

IN MEMORIAM

CLARENCE ALEXANDER STEPHENSON, founder of THE STAR and for over eighteen years its editor, died in the American Stomach Hospital in Philadelphia at 2.15 p. m. Friday, July 15th, 1910. Ulceration of the stomach had caused him much trouble in recent years and he had gone to the hospital four weeks previous to the end to undergo an operation. The surgeons found the case more serious than had been anticipated, but the operation, performed Saturday, June 18th, was pronounced successful; the patient rallied, and hope for his recovery was expressed. Shortly after congestion of the lungs set in and this, coming after the strain and shock of a severe surgical operation, was too much for his weakened constitution to bear. The heart gradually weakened and death came at the time above stated. Mr. Stephenson retained consciousness to the end and fought valiantly for his life. His wife, who accompanied him to Philadelphia and remained near him throughout the trying period of his struggle for life, was at his bedside when his spirit took flight.

The body was prepared for burial in Philadelphia, shipped to Reynoldsville Friday night and arrived here Saturday morning. Hughes & Fleming, funeral directors, removed it from the Pennsylvania station to the late home of the deceased on Grant street, where it rested until Monday noon. The bier was then taken to the Methodist Episcopal church, where the casket was opened and was viewed by over five hundred of the deceased man's friends before the hour of the funeral service.

At two o'clock an impressive service was conducted over the remains by the Rev. John F. Black, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church, in which he was assisted by the Rev. Messrs. J. C. McDonald and J. Bell Neff, of DuBois. The former had officiated at the funerals of the father and mother and a sister of Mr. Stephenson and was a life-long friend of the departed man. Touching tributes to the sterling character of Mr. Stephenson were paid by all three of the ministers and many in the audience were moved to tears as the service proceeded. At the close the audience was dismissed and the casket, watched over by friends, remained in the church until seven o'clock in the evening to give opportunity for a sister residing in Alabama, who could not reach Reynoldsville until 6:22 Monday evening, an opportunity to gaze once more on the features of a brother whom she had not seen for over twenty years. At seven the casket was placed in the funeral car and the cortege slowly moved to the Reynoldsville cemetery, where, just as the sun was sinking below the western horizon, the Rev. John F. Black offered a fervent prayer and breathed the last "Good Night" to the one who had fallen into the last deep sleep. While a quartette sang in a subdued tone the flower-laden casket was gently lowered into the grave.

Mr. Stephenson was born in Milton, Pa., October 1st, 1857, making him 52 years, 9 months and 14 days old at time of death. His parents, Josiah and Elizabeth Stephenson, came to Reynoldsville over forty years ago. Clarence Stephenson attended the pioneer log cabin schools of the village. After gaining a good common school education he entered the office of a Reynoldsville newspaper as an apprentice to learn the printing trade. A few years later he went to Pittsburgh and was employed in a job printing establishment for a time, leaving it to accept the position of foreman in the office of the St. Marys Gazette, in Elk county. When Frank J. Black was editing a little journal in Reynoldsville known as The Paper, Mr. Stephenson returned to this place to become foreman of the office. When the paper was purchased by W. C. Elliott and re-christened The Volunteer, Mr. Stephenson remained with the new management as foreman. May 11th, 1892, the first issue of THE STAR was published and from that time until the day of his death Mr. Stephenson was in constant touch with the paper. The success which came to the publication is almost wholly due to his individual efforts. In its editorial policy and business management it reflected in a striking way his personal character.

May 21, 1884, Mr. Stephenson was united in marriage to Miss Laura Gilson Reynolds, who survives to mourn his passing. His father and mother, as well as one sister, Mrs. Josephine Weitzel, preceded him to the grave. The surviving brothers and sisters are as follows:

John Stephenson, of Pittsburgh, Samuel B. Stephenson, of Pittsburgh, Mrs. John R. Elder, of DuBois, Mrs. Robert Moffat, of Calera, Alabama, Mrs. E. S. Vosburg, of Philipston, Pa., and Mrs.

Dell Ray Fowler, of Yankton, Oregon. The father and mother of the deceased and three sisters, Mrs. Josephine Weitzel and two who died in early childhood, preceded him to the grave and lie in the family lot in the Reynoldsville cemetery.

The following relatives were here from a distance to attend the funeral: John Stephenson and wife, S. B. Stephenson, of Pittsburgh, John R. Elder and family, of DuBois, E. S. Vosburg and family, of Philipston, Harvey Stephenson, of Pittsburgh, L. M. Weitzel and wife, of Iselin, Mrs. Clara Galbraith, Mrs. Yockey, and Mrs. S. M. Barclay, all of Butler, Charles Stephenson and wife, of East Brady, Clarence Stephenson, of Philipston, Walter B. and Will Reynolds, of Warren, Robert Norris and wife, of Connellsville.

Among others who came from a distance to attend the funeral were W. H. Bunce and family, of Kane, C. C. Benscoter and wife, of Brookville, Hon. W. O. Smith, Horace G. Miller, Hon. T. M. Kurtz, of Punxsutawney, Thomas V. Hendricks, of Brookville.

The floral tribute was very beautiful. Large pieces were given by the official board of the M. E. church, the M. E. Sunday school, the Epworth League, the Utopia Society, Dr. A. J. Meek, L. M. Weitzel, Dr. and Mrs. W. B. Alexander, Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Brown, John R. Elder, Mrs. E. S. Vosburg, and Mrs. S. M. Barclay, Mrs. C. A. Stephenson's Sunday school class, and there were also numerous large bouquets from friends of the family handed in at the home to which no cards were attached.

As a mark of respect to Mr. Stephenson practically all stores and hotels in Reynoldsville were closed from 2 to 3 o'clock Monday, the hour of funeral service. The request to close was made by officials of the Business Men's Association.

The private character of Mr. Stephenson was without blemish; no taint of scandal ever resting on his reputation during his long career as a citizen of the town. It was his constant aim to deal fairly and honestly with every man and in all the immense quantity of matter written by him during an editorial career of eighteen years it would be hard to find an instance of personal prejudice coloring his presentation of news to the public; and certainly he never willfully planted a thorn in any man's bosom. The writer of this tribute was for more than thirteen years in daily contact with the deceased editor and knew the traits of his character as few others had opportunity to learn. He was quiet and reserved and few knew the constant struggle against physical weakness he was forced to make. No one could become familiar with the difficulties he overcame without gaining a very high respect for the pluck and perseverance and grim determination which lay behind the frail physique of the man, and enabled him by sheer force of will to hold himself to his work when many a man less accustomed to pain would have given up in despair. His life for eighteen years past was wrapped up in the success of THE STAR. He was usually at the desk long before any of the employes arrived and was there when they went home. Scrupulously careful in his treatment of the news, he endeavored faithfully to cover his chosen field without giving offense to any interest or individual. Not infrequently he would omit legitimate items if he had reason to believe that their publication would cause pain to his friends—and his friends were the people of Reynoldsville.

One of the cardinal traits of Mr. Stephenson's character was his respect for things religious. From an early age he had been prominently identified with the Methodist Episcopal church and his sincerity in working for all that would advance the cause of religion was never questioned. Many persons in Reynoldsville can recall the days of childhood when the M. E. Sunday school and the name of Clarence Stephenson were almost synonymous, for he had served for many years as superintendent of that institution, at one time for nine years consecutively. He was also a class leader in the church and a member of the board of stewards. No appeal for financial support in the church was ever made but found him a willing contributor.

In politics and civil life, he played a less prominent part believing, as he frequently stated, that his position as editor of an independent paper demanded that he keep clear of the strife and factional quarrels so common in both. But while avoiding active association, he took a keen interest in the affairs of county and town and was at one time strongly urged to become a candidate for the Republican nomination for county treasurer.