

**OSCAR A. TOBEY, VETERAN TOWN
CLERK OF SMITHFIELD, IS DEAD**

He Was Dean of the Town Clerks of Rhode Island, Had Held the Office Continuously Since 1871, and Was Only Occupant of That Position Since Division of Town.



**OSCAR A. TOBEY,
SMITHFIELD, DEAD**

Dean of Town Clerks of State
Stricken Suddenly.

HELD OFFICE SINCE 1871

**With Exception of First Few Years
of Continuous Service, Never
Opposed at Polls.—Postmaster at
Greenville 20 Years.—Was in His
81st Year.**

Oscar Angell Tobey, for many years Town Clerk of Smithfield and the only Town Clerk ever elected in that township, died suddenly while at breakfast yesterday at his home in Greenville. He had been ill for only two days, but it was not believed that his condition was serious. Death was due to heart disease. He was present at the town meeting last Saturday. He was in his 81st year.

Funeral services will be held at the Tobey home at 2 o'clock Thursday afternoon. Burial will be in the Harmony Cemetery.

Mr. Tobey is survived by his wife, a son, William Tobey, of Palmer, Mass., and two daughters, Miss Jennie L. Tobey and Mrs. Jessie H. Smith, both of Greenville.

With the last election in June, Mr. Tobey became the senior Town Clerk of the State, Edwin R. Allen of Hopkinton retiring at that election, after 50 years of continuous service. On Mr. Tobey's death, Albert L. Chase of Middletown becomes dean of the clerks, having held office continuously since 1873.

A further distinction which Mr. Tobey held, and probably one that no other Town Clerk serving any number of years has ever had, was that, with the exception of the first few elections, he never had an opponent for his position. Samuel W. Farnum opposed Mr. Tobey for the first few elections, but was defeated each time and since then no one had been nominated against him, occasionally the Democrats placing his name on their ticket, but usually leaving that office blank.

In addition to being Town Clerk, Mr. Tobey served for a time as a member of the old Smithfield Town Council, previous to the division of the town, and was Postmaster at Greenville for 20 years, being retired under the age limit clause. He also owned and operated the village general store for many years, giving that up last spring.

He was born in Greenville on Jan. 10, 1837, the son of William and Sarah Ann (Angell) Tobey. He was educated in the village schools and at the academy in Wilbraham, Mass. In 1856 he returned to Greenville, and went to work in his father's store, the same general merchandise store which he afterward owned himself.

After a time he left the village and went to Hebronville, Mass., where he took charge of the general store of the E. B. & R. Knight, run in connection with their mill. He remained there for some time, until his father decided that the Greenville business was too much for him to look out for, because of advancing age, and so Mr. Tobey returned to his native place to work. In a few years his father retired definitely, and the son took over the business, keeping it until Feb. 20 of this year, when he sold it.

He was elected to the old Smithfield Town Council and was serving as a member of that body when the town was divided on its present lines into Smithfield and North Smithfield. That was in 1871, and Mr. Tobey was elected Town Clerk that year and continuously since then, his last election being in June of this year.

His office, as Town Clerk, was in a back room of the store, and the Post Office was also in the store, this arrangement concentrating all of the town business in the spot where most of the people would naturally come to transact their business affairs. The basement of the store was also fitted up as the village lockup for many years.

When Adin B. Capron was first elected to Congress he nominated Mr. Tobey for Postmaster of Greenville and for 20 years the Town Clerk served in that Federal office, finally being forced to give it up because of the law which limits postmasters to men or women under 65 years of age.