

John M. Kenney

(1864 – 8 Feb 1954)

Kenney, John M. On Monday, February 8, 1954, in Philadelphia, Pa., John M. Kenney, aged 92, husband of Katherine Kenney. Graveside services at Congressional Cemetery on Thursday, February 11, at 1:45 p.m.

The Washington Post, February 23, 1904, p. 9

Lieut. Kenney Resigns

Tenth Police Precinct Loses Officer in Command Offered A Better Position

Maj. Sylvester Deplores a Salary System Which Has Cost the Department So Many Trained and Efficient Men -- Half a Dozen Sergeants Named in Connection with the Vacancy

Another change in the police department was announced yesterday, when Lieut. John Kenney, of No. 10 precinct handed his resignation to Maj. Richard Sylvester. Lieut. Kenney said that he intended accepting a flattering offer from a Philadelphia firm. He addressed a letter full of kindly feeling to the superintendent, thanking him for his friendship and assistance, and stated that only the bettering of his condition in life promoted the change.

Lieut. Kennedy was appointed a member of the force in 1883. The son of a mother whose family were seamen, he early acquired a fondness for such life, and when twelve years of age had made several trips to Europe and South America. At seventeen he became a trooper in the army, and participated in the Indian campaign. In 1883 he went with the Garlington relief expedition in search of Lieut. A.W. Greely and his companions. He was on the Proteus, which was crushed in the ice July 23, 1883, eight miles north of Cape Sabine, and he and others were left adrift in Smiths Sound. After thirty one days they were rescued off the coast of Greenland.

Goes to Mounted Officer

The lieutenant has always proven himself active, intelligent, and fearless, and leaves the department with the best wishes of all of his associates. He was a mounted officer, and his successor will be such. A promotion has already been arranged for except to receive the approval of Commissioner West, who will take up the matter this morning. Just who it will be, of course, cannot be announced until today, but the names of half a dozen of the younger sergeants have been prominently mentioned, and it is believed that the appointment lies between Williams, of No. 1 precinct; Elliott, of No. 9, Hartley of No. 1; Schneider of No. 7; Falvey of No. 9 and Sullivan of No. 1.

Apropos of the going of Lieut. Kenney, which means the loss of another capable man, Maj. Richard Sylvester said last night that good men were in demand in the service, but the better pay they were able to secure elsewhere is always a strong inducement for them to leave. The same conditions obtain in the fire department.

For the past two years Maj. Sylvester has been earnest in his recommendation to Commissioner West that his officers, privates, and employes have been underpaid, when their compensation is compared with that allowed to other first-class cities, and the Commissioner has been endeavoring to better the situation in every way consistent with the many other District interests which must be maintained. While these officials have the welfare of the police at heart in this matter, they likewise contend that the firemen are living under many of the conditions which confront the police and fire

likewise. Inadequately remunerated for their services. The question which confronts the municipal protection is a plain business proposition.

Higher Prices a Factor

The cost of living has advanced within the past several years, and, in commercial life employes, agents, and managers have increased salaries all along the line. The policemen and firemen must meet these advances in living, and not only that, but provide themselves with uniforms and pay occasional penalties. The police uniform, both for summer and winter, is an expense of considerable extent -- appearance, warmth, and convenience entering into its construction, with rain coats and under garments as a part to supply. In Philadelphia a uniform allowance is made, in New York, Jersey City, and may other places, higher pay is given than in the District. In Jersey City the sergeant of police gets as much salary as a lieutenant receives in this jurisdiction. Maj. Sylvester smiles when he refers to his school for stenographers. The law allows \$900 and \$720 a year for these clerks, who work overtime, on holidays and part of Sundays, and about the time one becomes proficient, the Major says, someone who can give more pay takes him away, and no little difficulty attends the procuring of a new man. This results in the superintendent's work accumulating, and many embarrassments follow. During the last year or so the superintendent has lost in this way three or four stenographers, and he says he will not stand in the way of bettering a young man's condition.

Sergt. Carter Promoted

Sergt. Joseph Carter, who has been on duty at police headquarters for many years past, was promoted yesterday to the post of assistant captain, and detailed to Capt. Boardman's office. Sergt. Carter will go on duty daily at 8 o'clock and remain until relieved by Sergt. Helan, who takes charge at night. The purpose is to have someone in authority at headquarters every hour of the twenty-four.

Sergt. Carter became a member of the Metropolitan police force twenty-nine years ago, and did patrol duty for fifteen years. Then he was attached to the detective office, where he later became sergeant in charge at night. A few months ago, upon the retirement of Capt. Vernon, he took up the duties of that official, remaining there until the promotion of yesterday.

Capt. Isaac Pearson is expected to retire soon, and it is predicted that Lieut. Amiss, of No. 1 precinct, will be advanced to the captaincy.