Patrolman Jacob Kuenzel | Cincinnati Police Department



Patrolman Jacob Kuenzel

Age: 42 Served: $10^{\frac{1}{2}}$ years January 6, 1905 to June 24, 1916

Jacob Kuenzel was a cigar store owner and news dealer at May and McMillan Streets when he married Katie in 1901 and when their first son was born on September 26, 1902. But, by January 6, 1905, he decided to become a policeman and was appointed as a Substitute Patrolman for the Cincinnati Police Department.

Patrolman Kuenzel was assigned to the 7th District in Walnut Hills, where he lived and where he had had his cigar store. Already by October 1905, he had shown his bravery when he singlehandedly took on a combative man with a razor, two blocks from his home, at Boone and Wilkinson Streets, and then fended off an angry crowd, without either the prisoner or himself being cut. During December 1908, he and Patrolman Jones responded to a 16 year old youth who was galloping up and down Marquis Alley, four blocks from his home, firing a rifle. They arrested the youth without anyone being shot. Such was the reputation of Patrolman Kuenzel by 1910 that he was selected to be on the Exposition Detail, including the governor's detail, for the tri-state's Ohio Valley Exposition in September of that year.

To Mrs. Kuenzel his was a dangerous job and she desperately feared that he might die performing it. He provided her with more evidence during February 1912 when, about seven blocks from their home, he and Lieutenant Fisher stopped a runaway four-horse team and transfer wagon, saving numerous civilians lined up for street cars at Peeble's Corner, but causing themselves considerable scrapes, bruises, and shredded uniforms.

Mrs. Kuenzel was becoming increasingly mentally unstable.

Things were a little better at the Kuenzel household in 1915. Patrolman Kuenzel had transferred to the 2nd District, a good distant from her home. On November 26, 1915, Mrs. Kuenzel gave birth to their second son; Richard Jacob Kuenzel.

But 2 months later, In January 1916, the baby developed symptoms of a stomach flu and died on January 30. Soon after, Katie was confined to a sanitarium (probably the Oxford Retreat) at Oxford, Ohio. Patrolman Kuenzel visited her weekly and, on Sunday, June 18, 1916, she begged him to take her home. To him and his neighbors and relatives she seemed to be sane.

On June 23, 1916, Patrolman Kuenzel worked the night shift and was relieved at 7 a.m. the next morning, June 24, 1916. He went home to nap prior to his mandatory appearance at a Preparedness Parade that was due to stage at the Central Station courtyard, 321 W. 9th Street, later in the morning. As the patrolmen assembled in the courtyard and their commanders called the roll, Patrolman Kuenzel did not answer. It was then that they received word that he had been killed.

Still laboring under the hallucination that her husband might be killed in the line of duty and never return to her, after her husband fell asleep, Katie systematically locked the door and windows, descended into the basement room where Patrolman Kuenzel was sleeping, and with his revolver, fired four times, one of which struck him in the head, killing him instantly. The other three struck the couch and wall.

Upon hearing the shots, Kuenzel's neighbors, including his sister, Annie, broke a window to enter the home. Annie wrestled the revolver away from Katie while she was trying to fire a fifth shot. The two ran upstairs where Annie prevented Katie from jumping out a window, but she was unable to stop her from getting to the medicine cabinet and consuming Carbolic Acid. Katie died at General Hospital three hours later.

Patrolman and Mrs. Kuenzel were survived by their son, Adrian Edward Kuenzel (14); parents, Edward and Margaret; and sisters, Anna and Margarite. Their funeral was held from their Boone Street home on Monday, June 26, 1916 and they were buried in the Mt. Healthy Cemetery (now Mt. Pleasant Cemetery). Adrian was sent to live with relatives, married, had sons of his own, and died in 1983.

If you have information, artifacts, archives, or images related to this officer or the incident, please contact the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum at <u>memorial@police-</u><u>museum.org</u>.

This narrative was researched and revised June 23, 2013 by retired Cincinnati Police Lieutenant Stephen R. Kramer and the grave was found by retired Cincinnati Homicide Detective Edward Zieverink. All rights are reserved to them and the Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society.