

James Henry Gately

(1892 – 28 Mar 1965)

Gately, James H. On Sunday, March 28, 1965, James H. Gately of 131 Huron dr., Forest Heights, Md., the beloved husband of Mildred C. Gately, father of Mrs. Raymond Stamp, James W., Sr, and Allen P. Gately, grandmother of James W., Jr., and Bonnie Jean Gately. Prayers at the Simmons Bros. Funeral Home 1661 Good Hope rd. se. (parking facilities), on Wednesday, March 31, at 9 a.m. Interment Congressional Cemetery. Visiting hours until 9 p.m.

The Evening Star, March 30, 1965, p. B4

J.H. Gately, 73, Last Horse-Drawn Fire Truck Driver

James H. Gately, 73, a retired fireman who drove the last District Fire Department horse-drawn pumper, died at Prince Georges County Hospital Sunday after a heart attack.

A lifetime resident of the District area, he was a blacksmith from 1913-19. He then joined the District Fire Department. In 1925, he drove the last horse-drawn pumper responding to an alarm. He retired from the department in 1943, a member of Engine Company No. 8. He lived at 131 Huron Drive, Forest Heights.

From 1943-45, Gately was a guard for the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Co. He was a clerk with W&J Sloan-Mayer furniture store on 7th Street NW from 1945-47. He then worked at the Potomac Grill, 917 11th St. SE until 1956.

Gately leaves his wife of 51 years, Mildred C., of the home two sons, James W. Gately Sr., 1705 D St. NE, and Allen P. Gately, of the home a daughter, Mrs. Raymond Stamp, 9919 Old Fort Friendly Road, Friendly, Md. a brother, William T., Mayo Beach, Md. a sister, Mrs. Annie Brashears, Chester St. SE and two grandchildren.

Services will be at 9 a.m. tomorrow from Simmons Brothers funeral home, 1661 Good Hope Road SE. Burial will be in Congressional Cemetery.

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James Gately, Drove Last Horse-Drawn Fire Truck

James H. Gately, whose experienced hands guided Barney, Gene and Tom, the dapple-gray team that pulled the last horse-drawn fire engine through Washington streets, died Sunday of a heart attack at his home, 131 Huron dr., Forest Heights, Md.

Mr. Gately, 73, a native of Washington, joined the Fire Department in 1918 and retired in 1943 after 25 years' service.

He spent most of his service at old Engine 8, which was then located at 637 North Carolina ave. se., where Barney, Gene and Tom were quartered.

The engine, which provided steam pressure for the water hoses, figured in many fires, notably the Jackson Furniture Co., the National Hotel, Kann's warehouse and the Knickerbocker Theater disaster.

In the theater tragedy in 1922, in which 98 persons were killed when snow caused the roof to collapse, Mr. Gately once recalled how he drove his team across the District to 18th Street and Columbia Road nw. along the street car tracks because it was the only path cleared of snow.

The three-horse team made its last run on June 15, 1925 in a ceremonial trot around Lincoln Park, out East Capitol St. down to Pennsylvania Avenue and back to Engine 8. The horses were retired to pasture at Blue Plains. The last horse, Tom who was named after old captain Thomas Buckley, died May 3, 1937.

Mr. Gately's tales of his firefighting experiences caused his two sons, James and Allen to become District firemen. James, 1705 D St. N.E., is assigned to No. 15 Engine as the 3d Battalion Chief's aide. And Allen, of the home address, is a pumper operator assigned to the new No. 8 Engine, at 15th and C Sts. se.

A daughter, Mrs. Raymond Stamps, of Friendly, Md., and two grandchildren also survive.