

Henry L. Gessford

(1 Feb 1861 – 4 Nov 1933)

Gessford. On Saturday, November 4th at his residence 4713 Piney Branch road n.w., Harry L., beloved husband of the late Kate Gessford. Funeral from his late residence on Monday, November 6th at 2 p.m. Interment at Congressional Cemetery.



Lieut. Mina C. Van Winkle, Lieut. A.J. Stoll, Sergt. J.M. Walsh, Detective Sergt. Patrick O'Brien and Dr. Borden, police surgeon.

Gessford. A special communication of Mount Pleasant Lodge, No. 33, F.A.A.M., is called for 1 o'clock Monday, November 6, 1933, for the purpose of attending the funeral services of our late brother, Harry L. Gessford. By order of worshipful master, John F. Putnam, Secty.

The Evening Star, December 8, 1921, p. 7

Silver For Gessford

Police Department to Present Service, Token of Esteem

As an expression of the high esteem in which they hold their former superintendent, Maj. Gessford, members of the police department will present to him a set of silver service at exercises in the board room of the District building at 4 o'clock Wednesday, December 14. The gift will consist of 122 pieces of flat silver, with his initials engraved on each piece.

The three Commissioners will attend the exercises and Commissioner Oyster, who supervises the police department, will make the presentation.

The presentation is being arranged by a committee composed of Inspector F.E. Cross, Capt. E.W. Brown,

The Washington Post, November 5, 1933, p. 15

Maj. Gessford, Retired Head Of Police, Dies

Noted for His Service in Unknown Soldier Demonstration

Maj. Harry L. Gessford, former superintendent of police, died yesterday at his home, 4713 Piney Branch road, from an illness which began previous to his retirement from the superintendency in 1921.

The major illness was attributed to overwork in making police arrangements for the huge demonstration held here during the burial of the Unknown Soldier. In the two weeks preceding the ceremony he made more than 2,000 police details, a record for the department.

Maj. Gessford joined the department in January, 1881, at the time his father, James W. Gessford, was a lieutenant on the force. He became a first class private in 1892 and acting sergeant in 1899. In 1901 he was made a sergeant, the next day a lieutenant and the day following, a captain. Five years later he was promoted to the post of inspector, and on August 10, 1919, he was appointed assistant superintendent of police, under Maj. R.W. Pullman.

When Maj. Pullman died, August 19, 1920, Gessford was chosen superintendent. He was succeeded by Maj. Sullivan, after almost 41 years in the department.

Maj. Gessford, a native of Washington, was a member of Mount Pleasant Chapter, No. 13, R.A.M.; Mount Pleasant Lodge, No. 33, F.A.A.M., the Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs and the Board of Trade.

Funeral services will be held tomorrow at the home. Interment will be in Congressional Cemetery. A police escort will be designated by Maj. Brown, Superintendent of Police.

All flags on precinct police stations were ordered lowered to half mast.

Maj. Gessford is survived by three sons, five daughters and nine grandchildren. His wife died eight years ago.