

...ment that the state had appointed
former gendarmerie chief Gen.

Bakhtiar was expected to present

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Conrad Hilton dies at 91

From staff and wire reports

Conrad Hilton, a general store owner's son who built one of the greatest hotel chains in the world, establishing outposts around the globe offering American tourists the comforts of home, died last night in Santa Monica, Calif. at the age of 91.

Hilton, who was Zsa Zsa Gabor's second husband and Elizabeth Taylor's first father-in-law, died at 10 p.m., said a spokeswoman for St. John's hospital.

"HE WAS ADMITTED last Sunday for congestive heart failure," she said. A spokesman for Hilton gave the cause of death as pneumonia.

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Hilton once traced his start in the hotel business to his boyhood before the turn of the century in San Antonio, N.M., when he guided stranded train passengers through the darkness to rent rooms at the large house of his father, a Norwegian immigrant — "the first Hilton hotel," he called it.

Emerging from service as an Army officer in World War I, the young Hilton headed for the oil boom town of Cisco, Texas, in 1919, with \$5,000 in savings pinned into the pocket of his suit and bought the town hotel.

ON THAT MODEST foundation he built a chain that 50 years later boasted 188 Hiltons in 38 U.S. cities and 54 abroad.

Hilton, a close friend of El Paso banker Sam Young Sr., lost most of his hotels during the Great Depression, but was able to hold on to the El Paso Hilton, the eighth hotel he had built.

The El Paso Hilton, which is now the Plaza, was used as a base from which he rebuilt the chain during the 40s and 50s.

HILTON'S MOTHER lived in the El Paso Hilton until 1947 and he visited the city often until 1963, when the hotel was sold and the name changed.

The Airport Hilton Inn opened in January 1960 as his fourth airport site inn in the U.S.

Hilton, several of his sons and a coterie of the rich and famous including Hollywood movie stars helped open the inn, which remains a Hilton hostelry.

The Hilton chain includes some of the most prestigious names in U.S. hotels and a globe-dotted string of hostelries for well-heeled American tourists who want to experience foreign travel from a base with American style beds, rooms, food service and amenities.

At one time or another, the Hilton group included the Waldorf Astoria and Plaza in New York, the Sir Francis Drake in San Francisco, the May-

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World-famous hotelier Conrad Hilton dies

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flower in Washington, D.C., and the Palmer House in Chicago.

Usually, hotels in other countries actually were owned by others, with the Hilton corporation leasing the buildings and running the hotels for one-third of the profits.

HE ALSO ESTABLISHED the Carte Blanche credit card company.

Two years ago, at the age of 89, he married for the third time, wedding Mary Frances Kelly, 61, a former sales representative for United Airlines in Chicago and World War II Red Cross worker.

A spokesman for the Gates-Kingsley-Gates Mortuary said Hilton's family was gathering and "there will be a Rosary Friday with a mass Saturday at St. Paul the Apostle. The body will be shipped to Dallas for interment."

HILTON PUBLICLY described himself as a devout Catholic, saying he was disturbed to be cut off from the sacraments during his marriage to

Miss Gabor, unrecognized by the Church because both were divorced from living spouses.

A man of tremendous energy, Hilton was at his desk six days a week into his late 80s.

Hilton ran his empire with the help of his sons by his first wife, Mary Barron, whom he married in 1925 — Conrad Nicholson Jr. or "Nicky", William Barron and Eric Michael.

BARRON HILTON became president of the Hilton Hotels Corp. Nicky Hilton — who married the 17-year-old Elizabeth Taylor in 1959, when he was 23, a marriage that fell apart in seven months — died of a heart attack in 1969 at age 42.

Hilton later wrote in his autobiography, "Be My Guest," that December 1941, brought a number of events in his life — his first chance to buy a hotel in New York, Pearl Harbor and "a Hungarian siren" then only 18 but already once divorced.

"She was blonde, witty, vivacious, just off the boat, a fascinating package, Zsa Zsa Gabor by name. Our marriage was doomed before it started."



Conrad Hilton

THEY HAD A daughter, Francesca, now a photographer, and were divorced in 1947.

Hilton was born in San Antonio Dec. 25, 1887, one of eight children of Mary and Augustus Holver Hilton of Oslo, Norway.

He grew up in New Mexico in the waning days of the Wild West. He later recalled being collared in a saloon by the town marshal of Albuquerque at the age of 12 after he and a classmate went AWOL from their military academy.