

## [Griswold, Gaylon Gilbert]

### Gaylon G. Griswold Dies in South

FORMER CANTON ASSISTANT POSTMASTER VICTIM OF HEART ATTACK  
Came of Early North Country Settlers. Wife Was Member of Sykes Family.

Word reached Canton relatives Tuesday evening of the death at St. Petersburg, Fla. on Monday of Gaylon Griswold. The body, accompanied by his daughter, Lieut. Eleanor Griswold of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, reached here Thursday night and on Saturday afternoon services were held at the Lawrence funeral parlor. Rev Hugh S. Tigner, pastor of the Universalist church, gave the invocation and the Masonic service followed. Burial was at Fairview cemetery.

Mr. Griswold, as has been his custom for several years, left Canton early in the fall for his trip south for the winter. He stopped as usual for a visit with his children on Long Island. Upon arriving in Florida he immediately looked up his old friends, especially the members of the old Kids and Kubs three-quarter century softball teams with whom he planned a winter of umpiring. It will be recalled that two years ago last February he was taken ill while playing with these teams. On the advice of his physician he gave up playing and had contented himself with umpiring an occasional game as his principal pastime.

Monday evening just after he had ordered dinner with a friend, he died suddenly of a heart attack. His daughter, Lieut. Eleanor Griswold, was with the WAACS at Daytona Beach and was quickly reached.

Because of his life-long Canton associations, and his 33 years in the postoffice here, Gaylon Griswold was known by many. He was born on Elm street in what was the Griswold home for over half a century, the present Major Horace Hale residence, on April 29, 1861. His father, David Gilbert Griswold, lived to be 90 years of age, was a Civil War veteran, and for many years a painter and paper hanger by profession. David Griswold was born in a log cabin near Woodbridge Corners when Canton was still only partially settled. His wife, Harriett Brigham Griswold, came from Madrid. They christened their third child Gaylon Gilbert, and he was one of their five children. The five, in order of their ages, were: Charles, who died about a year ago in Chicago; Miss Lillian, now of Akron, N.Y.; Gaylon; Harriet (Mrs. Wall), of Akron, N.Y., and John A. Griswold of Canton. All were born at the Elm street home and Gaylon often remarked that he moved but once in his life, by wheelbarrow, when he came from his parents' home to the corner of Elm and Park street at the time of his marriage.

As a young man he clerked in the Jewett store. Later he was with his father and brother in the papering and painting business when they occupied the present McPhee store and did business under the name of Griswold, French and Griswold. In 1899 Gaylon joined the staff at the postoffice and was so employed until 1932 when he retired on a pension. He served many years as assistant postmaster. On May 16, 1887, he married Ellie Sykes, Dr. Henry Prentice Forbes performing the ceremony. She was a neighbor and member of a well-known Canton family, her father having been Bingham Sykes, the son of that early Canton settler from Vermont, Heber Sykes. Heber was the grandfather of the late Dr. Richard Eddy Sykes and great-grandfather of Edwin Sykes.

Bingham's widow, Lydia, and three daughters moved from the farm and lived on Park street at the corner of Elm street... It was in this house that Lydia Sykes mothered her children, and it was there that Gaylon and his bride came to live immediately upon their marriage. First the Sykes place, it later became known as the Griswold home and is such today, though now rented to the Young family from St. Regis Falls.

Here Gaylon Griswold spent fifty-five years of his life, here where he and his wife had lived so happily and had raised their family of five fine children. In July, 1932, he retired from the post office position and looked forward to the joys and comforts of home life during his last years.

[Griswold, Gaylon Gilbert]

Sorrow soon entered the home, however, for on December 6, 1932, Mrs. Griswold was taken. Mr. Griswold continued to live in the home, and there his children came each summer to be with him and keep the family ties firm.

Gaylon accepted what life had provided for him and during his remaining years found much of interest in life. As a young man he had played baseball with the Canton All Stars, and never lost interest in this sport. He attended about every ball game played in Canton and followed the Big Leagues closely. During the six winters in the South he timed his trip so that he could attend the World Series in New York. In the South he joined the Kids and Kubs Softball league at St. Petersburg and with these oldsters played a great game. In fact his reputation as a batter spread far and wide throughout the nation's Softball circles, as these two teams made up of men all over 75 years of age, attracted national sports attention and received many handsome write-ups. Gaylon was the leading batter for his team.

An interesting incident in his life came one spring when the New York Giants were holding spring practice at St Petersburg. Hal Schumacher was with them; of course Gaylon knew the Giant star well and became a regular on the sidelines during the Giants' training season. One day Schumacher sat down beside Gaylon and in talking over St. Lawrence days and Coach Burkman's ball club, Hal said, "When you get back to Canton, look up this lad, Steve Peek, at the Alpha House, and tell him not to do anything about signing up with any club until he has seen Terry."

The minute he reached Canton Gaylon started on this scouting assignment, but when he saw Steve Peek he learned that the New York Yankees had gotten there first and had the young pitcher signed on the dotted line.

Death came to Gaylon Griswold as he would have chosen, quickly, in fact instantly. He had attended a ball game in the afternoon and had gone out for his evening meal and while sitting at the table collapsed. It was all over in a second. His death came ten years and one day after that of his wife.

He was a member of the Universalist Church and of St. Lawrence St. Lawrence Lodge No. 111, F & A.M.

Surviving are his five children, E. K. Griswold, who is an executive for the Art Metal Company with offices in New York City; Mrs. William G. Griffiths, Port Washington; Lieut. Eleanor Griswold, Daytona Beach, Fla.; Miss Alice Griswold, Freeport, and G. Sykes Griswold of Trenton, N. J. There are also the brother, John A. Griswold, of Canton, and the two sisters, Miss Lillian Griswold and Mrs. Harriet G. Wall, both of Akron, N.Y. All five children are graduates of St. Lawrence University.

*St. Lawrence Plaindealer*, Canton NY, Tue. 15 Dec 1942

Transcribed on 29 Aug 2008 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY