

Gill, Edwin Maurice ^[1]

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by [William S. Powell](#) ^[2], 1986

20 July 1899–16 July 1978

Edwin Maurice Gill, lawyer and public official, was born in Laurinburg, the son of Thomas Jeffries and Mamie North Gill. After attending local schools, he entered [Trinity College](#) ^[3] in 1922 but left in 1924 after passing the bar examination. He established his practice in Laurinburg, and was elected to represent [Scotland County](#) ^[4] in the [General Assembly](#) ^[5] in 1929 and 1931. In the legislature he was a member of the subcommittees that drafted the state's local government act and the bill authorizing the state to take over the construction and maintenance of county roads. He also supported legislation for the Australian ballot, workmen's compensation, university consolidation, and benefits for the blind.

On 1 July 1931, after the General Assembly adjourned, Gill became private secretary to Governor [O. Max Gardner](#) ^[6] and remained in that post during Gardner's administration. Afterward he compiled the governor's letters and papers for publication. In 1933 Governor [J. C. B. Ehringhaus](#) ^[7] appointed Gill to head the newly created North Carolina Paroles Commission, a position he filled until 1942. Organizing the office and adopting procedures for the commission, he created a model agency that was widely copied throughout the nation and commented upon favorably by federal officials. Between 1942 and 1949 Gill served as commissioner of revenue by appointment of Governor J. Melville Broughton; at the end of that period he joined a law firm in Washington, D.C., founded by former Governor Gardner. [President Harry S. Truman](#) ^[8] named him collector of internal revenue in North Carolina in 1950. He left the post in 1953 when he was appointed state treasurer by [Governor William B. Umstead](#) ^[9]. Thereafter Gill was elected to this office until he retired in 1976. Under his direction, the state attained the highest possible credit rating. It was he who coined the phrase, "In North Carolina, we have made a habit of good government." Gill himself was often referred to as "Mr. Integrity."

In addition to his public offices, Gill was also a member of and an officer in various organizations including the State Banking Commission, Local Government Commission, Tax Review Board, Sinking Fund Commission, Capital Planning Commission, Southeastern State Probation and Parole Association, American Prison Association, and National Tax Association.

As a young man Gill studied for a year at the [New York School of Fine and Applied Arts](#) ^[10]. In later years his hobby was painting and he took a deep interest in the [North Carolina Museum of Art](#) ^[11], serving as an active and effectual member of the board of trustees and a director of the [State Art Society](#) ^[12]. He was also interested in music and was considered a "respectable" pianist and organist. An indefatigable reader, he was an avid but generous book collector. Many libraries in the state benefited from his gifts.

Gill was a [Methodist](#) ^[13] and taught Sunday school at the Edenton Street Methodist Church in [Raleigh](#) ^[14]. He was also a [Democrat](#) ^[15]. Both [Duke University](#) ^[16] and Campbell College awarded him honorary degrees. He never married. Burial took place in Hillside Cemetery, Laurinburg.

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