

## **Julia Green Scott (1839-1923)**

Julia Green Scott was born into a wealthy and prestigious family on February 14, 1839, in Danville, Kentucky. Her father, Rev. Lewis Warner, was a well-known preacher and the president of Centre College in Danville. Julia came from a family with many famous ancestors, including people related to George Washington. Her great-grandfather was a Revolutionary War captain, and she had other ancestors who played important roles in American history. Julia went to one of the best schools in New York and excelled in her privileged life.

On May 12, 1859, Julia married Matthew T. Scott from Lexington, Kentucky. They met while Matthew was attending Centre College, where Julia's father was the president. After their marriage, they moved to Chenoa, Illinois, where they helped establish the town. Matthew was involved in buying and selling land, and he eventually owned over 45,000 acres in Illinois, Iowa, and Tennessee. He developed the land for farming, focusing on growing corn, and hired workers to help shape the land.

However, the town of Chenoa did not grow as expected, so Julia and Matthew moved to Springfield in 1870. Although they said it was for Julia's health, it was probably because Julia was not happy with life in Chenoa. Later, they moved to Bloomington, where Matthew became involved in the McLean County Coal Company and started a local newspaper called *The Bulletin* in 1881. Julia and Matthew also bought a beautiful home located at 701 E. Taylor Street, one of the nicest in the area.

Julia and Matthew had two daughters: Letitia (called "Lettie") and Julia. After 32 years of marriage, Matthew passed away on May 21, 1891, and was buried in Bloomington. After his death, Julia became very successful in managing the family's land and businesses. She even became the president of the McLean County Coal Company. Julia also made many improvements to their home, including adding more space and making it even more elegant, spending over \$10,000 (almost \$250,000 in 2008).

Julia was a social leader and was involved in many important organizations. She was especially active in the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (N.S.D.A.R.), a group that her sister helped found. Julia also traveled around the country recruiting members and giving speeches promoting the N.S.D.A.R. Julia worked hard to expand the organization and became its president in 1909. During Julia's time in office, the membership of the N.S.D.A.R. increased by 7,000. The organization's financial status was strengthened as well. She was recognized for her efforts to improve and expand the organization, especially in fundraising for war orphans during World War I. For this, she was awarded the Medal of French Gratitude in 1921. Upon the expiration of her second term in 1919 she was elected honorary president general, a position she retained until her death.

In addition to her work with the N.S.D.A.R., Julia was a philanthropist. She used her own money to establish the Matthew T. Scott Institute in Kentucky to help educate impoverished children living in the mountains. She also worked to build a monument to George Rogers Clark, a hero of the American Revolution, and supported new farming techniques.

Julia spent her time in different places throughout the year—Washington, D.C. in the spring, Charlevoix, Michigan in the summer, Bloomington in the fall, and Mississippi in the winter. She even fought to keep a sidewalk from being built near her summer home, winning a small victory for her privacy.

Julia was also very successful in business. By 1918, she was earning \$118,000 a year, a large sum for that time. In 1921, after managing the McLean County Coal Company for many years, she retired and handed over her stocks to her son-in-law and grandson.

Julia Green Scott passed away on April 29, 1923, at her home in Bloomington after suffering a stroke. She was remembered as a great lady who had inspired many with her hard work and determination. She was buried next to her husband in Evergreen Memorial Cemetery in Bloomington.