

## OBITUARIES

# Victor Shankey Dies; Veteran of Politics

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crats, bankers, businessmen, editors and attorneys who had attempted to challenge him.

The mortal political blow dealt 35 months ago was one of three stinging setbacks Shankey suffered after completing his novitiate in public life.

**THE FIRST** came on Nov. 8, 1933, when he lost by a 171-vote plurality to the late John B. Lawson, a Republican, as the Haverstraw Democratic party split in a power struggle between Shankey and the late Thomas Farley, a brother of James A. Farley. But two years later Shankey was back at New City, there to stay for the next 17 years.

The second setback occurred on Jan. 8, 1963, when he lost chairmanship of the Board of Supervisors to Edwin E. Wallace of Ramapo, although the Democrats held a 4-to-1 majority.

Wallace, a Democrat, had the support of two budding figures in the party ranks, Paul F. Mundt of Clarkstown and Robert P. Slocum of Stony Point. It was a case of youth versus age, and Shankey's only support to continue as

board leader came from Clarence Noyes of Orangetown, a Republican who would soon retire and who upheld the tradition of seniority in the chairmanship.

Shankey always had been chairman in the boom years of the party's fortunes, early in the 30's and again in the 50's. More often than not he sat as the only Democratic member of the board in those years when the county voted solidly Republican outside Haverstraw.

**ALTHOUGH** he was a cautious administrator in town affairs, he took initiative in modern programs for the county as a whole. The present county sewer system planning was begun when he was board chairman, as was the enlargement of county services into the County Office Building.

The road between New City and his beloved Haverstraw was well worn by Victory J. Shankey, who was born in the old Rockland County Court House on March 6, 1892, when his father, John F. Shankey, was sheriff.

The family stock was Irish—Shankey's mother was Anastasia Burke—and there

was no missing it in the gregarious and ebullient supervisor. He was almost six-foot-four, with dark eyes that could pierce or brighten as he spoke with a slight trace of brogue.

He also had Irish compassion, an asset of his political life and as a mortician after the death of his father in 1922. In recent years he had directed funeral homes in both Haverstraw and Stony Point. He had no other livelihood, except the pay he drew as a Town and County officer.

**THE TURNING** point in Shankey's career was World War I. He had been educated at Fordham Preparatory School and Fordham College. He had played professional baseball in Perth Amboy, N.J. When the war came, he enlisted in the U.S. Marines, rising to the rank of corporal in a combat company and serving 14 months overseas. He saw action at Belleau Wood.

Back home in Haverstraw he took his first fling at politics, for County Coroner. He was not elected—few registered as a Democrat won then—but he bided his time as the wheel of fortunes changed.

The kingpin politician in Shankey's township was then Herman McKenzie Purdy, a mortician who had been supervisor since 1916. In 1924, Purdy ran for County clerk. The Republicans then nominated Weiant Springstead for supervisor. He was Shankey's first victim, in a close race that deposited the Republican establishment.

**KENNETH KEITH Killed In Viet Nam**

Services for Marine Pfc. Kenneth A. Keith, 24, a native of Pearl River, who was killed in action Sept. 28 in Viet Nam, will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday at the Coventryville Congregational Church. Interment will follow in Glenwood Cemetery, ly of Nyack and Stony Point, died Saturday at Middletown Hospital after a short illness.

He was formerly employed in the maintenance department of Lederle Laboratories, and was a Naval veteran of World War I.

He is survived by his widow, Clara; two sons, Raymond of

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