



Our Founder at SUSIE MATHEWS ABNEY and ASSOCIATES FOUNDATION

The following article was taken from the March 1969 edition of QUILLS, a monthly newsletter Published by Abney Mills. This is one of our favorite articles and feels that it is a wonderful portrayal of [our founder](#).

SUSIE MATHEWS ABNEY was the widow of John Pope Abney, the founder of Abney Mills. Mr. Abney died in 1942, and so Mrs. Abney survived her husband by more than 26 years. Although she preferred to remain in the background where business affairs were concerned, Mrs. Abney, following the death of her husband, nevertheless exercised a strong and benevolent influence over the subsequent development and expansion of Abney Mills from an organization of five textile mills to the large company of 15 plants it is today (at the time of printing, March 1969).

She was born in Elbert County, Georgia, a daughter of the late Pierce and Sallie Cade Mathews, but she had lived in Greenwood most of her life. A loyal member of the South Main Street Baptist Church, she lent generous support to all church activities as well as to [various civic enterprises](#), and she was held in high esteem for her philanthropy and humanitarian efforts. In 1954 she received the honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities from Lander College, and she served her alma mater, Converse College, as a trustee for a number of years.

One of the [organizations](#) in which she took special interest was the Connie Maxwell Children's Home in Greenwood. For 45 years she served as a member of the governing board of Connie Maxwell, and her acts of benevolence toward this institution are too numerous for this listing. Dr. Sam Smith, superintendent of the Children's Home, spoke of Mrs. Abney in this way: "She had a great capacity to love people, and she was especially concerned with the well-being, comfort and happiness of children."

Mrs. Abney was a person of instinctive good taste. She appreciated beauty in all its forms, and perhaps this fact accounts for her love of gardening, another of her special interests. She was a member of Unit One Garden Club in Greenwood, and she held a life membership in the South Carolina Federation of Garden Clubs. She was also a former trustee of the Memorial

Garden in Columbia, a project sponsored by the Garden Club of the State in memory of South Carolinians who gave their lives in World Wars I and II.

Those of us who knew Mrs. Abney will always remember her as a kind and gracious woman, ever hospitable in her home, ever thoughtful of her friends, and ever mindful of the needs of others,. We never heard her speak discourteously of anyone, nor did we ever know her to act in any way which might have been unbecoming to the Southern lady that she was. Mrs. Abney always tried to do the right thing. In her position as an official of Abney Mills she was often under pressure to do favors for this person or that one, she was often harassed by the strains of business matters, but in the moments of crisis or stress Mrs. Abney relied on a strong and active conscience to help her make decisions, and this reliance served her well. Mrs. Abney was modest and unassuming. The only picture of herself she would ever permit us to use in QUILLS was this photograph taken in the garden of her home, and it therefore seems appropriate for use in this page dedicated to her memory. Looking at it now, we can recall her kindly way, her strength of character, and her sincere desire to be of service to others. We feel that even now her spirit lives on, as calm and self-assured as when we knew her, as happy as she believed she would be, in the [company](#) of those whom she had loved and lost awhile.

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