

## Richard S. Kenney ( - 25 Dec 1928)

---

**Kenney, Richard S.** Suddenly Tuesday, December 25, 1928 at his residence, 1241 E street southeast, Richard S. Kenney, beloved son of Adella A. Kenney (nee Shelton) and the late John W. Kenney. Funeral Friday, December 28 at 2 p.m. Interment at Congressional Cemetery. Friends and relatives invited.

*The Evening Star, December 25, 1928, p. 1*

### **Tragic Death Of Son Shatters Widow's Joy Christmas Reunion Turned to Sorrow as Only Child, Home for Holiday, Is Electrocuted in Bathtub**

A happy Christmas reunion between a widowed mother and her only son was turned into tragedy this morning when Richard S. Kenney, 18, of 1241 E street southeast was electrocuted as he picked up an electric heater while standing in a bathtub of water.

Members of the Fire Department rescue squad and physicians from Casualty Hospital worked over the boy for hours, but unsuccessfully.

The young man had been working in Boston, Mass. It was with considerable difficulty that he managed the trip to Washington to be with his mother on Christmas.

"I was in the kitchen preparing our Christmas dinner," the mother, Mrs. Adela Kenney, said, "Richard was in the bathroom. I heard him scream 'Mother!' three times, and I ran upstairs, afraid that he had scalded himself.

"I knocked on the door, but he didn't answer. It was locked, so went out on the roof and tried to get in through a window, but it was too small. I could see him lying in the tub with the heater clutched in his hand.

"As soon as I saw him I knew what had happened because I received a shock from the heater just a day or so ago. He came home to me and now I have lost him."

Unable to get through the window, Mrs. Kenney returned to the house and called her brother-in-law. Together they broke down the door and carried the boy out.

Members of the rescue squad worked with a pulmotor and oxygen but they were unable to restore heart action. A doctor from the hospital tried strychnine and adrenalin. When everything had failed they told all but the mother that there was no hope.

In the front room of the house stood a gaily decorated Christmas tree surrounded by a little pile of presents. Those exchanged between the mother and the boy had not been opened. Mrs. Kenney said she had been waiting for him to come downstairs so they could open them together.

Near the door lay a child's tea set and a doll where the small daughter of the brother-in-law, Vernon J. Shelton, had dropped them as she was hurriedly taken to a neighbor's house. The brightly burning lights on the tree and the Christmas decorations hanging in the windows served only to accentuate the tragic silence in the home.

The boy was an only child. His father died several years ago.

Police who examined the heater said they could find no defect, but expressed the belief that a short circuit was responsible for the accident. The young man had used the same heater without mishap last night.

*The Evening Star, December 26, 1928, p. 9*

**Electrocuted Youth To Be Buried Friday  
Funeral Services Will Be Held From Home of Widowed Mother**

Funeral services for Richard S. Kenney, 18, who was electrocuted when he touched an electric heater while standing in a bathtub of water Christmas morning, will be held at 2 o'clock Friday afternoon at the home, 1241 E street southeast. Burial will be in Congressional Cemetery.

The young man, only child of Mrs. Adela Kenney, had come to Washington from Boston to spend the holidays with his mother. He went to take a bath and was killed when he picked up the heater believed to have been short-circuited.

Members of the Fire Department rescue squad and physicians from Casualty Hospital worked unsuccessfully for hours to revive him.

*The Washington Post, December 27, 1928, p. 17*

**Rites For R.S. Kenney**

Funeral services for Richard S. Kenney, 18 years old, who was electrocuted when he touched an electric heater while standing in a bathtub of water Christmas morning, will be held at 2 o'clock tomorrow afternoon at the Kenney home, 1241 E street southeast. Burial will be in the Congressional Cemetery

Mr. Kenney had come to Washington from Boston to pass the holidays with his mother, Mrs. Adela Kenney.