

Ex-Gov. W. Preston Lane Dies From Heart Attack

HAGERSTOWN (AP)—Former Gov. William Preston Lane, the man who built the \$45 million Chesapeake Bay Bridge only to have pennies thrown at him later in a protest over a sales tax he enacted, is dead.

Lane, 74, succumbed to a heart attack at his home here Tuesday.

Funeral services will be held at St. John's Episcopal Church, with burial at Rose Hill Cemetery. Time of the services will be announced later.

He served as governor from 1947 to 1951.

During his term, Lane personally put through a program containing more reforms than Maryland had seen in 20 years.

The bay bridge, which had been a dream since 1907, became a reality. In addition, Lane provided \$100 million for new highways, the state's school system was raised from one of the worst in the country to



W. Preston Lane

among the best and the Sherbow-Plane for a financial rebuilding of the state was adopted.

Included in the plan, passed

during Lane's first year in office, was the controversial sales tax, which was to spell defeat for Lane four years later.

During his campaign for reelection, Lane, his wife and two daughters had pennies thrown at them as the electorate revolted against the sales tax.

The man who defeated Lane, Theodore R. McKeldin, now mayor of Baltimore, said Tuesday that Lane was "one of Maryland's greatest governors.

"As the governor who succeeded him, I was the beneficiary of the efficient state governmental structure he founded and of the sales tax he so wisely initiated.

"And yet, for him to advocate such a tax was in many ways political suicide" McKeldin said. "However, he saw this tax not for what it meant to his future, but what it meant to the future of the state he governed."

In a statement, Gov. Agnew (See PRESTON, Page 6)

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said Lane's accomplishments "stand as a landmark for all who succeed him in this of-five."

"The courage and leadership he displayed in shoring up the state's financial structure, in the face of public bitterness and even hostility, will be long remembered," Agnew said.

The Senate adopted a resolution which also praised Lane for having fought for passage of the sales tax, then adjourned for the day.

Lane served as attorney general under the late Gov. Albert C. Ritchie in the early 1930s, when Maryland was smouldering over two brutal lynchings on the Eastern Shore.

Gov. Ritchie ordered Lane to hunt the lynchings and bring them to justice. Again the advice of politicians who said he could forget his political future and in the face of violence, Lane went to the Eastern Shore.

He told his critics, "I detest and abhor intolerance and bigotry." In the teeth of the fear, he scoured the Eastern Shore vainly for the lynchings as residents stoned his car and yelled insults at him.

Lane was successful in business, law, newspaper publishing and the Army. He was the honorary chairman and a working member of the Constitutional Convention Commission, charged with rewriting Maryland's 100-year-old constitution.

Lane managed the Herald-Mail Co., a publishing firm once owned by his father-in-law, until he retired in 1960 after the firm was sold to the South Bend, Ind., Tribune. But he remained active as chairman of the board.

He was appointed by President Eisenhower as a member of the Committee for the White House Conference on Education, served on the state Board of Natural Resources and was a trustee of Johns Hopkins University.

In 1964, Lane lashed out at Alabama Gov. George Wallace, who ran in the Maryland presidential primary, calling the Wallace campaign a mask of state's rights arguments covering segregationist views.

Survivors include his widow Dorothy and two daughters.