

Ex-Haverstraw Supervisor

Shankey Dies at 74

Funeral services are scheduled for Wednesday morning in the home of Victor Jerome Shankey of 78 Hudson Ave., Haverstraw, who died Saturday evening at St. Francis Hospital in Poughkeepsie at the age of 74.

Mr. Shankey, supervisor of Haverstraw over a period that covered 36 years, had been in critical condition since Sept. 28th, when he suffered a heart attack at a reception for Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall in the Bear Mt. Inn.

"Rockland County has lost one of its outstanding men," former Orangetown Supervisor Clarence A. Noyes said last night.

"During all my years on the Board of Supervisors it was a great pleasure and honor to have him as a friend."

OTHERS WHO worked with Mr. Shankey and knew him well expressed similar comment.

"I knew Victor Shankey long before he came into politics, and I have always known him to be kind, generous and highly thought of in the community," Robert A. Feehey, former Haverstraw Democratic Chairman, said.

"He was a big man," Rep. John G. Dow said. "I never knew him to get involved in petty problems. He was easy to talk and work with, and he had a broad view of Rockland County problems."

Haverstraw Supervisor Philip J. Rotella, who defeated Mr. Shankey for office in 1963, said: "It will take a long time for all of us in Haverstraw and throughout Rockland County to realize that Victor Shankey is gone."

"His interest in Haverstraw and Rockland County was so strong that he passed up many offers to run for higher office. I can personally say that in defeat, Victor Shankey was a gentleman."

ROTELLA said tonight's meeting of the town board will be adjourned in respect to Mr. Shankey.

"He won more elections in Rockland County than anyone else, but his real test came in defeat—he took it with good grace," District Attorney Robert R. Meehan said.

"He knew how to win, and he knew how to lose—and he went out a winner," Meehan added.

Mr. Shankey is survived by four brothers, Vincent A. of West Haverstraw, Lawrence A. of Maplewood, N.J., Richard A. of Stony Point, James B. of Pearl River and three sisters, Sister Francis Jerome O.P. of the Dominican Order, Mrs. Harry B. Finnegan and Miss Anastasia Shankey, both of White Plains.

His wife, Sarah Malley, passed away seven years ago.

MR. SHANKEY was a member of the Knights of Columbus, the Haverstraw Lodge of Elks, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Harold B. Holt Post of the American Legion, the Marine Veterans of World War I and the General Warren Home Co.

Funeral services will be held at 11 o'clock at St. Peter's Church, 115 Broadway, Haverstraw. Interment will follow in St. Peter's Cemetery.

Friends may call at the Shankey Funeral Home, 78 Hudson Ave., Haverstraw, today and tomorrow.

Special services will be held by the American Legion, tonight at 8, the Elks, tomorrow at 7 p.m., the Knights of Columbus, tomorrow at 8:30 p.m., and General Warren, at 9 p.m. tomorrow.



V. J. SHANKEY

...A Many-Sided Master of Politics

By GRANT JORSON
Journal-News News Editor

Politics were bread and circuses for Victor Jerome Shankey. He mastered the jungle of public life as a young man and did not lose his touch until time at last altered him and the arena he controlled.

He could be a battler and a compromiser, a dictator and a soft-sooper, a liberal and a conservative, whichever need filled the situation. He could lose skirmishes by the dozen, but the struggles for turning points most always were his.

HE WAS a master at politics who never sought to broaden his empire beyond the Town of Haverstraw. Like the Curleys and the Hagues of his time, he was content to rule the neighborhood he knew best.

He survived scurrilous campaigns and designed some great political intrigues himself. He wrecked opposition parties by the score. He made enemies by the hundreds, and yet most all of them would rejoin his camp eventually. He had the poise of an aristocrat, but he could strike like a tribal chief.

His political and social philosophies were never very far apart: win the vote, keep the taxes down, move ahead cautiously. He maintained a court of consultants and advisors urging him to make changes as new days dawned, but in the last analysis it was his own judgment that laid down the rules.

In big city politics they would have called him the Boss. He had sycophants and men and women who honestly enjoyed the harsh realities of vote-getting and staying in office. Some he rewarded; other he did not. Those who did not get the plums usually stayed at his side, because admitted by they knew that with patronage they were as vulnerable to his cause as Victor J. Shankey judged them to be.

HE HAD ENDED his political career fighting the old campaigner who would not retire gracefully. On Nov. 5, 1963, after 36 years as Haverstraw supervisor and titular head of his party, he was beaten by 228 votes by Philip J. Rotella, one of the hundreds of men he had helped up the political ladder.

Shankey was then 72, past an age vibrant enough for a return match. He saw what had happened and knew that he had come to the end of the political road. Always outspoken, he said on the morning after his defeat, "The people have spoken, and that's it. In a way, it's a relief. I'm not getting any younger, you know."

Behind him was some of the most fascinating politicking in Rockland County history, a path strewn with old guard Republicans, old guard Democrats.

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County Charter

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