



1998 Inductee
to the
South Carolina
Academy of Authors

Frank Bunker Gilbreth, Jr. was born on March 17, 1911 in Plainfield, NJ. He attended Montclair High School. After graduating in 1928, he enrolled at Saint John's College in Annapolis, MD to study engineering, but this interest did not last. In 1929, he transferred to the University of Michigan to major in journalism. While writing and editing for the school's newspaper Gilbreth found a true passion for reporting. He received his bachelor's degree from Michigan in 1933. Afterward, he worked as a reporter for the *New York Herald Tribune*.

Gilbreth was urged by a group of friends to move to Charleston and become a reporter for the *News and Courier*. After getting married, however, Gilbreth moved to Raleigh, NC to work for the Associated Press. The news agency, soon after, relocated him to New York, where his work was punctuated by a brief stint as a reporter for the *Buenos Aires Herald*.

To help with the World War II effort, Gilbreth joined the U.S. Navy at the beginning of 1942. He participated in three invasions of the Admiralty Islands and the Philippines. For his duties, he was awarded two air medals and a bronze star. He rose in the ranks to lieutenant commander and ended his service in 1945. Afterward, he rejoined the Associated Press in New York City.

In 1947, Gilbreth found himself again working for the *News and Courier* as an editorialist under the pseudonym Ashley Cooper – inspired by Lord Ashley Cooper, who helped found Charleston. The *News and Courier* gave Gilbreth the opportunity to write his own column, which he called “Doing the Charleston.” He worked at writing that column until 1993 – by which time, the name of the paper had been changed to the *Post and Courier*. In the middle-60s, he was promoted to assistant publisher.

In 1948, Gilbreth and his sister, Ernestine Carey, collaborated to create the memoir *Cheaper by the Dozen*, which recounts their lives as two of twelve siblings raised by a pair of motion study engineers. The book was adapted to film in 1950.

The success of their book led to a sequel entitled *Belles on Their Toes* (1950). After the familial endeavor, Gilbreth wrote a host of other books including *I'm a Lucky Guy* (1951), *How to Be a Father* (1958), and *He's My Boy* (1962). In 1972, he assembled the *Dictionary of Charlestonese*, which was a humorous pseudo-reference book that made fun of the Charleston drawl.

Frank Bunker Gilbreth, Jr. died on February 18, 2001.

- Blake Bolen



Image Courtesy Wikipedia.org

Frank B. Gilbreth, Jr.