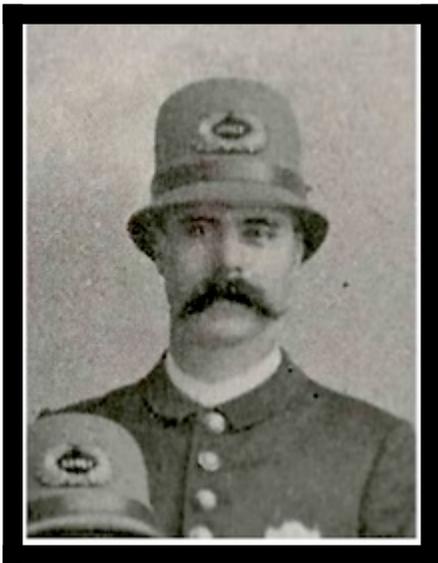


Sergeant Robert King (1852-1937)

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Some background is necessary in discussing Robert King's appointment to the Cincinnati Police Department. Civilian law enforcement in the region began March 29, 1803 with an ordinance appointing every male between the ages of 21 and 46 as Night Watchmen working without pay on a rotation basis. By 1819, specific men were elected to serve and they were paid. By 1851, an ordinance was passed creating a police force under the control of government, specifically under the mayor. Corruption almost immediately ensued, finally resulting in riots and the

burning of the Hamilton County Courthouse at the end of March 1884. It took the Ohio legislature two more years to resolve the issues when, effective March 30, 1886, the entire 400-man police force was disbanded, and a new 300-man police department was to be created under a non-partisan police commission. Part of the new system required men to pass examinations, including medical, physical, psychological, and intellectual. The commission was very busy throughout April and May 1886 processing applications, examining applicants, and recommending them to the Board of Commissioners for approval. We have no records prior to 1886, but we suspect that Robert King was a respected member of the disbanded force.

Robert was born in Scotland on September 15, 1852. After applying for employment in the new Police Department, he was one of 113, of the first 300 applicants, to pass the examinations. On May 29, 1886, five men of good reputation nominated him for the position of Patrolman. At that time, he was married and registered as a Republican. He was approved by the Board of Commissioners on June 3rd, and took the oath of office on June 7th, and immediately named as a Police Sergeant. This is why we believe he was previously on the police force and possibly held rank before 1886.

On January 1, 1891, Sergeant King was elected as Director of the Police Relief Fund. We are not sure why, other than perhaps his first appointment to Sergeant was intended to be temporary, but he was re-nominated for Police Sergeant on December 18, 1891 and approved by the Board on February 16, 1892.

We know little else about his career except that he was assigned to District 7 (Walnut Hills) in 1895 and toward the end of his career he worked out of District 6 (East End).

Beginning July 31, 1913, he apparently became ill with a

disabling, though not fatal, disease. By December 12th, it was apparent that he would never be able to return to work, and he was retired "on account of disability," effective December 15, 1913. Sergeant King was the first man retired under a new schedule of pensions went into effect, providing him \$70 a month for life.

On August 30, 1915, he and others founded the Retired Members of the Cincinnati Police Department organization, and he was elected its first Treasurer. That organization was eventually brought in under the Fraternal Order of Police as the Police Retired Men's Association, later modified to accept retirement women, and currently expanded to include all retired officers in Hamilton County.

Sergeant King died September 2, 1937 at the age of 85.