

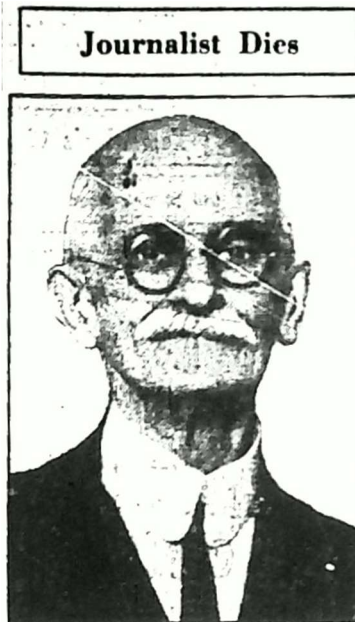
Charles M. Shinn

(30 Dec 1847 – 27 Jan 1931)

The Evening Star, January 28, 1931, p. A2

Charles M. Shinn Dies At Age Of 83 Star Staff Member Believed to Have Been Oldest Journalist in Active Service

Charles M. Shinn, for 33 years a member of the editorial staff of The Evening Star and possibly the oldest journalist in active service in the world, died last night in his 84th year of a sudden heart attack after a few days' illness.



CHARLES M. SHINN.

Dean of American newspaperdom, Mr. Shinn's activity and tenacity in the face of the accumulating weaknesses of years were such as hardly ever can have been equaled in this or any other profession. Seldom has there lived so modest and obscure a gentleman with so real a claim to the admiration of his fellows.

Worked in Midst of Tumult

Day after day, year after year, Col. Shinn sat on the rim of The Star's copydesk, "at the end of a telegraph wire." This is essentially a place for youth, for there is probably no place on earth so imbued with hurry, confusion and nerve strain as that little gap between the turmoil of the outside world and the eternally hungry mouths of the printing presses. Younger and stronger men came and went. Col. Shinn stayed on and did, up to the very beginning of his last illness, as much work as any man on the desk. He worked incessantly, without the slightest suggestion, spoken or implied, of leniency to age. There were two things that would make him angry -- any suspicion that his associates were trying to lighten his burden a trifle here and there and a reflection

on some of his political idols. But the former made him by far the angrier.

He had conquered age by doing like a young man a young man's work with all a young man's energy, and any suggestion of favoritism toward him was, he felt, an unjustified insinuation of defeat. For a man of less courage it would have been a fatal position. For him it was an ideal position -- a veritable fountain of eternal youth. For there at the end of the telegraph wire he was immersed in the tumultuous stream of the youth of the world. "News." After all, is a product of youth. Age is cast on the banks of the unquiet river. Only youth, comparatively speaking, does the brave things, the queer things and the crazy things that make news.

Born in Kentucky

Col. Shinn was of English descent, son of the late Dr. and Mrs. A.J. Shinn, and was born in Marshall County, Ky., December 30, 1847. The family later moved to Virginia and settled in Fairmont, Marion County, which is now a part of West Virginia.

During Col. Shinn's early life he studied journalism and all his life has been identified with journalistic work. Politically he was a Republican, and for many years was actively associated with party leaders in winning the State from the opposition.

At the age of 20 years he became connected with the Fairmont West Virginian, and his journal was the voice and exponent of Republican principles for the county and vicinity.

Col. Shinn was a member of Crusade Commandery, No. 6, Knights Templar, of Fairmont, W. Va., and was the oldest past master of his lodge at the time of his death. He was also an honorary member of Hope Lodge, No. 20, F.A.A.M., of this city.

Served in Civil War

He was a member of the Sixth Presbyterian Church, at Sixteenth and Kennedy streets northwest, of which Rev. Godfrey Chobot is pastor.

Col. Shinn was three times rejected when seeking to enlist in the Union Army during the Civil War, on account of his youth and physical disability, but served as needed with organized militia and took active part in many activities connected with the Union Army. For this service he was made an honorary member of the Army and Navy Union, and served two years as a colonel on the staff of the commander in chief.

Col. Shinn has been connected with The Evening Star since May 1897. He served as city editor and in many other capacities. For many years he also contributed articles to various newspapers and magazines. He was one of the organizers of the West Virginia Republican Association in the District of Columbia, and was its president for 16 years. He also served twice as president of the West Virginia State Society.

Col. Shinn was married at the age of 26 years, to Miss Anna Margaret Fleming, daughter of the late Allison and Martha Fleming of Fairmont, W. Va.

Nine Children Survive

Besides his widow, nine children survive Mr. Shinn, as follows: George Curtis Shinn, attorney-at-law; Harry Allison Shinn of this city, Lieut. Comdr. Herbert L. Shinn, now stationed in Haiti; Robert Carter Shinn of Lexington, Ky.; Mrs. S.H. Bush of Madison, Wis.; Mrs. I.S. Childs and Misses Flora, Elsie and Virginia Shinn of this city. Six grandchildren and one great grandchild also survive, namely; Ralph S. Childs, Charles M. Shinn, George Curtis Shinn, jr.; Flora Ann Shinn, Margaret Elizabeth Bush and Robert Shinn Bush, and Ralph S. Childs, jr.

Funeral services will be conducted Friday, January 30, at 2 p.m. at his late home, 1302 Floral street. Rev. Mr. Chobot will officiate. There will be Masonic services, and burial will be in Congressional Cemetery.

The Evening Star, January 29, 1931, p. B1

Funeral Arranged For Charles M. Shinn

Masonic Rites to Mark Burial of Veteran Washington Newspaper Man

Masonic rites will mark the burial tomorrow of the late Charles M. Shinn, member of the editorial staff of The Evening Star for the last 33 years, who died Tuesday night from a sudden heart attack after a few days' illness. Mr. Shinn was in his eighty-fourth year and was one of the oldest active newspaper men in the country.

Funeral services will be held at his residence, 1302 Floral street, at 2 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. Rev. Godfrey Chobot, pastor of the Sixth Presbyterian Church, which Mr. Shinn attended for many years will officiate. At the grave in Congressional Cemetery, Masonic services will be conducted under the auspices of Hope Lodge No. 20, F.A.A.M. of this city. Mr. Shinn was an honorary member of this lodge and at the time of his death was the oldest past master, and he also was a member of Crusade Commandery No. 6, Knights Templar, of Fairmant, W.Va. Representatives of the Knights Templar will attend the services tomorrow.

Despite his advanced years, Mr. Shinn continued to work, as he had always hoped to be able to do, up to his recent illness.