

"H. P. Gorsuch, Editor and Prominent Citizen"  
Carroll County Times article for 16 September 2001  
By Jay A. Graybeal

A number of Carroll County newspaper editors have played prominent roles in the history of the county. John K. Longwell, editor of The Carrolltonian, used his paper to promote the idea of founding the county in the 1830s. Editors often became community leaders and the death of a long time editor was news. The June 23, 1944 issue of the Times carried a story, Harry Peyton Gorsuch, Editor and Prominent Citizen Dies, on page one:

"Harry Peyton Gorsuch, one of the county's best known and beloved citizens, died Sunday, June 18, 1944, at 6:30 o'clock at his home 131 East Main street. Although in declining health for the past two years, his death comes as a shock to his many friends, not only locally, but through the state. Death was due to a chronic bronchial and heart condition.

Mr. Gorsuch was for many years widely known as a public speaker, and the demand for his services in this capacity took him to many sections of the state. His wit and philosophy made him popular wherever he was heard. He was well known, too, for his activities in politics, having always been a staunch Republican, and was one of the recognized leaders of his party in the county over a long period of years.

Since August 1, 1914 he has been editor of The Times, and with its readers his First Page Editorial was always a popular feature of the paper.

Mr. Gorsuch was interested in all municipal matters, and always worked for the betterment of his city and county. He was liberal to all worthy causes, and was especially concerned in War Veterans affairs and their organizations. He had always felt deeply disappointed that the people of Carroll county had failed to provide a fitting memorial for the men and women of the county who had served in the First World War. In 1937 he personally paid for and had erected a beautiful memorial gateway at the Center street entrance of the municipal grounds.

The two handsome flags in the Court room at the Court House were a gift from him, as well as the large flag which floats from the flag pole at the City Hall, presented when the building was dedicated in 1942.

During World War I, Mr. Gorsuch was vice-chairman of the Carroll County Chapter American Red Cross, and from 1920 to 1934, served as chairman. He served on the War Work Committee, the Council of Defense and was active in all war campaigns.

He was born near Dennings, this county, November 15, 1863, the son of Robert D. and Sarah Ann Gardner Gorsuch. His early education was at the Warfieldsburg public school. He later attended New Windsor College for two years. At the age of sixteen, he accepted a clerkship with the dry goods firm of Orndorf and Sharrer in Westminster, remaining with this firm seven years, until it was dissolved. He continued with John T. Orndorf as clerk and buyer for five years, then accepted a position as a traveling salesman for Moulton Brothers, wholesale dry goods and notions firm, of Baltimore.

In 1888 he was called to be the secretary and assistant manager of the Catoctin Mountain Iron Company at Catoctin, Md., and was later one of the receivers in the sale of the company's property which included 11,000 acres. His uncle, Thomas Gorsuch, who was president of the firm, died in 1896 and the company was then dissolved. He served as a postmaster at Catoctin six years. Mr. Gorsuch again took up

residence in Westminster. In September of that year (1896) he and the late Jesse C. Sharrer formed the partnership of Sharrer and Gorsuch, merchant tailors and retailers of men's clothing and accessories. This firm continued until 1917 when Harry J. Starr became a partner. In 1936 Mr. Gorsuch sold his interests to Mr. Starr and Edward G. Little, the present firm, and retired.

On April 1, 1910 he was appointed Postmaster, by President Taft, succeeding the late Samuel K. Herr, and served one term of four years.

Widely known as a fraternalist, he was a member of Door-to-Virtue Lodge No. 46 A. F. and A. M. since 1886, and served as master in 1901 and 1907; a member and former Most Excellent Scribe of Carroll Royal Arch Chapter No. 31; Carroll Council No. 7, Royal and Select Masters; Masonic Veterans Association of Baltimore; and since 1899 a member of the Grand Lodge of Masons of Maryland.

He held membership in Charity Lodge No. 58, Knights of Pythias; was past president of the Blue Ridge Fraternal Insurance Association; the Westminster Chamber of Commerce, and was a charter member and past president of the Westminster Rotary Club.

When The Times Printing company was organized in 1914, he was elected its first president, and served in that office until his death. He was elected director of The First National Bank of Westminster in 1910 and was its vice-president for seventeen years, retiring in December 1943. He had served on the Board of Visitors to the Maryland School for the Deaf at Frederick. In 1919 he was elected to the Maryland Legislature, and served one four-year term. He declined other political offices. Until three years ago Mr. Gorsuch was president of the Westminster Cemetery Company having been elected in 1930. At the time of his death he was serving on its Board of Managers.

In 1943 when the Westminster Chamber of Commerce inaugurated its outstanding citizenship award, Mr. Gorsuch was chosen the first to receive this honor."

As noted in his obituary, H. P. Gorsuch was well known for his First Page Editorial, strong support for World War I veterans and his involvement in projects for the betterment of Carroll County.



*This image of Harry Peyton Gorsuch accompanied his obituary in the June 23, 1944 issue of this newspaper. Gorsuch was the founding president of The Times Printing Company and the editor since 1914. Historical Society of Carroll County collection, gift of Mrs. Arleigh Burke, 1986.*