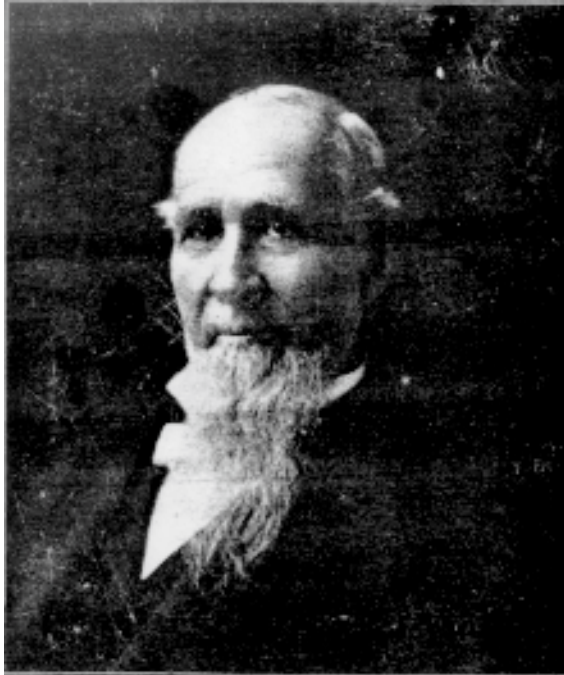


Charles B. Church

(11 Sep 1826 – 26 Apr 1908)

The Evening Star, March 22, 1859

Our readers will find it worth their while to examine the ice advertisement in another column of



CHARLES B. CHURCH

Charles B. Church. He procures his stock from the Rockland Lake Company, which is celebrated for furnishing a firm and pure article. We advise all those desiring to be satisfactorily supplied with this indispensable luxury during the warm season, to immediately have their names registered on his books.

The Evening Star, November 11, 1868

Handsome Improvement in South Washington

Through the enterprise of Mr. C.B. Church, South Washington improvements are being made daily in that section of G street, running on both sides, between 6th and 7th streets. On the south side, a row of handsome frame cottages, each having ornamental bay windows (a description of which has already appeared in the STAR) is about being completed, and will be ready for occupancy in a short time, while on the opposite side the spacious center building of two tenements, to be flanked on either side by four other cottage residences, is in the same advanced stage of completion. Within the past few days Messrs. George T. Davis and Edward

H. May, carpenters, have commenced the erection of the four tenements to form the west wing of the row of ten, each of which will contain eight comfortable rooms, exclusive of bath and anterooms. Spacious halls will run through each, and the whole number will be finished in the most approved style of cottage architecture, having gas and water, with saloon parlors, high-pitched ceilings, good ventilation, etc. They will each have a main front of twenty and a-half feet, and a depth of thirty feet, with a twelve by twenty-two feet addition, situated on lots of over one hundred and thirty feet depth. Of the four tenements, the erection of which has just commenced, the inside two will occupy a recess of about ten feet from the front line of the centre and two outside tenements, but will be faced with plazas running their entire length, the front line of which will strike even with the main front of the protecting buildings. The center and outside tenements will also be adorned with piazzas, running in relief of the receding ones, while pediment roofs will add to the handsome appearance of the east and west wing, a French roof will adorn the center building, and the four inside tenements (two on each side) will have flat tin roofs.

These tenements (fifteen or twenty in number) will be occupied by such a class of tenants as will add to the hitherto good character of the neighborhood, and very much enhance its desirableness for family residences.

The Evening Star, September 22, 1880

Mr. C.B. Church, president of the Independent Ice Co., with other prominent business men of Washington belonging to the company, have gone to Maine to superintend the construction of a dam at Boothbay, where the winter shipments of ice are made.

The Evening Star, September 27, 1882

A Question of Title

Mr. Charles B. Church, a lumber dealer of South Washington, was charged in the Police Court this morning with obstructing a public alley in square between C and D and 9th and 10th streets southwest. Sergeant Nokes testified that this alley is in the rear of a row of twelve houses owned by the defendant. It was formerly a private alley, but Mr. Church sold the ground to the government, and it was made a ten foot public alley, though Mr. Church continues to keep the gates at both ends of the alley. The court said he would continue the case until Friday, and gave the defendant until that time to remove the gates.

Evening Star, Sunday, April 26, 1908, p. 2

Death of an Aged Resident

Charles B. Church the Victim of Diabetes

Was Native of Maryland, But Resided in the District Since the Year 1840

Charles B. Church, one of the oldest residents and business men of this city, died at his home, 306 11th street southwest, shortly after 2 o'clock this morning. The death was attributed to diabetes and complications arising from the disease. He had been ill about one month. Mr. Church was hale and hearty until a few weeks ago. He contracted a severe cold while attending the funeral of the late Crosby S. Noyes, which took a deep hold upon him, and for a time it was feared that pneumonia would develop. This was avoided by the physicians, however, but diabetes, from which Mr. Church had suffered for a number of years reappeared in an aggravated form, and this, as stated, coupled with a weak heart, proved fatal. Mr. Church passed away surrounded by his children and grandchildren. He was eighty-one years of age, and the greater part of his years was spent in this city, with whose business interests he was prominently identified.

Mr. Church was a native of Maryland, having been born in Jefferson, Frederick County, September 11, 1826. His father was Shepherd Solars Church and his mother Eliza Cherry Church. He attended school for a few years at Norfolk, Va., but in 1840, when he was about fourteen years of age, he came to this city and entered the shop of William A. Harris to learn the carpenter's and joiner's trade. On the completion of his apprenticeship, in 1845, he went into business for himself and until 1876 carried on the business of carpenter and joiner.

March 4, 1847, he married Miss Matilda S. Harris, the daughter of his first employer, and their happy married life extended over a period of fifty-four years.

Establishes Lumber Firm

In 1861 Mr. Church, in addition to his other business, established the lumber firm of C.B. Church & Co., and that business was later transferred to his son. Mr. Church was prominently identified with the ice business in this city, having been one of the organizers of the old Independent Ice Company, which, from its organization in 1866 until it was absorbed by the American Ice Company about eight years ago, was the leading concern of its kind in this section of the country. Mr. Church was made its general manager upon its organization and in 1873 he was also elected its president. He held this position when the company was merged with the American company, and he then became a director in the company for this city, but retired several years ago.

Mr. Church always took an active part in any movement for the betterment of the southwest section of the city, and as chairman of the river and harbor committee of an old business men's association he had a foremost part in framing the legislation authorizing the reclaiming of the Potomac flats and the building of the Potomac Park. Against his protest the harbor was fixed at its present width. Mr. Church wanted it from 100 to 200 feet wider, and the wisdom of the position he took, a quarter of a century ago can be seen in the fact that what he advocated then is now being advocated in the new harbor improvement plans.

While Mr. Church was chairman of the river and harbor committee the depth of the water in the harbor was increased from fourteen to twenty-two feet, and the channel of the river was dredged to twenty-two feet from its mouth to Alexandria. In 1852 a big freshet carried away a portion of the old wooden Long bridge the sole connecting link between the north and south. It was necessary that it should be rebuilt quickly, and after consulting older builders the task was given to Mr. Church, then a young man of about twenty years of age. He completed the work in about three weeks, and at a cost of several thousand dollars less than the city authorities had estimated.

Develops Southwest Section

Mr. Church was a firm believer in the southwest section of the city, and a large portion of his fortune was invested in building it up. To him the southwest owes much of its present prosperity. He built many rows of neat dwellings in the vicinity of his home on 11th street and he was one of the largest holders of southwest property in the city at the time of his death. In recent years Mr. Church has not engaged in active business enterprises, contenting himself with looking after his property interests. He was a very charitable man, and many will doubtless miss his kindnesses.

Mr. Church built Westminster Presbyterian Church, at the corner of 7th and D streets southwest, and donated the structure to its congregation. He was a worshiper there. He was a very genial man, and was fond of telling of his experiences in the early days of Washington, when the city was but a struggling village. He numbered his friends by the score, not only in this city, but throughout the country, and his death will be sincerely regretted.

He was a member of the Masonic fraternity, having received the degrees in Centennial Lodge in this city. Two sons -- Mr. C.W. Church of the firm of Dupue & Church, and W.A.H. Church of Church & Stephenson -- and three daughters -- Mrs. Alice V. Dupue, Mrs. Mattie E. Berkley and Miss Mary A. Church -- survive him. Mrs. Church died September 26, 1901.

Washington Evening Star, Monday, April 27, 1908, p. 9

Old Resident Dies

President of Oldest Inhabitants Passes Away

Death Was Not Expected

Demise Follows Soon After That of Charles B. Church

Arrangements For Funerals

Two veteran citizens of the District of Columbia -- John Edward Libbey and Charles B. Church -- both honored members of the Association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia, passed away at an early hour yesterday morning.

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Funeral of Mr. Church

The funeral of Mr. Church will take place from Westminster Memorial Presbyterian Church tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock. Rev. T.E. Davis, the pastor, will officiate, and Rev. Dr. Bittinger, a lifelong friend of the deceased and a former pastor of Westminster Memorial Church, will assist at the services. Messrs. Ambrose H. Stephenson, Joseph G. Stephenson, John B. Stephenson, William A. Wimsatt,

Frederick J. White and R. Harrison Johnson, all nephews of the deceased, will be the pallbearers. The interment will be in Congressional Cemetery.

Mr. Church was a charter member of the Association of Oldest Inhabitants, and his death, it is stated, leaves only one charter member, William H. Williams, 89 years of age, living. Mr. Church was for nearly a quarter of a century a vice president of the association and the organization, it is stated will attend the funeral services in a body. Centennial Lodge, F.A.A.M. of which the deceased, it is stated, was the oldest member, will also attend.

The Washington Board of Trade held a meeting today to take action in the matter. It was decided that by the deaths of Mr. Church and Mr. Libbey the Washington Board of Trade loses two of its members who have been associated with the board for more than ten years and who served on many important committees.

To Represent Board of Trade

The following named were appointed representatives of the board to attend the funeral services of Mr. Church: Cuno H. Rudolph, president; William T. Galliher, N.H. Shea, M.I. Weller and W.H. Yerkes.

The Evening Star, April 28, 1908, p. 2

Hold Services For The Dead

Funerals of J. Edward Libbey and Charles B. Church

Final Rites in Tribute to Memory of Honored Citizens of This City

The association of Oldest Inhabitants of the District of Columbia today paid tribute to the memory of two of its members, who died within a few hours of each other last Sunday morning -- J. Edward Libbey, the president, and Charles B. Church, a charter member. The funeral of each occurred at 2 o'clock this afternoon in different sections of the city, attended by representatives of the association, and by members of other organizations with which the deceased were affiliated.

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Funeral of Charles B. Church

The funeral of Charles B. Church, who died at his home, 306 11th street southwest, early yesterday morning, took place from Westminster Memorial Presbyterian Church, 7th street, between D and E streets southwest, this afternoon at 2 o'clock. The edifice was filled with representatives of the Oldest Inhabitants' Association, the Board of Trade, Washington Centennial Lodge of Masons and other organizations. There were many personal friends of the deceased present, all desiring to pay a last mark of respect to the memory of one whom they had loved and honored in life.

Rev. .E. Davis, pastor of Westminster Memorial Church, and Rev. Dr. Bittinger, a former pastor of the church and lifelong friend of Mr. Church, conducted the funeral services and paid tributes to the memory of the deceased as a man and a citizen.

The interment, which was private, was in the family burial ground in Congressional cemetery, and the body of Mr. Church was borne to its last resting place by his nephews, Messrs. Ambrose H. Stephenson, John S. Stephenson, Joseph G. Sephenson, William Wimsatt, Frederick J. White and R. Harrison Johnson.

The honorary pallbearers were from the Oldest Inhabitants' Association.

Action of Association

The meeting of the Oldest Inhabitants' Association in the Corcoran building last evening was devoted to two of their prominent members who have recently passed away, Mr. J. Edward Libbey, their

president, and Mr. Charles B. Church, who, for many years, was vice president of the organization. Tributes were paid to their memory and resolutions of condolence were adopted. J.J. Georges, George J. Suter, J.T. Petty, William H. Braund, George W. Harvey, John T. Chancy, William A. Clark and William A. Linton were selected to represent the association as pallbearers at the funeral of Mr. Church.

A resolution offered by John R. Mahoney on the death of Mr. Church, who was one of the two surviving charter members of the association, a successful business man and one whose life had been of great usefulness to his fellowmen, was adopted.

Goode, James M., Capital Losses: A Cultural History of Washington's Destroyed Buildings, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 1979

Church Row

601-613 6th Street, S.W.

1871 - razed 1958

Architect: unknown

The seven houses that formed Church Row in the Southwest section are illustrations of the fact that new styles in architecture were often late in being adopted in Washington. Erected by lumber merchant and real-estate developer Charles B. Church in 1871, these houses would have been considered out of style in Baltimore, Philadelphia, or New York. They could have been built thirty years earlier. The most notable features to indicate that the row was built in 1871 rather than 1841 were the flat roofs and large sheets of glass in the sash windows. The entrances had arched architrave's with heavy moldings. Above the three stories, with flat arched window, was a bracketed cornice. These were handsome buildings, nevertheless, and remained in good condition until they were demolished along with more than 2,000 other Victorian houses in the 1950s under Washington's urban renewal program.

A History of the City of Washington, Its Men and Institutions

Mr. Charles B. Church is the founder of the firm of Church & Stephenson, lumber merchants, in Washington. Their main office is located at Maryland avenue, Eighth and Ninth streets, southwest, and their yards cover the entire block bounded by those thoroughfares. This firm is one of the oldest lumber firms in this part of the country, and consists of William A.H. Church and Thomas P. Stephenson. From their immense and well-stocked yards has come the building material for many of Washington's most prominent business houses, residences, churches, schools, manufacturing concerns, and Government buildings. At their yards is to be found the largest and most diverse stock of manufactured lumber of all grades and kinds. Nothing but the best that the market produces is furnished to builders here and everywhere by this reliable firm. It has always been the motto of this old and reliable establishment to accord its numerous customers honest and fair treatment, and furnish only the very best article. Upon this foundation the business has been conducted from its very inception, and today it occupies a high standing in the community of Washington.