

Samuel Hamilton Walker

(7 Jun 1844 – 24 Jan 1935)

The Evening Star, August 7, 1886, p. 5

Major Walker's Eligibility

A Question Raised as to His Qualification For His Present Office

The question of the eligibility of Major Walker to office as major and superintendent of police has been raised, under the law which provides that "no person shall be appointed as policeman or watchman who has not served in the army or navy of the United States and received an honorable discharge." Major Walker, it is stated, never served in the army or navy. The question is whether the major is a policeman or not. The law will be examined by First Controller Durham, when the accounts of the police including the payment of Major Walker's salary will come before him for approval. The District Commissioners considered this matter when Major Walker was appointed, but concluded that the law did not apply to the major of police.

Attorney Davis' Opinion Of The Law

Mr. Riddle, the attorney of the District, being out of the city, a reporter of The Star asked Mr. H.E. Davis, the assistant attorney, his views on the subject.

Mr. Davis said: "The chapter of the Revised Statutes of the United States relating to the District of Columbia which deals with the Metropolitan police is chapter thirteen, pp. 38-51 That chapter is the reviser's consolidation and arrangement of a number of acts and parts of acts dealing with the subject of the police, and extending over the years from 1861 to 1878. What is now known as section 340 of the Revised Statutes, relating to the District, contains parts of three separate acts passed respectively in 1861, 1862 and 186. This section enumerates those of whom the police force shall consist, which enumeration comprises a certain number of privates and a certain number of officers, including the major, above the rank of private. What is now known as section 854 of the Revised Statutes relating to the District is as follows:

'No person shall be appointed to office, or hold office in the police force, who cannot read and write the English language, or who is not a citizen of the United States, or who shall ever have been indicted and convicted of crime; and no person shall be appointed as policeman or watchman who has not served in the army or navy of the United States and received an honorable discharge.'

Down to the semicolon, after the word 'crime,' the provision of this section is taken from section 8 of the act of 1861 creating the Metropolitan police. The rest of the section is taken from the legislative, executive and judicial appropriation act of March 2, 1867; and was originally a proviso attached to the clause of that act which stated the appropriations for the Metropolitan police. That the word "policeman" in this provisions was not intended to include the major of the force seems perfectly clear. In no one of the acts of parts of acts dealing with the force in the sense of one who is in control or management. In the original act he was denominated 'a superintendent of police;' and by the act of July 28, 1866, it was provided 'that the chief executive officer of the police shall hereafter be styled major.'

On the other hand, what are now known as privates were, by the original act, designated to 'privates' having been made by the act of July 28, 1866, just mentioned. You will observe that this act ante-dates the appropriation act which the provision in question originated; and it would not seem to admit of doubt that the words 'policeman or watchman' were used in the provision in full memory of the clear distinction made by Congress less than eight months before between the 'police patrolmen' or 'privates' on the one hand, and the officers, up to the grade of major, on the other. Moreover, the association by the provision in question of 'policeman' with 'watchman' ought to be conclusive of the

matter. The intention of Congress was to restrict appointments of those engaged in ordinary police patrol duty to honorably discharged soldiers and sailors; and it placed the same restriction upon appointments to the analogous, indeed, in many respects identical, duties of watchman. Congress was fully aware of the importance of the office of superintendent or 'chief executive officer' of a police force and of the able and prominent men who had occupied the office elsewhere; and surely it never intended to limit appointments to that office at the nation's capital to those who had been in another branch of public service and discharged."

Walker, Samuel Hamilton. Suddenly on Thursday, January 24, 1935 at 8:15 a.m., Maj. Samuel Hamilton Walker, beloved husband of Sallie Lucretia Walker. Services will be held at Waugh Methodist Episcopal Church, 3rd and A sts. n.e., on Saturday, January 26, at 2 p.m. Interment Congressional Cemetery.

Walker, Samuel H. District of Columbia Society, Sons of American Revolution announces with regret the death of Compatriot Samuel H. Walker, who will be buried Saturday, January 26, 1935, at 2 p.m., from the Waugh M.E. Church, 3rd and A sts. n.e. The following committee is named to attend the funeral: Dr. Clifton P. Clark, Maj. Charles C. Griggs, Maj. Laurence Leonard, Mr. Robert C. Tracy and Comdr. S. S. Williamson.

Walker, Samuel H. A special communication of Dawson Lodge, No. 16, F.A.A.M., will be held in the Masonic Temple on Saturday, January 26, 1935, at 1 o'clock p.m., for the purpose of attending the funeral of our late brother, Samuel H. Walker. By order of the worshipful master.

John A. Colburn, Secretary

The Evening Star, January 24, 1935, p. A9

Maj. S.H. Walker, 91, Dies Suddenly

Former Superintendent of Police Had Active Part in Building City

Maj. Samuel H. Walker, 91, a former superintendent of Metropolitan Police, died suddenly in his office at 507 E street shortly after 8 o'clock this morning.

Maj. Walker had left his home, 420 B street northeast, only a few minutes before.

One of the best known businessmen in Washington, Maj. Walker was born here June 7, 1844, and had an active part in building up the northeast and southeast sections of the city. He built the building which houses police headquarters.

At the time of his death he was president of the Capital City Life Insurance Co., which he founded years ago as the Capital City Benefit Society. It is the oldest industrial insurance company chartered in Washington. For many years he had been vice president of the National Capital Bank which he also helped to found.

Helped Defend City

Maj. Walker served in the defense of Washington. He was a member of the unenlisted forces that threw lines of defense around the city. He attended public schools here and was the oldest living graduate of Columbian College, now George Washington University. He was a member of Sigma Chi fraternity.

Maj. Walker was employed by the clerk's office at the old city hall January 2, 1862. Later he entered the real estate business.

Some 20 years later, in 1886, the Commissioners of the District tendered Mr. Walker the post of major and superintendent of police. Though he remained in office only six months, resigning to carry on

his business affairs, Maj. Walker made a memorable record. He set up radical changes in the system of police protection. His orders of police inspection still stand, changed only in small degree.

Developed Several Companies

It was after resigning from the police force that Maj. Walker developed the Washington Title Insurance Co., the Mutual Fire Insurance Co., the National Capital Insurance Co., and several other organizations which are still in existence. He was vice president of the East Washington Savings Bank for many years.

An active Mason, the 33d degree was conferred upon Maj. Walker about 20 years ago. He was a member of the York and Scottish Rites, and his blue lodge, Dawson, No. 16, Free and Accepted Masons. For 15 years, he was a treasurer of this organization. He was also a member of Almas Temple, Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine.

For the past half century Maj. Walker was an active member of the Waugh Methodist Episcopal Church at Third and A streets. For 15 years he was superintendent of the Sunday school there. At the time of his death he was also chairman of the board of trustees of the Methodist Home for the Aged.

Mrs. Walker Survives

In 1872, Maj. Walker married Miss Sallie Brady of the Eastern Shore, who survives him. They were the parents of 11 children, eight living. February 22, 1922, Maj. And Mrs. Walker celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

Besides his wife, the following children survive Maj. Walker: Mrs. William B. Hardy, Miss Rosalie Walker, Mrs. H.J. Walther, Mrs. Maxwell Winter, Mrs. McClain Smith, Robert H. Walker and Arthur B. Walker. Besides these there are 16 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren, the last -- Nancy Lee Shantz -- born the second day of this year in Minnesota.

Funeral arrangements have not yet been made.

A History of the City of Washington, Its Men and Institutions, 1895

Samuel H. Walker

No individual is more prominently identified with the development, improvement and general progression of northeast Washington than is Major Samuel H. Walker, real estate promoter and general and fire insurance agent, with offices in the Walker Building, at 458 Louisiana avenue. The march of time has seen East Washington grow, expand and improve, and many of these improvements are attributable to his efforts and farsighted instinct. Samuel H. Walker, son of Jonathan T. and Amelia Benson Walker, was born in this city on June 7, 1844. After attending Richards School at Fourteenth street and New York avenue, he entered Columbian University, then a college. His education complete, Mr. Walker immediately launched into a life of activity and usefulness. In 1861 he entered the clerks' office, city hall, in charge of land records. Mr. Walker afterwards engaged in the real estate and insurance business. His success was immediate, and his business steadily grew until it has reached its present large proportions. Mr. Walker formed the National Capital Investment Company, and was made its president. This company built and owns the District Building, which it rents to the District government. He has also been a director in the National Capital Bank since its organization and was the organizer of the Capital City Benefit Society, the largest of its kind in Washington. Mr. Walker has built many beautiful buildings in East Washington, notably among them his own residence at the corner of Fifth and B streets N.E. a structure both ornamental and commodious, having a style all its own, and designed after plans of Mr. Walker's conception.

Mr. Walker served three days, without enlistment, in the defense of Washington during the Civil War, and has the proud distinction of having been presented to every President of the United States,

beginning with President Tyler. He was major and superintendent of the Police Department of the District in 1886. As a Mason his record is unparalleled in the District, he having received every degree to the 33d in York Rite and Scottish Free Masonry, and Mystic Shrine, and is also a member of the Sigma Chi Fraternity.

Mr. Walker married Sallie L. Brady, of Benning, D.C., on February 22, 1872. Mr. and Mrs. Walker have nine children living.