

SHONTS'S FUNERAL IN BRICK CHURCH

Services for Late President of I. R. T. Will Be Held To-morrow.

MANY CONDOLENCES SENT

Successor Not Yet Considered, Says Counsel for Company.

TACKLED SUBWAY AND PANAMA TASKS

In Each Case Shonts Solved Difficult Problems.

From the late Edition of Sunday's Sun.

The two greatest achievements in the career of Theodore Perry Shonts, president of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company and affiliated transportation lines, have been his organization of work upon the Panama Canal during President Roosevelt's Administration and his part in the successful completion of the project, and his development of the New York subway systems under a plan by which the municipality became a partner in the building and operation of its railways.

Herculean Tasks Completed.

Both of these jobs constituted herculean tasks, but in each case Mr. Shonts tackled his problems boldly and successfully. Both at Panama and in New York Mr. Shonts brought order out of chaos and left his work in such shape that his successors would be able to carry it on.

Mr. Shonts was selected to head the second Isthmian Canal Commission in 1907 after the first commission had failed to show satisfactory results. President Roosevelt was convinced that a good railroad man was needed for the work, and Paul Morton, then Secretary of the Navy, suggested that Mr. Shonts, at the President's request William Howard Taft, then Secretary of War, wrote several prominent business men stating that Mr. Shonts was being considered for the responsible post and asking their opinion upon his qualifications. All of the replies assured Mr. Taft that Mr. Shonts was "the man for the job."

Accordingly President Roosevelt wired Mr. Shonts offering him the position and his communication was delivered in March, 1908, when Mr. Shonts was cruising the West Indies en route to New York on the Dolphin, the official yacht of the Secretary of the Navy. Mr. Shonts was surprised. He said at the time that he knew nothing about Panama; but he recognized the soundness of the President in selecting a railroad man to head the commission, for he considered the big problem to be transportation—the moving of excavated material from the cut to the spill banks—the moving of sand, rock, cement and iron to the points for the location of the locks along the route.

He knew that the condition at the time was chaotic; that Mr. Taft had said of the first commission that it had not "developed itself into an executive body as to give hope that it might be used successfully as an instrument for carrying on the immense executive burden involved in the construction of the canal."

The acceptance of the President's offer meant material sacrifice, but he considered it his patriotic duty to accept provided he might receive full authority for he felt that by no other means could success be attained.

spite criticism he adhered to the determination to render the Isthmus habitable before beginning to dig rather than bring workmen there to die.

At his instance and under direction of Col. Gorgas the work of cleaning up the Isthmus began. Panama, Colon and the towns, villages and labor camps in the Canal Zone were fumigated over and over again. They were fumigated by house and later villages and towns at a time. Thirty-five hundred men worked unceasingly at this task, and as a result yellow fever was exterminated in less than four months, after which it never returned.

The success of this sanitary accomplishment is best shown by a comparison of the death rate under the French regime and later under the commission headed by Mr. Shonts. In August, 1882, the second year of French occupancy, with a force of nineteen hundred men, the death rate was 112 a thousand. In August, 1905, with a force of 13,000 men, there were only eight deaths, or two-hundredths of a man a thousand.

The establishment of a hospital system, including large hospitals at Colon and Panama and a number of smaller hospitals along the line of the Canal was another of Mr. Shonts's accomplishments.

President Roosevelt in a special message to Congress lauded this work and said of the accomplishments of the Shonts regime: "The results have been astounding. The conditions as regards sickness and the death rate compare favorably with reasonably healthy localities in the United States."

Another feature of his canal work was the conversion of the City of Panama, which had been without pavement, sewers or water supply, into the best paved, the best watered and the best sewered city in Central America.

This was accomplished largely by the construction of great reservoirs and the installation of an up to date fire department, which on two occasions saved the city from destruction.

Another great reservoir was constructed at Colon, with a capacity of 508,000,000 gallons. The main street of Colon was paved and the surfaces of the other streets raised. During all of this work observance of the sanitary laws was rigidly enforced. Whenever an employee of the commission was discovered with too high a temperature he was compelled to go to the hospital whether he wanted to or not.

For the triumph of science over disease on the Isthmus Mr. Shonts gave credit to Col. Gorgas; nevertheless without his own support and the resources that he was able to put at the disposal of that army officer the effort to clean the place would have been a failure. It was his determination to make the place healthful at all costs that really brought the improvement about.

Fraction Solved.

It was his remarkable success with the problem on the Isthmus that caused Mr. Shonts to be picked by Thomas F. Ryan and other traction heads in New York for the task of unravelling the snarl in the transit systems and developing the present elaborate system of Interborough subways.

freely, and one after another the heads of the various departments that had been tugging in opposite directions in the past, the jarring, discordant elements, went into the scrap heap.

He was opposed by certain directors who favored the men that he was eliminating, and things came to a crisis when some of them intimated that he would resign before he would be able to overcome their interests. But in the struggle that followed these directors resigned and Mr. Shonts remained supreme ruler of the traction lines. From that time he had wielded undisputed authority.

It was his autocratic rule that enabled Mr. Shonts to accomplish so much with the city railways in so short a time. He had a part in the construction of the Iowa Central Railroad, and afterward built the Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska Railroad, of which he was the controlling owner. With associates he obtained control of the Toledo St. Louis and Western Railroad and rehabilitated it. He was president of this line, the Chicago & Alton, Minneapolis & St. Louis and several other companies, and director of many more before he tackled the two biggest problems of his life: the canal and the New York subways.

Mr. Shonts was a member of the Metropolitan Union League, Recess and Sleepy Hollow Country Clubs of New York, the Metropolitan and Chevy Chase of Washington, the Chicago Club of Chicago.

Mr. Shonts was always an untiring worker. His hours of business ran far into the morning in times of stress. His other avocations he could not be induced to rest until he had battled with them and completely overcome them. He specialized in the difficulties and the great work, leaving the routine to subordinates.

The relations between Mr. Shonts and his employees have been most amicable. While there was a strike about two years ago, his employees have generally expressed perfect satisfaction with his arrangements. W. Leon Pepperman, formerly of the Canal Commission, and associated with Mr. Shonts in the Interborough, declared to a representative of THE SUN that one of Mr. Shonts's greatest accomplishments had been his humanizing of the system. The interest that he has taken in his employees is evidenced in the organization of the welfare department. At the time of their strike his train and car workers broke away from the American Federation of Labor and set up a union of their own, and Mr. Shonts approved their action in so doing.

His views on the capital and labor problem are set forth fairly in an address that he delivered some time ago, in which he declared that both workers and employers in railroad strikes should consider the interests and safety of the public before their own wants or grievances.

He suggested the three following principles for guidance of both capital and labor in all disturbances: "That in any conflict between the officers and men of a public service corporation the rights of the public are paramount.

"There can be no permanent benefit in the triumph of either capital or labor in such a conflict if the struggle leaves scars and wounds or bad blood. Unless good will based on justice and right is restored, and made permanent the struggle is a loss for all.

"Nothing must be done to impair any of the fundamental rights belonging to any man to work—or not to work—for or with whomsoever he will and under conditions satisfactory to himself."

LA GUARDIA WON'T TAKE LEGION OFFICE

His Political Candidacy Bars Him, He Writes T. B. Mandel Post.

URGES CURTIS TO FIGHT

Says Rival Should Contest Re-election by the Board of Elections.

Representative Fiorello H. La Guardia, Republican candidate for President of the Board of Aldermen, has refused to accept the vice-presidency of the B. Mandel Post of the American Legion because he does not believe that the legion, if it is to achieve its full usefulness,

should permit anything to be done which might give the impression that the organization is to become associated with partisan politics.

"I am certain," said Mr. La Guardia in a statement yesterday, "that my comrades of the post will understand my stand and the spirit which prompts me to decline the honor conferred upon me by the post. To any one familiar with the ideas and policies of the legion the reasons prompting my declination must be apparent. There can be no mingling of the American Legion with partisan politics. I am a candidate for public office and I feel that it is impossible for me to accept any office, honorary or otherwise, in the American Legion.

"The possibilities of the legion are tremendous, and nothing, no matter how small, should be done to let the people believe that this body of war veterans is allied in any way with partisan politics. I want to keep absolutely pure and spotless the name of the American Legion.

"I shall never take advantage of my military record or impose upon the affection of my former comrades, nor should any one else. I am heartily in favor of the attitude adopted by the New York county organization of the legion absolutely forbidding candidates for public office from holding office in the legion, or membership on any standing committee."

Representative La Guardia, returned yesterday from Washington, said he was "hurtled" to note that the Board of Elections had rejected the petition of Thomas Curtis for President of the Board of Aldermen. Mr. La Guardia thought that in justice to his backing Mr. Curtis should give battle to the ruling.

"It is indeed a pity that the labor organizations which selected Mr. Curtis as their candidate at a convention are to lose him," he said. "I personally hope that Mr. Curtis will have all the opportunity possible to present his cause to the voters of the city, realizing, however, that his running will make my campaigning more arduous. In the spirit of fair play, I believe that all men should have the opportunity to register their choice in the selection of men for public office.

"Mr. Curtis should see this thing through. He not alone owes it to himself, but he owes it to the men who stood by and signed his petition. He should have the courage of his convictions, and if necessary fling into the face of the Governor his job with the Industrial Commission of this State and stand up for the thing he started, namely, the defeat of Tammany Hall."

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"Interesting" that Mr. Curtis's petition was thrown out after Tammany Hall had issued a statement professing apprehension over the candidacy of Mr. Curtis against Mr. Moran.



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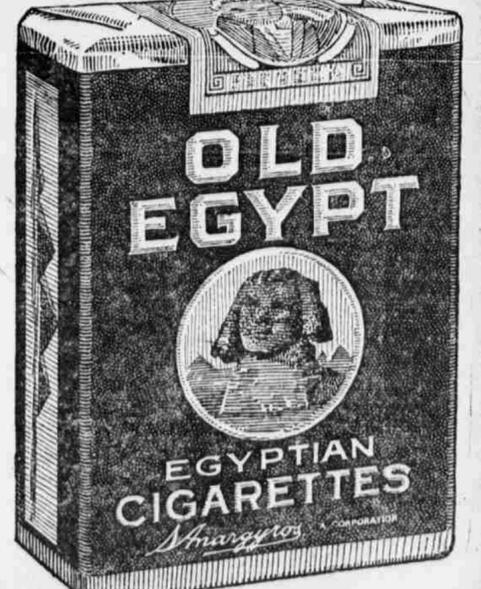
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