CICERO B. BOOKER, SR.

"I was able to open the door for Black people to become police officers in this city. It is now up to you and the other young Black officers to open those doors now closed to you."
—Cicero Booker, Sr.

Cicero B. Booker Sr., born in Conqueale,
N.C. on April 6, 1908, was a trailblazer. He was the
first Black police officer to work for the Waterbury
Police Department.

There were no Blacks wearing a Waterbury
police uniform when Booker was appointed to
the supernumerary force in October of 1943.
Around that time, Blacks in the community
formed a committee to promote the hiring of
someone for the police force. Numerous Blacks
were encouraged to seek employment at the
Police Department, eliminating the claim that
there were no qualified Black applicants. Booker
was chosen from among seven or eight candidates
and he was admitted to the force in January of
1946. "Some officials didn’t think it was time for a
Negro on the force, but it was," he said.

Booker walked a beat in the North End for
twenty-two years, finishing his career with three
years in the South End before retiring in 1971. He
served as a patrolman for twenty-seven years and
helped pave the way for others who followed.
The husband of Addie (Harrison) Booker, he
resided in Waterbury from 1928 until his death on
October 4, 1986 at the age of 78.

He was an activist and became a role model
for many people including his son, Cicero Jr., who
followed in his footsteps to work for the Waterbury Police Department.

Booker was a member of Grace Baptist Church. He attended local schools and in 1957 received a diploma
from the Institute of Applied Science in Chicago for a correspondence course in criminal investigation and identification.

Booker actively served many local organizations. He was a member of the Central Naugatuck Valley Task
Force Board, the Naugatuck Valley Development Corporation Board of Directors, the Northwestern Area Agency
on Aging Advisory Board, the Walnut, Orange, Walsh Board of Directors, the Mt. Olive Senior Citizens Board, the
Retired Senior Volunteer Program Board, the Community Development Rehabilitation Board and the Waterbury
Housing Coalition Board. He was a president of the Pearl Street Neighborhood House and, in 1981, he was
chairman of the Need Action Council Inc.

On October 29, 1983, Booker received an award from the Waterbury Flaming Knights for his public service to
Waterbury and on March 26, 1985, he was presented the Professional Award by the Waterbury Chapter, National
Association of Negro Business and Professional Women’s Club Inc. He is honored with a plaque at both the
Waterbury Police Department and the New Opportunities for Waterbury building.

As a community leader, Booker was constantly involved in social issues and his legacy is etched with the
breaking down of racial barriers.