

FARMVILLE ENTERPRISE
FARMVILLE, N. C.

Published by
THE ROUSE PRINTERY
 Farmville, N. C.

Subscription Price:
 Year \$2.00—6 Mos. \$1.25—3 Mos. \$0.75

Advertisements of Marriage, Death, Births and all notices of entertainment for profit will be charged for at the rate of 3 cents per word. Cash in advance or order. Advertising rates will be furnished upon request.

Published weekly and entered as Second Class Mail Matter at the Post Office at Farmville, N. C., under Act of March 3rd, 1879.

Harper Sheppard Was Outstanding In Many Fields

The following article about Harper D. Sheppard appeared in the Evening Sun of Hanover, Pa., on October 10. Mr. Sheppard was an uncle of Mrs. Moulie Barrett, J. Glasgow Smith, Haywood Smith, Jack Smith and Joe Henry Dymann, all of Farmville. A native of this county, Mr. Sheppard's last visit to Pitt was about a dozen years ago, the occasion being the dedication of the public library in Greenville, which he donated to the people of his home section.

Harper Donelson Sheppard, co-founder, chairman of the board and former president of the Hanover Shoe, Inc., died at 1:55 o'clock this morning at the Hanover General Hospital. His death, which occurred on the day following his 53rd birthday, came after an illness which had assumed a serious nature Thursday, September 27.

Mr. Sheppard, who with his business partner for over half a century, C. N. Myers, shared the unimpaired role of Hanover's No. 1 citizens, was also president of Sheppard and Myers, Inc., which operates the retail stores of the Hanover Shoe, and president of the Evening Sun Company and the Hanover Trust Company.

Mr. Sheppard is survived by his wife, Mrs. Henrietta Dawson Ayres Sheppard; two sons, Lawrence D. and B. Harper Sheppard; five grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Friday, October 12, at 2 o'clock at the Sheppard home, 117 Frederick street. The Rev. Dr. John Robbins Hart, of the Washington Memorial Chapel, Valley Forge, officiated. Burial was in the Sheppard family plot in Mt. Olive cemetery.

Mr. Sheppard's last illness came as the climax of a series of attacks which had incapacitated him at various times. He had fought off illness in the past with a determination and capacity for recovery that amazed his physicians. The same tenacity, so representative of his character in everything he did, was displayed again after the latest attack and hope for his recovery rose a week before his death. His age and depletion of his reserve strength were too great, however, and death came.

Mr. Sheppard's interests were so widespread that practically every phase of life in the community which he proudly called his home reflected his influence. The great shoe industry which he and Mr. Myers developed provided Hanover with its largest industrial establishment and employment for many hundreds of persons through more than half a century. He and his business partner worked in their efforts on behalf of the community as they did in the shoe industry, as a well balanced team. Their benevolence, individually and jointly, perhaps could never be detailed completely, for their acts for the welfare of the town's people were performed with an attitude of doing good, not of gaining public recognition or acclaim.

Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Myers made their greatest single welfare contribution to the community in establishing the Hanover General Hospital 25 years ago. They made it possible for the community to acquire its own public water works. They contributed to the physical development of the town's youth by giving the Hanover schools a complete outdoor athletic plant which was named Sheppard and Myers Field in their honor. Countless other benefactions have helped the town, organizations and individuals in many ways.

Mr. Sheppard was always a public-spirited citizen and was keenly interested in making the community a better place in which to live. He was outstanding in his many fields—as industrialist, publisher, banker, sportsman, gentleman farmer, philanthropist. He was the possessor of a brilliant sense of humor. He enjoyed riding and driving horses, hunting and fishing. He had a keen mind and a deep perception of broad social and economic problems.

Native of North Carolina, Mr. Sheppard was born October 9, 1880, in Pitt county, North Carolina. He was a son of William Henry Harper Sheppard and Elizabeth Ann Wood Young Sheppard. He was one of the thirteen children of William Sheppard, who was married three times.

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being Lawrence John Sheppard, Jr., who he named his son. Mr. Sheppard died when he was only 25 months old, and his father passed away when Harper had just reached his 12th birthday.

Gets His First Job
 When Harper was seven years of age the family moved to Greenville, N. C. He attended the public schools there and was graduated from Vine Hill Academy at Sevierville, N. C.

In his early teens, Mr. Sheppard lived with an uncle by marriage. By the time he reached the age of 15 years he was assisting his uncle in overseeing the operation of three North Carolina plantations—Bear Creek, Avon and Yankee Hall—during the trying reconstruction period which followed the War Between the States.

Through his experiences on the plantations he acquired the rudiments of business skill which served him well in later years.

He struck out on his own when he was seventeen, going to Baltimore. There he secured employment as a stock clerk in the notions business of Rouse, Hemphosts and Company. His starting wage was \$2 a week. By the end of six months his compensation amounted to \$6 weekly.

Shortly afterwards, however, Mr. Sheppard returned to North Carolina for six months then went back to Baltimore. In a spirit of adventure, he bought a ticket to Austin, Texas. He worked in the Lone Star state from Galveston to the Panhandle. This was in 1895. February of the following year found him in Oklahoma. During his work in the southwest he acquired a broad knowledge of ranching.

Returning east in March, 1892, Mr. Sheppard settled in Baltimore and obtained a job with Charles Heiser, a shoe manufacturer.

He offered to work for nothing until it was decided what he was worth. He was assigned to the shipping room. The third week he was paid \$5. Later when he found \$6 in his pay envelope he thought it was a mistake, only to be informed it was a raise. At 23, his shoemaking career had begun.

It was while employed in the Heiser factory that Mr. Sheppard married Miss Henrietta Dawson Ayres on December 20, 1895.

In 1897 Mr. Sheppard resigned to join Hathaway, Soule and Harington, of Boston, as a traveling salesman with a territory extending from Delaware to Key West.

In the summer of 1898, Charles Heiser arrived in Hanover, having many years before conducted a shoe store here and made shoes by hand. He planned to organize a company for the manufacture of men's shoes. He raised sufficient funds to start, but several months after operations began he felt the need of the assistance of an experienced shoemaker. He sought Mr. Sheppard, and aided by Mr. Sheppard, persuaded him to investigate the Hanover proposition.

Accordingly, on February 8, 1898, Mr. Sheppard came to Hanover from his home in Baltimore to look over the situation. He was escorted around the town by Mr. Heiser and introduced to a dozen or more of the stockholders. They were prominent citizens, all of whom had invested varying amounts up to \$1,000 in the enterprise.

His unusual ability and business acumen were apparent from the start and at a meeting of the directors on December 20 a proposition was made to Mr. Heiser to relinquish all rights under his contract, which he accepted, and withdrew by mutual agreement.

The company then leased the manufacturing business to Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Myers who had formed a partnership.

Early in their business career the new firm conceived the plan of marketing their product exclusively in their own retail stores. The first "Hanover Shoe" store was established in York at 5 East Market street, June 20, 1900. On that day, as they often did thereafter, Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Myers drove the 19 miles to York with horse and buggy.

The second store was opened in Reading. A daring adventure, which caused comment in the trade, was the establishment of a store at a choice location on fashionable Chestnut Street in Philadelphia where the competition was with much higher priced shoes.

When Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Myers first took over the factory the product was being sold to retailers. Gradually they stopped this.

In the meantime they were accumulating shoes to be consigned to their own stores. Their policy was one price, that \$2.50, and to make the best possible shoe for the money.

Meanwhile, the factory was being gradually expanded. The very first statement presented to the board of directors by Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Myers on June 4, 1900, showed sufficient gain to declare the five per cent annual dividend which they distributed themselves to pay to the stockholders.

In the meantime shoes were being turned out at the rate of four a year. The shoes were made in the Hanover factory and were made, including in

the finished product, the amount of \$100,000 was paid to the community from the factory.

Mr. Sheppard was a member of the board of directors of the Hanover Shoe, Inc. from the time of its founding until March, 1924, when he relinquished his post. He served also as president in 1922, 1924 and 1925.

Head of Evening Sun Company
 Mr. Sheppard had served as president of the Evening Sun Company ever since it was formed in 1912. Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Myers acquired in February of that year at public sale the business of The Poultry Fancier Publishing Company which published a daily paper known as the Hanover Independent together with a monthly poultry magazine. The new owners continued to publish the Independent until April 28, 1915, and on the following day the name was changed to The Evening Sun.

Connected With Two Banks
 Mr. Sheppard for many years was officially connected with two of Hanover's banking institutions. He was elected a director of the Hanover Trust Company on January 13, 1916, and served as a member of that board ever since. On January 12, 1923, he succeeded the late D. D. Shurtart as president of the Trust Company and was annually re-elected to that post. Since 1928, he served also as trust officer.

He became a director of the First National Bank on January 18, 1920, succeeding the late D. D. Krug and served on that directorate ever since. Led in Securing Water System.

Mr. Sheppard took a leading part in securing for Hanover an ample supply of good, pure water. It was largely through his efforts that in 1932 there was constructed here a modern and adequate water system with the storing up of reserve water supplies against any drought contingencies that may occur and he was in a large part instrumental in having the municipality of Hanover purchase that system.

The water works here previously had been owned and operated by foreign interests who had made no effort to give Hanover an adequate water supply. With no facilities for storing water beyond a three or four days' supply in a reservoir on Parr's hill, this community suffered for lack of water every time a dry spell would occur. This situation continued until finally in 1930 a severe drought occurred, the small creek from which the town's water supply was drawn dried up and it was not long until the supply in the lone reservoir became exhausted.

PARAMOUNT THEATRE
 FARMVILLE, N. C.

New Showing | Movies Are Better Than Ever

Ronald Reagan
 Rhonda Fleming in
"THE LAST OUTPOST"
 added Joy News - Pete Smith Short and Donald Duck Cartoon

SATURDAY | 2 BIG HITS
 Alen "Rocky" Lane in
"SALT LAKE RAIDERS"
 also Johnny Weissmuller in
"FURY OF THE CONGO"
 added Pirate of The High Seas No. 4 and Cartoon

SUNDAY | **MONDAY**
 William Holden - Nancy Olson
 Frank Lovejoy in
"FORCE OF ARMS"
 added News - Tom & Jerry Cartoon

TUESDAY
 Errol Flynn - Randolph Scott
 Humphrey Bogart in
"VIRGINIA CITY"
 added Color Cartoon

WED. | 2 BIG HITS
 Leah LaRue in
"SON OF A BADMAN"
 also John Derek & Ann Quinn in
"MASK OF THE AVENGER"

ALSO CARTOON

THURSDAY | **FRIDAY**
 Glenn Ford and Ethel Barrymore in
"SECRET OF CONVICT LAKE"
 added News - Short Tom and Jerry Cartoons

— Coming —
"A PLACE IN THE SUN"
"THE MAN WHO WAS"

The committee anticipated that because of the result of having in view, secured the community of Hanover and neighboring towns and a citizens emergency water committee headed by Mr. Sheppard was formed to combat the situation. As the outgrowth of the movement started by an organized citizenry, the allocation of money to Hanover and neighboring towns Water Company and its holdings which had been used as a facility among various financial interests for many years, were taken over on December 1, 1931, by Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Myers by purchase from the trust corporation for the expressed purpose of improving them and then turning them over to the municipality at cost. Mr. Sheppard and Mr. Myers acted on behalf of the citizens committee.

Served Nation During War
 In 1917 Mr. Sheppard was called to Washington, and in association with other shoe manufacturers performed a vital service for the Government during the prosecution of World War I. He was a member of the Shoes, Leather and Rubber Goods Branch, Leather Sub-Division, Quartermaster

Corps and served about a year. He was a member of the Episcopal Church. He was a member of the First Families of Virginia 1897-1899, a founding member of the Hanover Country Club and an active member of the Arctesian Club for many years.

His Great Interest in Horses
 He and Mr. Myers shared a great love for horses. Both in their young years, had fine saddle horses which they rode almost daily. Both had excellent driving horses, too. Mr. Sheppard for a number of years, even after the automobile became the generally accepted mode of travel, enjoyed driving one of his horses from his home several miles southwest of Hanover to his office.

Mr. Sheppard served for many years as a member of the board of directors and an officer of the Han-

over Agricultural Society, which conducted the Hanover Fair annually through 1931. He was vice president of the society when it dissolved in 1932. He had served for a number of years as manager of the agricultural section of the fair.

Mr. Sheppard served as a delegate from the York-Adams-Franklin county congressional district at the 1930 convention of the Republican party at Cleveland, at which Alfred M. London and Col. Frank Knox were nominated to head the party's ticket. The Hanover manufacturer had been chosen, along with Henry F. Fletcher, Greenacres, at the spring election that year to represent the district in selection of presidential and vice presidential candidates.

His intense interest in the welfare of the youth of the community was illustrated by his activity in the organization of the Hanover Boys' Club many years ago. During the years the organization operated he was frequently a visitor in the club rooms, in the quarters now occupied by the Republican Club of Hanover, Carlisle street.

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