

## Godwin Pierce

(12 Jul 1829 – 21 Apr 1897)

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*The Washington Post, September 11, 1887, p. 8*

### Over Twenty-Five Years of Service

Today is the twenty-sixth anniversary of the organization of the Metropolitan Police Force. The present members of the force who were included in the organization are: Lieuts. James Gessford, A.A. Greer, John F. Kelly, C.K. Vernon, Acting Sergeant Cornelius Noonan and Officers John T. Findlay, Godwin Pierce and Caleb Sebastian.



**Godwin Pierce**

*The Washington Post, September 11, 1890, p. 8*

### Only a Few Veterans Left

New policemen should take off their hats today whenever any of them meet these veterans: Lieut. John F. Kelly, Lieut. James W. Gessford, Lieut. Charles R. Vernon, Acting Sergt. Cornelius Noonan, and Privates Godwin Pierce, Caleb Sebastian, John J. Findley, and Augustus Brown. All these men are on duty except Findley, who is on the retired list, September 11, 1861, the Metropolitan Police force was started out upon its career, and this is the twenty-ninth

anniversary of its organization. Its record will compare favorably with any, and will surpass many.

*The Washington Post, April 13, 1897, p. 10*

### Police Department Notes

Returns from the police census are not all in yet, but it is stated that those from the Third Precinct indicate increased population over that of two years ago. Figures from the eighth show a decrease. Chief Clerk Sylvester predicts a general decrease from previous estimates.

Sergt. Godwin Pierce, whose post is at the District Building, and who was stricken with paralysis a short time ago, is reported to be improving, but his condition will not warrant a return to work for some time. He is one of the original members of the force, is very popular and much missed by those whose business calls them to the Commissioners' offices.

Station Clerk Albert R. Lamb, of the First Precinct, has just been married to Miss Serena Gray, of this city.

Police Privates I.S. Green and William Robey will shortly be retired, on account of physical disability.

**Pierce.** On Wednesday, April 21, 1897 at 2:20 a.m., Godwin Pierce in the 70th year of his age. Funeral from his late residence, No. 417 11th street southeast on Friday, April 23 at 4 o'clock, Lebanon Lodge, F.A.A.M., Veteran Firemen's Association, Metropolitan police force and all friends are invited to attend.

*The Evening Star, April 21, 1897*

### Death of Sergt. Pierce

Sergt. Godwin Pierce, who was stricken with paralysis while on duty at the District building about three weeks ago, as published in The Star, at the time, died at his home, No. 417 11th street southeast,

at 2:20 o'clock this morning. He was one of the officers who went on duty the day of the organization of the present police force, September 11, 1861. The only surviving originals now on the force are Lieuts. Kelly, Gessford and Vernon, and Private Gus Brown, who is detailed at the Free bridge in Georgetown.

Sergt. Pierce was a native of Philadelphia, having been born there sixty-eight years ago. Before the war he came here, and being a brickmaker by trade, he soon found employment as manager of Plant's brick yards. When the police force was organized he gave up the brick business for the baton, and has been a faithful officer during all these years. For about ten years he has been detailed at the entrance to the District building, and during his last absence many inquiries by people who had seen him there were made for him. He leaves a widow, two daughters, Mrs. Cleveland and Mrs. McKenzie, and a son. His funeral will take place from his late residence Friday, at 4 o'clock, and members of the Veteran Volunteer Firemen's Association, of which he was a member, will attend the funeral. He was a member of Lebanon Lodge, F.A.A.M.

*The Washington Post, April 22, 1897, p. 10*

#### **Veteran Police Officer Dead**

##### **Sergt. Godwin Pierce Was One of the Original Members of the Force**

Sergt. Godwin Pierce, who for ten years had been on duty at the entrance to the District Building, died at his residence, 417 Eleventh street southeast, early Wednesday morning. He was stricken with paralysis three weeks ago while at his post of duty. The funeral will take place from the residence at 4 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. It will be attended by a delegation of the Veteran Volunteer Firemen's Association and Lebanon Lodge, F.A.A.M., both of which he belonged to.

Sergt. Pierce was one of the original members of the police force as organized in September, 1861. He was born in Philadelphia and came to Washington to work as manager of Plant's brick yards. He left the brick business to become a member of the police force. During his long term of service at the District Building he made many friends and he will be missed from his accustomed station at the door.

*The Evening Star, April 28, 1897, p. 10*

#### **Will of a Former Policeman**

##### **Leaves Estate to His Children**

The will of the late Godwin Pierce, who was a member of the Metropolitan Police force, dated September 18, 1895, with a codicil dated August 19, 1896, and filed yesterday, names George W. Pierce as executor. To each of his daughters, Annie Cleveland and Fannie McKenzie, is deeded a one-half interest in premises 417 Eleventh street southeast. To George W. Pierce, a son, is given all the moneys due the testator at the time of his death, not otherwise disposed of by his will, and the benefits from certain insurance policies and money to his credit in the National Bank of Washington. To Mrs. McKenzie the proceeds from a policy in the Metropolitan Insurance Company are bequeathed.