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Conductor of the Old Eighth: Harriet M. Marshall

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CONDUCTOR OF THE OLD EIGHTH

Harriet M. Marshall

1840-1923

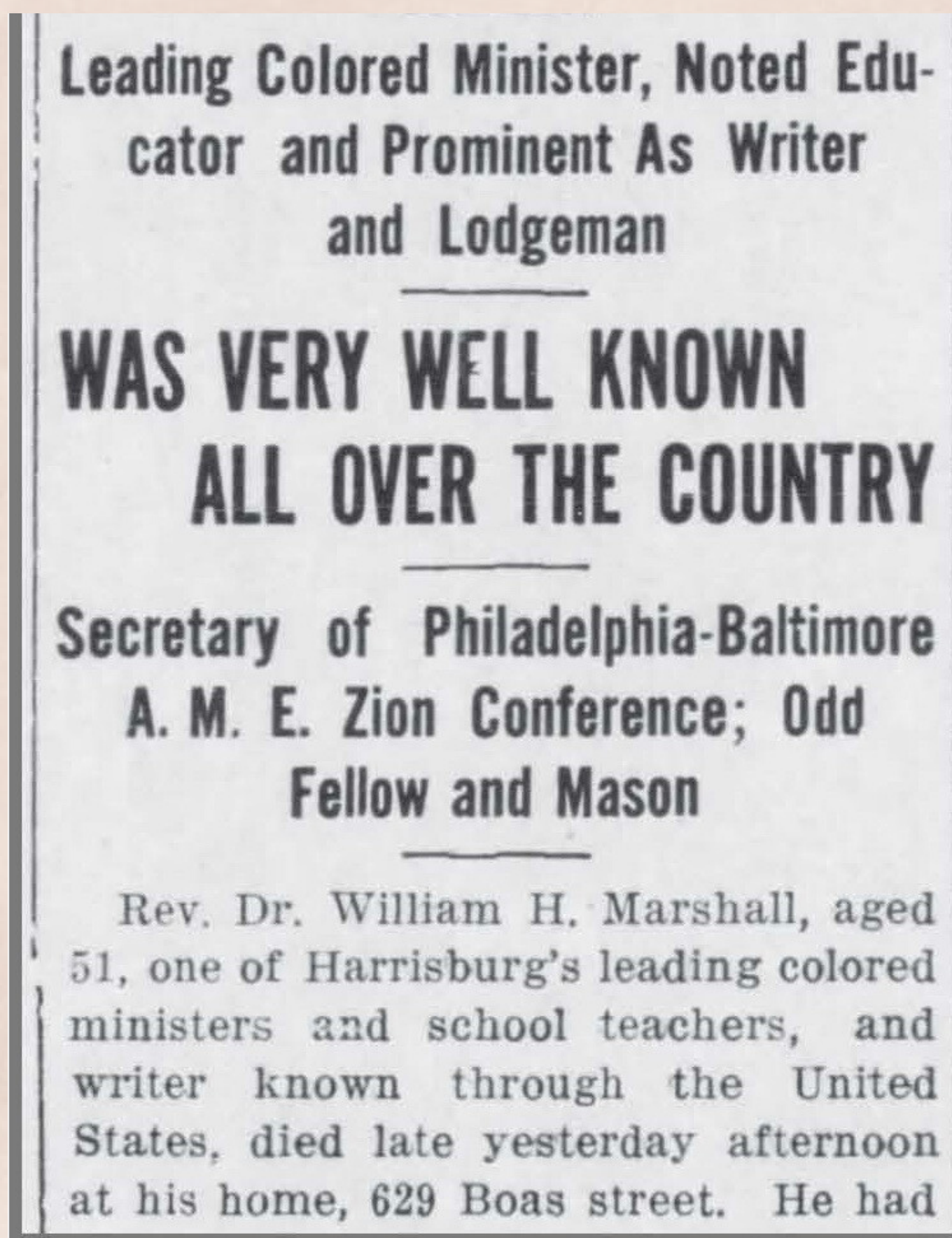
CONDUCTING THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

Harriet McClintock Marshall was born in 1840. Her mother, Catherine, was one of the founding members of Wesley Union African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and Harriet worked with her mother to continue establishing the church's reputation. Wesley Union, located on Tanner's Alley, was a haven for those seeking freedom through the Underground Railroad. Harriet's and her mother's work in the Underground Railroad grew even more dangerous - and illegal - with the passage of 1850 Fugitive Slave Act. The church's proximity to the Mason-Dixon Line increased the risk.

MEMORIALIZIZING THE WAR OF THE REBELLION

In 1860, Harriet met Elisha Marshall, who escaped enslavement and traveled to Harrisburg via the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, Elisha joined the Union forces and achieved the rank of corporal in the 24th regiment. In 1864, Harriet and Elisha married. Together, they both worked for the Eby family on Front Street. The Marshalls had two children: William and Ella.

After the war, Harriet, along with several other women in the Eighth Ward - including Jane Chester and Anne Amos - worked together to create a monument dedicated to Elisha and the numerous other African Americans in Harrisburg who fought in what they called "The War of the Rebellion." Today, the monument still stands at Lincoln Cemetery in Penbrook.



Monument in Lincon Cemetery

FROM BEGINNING TO END: A LIFE IN THE OLD EIGHTH

Harriet lived in the Eighth Ward at 708 East Street from 1900 until its destruction. She is one of the few individuals to witness the thriving activity in the Eighth Ward from the buzzing Underground Railroad activity all the way until the final days of its destruction in the early 1900s. Harriet's died in 1925, amid the construction of the Capitol Complex.

Harriet's son, William Howard Marshall, continued his mother's legacy through the era of educational reform. William was one of two African-American male students to first graduate from Harrisburg High School and later became a minister, educator, and reformer like his mother. See his obituary above.

