Max Grant, 85, dies; aided many causes

PROVIDENCE — Max L. Grant, millionaire industrialist and philanthropist who was the key factor in the founding of The Miriam Hospital and prominent in countless community organizations died yesterday at his home, 90 Hazard Ave.

Mr. Grant, 85, had worked daily at his office, 204 Westminster Mall, until he became ill about six months ago. As late as last month, during a temporary remission the octogenarian was working at his desk.

The South Providence native, who started out at 10 writing advertising jingles for his mother's millinery store and distributing them door to door, wound up as scion of a vast financial empire that enabled him to announce plans two years ago to give away $2.5 million.

Even in his 80s, Mr. Grant was still writing love poems to his wife, Miriam (Gardner) Grant, and funding anti-war and peace research.

Mr. Grant, who invented the fare collection meter used by transit companies around the world, was given the Joseph Dressler Memorial Award in 1972 as Jewish Man of the Year.

He was a member of virtually every Jewish organization in the state but also cut across religious and ethnic lines in his activity and his philanthropy.

The $2.5 million gifts announced in 1972 included $100,000 awards each to the General Jewish Committee, Catholic Charities and the United Fund of Southeastern New England.

The day he graduated from Classical High School his uncle died and young Max took over his relative's jewelry business. The next year he visited the Crompton Company and soon was associated with its booming production of velvets plushes, corduroys and velveteens.

When he first started at Brown University, Mr. rGant envisioned becoming a lawyer. But his mushrooming financial success sidetracked that ambition. Eventually he took over Grant Money Meters, which became universally known. He also had real estate holdings throughout the country.

He was president of a variety of businesses, including Grant Supply Co., Central Real Estate Corporation and Elastic Knitted Wire Co.

He was president of The Miriam Hospital for 20 years, first president of the Jewish Community Center, national vice president of the Joint Defense Appeal and former director of the Providence Community Fund, the Legal Aid Society, the Council of Social Agencies, R.I. Blue Cro: and Osteopathic Hospital which is on the site of Mr. Grant's former Cranston home. He donated the site to the hospital.

He was a director of Jewish Family Welfare, the Jewish Home for Aged, B'nai B'rith Fraternity and the Ledgemont Country Club and was an early supporter of Israel and helped organize the Zionist movement in Rhode Island.

He was born April 28, 1889, in Providence, the son of the late Louis M. and Mary D. Grant. He is survived by two children, Gardner L. Grant of Scarsdale, N.Y., and Mrs. Alfred H. Joslin of Bristol, wife of the Rhode Island Supreme Court justice; a sister, Mrs. Charles Brown of Providence, and four grandchildren.

The funeral service will be held tomorrow at 1 p.m. at Temple Beth-El, 70 Orchard Ave. Burial will be in Sons of Israel and David cemetery, Providence.

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Max Grant Estate: $3 Million

PROVIDENCE — The personal estate of industrialist Max L. Grant was estimated at about three million dollars based on the bond fixed yesterday by Probate Court Judge Anthony B. Sciarretta.

In his will, the philanthropist who died Oct. 11 at his home at 90 Hazard Ave., provided for the establishment of a charitable foundation of undetermined size to continue his philanthropic work.

MAX GRANT

Although no figures could be obtained, a lawyer close to the family said some of the money for the Max L. Grant Charitable Foundation would come from the $2.5 million he announced he would give away two years ago.

The will provides that all charitable pledges be honored. In 1972 Grant announced $100,000 awards each to the General Jewish Committee, Catholic Charities and the United Fund of Southeastern New England.

Although the foundation he established in his will has the freedom to dispense gifts to institutions deemed worthy by the trustees, Grant indicated that "special attention" be given to "the needs" of Miriam Hospital, Providence College, Cranston General Hospital and the Brown University Medical Program in cooperation with Miriam Hospital.

Grant, who invented the fare collection meter used by transit compaines around the world, was instrumental in the founding of Miriam Hospital and was prominent in countless community organizations.

Provisions were also made for his wife, Miriam G. Grant, his daughter, Roberta G. Joslin, and his son, Gardner L. Grant.