

Biography

Major General Edward C. Shannon (1870-1946)

Edward Caswell Shannon was born in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, on June 24, 1870, and grew up in Columbia, Pennsylvania. He studied metallurgical chemistry at Lehigh University and Lafayette College. He later completed a course in metallurgical chemistry in the laboratory of the Phoenix Iron Company, and then worked as a chemist and blast furnace superintendent in the iron and steel industries. In 1899, he married Maud Radcliffe Lucas (1877-1943). Shannon later worked as Treasurer and General Manager of Lucas Manufacturing, Columbia, Pennsylvania.

His military career began in 1889, when he enlisted in Company C, 4th Infantry Regiment, Pennsylvania National Guard. He advanced through the noncommissioned officer ranks and obtained a commission as a Second Lieutenant in 1893. He had attained the rank of Captain and command of a company by the time he volunteered to serve in the Spanish–American War.

Shannon remained in the National Guard, and by 1915, had become commander of the 4th Infantry with the rank of Colonel. He commanded his regiment on the Mexican border during the 1916 Pancho Villa Expedition. During World War I, he continued in command of his regiment, which combined with other units and federalized as the 111th Infantry, 28th Infantry Division. During the war, Shannon earned the nickname "Two Yard" because of the reputation he developed for leading his men from the front ("two yards" ahead) during their attacks on German positions. Colonel Shannon was awarded the coveted Silver Star and also received the Army's Distinguished Service Medal.

After World War I, Shannon was promoted to Brigadier General as commander of Pennsylvania's 1st Infantry Brigade. He later commanded the 52nd Cavalry Brigade.

In 1919, he was elected as Prothonotary of Lancaster County. From 1930 to 1935, he served as Lieutenant Governor. Shannon unsuccessfully sought the Republican nomination for governor in 1934.

From 1933 to 1939, Shannon served as Major General and commander of the 28th Infantry Division. During World War II, Shannon was chairman of his local draft board.

Shannon died in Columbia, Pennsylvania, on May 20, 1946, and is buried at Laurel Hill Memorial Gardens.