smith finalized her will on February 2, 1937. In it, she included a bequest to establish the Charles and Elizabeth Smith Trust Fund "to be used for the purpose of assisting and supporting one or more Westfield boys or girls during their college course." Just two months later, on April 5, 1937, Elizabeth Smith passed away.

Since then, the Charles and Elizabeth Smith Trust has funded an average of five scholarships every year. For almost 70 years, Charles and Elizabeth have helped hundreds of Westfield students to achieve their dream of a college education. This exemplary couple contributed so much to our community in life, and this scholarship is their loving legacy for the future of Westfield.

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