



T. E. Conlon

Thomas E. Conlon

THE unexpected death of Thomas E. Conlon, B&O general tax agent, on October 29, came as a great shock to his hundreds of friends and admirers on the railroad, and to untold hundreds among the church, neighborhood and political groups in Baltimore and Maryland in which he was a leader. Mr. Conlon, who was president of the Baltimore City Council, the city's legislative body, was stricken while attending a meeting of the Board of Awards, of which he was a member, and although a doctor was summoned immediately and had him taken quickly to a nearby hospital, he never regained consciousness.

Mr. Conlon had a notable career with the B&O, but the most notable feature of his life was his remarkable, though short, career in the public service. Concerning this the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, published on the day of his death, said, in part:

"In 1934 Mr. Conlon underwent an operation and then took a boat trip to the Pacific Coast to recuperate. While he was absent a neighbor sent him a certificate of candidacy for the Legislature and asked him to fill it out and return it. Mr. Conlon obliged but stipulated that the certificate should be filed only if his superiors on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad first approved it.

"The approval was granted readily, and Mr. Conlon came home to find himself a full-fledged candidate. His previous interest in public affairs, except as a voter, had been confined to neighborhood problems. Only a few weeks remained before the election, and Mr. Conlon made only a few brief

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"Mr. Conlon entered politics late in life, but he had risen rapidly, largely, it is said, because of his honesty of purpose, his unbounded energy and his unfailing good nature.

"He had many political enemies, but even they could not, and did not, speak ill of him personally."

The Baltimore *Morning Sun* concluded a long and appreciative editorial, in effect: "He used his influence, whenever possible, in the high-minded way his friends had come to expect. In his death Baltimore has lost a useful public servant."

In such tributes we can heartily concur on behalf of all B&O people who knew Mr. Conlon, or were familiar with his fine record. Although a quiet, unobtrusive person, he had great ability and character, coupled with a personality and disposition which won people to him almost instinctively. He had always been a competent B&O worker, who spoke often of his appreciation of what the railroad had meant to him and who never departed from the path of loyalty.

Mr. Conlon was born in Toledo, Ohio, June 27, 1883, and after attending the grade schools, was graduated from De La Salle Academy there. He entered law school of the University of Baltimore in 1925, was graduated and became a member of the Bar in 1928.

Mr. Conlon began his railroad career at Toledo in December, 1900, as stenographer in the Division Freight Agent's Office of the B&O. In November, 1903, he was transferred to the General Freight Office in Pittsburgh and became stenographer and chief clerk there in February, 1904. He was promoted to secretary to division freight agent in May, 1904, and to secretary to general freight agent in May, 1906.

He was appointed traveling freight agent at Connellsville in 1914 and in 1918 came to Baltimore as supervisor of freight suits for the entire system, his work consisting of preparation of law suits growing out of loss and damage to freight. On January 1, 1940, he was promoted to assistant general freight claim agent. He was made tax agent of the company on May 1, 1941, by appointment of J. J. Cornwell, general

counsel, who named him general tax agent on November 1, 1942.

Tom was one of those rare souls who with kindly smile and merry twinkle of eye, made the day happier for all he met. And this, with his great capacity for friendship, will make him long remembered to the B&O family.

Mr. Conlon and Marcella Quigley were married in Pittsburgh in 1908. She survives him, with three sons and three daughters and several brothers and sisters. Of the sons, Lieut. Frank Conlon and Yeoman Second Class Joseph Conlon are in the U. S. armed forces. To all members of the family we extend deep sympathy.

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speeches at small meetings. But on election day he led the ticket.

"In his four years on the floor of the House his calm and ingratiating manner, coupled with his work, won him general affection and respect, and in 1938 he not only was returned to the House but was elected Speaker.

"After the 1942 session, Mr. Conlon announced that he was retiring to private life.

"Pearl Harbor, however, started a public clamor for a 'blue ribbon' Legislature, so back to the Speaker's chair he went."

Shortly thereafter he was urged to become a candidate on the Democratic ticket for president of the Baltimore City Council, and he defeated the incumbent candidate and was elected.

It is apparent that Mr. Conlon was a public servant in the best sense of the word, a type of office-holder of whom cities and states have far too few. He did not seek public office. His friends and neighbors were responsible for his entrance into politics, and later it was the sound and useful record he made that persuaded his larger and growing constituency to keep him in public office. Of him the Baltimore *News-Post* said, in an editorial, in part:

"The sudden death at his post of duty of Thomas E. Conlon, president of the City Council, is a distinct loss to that body in particular and to the citizens of Baltimore in general.

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