

Francis A. Sebring (1859 – 22 Feb 1937)

Sebring, Francis A. On Monday, February 22, 1937, at his residence, 5320 Colorado ave. n.w., Francis A. Sebring, beloved husband of Carrie Hickenloober Sebring. Funeral services from his residence on Wednesday, February 24, at 2 p.m. Interment Congressional cemetery.

The Evening Star, February 22, 1937, p. B1

Sebring, Police Court Clerk For Last 30 Years, Dies at 77 Was Ill Two Months, Would Have Been Retired March 1



FRANCIS A. SEBRING
Eminent Commander—1909

Francis A. Sebring, 77, clerk of Police Court for the last 30 years, who would have been retired March 1, died today at his home, 5320 Colorado avenue, after an illness of two months.

Mr. Sebring, who had been confined to his home by illness since early in December, asked to be retired in a letter addressed to Presiding Judge John P. McMahon last month. His request, made because of poor health, was approved and Walter F. Bramhall has been appointed as his successor, to take office March 1. William A. Norgren is acting chief clerk.

Retirement of Mr. Sebring, who had been an employe of the court more than 40 years, was blocked in 1932 when Police Court judges interceded in his behalf and obtained special orders from President Hoover waiving terms of the economy act in his case.

Praised by Judges

In asking that he be retained in office beyond the retirement age fixed in the act, the judges said in their request to the President that Mr. Sebring's "capability, sound judgment and energy and capacity for work has not been diminished because of his age"

President Hoover granted a 30-day extension in office and later a further extension was granted under which he had held office up to the time of his final illness.

The judges paid high tribute to the veteran court clerk in their request of 1932.

"Under his progressive regime" they said, "the system in vogue in the Police Court is well above the average found in other jurisdictions. In view of the splendid organization which he has built up and his ability to handle difficult situations, which constantly arise, and his thorough knowledge of all precedents and retentive memory relating thereto, which are of inestimable value to the judges, his retention is therefore considered vital to the interests of the general public and to the judges of this court."

Refused Vacations

The judges cited the fact that he had been absent from his desk because of illness only twice in his long term of service -- during the World War, when he was a victim of the influenza epidemic, and in 1919, when he was run down by an automobile. For many years he refused to take vacations.

Mr. Sebring was prominent in Masonic affairs. He was a thirty-third degree Mason, past master of Temple-Noyes Lodge, past potentate of Almas Temple of the Shrine, past high priest of Mount Vernon Chapter, Scottish Rite, and past commander of Columbia Commandery, Knights Templar.

Born in Chatfield, Minn., Mr. Sebring came to Washington as a young man, after having been admitted to the bar in North Dakota. He was graduated from the University of Rochester in 1886. He was personal page to James G. Blaine during part of Blaine's service in the House and then worked for the Census Bureau and the Treasury Department before going to Police Court 43 years ago.

Collected Autographs

For 60 years Mr. Sebring had collected autographs of eminent American statesmen which fill a volume of more than 100 pages. He began the hobby in 1876 when he was a page in the House and obtained the signatures not only of all members of the Congress of that period but practically all the notable Capitol figures of the day, even of the justices of the Supreme Court. Resident Grant and his cabinet members all signed. All of the Presidents since Grant have signed. His book has been sought for years by collectors of Americana.

Mr. Sebring is survived by his widow, Mrs. Carrie H Sebring; two daughters, Mrs. Stephen O. Ford of this city and Mrs. George P. Plummer of Rockville, Md., and by two sisters, Mrs. Celia Sebring Knoepfel of Nashville, Tenn., and Mrs. Libbie Doremus of Newton Center, Mass.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday at the home, with interment in Congressional Cemetery.

The Evening Star, February 23, 1937, p. B1

F.A. Sebring Rites Set For Tomorrow

St. John's Rector to Conduct Funeral Service for Police Court Clerk

Funeral services for Francis A. Sebring, 77, clerk of Police Court for the last 30 years, who died yesterday at his home, 5320 Colorado avenue, after a two-month illness, will be held at his house tomorrow at 2 p.m. Rev. Oliver J. Hart, rector of St. John's Church, will officiate.

Burial will be in Congressional Cemetery, where both church and Masonic blue lodge services will be conducted. Eight Masonic pallbearers will serve, two being from Temple-Noyes Lodge, of which Mr. Sebring was past master, Collin Guy and Adolphe Gude. He was a thirty-third degree Mason.

An employe of the court for more than 40 years, Mr. Sebring would have been retired March 1 in recognition of a request made by him to Presiding Judge John P. McMahan last month.

Surviving are his wife, Mrs. Carrie H Sebring; two daughters, Mrs. Stephen O. Ford of this city and Mrs. George P. Plummer of Rockville, Md., and two sisters, Mrs. Celia Sebring Knoepfel of Nashville, Tenn., and Mrs. Libbie Doremus of Newton Center, Mass.

The Washington Post, February 23, 1937, p. 10

Sebring Death Ends 40 Years of Court Work

Clerk Was to Retire in Week; Funeral to Be Held Tomorrow

Exactly one week before he was to retire as clerk of Police Court after 30 years in that post, Francis A. Sebring, 77, died yesterday at his home, 5320 Colorado avenue northwest.

Confined more than two months to his home by illness, Mr. Sebring was to have been succeeded as court clerk by Walter F. Bramhall on March 1. More than 40 years as an employe of the court, he asked to be retired in a letter to Presiding Judge John P. McMahan on February 3.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. tomorrow at the residence. Burial will be in Congressional Cemetery.

Mr. Sebring is survived by his widow, Mrs. Carie H. Sebring; two daughters, Mrs. Stephen O. Ford, of Washington, and Mrs. George P. Plummer, of Rockville, Md. And two sisters, Mrs. Celia Sebring Knoeppel, of Nashville, and Mrs. Libbie Doremus, of Newton Center, Mass.

He was born in Chatfield, Minn., graduated from the University of Rochester in 1886, admitted to the bar of North Dakota and came to the Capital as a young man. For a time he was personal page to Representative James G. Blaine and worked for the Census Bureau and the Treasury Department before assuming his Police Court duties in the early nineties.

His statutory retirement in 1932 was blocked by the members of the Police Court bench, whose intercession was responsible for a special dispensation order of President Hoover. The judges informed the President that Mr. Sebring's "capability, sound judgment and energy and capacity for work have not been diminished because of his age."

A 30-day extension in office resulted, to be followed by other extensions.

Disdainful of vacations, Mr. Sebring was absent from his desk only twice, when he was felled by influenza during the World War epidemic and a year later when he was struck by an auto.

He was a thirty-third degree Mason, past master of Temple-Noyes Lodge, past potentate of Almas Temple of the Shrine, past high priest of Mount Vernon Chapter, and past commander of Columbia Commandery, Knights Templar.