

## John Walter Hendley

(1827 – 3 Jul 1899)

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*The Evening Star, July 4, 1899, p. 7*

### **Death of John W. Hendley**

#### **Maker of Wax Models the Victim of Apoplexy**

#### **Was an Old Resident of Washington and Well-Known in Official Circles**

Mr. John Walter Hendley died last night soon after 8 o'clock at his residence, 704 F street southwest, of a stroke of apoplexy. Mr. Hendley has been indisposed for several days, and kept in his room. Last night he attempted to descend to the lower floor, but fell, striking his head against the wall and receiving a severe shock. He was unconscious when picked up, and, although everything possible was done for him, he did not rally. An ambulance was called, and he was taken to the Emergency Hospital, but on arrival there was pronounced dead by the surgeon.

Mr. Hendley was an old resident of Washington and well known in government circles. For a great many years he was employed by the Agricultural Department and the National Museum in making wax models of figures, fruits and other objects. Mr. Hendley was so proficient in this art that he was regarded as being without a peer. His productions were so life-like and so true to nature that it was often impossible to identify them as imitations.

#### *Native of Virginia*

John Walter Hendley was born in Heathsville, Va., in 1827, and was, therefore, 72 years of age. When still a very young man he enlisted in the navy for the war with Mexico, and was on the flagship Ohio during the years of that contest. This vessel cruised the Pacific, and when Hendley's time was out he was discharged in the Bay of San Francisco, in 1847, a few months before the first gold discoveries. When gold was discovered he made his way to the mines, and in 1852 started home overland with \$110,000. He was very unfortunate in the investment of his money, however, and in two years after his return lost it all.

When the civil war broke out he enlisted with the other youths of the neighborhood in the confederate army, and in 1862, after being discharged on account of ill-health, made his way to Washington and began to model wax flowers.

*The Evening Star, July 6, 1899*

### **Funeral of John W. Hendley**

Funeral services were held this afternoon over the remains of John W. Hendley, at the late residence, 704 F street southwest. The pallbearers were William Palmer, chief taxidermist at the National Museum; Chas. Wolff and Edwin H. Hawley, also of the National Museum, and Edward B. Collins, William T. Whelan and Charles F. Wehausen.

*McMahan, Virgil E. The Artists of Washington, DC, 1796-1996. The Artists of Washington, Washington, DC, 1995.*

### **HENDLEY, JOHN W.**

Artist born in Virginia in 1827 he was a modeler for the Smithsonian Institution in the 1890s. He died in Washington, DC in 1899. REFS: AAA; GROCE; MILLET 1; OPITZ; WBD (1898-1899).