

## **John Baptiste Leon Dessez** (20 Mar 1825 – 17 May 1895)

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**Dessez, Jean Baptiste Leon.** Born March 20, 1825 died Friday, March 17, 1895 at 1:20 a.m. Funeral services at late residence, 2418 14th street northwest, Saturday at 2 p.m. Interment private.

*The Washington Post, May 24, 1895, p. 2*

### **Of A Distinguished Family**

#### **The Death of Jean Baptiste Dessez Recalls Interesting Historical Events**

Jean Baptiste Leon Dessez, aged seventy years, who died on the 17th instant at his residence, No. 2418 Fourteenth street northwest, belonged to an old and distinguished family of France, his maternal grandfather, George Tonnell, having held the honorable position of chancellor at the court of Louise XVI, and being devoted to the king's cause, was, with his wife, imprisoned in the Bastile during the reign of terror, and only by the secret intervention of a friend in power were their names removed from the fated list of those names sentenced to die by the guillotine. Later they were liberated, and lived to be warm personal friends of Napoleon 1, many interesting mementoes of whom Mr. Dessez's family still possess.

Stanch royalists as were his ancestors, Mr. Dessez has ever been a believer in republican form of government and institutions. He came many years ago to this country, where he successfully followed his profession of civil engineer and was engaged on important work in North Carolina when the late war began. He wore the gray, and rendered valuable service as military engineer in the construction of fortifications for the defense of Richmond. For many years past his home has been in Washington, where he held a position in the Hydrographic Office of the Navy Department, and otherwise lived quietly in the midst of his family circle, a devoted husband and father.

*Washington Post, February 15, 1896, p. 7*

### **Will of the Late Leon Dessez**

The late Leon Dessez in his will dated August 5, 1874 bequeaths to his wife, Mina all property to use and hold in trust for their children. Mrs. Dessez is named as executrix.