

MAJOR PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN PUBLISHING
A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER IN KANSAS

by

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the popularity of television in the United States today, as well as the influence radio has had upon the American public in the past two decades, newspapers remain the chief source of news in this country. Even with competition from other media, which some predicted would push newspapers far into the background, the number of persons reading newspapers daily has soared to unexpected heights.

Great discoveries have been made in the field of communications during the last half century. While radio and television have been developing, constantly improving and winning support, newspapers also have been changing to meet demands in this atomic age. Technological discoveries have made it possible to report a war in Korea, or a riot in East Berlin, with the speed of light, slowed only by human restrictions. Not only do readers learn of events in far-off places only a few hours after they happen, and in greater detail than either radio or television can afford, but it is possible to transmit pictures at the same speed.

In the midst of the exciting events that occur daily throughout the world, one group of newspapers sits back complacently and concerns itself only with happenings having very little ramifications. Their front pages do not herald the passage of a new income tax law in Washington, but more often the lead story will be about the actions of a much smaller governmental unit. They are, of course, the country newspapers; more specifically, the weeklies, situated in thousands of small towns in America.

To say that weekly newspapers have not changed essentially in the past half century would be false. Publishers have been quick to adopt techniques developed by larger newspapers, but the country paper still lags behind the dailies in many ways, principally in methods of production, due to the expense of complicated machinery.

A different philosophy prevails among the weekly newspapers, however, than exists in the offices of metropolitan dailies. And in this respect, at least, weeklies have not changed. The local news item is still paramount. The fiery editor of yesteryear is gone, but the local press still watches over thousands of small communities with a cyclopean eye. The tongue may be more cautious, but the power is still present.

This segment of the publishing industry is often called "the grass-roots press," because of its closeness to the people it serves. Indeed, if any newspaper can be said to be "of the people," it would be a weekly. No other newspaper has such a close check on the pulse of its readers.

This thesis is about the weekly newspaper. The writer has attempted to limit its scope to Kansas, but weeklies everywhere have many things in common and the writer borrowed heavily upon experiences of editors in other states, also.

Purpose of This Thesis

The purpose in writing on this subject was three-fold. First, the writer's interest, training and experience have been in this field. Second, after an apprenticeship to become a printer, the

writer decided to cross the line into the editorial department, which he did. After serving as editor and manager of two weekly newspapers, and later as a partner in one enterprise, it became apparent that certain problems were common among weeklies. To explore some of these problems seemed to be a worthwhile project. Third, the writer hoped to gather practical material that would be suitable for presentation to a class in Rural Press which he proposed to teach at Kansas State College.

Methods Used to Collect Information

Many books and articles have been written on this subject, but it was discovered that very little had been printed about weekly newspapers in recent years. Therefore, rather than rely on information that might not be applicable today, the writer spent his vacation period in 1954 interviewing weekly newspaper editors in Kansas. Nineteen newspapers were visited. Results from two of these newspapers were later rejected because of incomplete information, but they were replaced by questionnaires and information received from two other editors with whom the writer was acquainted.

Approximately 1,000 miles was covered in making the survey and newspapers in 18 counties were included in the study. Geographically, seven of the newspapers were located in the eastern one-third of Kansas; nine in the central one-third; and three in the western one-third of the state.

The 19 newspapers represent 6.2 percent of the total number

of weekly newspapers in the state. Fourteen of the newspapers were county seat publications, and 16 did not have local competition.

The newspapers were selected by routes that made it possible for the writer to use Manhattan, Kansas as a home base. Four trips were made out of Manhattan, requiring a total of seven and one-half days.

A questionnaire was compiled before the interviews began. However, the purpose of the questionnaires was not so much to obtain information that could be tabulated, as to have a uniform system of questioning editors about their various problems. At the outset, the writer did not intend to compile statistical data concerning weekly newspapers, although such information is often quite valuable. Some statistical data was collected, however, and is included in this thesis. The primary purpose of making personal interviews was to visit with editors, in their own surroundings, about their problems and to look over their plants, equipment and locations. It was felt that much more could be learned about weekly newspapers in this way than if a survey were conducted entirely through mail questionnaires. The interviews required an average of approximately one and one-half hours.

Many good books and articles have been written concerning weekly newspapers and the writer borrowed from these sources whenever a point needed clarification and the information was still applicable. Even though most of these books are now outdated, much of the knowledge presented by such authorities as Charles Laurel Allen, Thomas Barnhart and others is still valid.

Terms Used

All of the terms used in this thesis are familiar to any newspaperman or journalism student. However, to avoid confusion, perhaps it is best to point out that the terms "country newspaper" and "weekly newspaper" are used interchangeably, even though the former may be expanded to include daily newspapers published in small towns. Also, the word "newspaper" is frequently dropped and the subject is referred to simply as "weeklies," merely to avoid repetition and monotony.

In most cases with weekly newspapers, the terms "editor" and "publisher" are synonymous. In only two cases in the survey were they different persons. In this thesis, "editor" is used whenever the topic concerns news-editorial work, while "publisher" is more applicable in discussing other phases of the weekly newspaper business.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEWSPAPER IN THE UNITED STATES

Early Newspapers in America

The United States is noted for its abundance of newspapers. Its citizens are perhaps the best informed in the world, principally because of the numerous publications available in which controversial issues are freely discussed. The huge, multi-page metropolitan daily is an invention of the United States and the low cost of purchasing a newspaper makes it possible for nearly everyone to read about the issues of the day.

However, the American press as it is known today is the

result of an evolutionary process that developed slowly at first. But with the migration of settlers to the west and the growth of large cities along the Eastern coast, the demand for news brought about the establishment of hundreds of weekly and daily newspapers.

The first newspaper in America was printed September 25, 1690, by Benjamin Harris, a former London bookseller.¹ It was a three-page sheet (with one blank page), printed in Boston. Its size was 6 x 9½ inches. Harris reported in this first issue that his intentions were "to report such considerable things as have arrived unto our notice." But his venture was short-lived. The Massachusetts authorities, setting precedent for their later descendants, took offense at some of the material that Publick Occurrences contained, and the publication was suppressed. Volume I, Number I is all that was ever issued.

The first paper to have considerable consecutive publication appeared in 1704.² Boston, in that year, was the largest town in the colonies, having a population of about 10,000. Boston's postmaster, John Campbell, was a canny, cautious scotsman and on April 24, 1704, he founded the Boston News-Letter.

Its appearance would look strange if compared with one of today's newspapers and the entire contents of one of its issues would scarcely fill two columns of a modern newspaper. Although the News-Letter had its ups and downs and its frequency of publication was quite often changed, the paper existed until the

¹Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism, p. 9.

²Ibid, p. 11.

revolution, when it perished at the age of 72--one of the three longest-lived American newspapers in the eighteenth century.¹

Strangely enough, the first daily newspaper did not appear in America until May, 1783, when Benjamin Towne founded the Pennsylvania Evening Post in Philadelphia.² London had had its daily papers since 1702; Augsburg (Germany) since 1718, and Paris since 1777; but no centers of population existed in America comparable to those in Europe.³

Towne's newspaper led a rather perilous existence because of his alleged association with the Tory forces during the British occupation of Philadelphia. His newspaper succumbed soon after another daily, The Pennsylvania Packet and Daily Advertiser, was started in September, 1874, by John Dunlap. The success of the daily newspaper in Philadelphia evidently encouraged the establishment of other dailies, according to Mott:

A few months after the Packet had demonstrated the practicability of a daily in Philadelphia, New York had a similar paper--the New York Daily Advertiser. Philadelphia and New York long kept the leadership in daily papers; at the close of the century the former had six of them and the latter five. Boston, though it had two short-lived attempts of this kind, gave no consistent support to the daily publication in the eighteenth century. But the rising commercial center of Baltimore supported three dailies by 1800; and further south, Charleston, in size the fourth American city, had two.

¹Mott, op. cit., p. 14.

²Ibid, p. 115.

³Ibid, p. 118.

⁴Ibid, p. 116.

Settlement of the West and the Emergence of Weekly Newspapers

Although daily newspapers grew in number and editors of such influence as Greeley, Dana, Bennett and Raymond had risen into prominence at the outbreak of the Civil War, the weekly papers, because of their numbers, were immensely important.

With each new settlement in the west, newspapers sprang up. For the most part, editors were printers who had served their apprenticeships in eastern shops and were eager to strike out on their own. The western development was made for them.

But newspapers also served a very important purpose in the new land, although it is evident that many of them were founded only for the purpose of stimulating profitable frontier land booms and to print the legal notices required by the filing of more than a million homestead claims.¹

Modern means of communications had not been developed, and the influence of the local paper was important. Most of the nation, and particularly the west, was agrarian. Urban interests did not reach into these isolated areas. Today, the telegraph, metropolitan newspapers, radio, television, and movies have profoundly changed the small city and country dweller. But in the days of the pioneer, isolation was an important factor in accounting for the strength of the country weekly. It was difficult for the few daily papers that did exist to reach the rural communities.

¹Wendell W. Norris, "The Transient Frontier Weekly as a Stimulant to Homesteading," Journalism Quarterly, Vol. 30, 1953, p. 44.

This was the era of so-called "personal journalism." Newspapers today attempt to be objective in their reporting of the news, but one of the characteristics of early 19th century journalism was the individuality which each paper possessed, reflecting the personality of its editor. To feuding newspaper editors, everything was fair game and they named names without fear. This was a result of the "wild west" when shooting brawls were frequent and often started without much provocation.

It wasn't uncommon, for example, for the local editor to offer a "first class obituary notice in case of death" for all persons who paid their subscriptions.¹

Political affiliations caused many feuds during the days of personal journalism. Most newspapers in those days were started for political purposes. A profit was secondary. This feeling continued among country newspapermen until the late 19th century and it is relatively modern for rural newspapermen to believe that to survive they must also become businessmen.

William Allen White, writing in Harper's Magazine in 1916, had this to say about the early country newspapers:

Of old in this country the newspaper was a sort of poor relation in the commerce of a place. The newspaper required support, and the support was given, somewhat in charity, more or less in return for polite blackmail, and the rest for business reasons. The editor was a tolerated person. He had to be put on the chairmanship of some important committee in every community enterprise to secure his help. In times of social or political emergency, he sold stock in his newspaper company to statesmen. That was in those primeval days before corporations were controlled; so the editor's trusty job press never let the supply of

¹Elmo Scott Watson, Jobs in Rural Journalism, p. 14.

stock fall behind the demand. Those good old days were the days when the editor with the "trenchant pen" stalked to glory through libel suits and shooting scrapes, and when most American towns were beset by a newspaper row as by a fiendish mania.¹

The Effect of New Printing Equipment

During the period of western development in the United States, it was a rather simple process for a printer to "pack up" his equipment and move to another locality. The proverbial "shirt-tail" full of type and a Washington hand press was all the equipment needed.² The hand press was a slow, cumbersome piece of equipment and at the most could print only about 50 copies an hour, but circulations were small in those days and long impressions were unnecessary. It still can be said, however, that early printers used more elbow grease than ink.

Until the beginning of the 19th century, paper was made by hand, a tedious and expensive process at the very best. Then, about 1800, a machine was invented in France to make paper, which helped lower costs and, in turn, encouraged larger press runs and the establishment of more printing plants. In 1826, David Napier, an Englishman, sent his first cylinder press to the United States. Up to that time, flat sheets of paper had been pressed against

¹William Allen White, "The Country Newspaper," Harper's Magazine, Vol. 132, 1916. p. 888.

²Two of these early day presses still exist in Kansas. One is on display in the William Allen White School of Journalism at Kansas University, and the other is owned by Ralph G. Hemenway, publisher of the Minneapolis Messenger. The Messenger still uses the press to take proofs of their mailing galleys and the press is nearly in perfect condition.

inked type to make impressions. For the flat press, 250 impressions an hour was fast work, and it was not until inventors got the idea of rolling paper on cylinders over flat beds of type that the process was speeded up.¹

The press invented by Napier could print papers at the phenomenal rate of 1,000 copies an hour. But no matter how fast papers were printed, the public by that time clamored for more, and faster ways of printing became necessary. In 1846, Richard Hoe conceived the idea of having the type on a cylinder which rolled over the paper. Thus, the rotary press was invented and the same principle is used on modern presses which today are capable of turning out papers at the rate of 200,000 copies an hour.

The problem of printing a large quantity of papers, then, had been solved by the middle of the 19th century, but another bottleneck remained. Type was still set by hand and this was a slow, laborious process that held back the progress of mass-produced newspapers. It seemed that the job of selecting the proper type characters from 150 different compartments the hand compositor used and then making sure that each line came out exactly even was too complicated for even the most ingenious machine. Many inventors worked on the problem. It is said that Mark Twain nearly went bankrupt after investing a fortune on a type-setting invention that failed.²

¹Watson, op. cit., p. 11

²Willi Mengel, Ottmar Mergenthaler and the Printing Revolution, p. 26.

It wasn't until 1884 that Ottmar Mergenthaler perfected the first successful machine to set type.¹ Whereas most of the other inventors had attempted to perfect a machine that would pick out individual characters, Mergenthaler's machine cast type in a solid line of metal. Thus, the name "Linotype" was developed. As later perfected, the Linotype would set type about six times as fast as it could be set by hand and the problem of producing type in large quantities at a fast rate had been solved.

These mechanical developments, however, were designed to meet the needs of the large daily newspapers which had circulations numbering into the thousands. The small country weekly was still unaffected by the new equipment and it wasn't until the turn of the 20th century that many of the weekly newspapers began to use Linotype machines. Westward-trekking settlers had simply loaded small presses and boxes of type aboard their prairie schooners and taken their print shops with them as the new country opened up. Complicated machinery was left behind.

The Rise and Decline of Weeklies

Since reaching a peak of nearly 17,000 in 1914, weekly newspapers have declined to about two-thirds of that number today.² According to a study made by Wendell W. Norris, much of this decline has been due to changes in rural patterns of living and by

¹Watson, op. cit., p. 12.

²Alfred M. Lee, The Daily Newspaper in America, p. 723.

technological changes affecting weekly newspaper production.¹ Competition from other media has been a factor, also.

Other opinions have been advanced by publishers and persons connected with the publishing industry as to why the number of newspapers has declined. Elmo Scott Watson, formerly editor of Publisher's Auxiliary, has contended that the changing regional population distribution of the country has been responsible for much of the decline. Since the turn of the century, the population has shifted from rural areas to urban centers. Thus, there are fewer people in the rural areas, the operating grounds of weekly newspapers. Therefore, it has been difficult for weekly newspapers to grow in areas that are losing potential subscribers.²

Norris claims in his study that the number of newspapers and homestead claims reached their peak numbers at approximately the same time. The end of the frontier has often been fixed at 1890, Norris said, when a census official remarked that the frontier could no longer be defined by any clear boundary. But mopping up operations continued for many years and it was not until 1913 that final homestead entries reached a high point in the United States.³

Norris goes on to say that the weekly newspaper, requiring only a hand press and some readyprint pages, was the ideal medium for publicizing a townsite in an effort to make it a county

¹Norris, op. cit., p. 44.

²Watson, op. cit., p. 17.

³Norris, op. cit., p. 17.

seat or to attract prospective town lot buyers by convincing them they were helping to found a future metropolis. The early files of nearly any Kansas weekly newspaper are filled with exorbitant claims.

At any rate, the passing of the western frontier seemed to end the rise in numbers of weekly newspapers, although it did not mean an end to the importance of the weekly press as an institution serving local needs. In fact, a thinning out process was necessary to assure circulations that could finance good local news coverage and end the weekly newspaper's dependence upon readyprint pages and boiler plate.¹

Another important reason for the decline is that many newspapers consolidated as publishers began to turn their interests from politics to profits. As stated before, many early papers were published for political purposes and they managed to keep alive through political subsidies. But a paper printed for political purposes could hardly expect to show a profit and many publishers soon found that by combining two weak papers in one area, they could attract more circulation and create more advertising revenue than each of them separately. Thus, a number of "Independent" newspapers came into existence when "Republican"

¹This does not mean, however, that readyprint was not used in weekly newspapers after the west had been settled. Readyprint and boiler plate were distributed by Western Newspaper Union until March, 1952, at which time that company discontinued it. Several hundred weekly newspapers were forced into cutting down the size of their papers or filling them with more local news. Many newspaper editors lamented the passing of readyprint, while others claimed it was a good thing because it would stimulate better local reporting in towns where readyprint had been used.

and "Democratic" newspapers consolidated. They could obtain advertising from both parties at election time.¹

Technological changes, also, undoubtedly resulted in some papers dropping by the wayside. As the need for new and better equipment became necessary in the country newspaper shops, publishers were faced with the problem of investing huge sums in expensive and complex machinery. Not only that, but the new equipment meant that someone had to be trained to operate it. Many of the old printers, trained in the days of handset type, made the conversion quite easily. Others did not. But publishers who lacked the foresight or the capital to install the expensive machinery soon found they could not compete with print shops that had the modern equipment and they were forced out of business.

Of course, other factors have had some effect on the decreasing number of country newspapers. Perhaps, in some respects, they are more important than those listed above. It is evident, for example, to anyone who has traveled the side roads in any state that hundreds of small towns are slowly withering away. Many of them have already disappeared. At one time, when the horse and buggy were the principal means of transportation, these little towns flourished. But with the advent of the automobile, the smaller rural trading centers began to disappear, and the newspapers disappeared with them. Only the small towns that were chosen as county seats, or those having some industrial

¹Watson, op. cit., p. 17.

plant, or towns with some other reason for holding population have survived, and in most of these towns newspapers can still be found. But whereas nearly every town in a county once had a prosperous newspaper, now only the larger towns are big enough to support one. Even then, usually, there is only one strong paper in a county.

THE NEWSPAPER IN KANSAS

Early Newspapers in the State

Evidently Kansas had newspapers almost as soon as people started settling in the territory. Even before a press and type were available, newspapers were printed in the Eastern states and distributed in the territory.¹

The first venture in printing -- it could hardly be called a newspaper -- was undertaken March 1, 1835, by the Rev. Jotham Meeker who published a sheet called the Shau-wau-nowe Kesauthwau (Shawanoë Sun) for the Shawnee Indians.² Reverend Meeker was faced with the unusual task of first teaching his subscribers (if they could be called such) how to read before his paper was published. Using a hand press which he brought into the territory in 1833, he used type which expressed phonetically the sounds of the words in the Shawnee language. Meeker had printed several books prior to his newspaper and by the time the paper was

¹A. Andreas, Kansas History, p. 278.

²Loc. cit.

issued, the Indians had become quite a reading community.¹

Meeker later turned the printing over to another missionary, Johnston Lykins, who continued publication of the sheet until about 1844.² In a journal kept by Meeker, and now in the possession of the Kansas State Historical Society, mention was made of the paper from time to time up to the fourteenth issue in April 1837. Later copies of the paper have been discovered at times, but all have since disappeared.³

Other missionary printers published books and papers in the area before it became a territory, but the actual beginning of newspaper publishing was as stormy as the early struggle for control between the pro-slavery elements and the free-staters.

President Franklin Pierce signed the Kansas-Nebraska bill May 30, 1854, thereby opening the territory for settlement and pushing the Indians still farther west. The rush of settlement began at once. With the settlers came newspapers -- and bitter political campaigns.⁴

That newspapers played a decidedly important role in the ensuing struggle is borne out by Herbert Flint, who wrote a master's thesis in 1916 on "Journalism in Territorial Kansas:"

. . . it is merely an elaboration of modest statements made by such men as Captain Henry King, D. W. Wilder, Franklin G.

¹Loc. cit.

²Douglas C. McMurtrie, "Pioneer Printing of Kansas," The Kansas Historical Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 1, Nov. 1931, p. 6.

³Loc. cit.

⁴McMurtrie, op. cit., p. 7.

Adams and George W. Martin that the early newspapers of Kansas probably did as much to make the state as any other single influence. That assertion is not quite broad enough. One should not say that the early newspapers of the Territory alone made Kansas, but that newspapers in general made and, through the making, saved Kansas. In other words, publicity dependent primarily upon newspapers is the key to the success of the free-soil fight which attended the birth of this state.

A publicity campaign such as this country had never before witnessed was conducted by its newspapers between 1854 and 1861, and the subject of that campaign was Kansas--. ¹

The first bonafide newspaper credited to the territory was the Kansas Weekly Herald, published at the site of what is now Leavenworth. The race between the pro-slavery elements and the free-staters had reached a high pitch and the Southern party (pro-slavery) "won the first heat."² Thus, the first newspaper in the state was devoted to the establishment of slavery.

The first issue of the Kansas Weekly Herald was set up and printed under an elm tree September 15, 1854. William H. Adams and William J. Osborn started the newspaper, but after the first six issues, Osborn dropped out. He was replaced in the partnership by General Lucien J. Eastin. Adams is described as being a "Mild-mannered person, a printer rather than an editor, and his paper at first was colorless enough, although representing the proslavery cause."³ But under the firm of Eastin and Adams, the Kansas Weekly Herald began to emit editorial fire.

¹Herbert Flint, Journalism in Territorial Kansas, p. 3. Unpublished M.S. thesis, Kansas University, 1916.

²Noble L. Prentis, Kansas Miscellanies, p. 92.

³McMurtrie, op. cit., p. 9.

Much has been made of the fact that the first issue was printed before a building had been erected to house the equipment, because it seems to emphasize the urgency of establishing a proslavery paper before others could get underway. Noble L. Prentis, an early newspaperman in the territory, described the setting in his book, Kansas Miscellanies:

The primeval type-sticker had a magnificent composing room. Its boundaries were the Missouri river, the Gulf of Mexico, the Rocky Mountains and the British possessions. No smoke-dimmed ceiling stretched above him, but he listened as he worked to the September breeze as it rustled and rattled the leaves of a great elm tree, which extended its sheltering branches over the laborers of the "art preservative." The Herald was moved into the first house erected on the town-site, so a printing office was literally the beginning of the first city of Kansas.¹

The first issue of the Herald did not indicate its later role in the slavery struggle. In fact, in the introductory editorial by its publishers, the newspaper vowed to "watch over her interests (the territory),² defend her rights, advocate her claims and endeavor to promote her interests and welfare." The editorial would be quite appropriate in any newspaper making its start today, except for changes to bring it up to date. For that reason, it is included:

The establishment of the first press in a Territory is always an important and interesting event; and this we feel to be peculiarly so, in the establishment of one in the Territory of Kansas.

We commence our efforts under a combination of circumstances, peculiarly interesting and exciting, and therefore

¹Prentis, op. cit., p. 92.

²Added by the writer for clarification.

great wisdom, prudence and moderation are indispensable in conducting a press at this time and in this place; more, indeed, of these qualities are needed than we profess to have. At the same time, the qualities of truth, honesty and firmness, were never more requisite on the part of journalists than at this time.

Our course shall be straight-forward, open, undisguised, repudiating alike, on the one hand, violence and ultraism, in the defence and advocacy of our principles; and on the other, every form and species of Machiavelian policy that substitutes craft, cunning, duplicity and falsehood, for truth, honesty and manly fairness and integrity--a policy as crooked as the course of the serpent, and whose principles are as poisonous as the virus of its fangs.

As honest journalists we deem it necessary to define our positions and declare our political creed. We are Democrats, and will advocate and defend the well established and long tried principles of that democracy, which has conducted our country to the elevated station she holds among the nations of the earth--that has made her the wonder and admiration of the world, and the dread of tyrants.

We will also defend to the utmost of our abilities the constitution, the laws and the institutions of our country, firmly believing that with the preservation of the same is identified the preservation of our union and our liberties. We will, therefore, oppose all fanatical and factious movements, in every quarter--of every name and on every pretext, that opposes itself to that constitution, those laws and institutions.

Subscribing with all our hearts to the true and safe democratic doctrine, that the majority shall rule, that its will and decisions shall be the supreme law of the land--we will oppose steadfastly all endeavors to counteract the same, and count those as enemies, who will not submit thereto, when legally and constitutionally declared.

As pioneers of the press in this new and beautiful Territory, we will carefully watch over her interests, defend her rights, advocate her claims and endeavor to promote her interests and welfare. Believing that an intelligent and moral press is a powerful agent in elevating the character of a people in correcting and purifying public sentiment, we will do our utmost to make our paper an efficient instrument in that behalf. We look for favor and assistance in our labors, to the friends of virtue, law and order, and to

the lovers of our country and her glorious constitution.

OSBORN & ADAMS¹

The Kansas Weekly Herald survived until 1861,² when, presumably, free-state sentiment gained considerable strength in the territory. But its seven years of existence paved the way for the reputation Kansas later gained as a newspaper state.

Authorities disagree on the second newspaper in the territory, because it first must be decided whether that honor should belong to the second paper actually printed in the state, or the second paper to appear with local news, even though it was printed at a distant point. If actual printing in the territory is to be the criterion, then the Kickapoo Pioneer,³ another proslavery paper, is to be considered the second newspaper in the territory. At Kickapoo, about seven miles from Leavenworth, A. B. Hazzard and a man named Sexton published the first issue of the Pioneer November 18, 1854.⁴

However, John and Joseph L. Speer had visited the territory at an earlier date and decided to publish a free-state newspaper, but they ran into difficulties getting their paper published. They did not have their own equipment at that time and nearly all other printing plants in the area were proslavery. The Speers

¹"Introductory," editorial, Kansas Weekly Herald, Sept. 15, 1854, p. 2.

²Raymond G. Gaeddert, "First Newspapers in Kansas," Kansas Historical Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 1, Feb. 1941, p. 6.

³This newspaper is sometimes called the Kansas Pioneer.

⁴McMurtrie, op. cit., p. 9.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE I

Front page of the Kansas Weekly Herald, September 15, 1854,
the first newspaper published in Kansas.

gathered news in the Lawrence area and prepared part of the copy for their newspaper, which was also to be named the Kansas Pioneer, and returned to Ohio to have it printed. The first number was dated October 15, 1854, more than a month before the Pioneer at Kickapoo was issued.¹

When the Speers returned to Kansas, they discovered the pro-slavery paper with the same name had been published at Kickapoo, so the name of the second issue of the Lawrence paper was changed to Kansas Tribune and published in January, 1855.²

Another dispute still exists as to which newspaper was the first free-state publication to be printed on Kansas soil. Three papers converged on Lawrence, the capital of the free-staters, at about the same time. The three rival papers were published by George Washington Brown of the Herald of Freedom; John Speer of the Kansas Tribune; and Robert Gaston Elliott and Josiah Miller of the Kansas Free State.³

As stated above, the first issue of the Kansas Pioneer (later the Tribune) was published in Ohio and dated October 15, 1854. The Herald of Freedom, similarly, was first published in Pennsylvania and dated Wakarusa (which didn't actually exist except in the minds of town lot promoters) October 21, 1854.⁴ But the actual printing of the Herald of Freedom, the Kansas

¹McMurtrie, op. cit., p. 11.

²Ibid, p. 12.

³Flint, op. cit., p. 39.

⁴Andreas, op. cit., p. 272.

Tribune and the Kansas Free State on Kansas soil was so close together that the argument still hasn't been settled as to which paper came first. In the Herald of Freedom of January 10, 1857, editor G. W. Brown stated:

The first number of the Herald of Freedom printed in Kansas was dated January 6, 1855, though it made its appearance nearly a week previous to that date. If our recollection is correct, the Free State made its appearance about the 15th of January, and the Tribune at a still later date, made up mostly from the columns of the Free State.¹

It is not the purpose of this thesis to settle the argument and it is irrelevant to what follows, except as background material, so the matter will be left to the historians to decide.

Soon after the three Lawrence papers appeared, the Squatter Sovereign, a rabid proslavery paper, was started in Atchison by Robert S. Kelley and John H. Stringfellow. Its first publication date was February 3, 1855.² It remained a champion of border-ruffian rule up to 1857 when the office was sold to John A. Martin³ who changed its name to the Champion. It became a strong free state paper.⁴

These six newspapers were all that existed in Kansas prior to the spring of 1855. In the period before 1860, the press had advanced no farther west than Junction City, when B. H. Keyser began the Sentinel there in June, 1858. The area in which

¹Flint, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

²Andreas, loc. cit.

³Martin was governor of Kansas from 1885 to 1889.

⁴Andreas, loc. cit.

the early press operated may be described as running from Marysville in the north, southward through Junction City to Cottonwood Falls and then southeast to Fort Scott. At least eight printers set up their presses in the small area of what is now Doniphan county, all of them arriving in the years 1857-1859 and all but one being free-state advocates.¹

As settlers began pouring into the western part of the state, however, the press moved westward, too, and by 1882, 372 papers existed in the state. On April 1, 1886, the Hector Echo was established in Greeley county and every county in the state then had a newspaper.²

Newspapers in Kansas Today³

Kansas has gained a wide reputation for being an outstanding newspaper state. The large number of newspapers existing in the state for its population has been responsible for this to a large extent, but so has the fact that so many newspapers have survived in even the smallest towns.

Kansas has 355 newspapers -- 303 weeklies and 52 dailies. This figure does not include certain trade newspapers or free circulation newspapers since they are not recognized by the Kansas Press Association. Weekly newspapers outnumber the daily

¹McMurtrie, op. cit., p. 15.

²Table 2, Appendix, p. 105.

³All data relating to Kansas newspapers in this section was compiled from the Kansas Newspaper Directory, 1955, published by the Kansas Press Service, Topeka, Kansas.

newspapers in the state almost six to one, indicating to some degree the importance of the weekly press in the state. It is not intended, however, to imply that daily newspapers are unimportant. Because of fast transportation today, daily newspapers are available in every town in the state and a high percentage of subscribers to local weekly newspapers also take daily newspapers.

But the importance of the weekly newspaper to the hundreds of communities they serve cannot be minimized. In the small town, the local paper is as much an institution as the schools, the churches and the various organizations around which social life revolves. The country editor is in a position to help create progressive social actions and to interpret community developments for his readers. A daily paper, even though it may be widely circulated in small towns, can never fulfill this function in all the communities it enters.

The 303 weekly newspapers in the state were distributed over a wide population range. The smallest newspaper in the state was at Potter, population 105. The circulation of the Potter Kansan was 200. On the other hand, five weekly newspapers were published in Kansas City, Kansas, and two in Wichita. These papers were community weeklies or farm newspapers which filled a gap not covered by the large daily newspapers in those cities.

A break-down in the number of weekly newspapers according to the population of the towns in which they were published shows:

Less than 500 population -- 59
 Towns of 500 to 1,500 -- 147
 Towns of 1,500 to 5,000 -- 64
 Towns of 5,000 to 10,000 -- 10
 Towns of 10,000 or more -- 23

A similar break-down according to the circulation makes an interesting comparison:

Less than 500 circulation -- 39
 Circulation of 500 to 999 -- 109
 Circulation of 1,000 to 1,999 -- 95
 Circulation of 2,000 to 2,999 -- 43
 Circulation of 3,000 or more -- 17

This would seem to indicate that newspapers published in the smaller towns (less than 500 and 500 to 1,500 groups) tend to exceed their population in their circulation figures, while the larger groups find it more difficult to do so. This might be misconstrued as meaning, however, that the smaller newspapers are the most successful, which is not always the case. But it does show that the smaller papers probably saturate their communities, extend out of the communities some, or send a large number of papers to out-of-state subscribers.

Kansas had newspapers in 309 towns and cities, including 103 of the 105 county seats. Russell Springs in Logan county and Richfield in Morton county were the only county seat towns that did not have newspapers. Newspapers in nearby towns were given the county printing.

Daily newspapers often publish weekly newspapers for former residents who do not wish to take the daily but still want to receive the "home-town" news. In Kansas, at least nine daily newspapers did this. In most cases, important news stories appearing in the daily during the week were "held-up" and printed

again in the weekly, although a few operated independently of the daily and had their own staffs. Weekly newspapers published in this manner, and the parent newspapers, included:

JUNCTION CITY DAILY UNION -- The Weekly Union.
HIAWATHA DAILY WORLD -- Brown County World.
MANHATTAN MERCURY -- Manhattan Republic.
CLAY CENTER DISPATCH -- Clay Center Times.
WELLINGTON DAILY NEWS -- Sumner County News.
GREAT BEND DAILY TRIBUNE -- Great Bend Herald-Press.
PRATT DAILY TRIBUNE -- Pratt Union.
HAYS DAILY NEWS -- Ellis County News.
BELOIT DAILY CALL -- The Weekly Call.

Weekly newspapers competed in nine towns in the state. In most cases this was a friendly, but vigorous competition and it was healthy in towns that were large enough to support two papers.

Towns in which more than one weekly newspaper was published:

| Ellsworth | Circulation |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Ellsworth Messenger</u> | 1774 |
| <u>Ellsworth Reporter</u> | 1800 |
| Garnett | |
| <u>Anderson Countian</u> | 2490 |
| <u>Garnett Review</u> | 2498 |
| Kansas City | |
| <u>Kansas City News</u> | 1850 |
| <u>Press</u> | 1186 |
| <u>Wyandotte County Record</u> | 1686 |
| <u>Wyandotte Echo</u> | 6100 |
| Marysville | |
| <u>Marysville Advocate</u> | 3963 |
| <u>Marshall County News</u> | 3087 |
| Olathe | |
| <u>Johnson County Democrat</u> | 2850 |
| <u>Olathe Mirror</u> | 2639 |
| Oswego | |
| <u>Oswego Democrat</u> | 1050 |
| <u>Oswego Independent</u> | 1200 |
| Paola | |
| <u>Miami Republican</u> | 2776 |
| <u>Western Spirit</u> | 2634 |

| <u>Wamego</u> | Circulation |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Wamego Reporter</u> | 1547 |
| <u>Wamego Times</u> | 1100 |
| | |
| <u>Wichita</u> | |
| <u>Democrat</u> | 1178 |
| <u>Sedgwick County Farmer</u> | 1153 |

Twenty-five independently owned weekly newspapers also competed with daily newspapers in the state, not including the weeklies published in Kansas City, Kansas and Wichita. Towns in which this situation existed:

(Daily newspapers indicated by--D; weeklies by--W)

| | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <u>Leavenworth Times</u> --D | <u>Manhattan Mercury</u> --D |
| <u>Leavenworth Chronicle</u> --W | <u>Manhattan Tribune</u> --W |
| <u>Lawrence Daily Journal-World</u> --D | <u>Junction City Union</u> --D |
| <u>Lawrence Outlook</u> --W | <u>Junction City Republic</u> --W |
| <u>Ottawa Herald</u> --D | <u>Eldorado Times</u> --D |
| <u>Ottawa Times</u> --W | <u>Butler County News</u> --W |
| | <u>Butler Free-Lance</u> --W |
| <u>Iola Register</u> --D | <u>Wellington Daily News</u> --D |
| <u>Allen County News-Journal</u> --W | <u>Wellington Monitor-Press</u> --W |
| <u>Fredonia Daily Herald</u> --D | <u>Newton Kansan</u> --D |
| <u>Wilson County Citizen</u> --W | <u>Harvey County News</u> --W |
| <u>Neodesha Daily Sun</u> --D | <u>McPherson Daily Republican</u> --D |
| <u>Neodesha Register</u> --W | <u>McPherson County News</u> --W |
| <u>Independence Daily Reporter</u> --D | <u>Salina Journal</u> --D |
| <u>Independence News</u> --W | <u>Salina Advertiser-Sun</u> --W |
| <u>Parsons Sun</u> --D | <u>Beloit Call</u> --D |
| <u>Parsons News</u> --W | <u>Beloit Gazette</u> --W |
| <u>Columbus Daily Advocate</u> --D | <u>Hutchinson News-Herald</u> --D |
| <u>Columbus Modern Light</u> --W | <u>Hutchinson Record</u> --W |
| <u>Emporia Gazette</u> --D | <u>Russell Daily News</u> --D |
| <u>Emporia Times</u> --W | <u>Russell Record</u> --W |
| <u>Dodge City Daily Globe</u> --D | <u>Goodland Daily News</u> --D |
| <u>High Plains Journal</u> --W | <u>Sherman County Herald</u> --W |

Concordia Blade-Empire--D
Concordia Kansan--W

Hays Daily News--D
Ellis County Farmer--W

NEWS IN THE COUNTRY NEWSPAPER

Importance of Local News

To the city dweller, the fact that thousands of country newspapers are scattered throughout the nation, apparently enjoying financial success and commanding the respect of their communities, seems anomalous in this atomic age. Admittedly, many are poorly printed and alongside one of today's metropolitan papers some country weeklies make a poor appearance. But still they exist, and it seems doubtful they will ever perish, at least so long as small communities survive, because of peoples' desire to know the news. And in a small town, local news ranks first.

The country paper has not always been a local paper, however. A country weekly in the middle nineteenth century printed almost no local news. As Atwood put it:

Perhaps ink and type and paper were then so comparatively new and expensive and hard to get that it seemed somewhat sacrilegious to use them for chronicling so homely a thing as the purchase of a new yoke of oxen by Obadiah Smith.¹

In those days there was a need for news of the outside, because the big city newspapers, with their meager facilities for producing and distributing, could not reach the more-or-less isolated communities. So it was the lot of the local newspaper to keep its readers informed on what was going on in the world. Type

¹M. V. Atwood, The Country Newspaper, pp. 31-32.

was set by hand, newsprint was scarce and the number of pages was limited. Thus, there wasn't room for local news after news of the world, often months old, had been printed.

Today, however, metropolitan newspapers invade every small town and a high percentage of weekly newspaper readers also subscribe to a daily newspaper. Also, radio brings the news into millions of American homes and television is fast becoming a household fixture. But nowhere else in the world will the local item, the personals column, the country correspondence, club reports, etc., be found except in the local newspaper.

William Allen White, who remained in a small town and became famous, and, although editor of one of the best known daily newspapers in the United States, always considered himself as a country editor, explained the appeal of the small town newspaper as well as anyone could:

Our papers, our little country papers, seem drab and miserably provincial to strangers; yet we who read them read in their lines the sweet, intimate story of life. And all these touches of nature make us wondrous kind. It is the country newspaper, bringing together daily the threads of the town's life, weaving them into something rich and strange, and setting the pattern as it weaves, directing the loom, and giving the cloth its color by mixing the lives of all the people in its color-pot--it is this country newspaper that reveals us to ourselves, that keeps our country hearts quick and our country minds open and our country faith strong.

. . . Therefore, men and brethren, when you are riding through this vale of tears upon the California Limited, and by chance pick up the little country newspaper with its meager telegraph service of three or four thousand words--or, at best, fifteen or twenty thousand; when you see its array of countryside items; its interminable local stories; its tiresome editorials on the waterworks, the schools, the street railroad, the crops, and the city printing, don't throw down the contemptible little rag with the verdict that there is nothing in it. But know this, and know it well; if you could take the clay from your eyes and read the little

paper as it is written, you would find all of God's beautiful, sorrowing, struggling, aspiring world in it, and what you saw would make you touch the little paper with reverent hands.¹

The country newspaper exists primarily because of local news. Thus, it should also follow that country newspapers have as their first function the duty of faithfully reporting the local news.

Many of the larger daily newspapers realize the importance of local news in the small communities and to increase their circulations in those areas, they have a staff member who serves as "state" editor. His task is to supervise "correspondents" in the smaller towns and to peruse the country newspapers for stories of importance to be rewritten and printed in the daily. Much to the chagrin of many weekly editors, these stories are written as if the daily actually covered them. Nevertheless, the dailies cannot cover local news in the small communities as completely as the local papers and the country paper's ability to do so remains its chief reason for existence.

Country Correspondence in the Weekly

Folks were overjoyed for the moisture which fell on Friday. Don't know the amount of moisture but enough to keep the top soil from blowing. Some fear their wheat blew out because of the high wind and dirt on Thursday.

The old Kansas Meadowlark, that harbinger of spring, is back to sing his joyful song.²

The new journalism school graduate gnashes his teeth and pulls

¹White, op. cit., p. 891.

²Harmony correspondent, Smith County (Kan.) Pioneer, Feb. 25, 1954, p. 3B.

his hair when he reads it. It violates all the rules of good newspaper writing, yet the country editor grins, does a minimum of editing, and sends it back to the linotype operators because he knows that country correspondence is one of the best read features in his paper and without it his newspaper's circulation would drop off sharply.

Country correspondence is local news, too, but it falls into a slightly different category than the personal items reported in the town where the weekly newspaper is published.

The correspondents made up the largest group of "employees" on the 19 papers visited. The average number of correspondents was 12.6. The Smith County Pioneer had 30.

Many country correspondents write for the local paper for the sheer love of it, and, perhaps, the opportunity to be "in the know" about everything going on in their communities. Most newspapers now pay their correspondents, but the small amount correspondents receive couldn't possibly pay them for their time, so there must be another explanation for their devotion to the newspaper for which they "collect items," as they call it.

Few of these correspondents are trained reporters and to many of them the fact that "Pete Johnson bought a new car Saturday" is big news. Because of this, a problem arises. How can the weekly editor train his correspondents to recognize and report news and to omit the trivial items?

Since most of them are not required to cover city council meetings, school board activities and other news of community government, as well as spot news events, they are concerned

primarily with the local item.¹ Is it news, then, when Mr. and Mrs. Robert Smith drop in on their neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Gillespie, for an evening? Most editors would say, "No." But what if the Smith's entertained the Gillespies at a dinner in honor of their 20th wedding anniversary? Then, it is obvious, the answer would be, "Yes." Yet to many correspondents the former is just as important as the latter and they would fill their columns with such items, taking up space that could be used for real news and wasting time that could be spent collecting items of value. Of course these items could be, and often are, edited out, but this requires extra time for the already busy editor.

Unfortunately, weekly editors are extremely busy and do not have the time to devote several hours a week helping their correspondents. Of the 19 papers visited, only three indicated they made any effort to train their correspondents. Two of these newspapers held annual meetings, usually a dinner paid for by the newspaper, at which the editor stressed news writing and made suggestions for improving their writing. Both editors claimed their efforts had been fairly successful. A third editor made an attempt each week to write his correspondents, or at least those who needed help most, pointing out where they could have made improvements. This, of course, had to be done tactfully, because many correspondents had been writing for newspapers for several years and they took pride in their work.

¹However, some of the better trained correspondents in the larger communities do report this news and it is an asset to the newspaper when the correspondent is capable of doing so.

Even though only three papers made any direct effort to train their correspondents, nine indicated they edited their copy before it was set in type and four of the remaining seven said they edited the correspondence as it was set.

Herb Hickman, editor of the Blue Rapids Times, believed the value of country correspondence was destroyed if it were edited, however. His point must be well taken, too, for many of the correspondents develop a style of writing that in itself is entertaining, if perhaps not good reporting. An editor for which the writer once worked insisted that one correspondent's column never be edited. "It's the best read feature in our paper," he said. Time on that particular job proved the editor was right.

But there should be a limit to unedited copy. Even though a correspondent may write in an entertaining manner, it may be embarrassing to some of the persons in the correspondent's news area. Obvious mistakes in grammar, misspelled words, misleading sentences, errors in fact, etc., should be corrected.

Only one of the papers used the correspondents' magazine, Folks, as an aid in helping correspondents. This monthly publication is distributed through the Kansas Press Association. It is edited by Mrs. C. R. F. Smith, whose husband was the leading authority in the United States on country correspondents until his death a few years ago. The magazine is written for the correspondent and includes news writing tips that are simple to understand and put into practice. Each month Folks recognizes a correspondent and reprints examples of good reporting from correspondents' columns.

Who Gathers the News?

There isn't room on the country newspaper staff for the specialist. As contrasted with the city newspaper, a reporter on a weekly must be a "specialist" in every field. Whereas a city reporter may do nothing but report federal courthouse news, a weekly reporter covers everything from exciting murders (on the rare occasions when they do happen in the small town) to piano recitals in the high school auditorium.

The only person who would come close to being a "specialist" is the society editor, but even she usually doubles as book-keeper, circulation manager and the person who looks after the office when everyone else is gone. She is responsible for writing the social events of the week, as well as telephoning for personal items. But everyone on the staff gathers personal items.

Of the papers visited, an average of 2.5 persons were directly responsible for gathering news, including main news stories, society, personals and sports. The "front page" news, or sometimes called "headed items," were written by the editor in most cases, although six papers had reporters doing that job exclusively, and two editors shared the job with their reporters.

What Is News in the Weekly Paper?

To answer the question of what is news in a weekly paper by merely answering, "Anything that is local," would be simplifying the problem to an extreme. News values exist for a country paper just as they do for a metropolitan daily. Certainly many events that are considered news in the small town, however,

would not rate even a line in many larger papers.

Thus, the announcement that a local grocery store plans to install new vegetable racks and "serve-yourself" counters might be news in a small community, because it is a progressive movement that keeps the town up-to-date with modern times. But in a larger city such an improvement would probably go unnoticed by an editor unless a small story is inserted to satisfy the advertising department.

But foremost in the editor's mind should be the localness of the story. All of the editors interviewed stressed this factor in the selection of news, and copies of their papers bears this out. First, last and always, then, the weekly newspaper is a local institution and its primary function is to serve the people of the community.

Allen says the news service of the country paper is three-fold: 1. To present all the news of purely local interest; 2. to give news of events in other parts of the country having a local angle; 3. to give news in the form of "local features" and helpful material for the country and town resident.¹

Of the three services, the first is paramount in importance. News of purely local interest is most important to readers of a weekly newspaper because the city daily does not contain this information. Local news is abundant in most towns and a newspaper soon establishes a routine in gathering stories.

To help the student or local editor do a better job of

¹Charles Laurel Allen, Country Journalism, p. 21.

gathering local news, Allen classifies local news into eight groups.¹

- A. Stories about persons
 1. Their activities--business trips, moves, travels, social activities, etc.
 2. Their accomplishments--election to office, prizes, exceptional crops, successful business deals.
 3. The home life of neighbors--sickness and health, pleasure and business.
 4. What they are thinking--opinions and comments on local affairs by local citizens.
- B. Personals--the principal of "names making news" is used in the personals columns.
- C. Local events--plays, games, civic events, charity drives.
 1. Advance news--written before the event takes place.
 2. Follow-up story--details of the event after it has happened.
- D. Stories concerning local institutions--public schools, library, churches, public buildings.
- E. Public service agencies--power and gas companies, water department, telephone company.
- F. Professional, commercial and industrial life of the community.
- G. Municipal affairs and government.
- H. Local organizations.

Although Allen lists municipal affairs and government toward the last of his groupings, it is doubtful that he meant it to be that lowly in importance. Since "it is popularly held that local units of government . . . are the most democratic because they are 'closest to the people,' "² it seems logical that the local paper has an obligation to follow closely and thoroughly

¹Allen, op. cit., pp. 21-33.

²Charles T. Duncan, "How the Weekly Press Covers News of Local Government," Journalism Quarterly, Vol. 29, 1952, p. 283.

the activities of local governmental units.

Activities of local government were among the most consistent front page stories. Fifteen of the editors interviewed said they covered the courthouse offices completely each week. One editor indicated that he covered it most weeks, one said occasionally, and only two answered that they never covered the courthouse offices. Both of these were non-county seat publications.

City government was well covered, too. Thirteen editors reported every meeting of the city council; one editor said he covered most meetings; two said they covered them occasionally; and three indicated they never covered the city council meetings. Principal reason given for not covering each meeting was that "most of the business is just routine."

School activities, including board of education meetings, were more thoroughly covered than city or county government. Sixteen editors stated they report this news each week; one said most weeks; and two covered the schools occasionally. Not all of the editors covered the board meetings in person, however, but they relied on the school superintendent to give them a complete report. Only one editor stated he had experienced difficulty in obtaining news from the superintendent, and that was because of the latter's tendency to procrastinate, not because he didn't want the newspaper to have the news.

The importance of agricultural news in a small town was also indicated by the answers which showed that 16 editors carried some news each week about the Extension Service, the Agricultural Stabilization Committee, or the Soil Conservation Service. Two

EXPLANATION OF PLATE II

Actions by local governing units are as important to weekly newspapers as the proceedings of the national Congress are to city daily newspapers. These figures are typical examples of stories covering city and county governmental news.

Fig. 1. Actions by and recommendations made to the city commission are front page news to a weekly. Readers are kept informed of plans and developments of the governing unit closest to them. This story appeared on page 1 of the Miami Republican, August 12, 1954.

Fig. 2. Every office of the county courthouse yields news stories for weekly newspapers. Important stories usually rate space under a separate headline, but most courthouse items are grouped under a "standing" headline as shown in this example. From the Minneapolis Messenger, page 1, August 12, 1954.

Fig. 3. Most weekly newspapers cover an entire county. Therefore, events taking place in county government usually rate front page space, also. From the Miami Republican, page 1, August 12, 1954.

PLATE II

Board Makes Suggestions To Council

City Planning Commission had a busy session Tuesday night and several recommendations were made to the city council. Marvin Clark, the chairman, W. E. Griffin, J. W. Coker and Paul Brady were present. Loren Ellis, Maynard Elliott and Dr. Marvin Johnson being absent.

Mr. Griffin moved that a recommendation be made to the council that modern rest rooms and lounge be constructed on the east side of the city parking lot, that the lot be landscaped and made an asset to the community. Mr. Coker seconded the motion and it carried.

Mr. Coker moved, with a second by Mr. Brady, that the city council investigate the possibility of extending the present sewer main from the region of the Fluor Corporation plants eastward and northward along the Katy track to encourage further development of the city, and the motion carried.

Mr. Brady moved, with Mr. Griffin seconding, that the governing body of the city instruct the city engineer to draw up tentative plats of the areas adjoining Paola and that these plats be used for further development of the city. The most urgent of these areas to be the undeveloped area north and east of the area known as Vulture Acres and including land adjoining the Miami County hospital. There was

Fig. 1

Courthouse News And County Affairs

Items and Gossip From Offices of Ottawa County Officials

The county budget for the coming year was adopted Monday by the county commissioners. A public hearing was held then to answer questions concerning the budget but there were no complaints, so it was adopted as published. It calls for a levy of 18.29 mills in high school districts and 21 mills in areas not in a high school district.

County Clerk L. T. Merryfield would like to have the township budgets returned to his office as quickly as possible.

The county commissioners canvassed the votes Friday and approved the counting. In the canvass, it was found that Kenneth Lancaster had received enough votes on the Democratic ticket to have his name printed for constable in Minneapolis on the November ballot, if he desires. He received 16 votes and only 11 were needed as that was five percent of the Democrats voting for secretary of state in the last general election.

No marriage licenses were issued by Judge W. D. Lancaster this past week. In probate court, final settlement in the estate of James F. Kline was made on the sixth and Gracia Kline was released as administratrix.

On the seventh, final settlement in the estate of Alfred Carter was made and Clara Carter was released as administratrix.

Final settlement in the estate of Thelma E. Merriman was made on the seventh and Harry L. Merriman was released as executor.

A hearing on a petition for probate of a will in the estate of Cloyd McCormick was set by the court for August 27.

Miss Bergetta Martin, register of deeds, closed during January 29 days, 282 chattel, 12 real estate mortgages, and 12

Notary work is being carried out by the county treasurer's office. A list of millage real estate taxes is being prepared by the county clerk.

Fig. 2

Hold Up OK On County Court Here

Last Friday Chairman C. E. Heflebower stated that the county commissioners had decided to authorize the establishment of a county court, effective January 1, but would sign the resolution later. At the meeting Monday Chairman Heflebower and Commissioner Frank Haney voted for the resolution and Commissioner O. D. Hollinger voted against. The matter was held up until there is a unanimous vote. A committee from the Miami County Bar association appeared before the commissioners Friday to urge the establishment of the court.

Commissioner Hollinger stated Monday that he was not opposed to the court but before voting to establish it he wanted to be sure the general fund of the county will be sufficient to pay the added expense, also that the budget recently adopted provides for the expense of the court. It is probable the matter will be before the commissioners again Friday. Allen French, the auditor who prepared the budget, felt the court could not be provided by the maximum levy but would check further.

There are 63 Kansas counties that have county courts. The probate judge is judge of the county court and would receive additional pay amounting to approximately \$1,200 yearly. A county court handles state returns under \$1,000, holds preliminary hearings, conducts trials of those charged with misdemeanors and takes over other duties now handled by justices of the peace.

Fig. 3

EXPLANATION OF PLATE III

Fig. 1. Church activities play an important role in a small town and weekly newspapers recognize the news value of such stories, as this example typifies, by running front page stories. Other church news, containing information as to regular Sunday services and programs, is often printed on inside pages in a special column. This story appeared on page 1 of the Rush County News, LaCrosse, Kansas, August 12, 1954.

Fig. 2. Stories concerning local utilities rate front page space in most weekly newspapers because utilities affect nearly everyone in the community. From the Miami Republican, August 12, 1954, page 1.

Fig. 3. News of the city and county schools is of importance in small towns, and schools are one of the newspaper's best sources of news throughout the year. This story is a typical example of a "back-to-school" article in a weekly newspaper. From the Anthony Republican, August 26, 1954, page 1.

PLATE III

Anthony Schools To Open September 7 County Schools Open On September 6

Schools in Anthony will open on Tuesday, September 7, according to W. D. Carr, Superintendent of schools. High school and Lincoln school students will report for classes at 8:30 Tuesday morning and the Washington school students will report at 9:00 o'clock. Students will receive assignments the first morning of school and will be dismissed by noon. Textbook requirements will also be thoroughly explained by the teachers in the first session.

Both the morning and afternoon classes of kindergarten will meet for the first session on the first day at 9:00 o'clock. The class assignment will be made at that time.

The first grade classes will be divided into morning and afternoon classes for the first part of the school year, according to Supt. Carr. All first grade students will meet at the opening session at 9:00 o'clock on the first day. Mrs. Grace Caton, principal of the Washington school, has announced that students will be enrolled in all of the first four grades and kindergarten on the first day.

Lincoln Enrollment

Fifth and sixth grade pupils will enroll at Lincoln from 9:00 a. m. to 12:00 noon and from 1:30 to 4:00 p. m. on Thursday September 2.

Junior high pupils will enroll at the Lincoln Building from 9:00 a. m. to 12:00 noon and from 1:30 to 4:00 p. m. on Friday, September 3.

Fees for towels and materials used in the crafts classes will be paid at the time of enrollment. The fees are explained in another section of this issue of The Anthony Republican.

Principal Don Cushenbery, of the Lincoln school has requested all boys who plan to take part in junior high football, to pick up their physical examination cards from him prior to enrollment time.

Rush Churches To Open CROP Drive Sunday

Aug. 15 is Ecumenical Sunday in the United States and is also Christian Rural Overseas Program Sunday in Rush county. On that day, most of the Protestant churches in the county will use bulletins put out by C.R.O.P. headquarters and hand out material that explains the hunger areas and needs of the world.

Some churches distributed the C.R.O.P. material Aug. 8 but the canvas for funds throughout the county will start Aug. 15. Every dollar contributed for C.R.O.P. this year means 20 dollars worth of surplus American food stuffs made available to the hungry people of the world through church channels, according to Harold R. McGill, publicity chairman for the Rush County C.R.O.P. committee.

Leaders in the C.R.O.P. drive at La Crosse are:

Fred E. Jackson and Mrs. O. S. Bellport, division chairman. Mrs. John Luft, Mrs. C. A. Smith, Miss Ola Newcomer, Mrs. A. F. Johnson, Mrs. Cecil Johnson, Mrs. O. L. Wilhelm, Mrs. Clarence Cunningham, Mrs. Gordon Holiday, Faye Lacquement, Mrs. L. E. Wallace, A. L. Hallsted, Mrs. Bertha Bailey, Dale Renberger, Mrs. Allen McChristian, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Elias and Mrs. Fred [unclear] canvas helpers

Vote To Sell To Bell System

At a meeting of the stockholders of the Miami County Mutual Telephone Co., called in special session for Monday night, a large majority of the 150 present voted in favor of selling the Paola system to the Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. Herbert Cramer, president of the Miami County Mutual, presided at the meeting.

The company has 670 shares of stock. A majority of the stockholders were represented by proxies. There were some votes against the proposed sale. Two-thirds of the stockholders must vote in favor if a sale is consummated. With the large number of proxies mailed in and those to come President Cramer feels that the necessary two-thirds vote will be cast within two weeks. Afterwards details will have to be worked out for the sale, which must be approved by the Kansas Corporation Commission before transfer can be made.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

EXPLANATION OF PLATE IV

Fig. 1. Front page columns are found frequently in weekly newspapers and many editors use them to boost an event, such as the county fair, or to editorialize on a local topic. Usually, the front page column is a collection of short topics that would not be large enough for separate stories on the front page. Note how the county fair is discussed in this column as compared with Fig. 2 in which the same topic is discussed in a formal editorial. From the Minneapolis Messenger, August 12, 1954, page 1.

Fig. 2. Through the editorial column, a weekly editor can keep a watchful eye over controversial activities in a community, as well as lend his support to a project. From the Rooks County Record, Stockton, Kansas, August 12, 1954, page 4.

Fig. 3. Business news, if it is not "free advertising," takes its place alongside other events in a community in a weekly newspaper. From the Ellinwood Leader, August 12, 1954, page 1.

Fig. 4. Local items, sometimes called "personals," have a lot of appeal to readers of weekly newspapers and nearly all of the inside pages are made up of such items. The same type of items are reported by country correspondents for rural areas in the county covered by the weekly paper. From the Rush County News, LaCrosse, Kansas, August 12, 1954, page 8.

Fig. 5. Even though an event may not occur in the community, it still might have local significance. This is a typical example. From the Minneapolis Messenger, August 12, 1954, page 1.

Fig. 6. A typical story boosting a charity drive in a weekly newspaper. From the Anthony Republican, August 26, 1954, page 1.

PLATE IV

• • • • •
JUST A LITTLE COMMENT
• • • • •
By the Editor

The Pessimists are already saying that we need not expect a good rain until the Fair starts next week. And then we can expect a deluge.

—rgh—
They are pessimists because they think it can't rain any more until its time to spoil something.

—rgh—
But if it doesn't rain until that time there are a lot of people in this area who would be glad to see it pour and pour and pour through fair week.

—rgh—
But let's forget that sort of thing and hope it will give us a really good rain or two between now and next Wednesday and then fine weather through the rest of the week, with temperatures not over normal and further rains postponed until the fair is over.

—rgh—
The annual fair is really an important event to the county each year and although it is a lot of work for a relatively few people, it is worth all the time and effort it takes, even if a few are bearing too much of the work burden.

Fig. 1

**LINKE AND CHRISTIAN
DRUG STORE'S NEW NAME**

As of Sunday the south drug store, which has been known as Smith's Drug Store for several years, is the Linke and Christian Drug store. The owners of the business, Larry Linke and his sister, Mrs. Ralph Christian decided upon the change to avoid confusion which some times arises.

The owners of the store purchased it from Cecil Smith, now of Sterling, more than a year ago, and the name was not changed at the time. All of the terms of the purchase contract have been discharged, however, and since the difference in names sometimes causes confusion the new name was adopted, effective August 1. No change in personnel or policy involved.

Fig. 3

AS WE THINK IT

WILL YOU DO YOUR PART?

Just a few weeks now and the Rocks County Free Fair will be a reality. And as usual, there will be a lot of people complain about various aspects of it. But they will not be the ones who spent long, weary hours to make it a success. They will be the folk who had some fine livestock at home, which they didn't care to bring; or some truly beautiful fancywork which they considered too much trouble to bring. They will crab about the entertainment, which they will view for free over the retaining wall, but they won't dream of buying a grandstand ticket. They will not give constructive suggestions to a member of the Fair Board before the fair, but will be loud in their criticism. Thank goodness, there aren't many people like that in the community, else the Rocks County Fair wouldn't be what it is—one of the top fairs in the state.

Fig. 2

Local Happenings

Mrs. Mollie Weigand, Mrs. Emma Stelmle and Mrs. Fred Krug returned Tuesday from Denver where they went to market for winter fashions.

Mrs. H. E. Reinhardt, Bison, and Mrs. Mollie Weigand and Mrs. Grace Shank, La Crosse, left this morning for California. The group will stop in Idaho and Portland, Ore., enroute to the west coast.

Fig. 4

**MET FORMER TESCOTT
PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON**

Mrs. Fred Stirn writes from Tacoma, Washington, where she is visiting her son Elmer and family, that she has attended the Washington "Twin picnic" in Tacoma; also the Oregon "Kansas Day" picnic, which was held at Beavertown, Oregon.

Fig. 5

**March Of Dimes Drive
In Progress In County**

Harper county volunteers are joining with the volunteers from over the nation in an emergency National Foundation For Infantile Paralysis March of Dimes Drive. The drive is extending over the entire nation and will continue through August 31. J. L. Robinson, chairman of the Harper County drive said that all contacts in this county were being made by mail and that contributions are coming in.

The National Foundation faces a crisis and unless funds are raised quickly the program is in danger of being slowed down considerably. Funds are needed to continue epidemic aid and to finance the gamma globulin program over the nation.

Fig. 6

editors stated they carried this news most weeks, while only one said he printed it occasionally.

Style of Writing in a Country Weekly

It is pertinent, perhaps, that some mention be made of the style of writing commonly found in weekly newspapers. In general, the usual rules of news writing apply to a weekly just as they do to a metropolitan daily, but they are not as hard and fast. The summary lead, the inverted pyramid form, objectivity, etc., are observed by most weeklies, principally because they represent the natural way of telling news. But few editors recognize these rules as part of their make-up.

Weekly newspaper stories are more often thought of as being "folksy." The editor and the paper are, necessarily, quite close to the people they serve. Any editor who has been in a town for some time is on a first-name basis with most of his readers. For this reason, the style of writing is a little more personal than the style used in larger papers.

In some respects the feature story form is better adapted to the weekly because it permits a leisurely, conversational approach that is well suited for the personal type of news gathering on the weekly.

As a result of this neighborly approach to news writing, many weekly editors editorialize in their news stories. An example is the following story, which appeared on the front page of a weekly newspaper in Kansas:

The Topeka State Journal, which suspects Nemaha County

of leaning toward the savage side of civilization anyway, called Tuesday to check on a reported helicopter crash in Nemaha County. We were sorry to have to disappoint them, and tell them there wasn't much going on besides a couple of deaths by poison, and one death through a self-inflicted shot-gun wound.

It turned out the crash was in Florida. If this sort of thing continues Roscoe Born is going to lose faith in us, and shift his attentions to some more exciting locality.¹

The writer does not wish to give the impression that he condones editorial comments in news stories. In fact nearly all authorities on news writing agree that such action is inexcusable. But the small town editor often gets carried away by local patriotism or the fervent desire to help build his community and the freer, more "folksy" style of writing often develops into the type of story quoted above. Some weekly editors, of course, became publishers through the back shop and have not received formal training in news writing and to them it seems permissible to inject personal comments in the news. The point to be made, however, is that it is easy to develop an editorial style of writing when a local situation seems to demand that a spade be called a spade. Indeed, such examples can easily be found in some of the larger daily newspapers, also. The impulse to editorialize should be confined to the editorial page, which is the next topic.

Editorials in Weekly Papers

Thirteen of the editors interviewed said they wrote weekly

¹"This Time County Wasn't Involved," Nemaha County Journal, March 4, 1954, p. 1.

editorials, while the remaining six stated they published editorials when the occasion warranted it.

After surveying copies of the newspapers, however, it was discovered that many editors considered front page columns as "editorials." Most of these columns consist of local items that would be "lost" if they were scattered throughout the paper under small headlines. Interspersed among the newsy items in a front page column, editorial comments on local situations often attract a lot of attention--possibly more than if they were printed on an editorial page. A typical example are the comments below taken from the column "Around the Square" which appeared in the Miami (Kan.) Republican, March 4, 1954:

. . . Garden seeds have been in demand here of late. Most people plant by the signs. Susie, the Hired Girl, was going to use the signs but she got caught without her garden spaded and believe it or not, it has been too wet the last few days to spade . . . Think it has been mentioned before but the mayor and members of the city council are to be congratulated for putting the parking meters back on the west side of the square in a position for slant parking . . . More than a dozen people have dropped in to say how much they like the blinker light system at the intersection of US-169 and K-68 north of Paola. It has been needed long. So Miami county citizens say "thanks" to the State Highway Commission for seeing that the light was installed. So if everyone observes the light signals there, it will never be necessary to send ambulances hurrying to pick up the dead and injured.

Thus, in a very short space, the editor has commented on moisture in the ground, complimented the mayor and city council members for progressive actions, and cautioned motorists to heed the new traffic signal for their own safety.

Among the arguments against the use of a front page column are that valuable space that should be filled with live, local

news that is taken up by the column and that the front page is a page for news and not editorial comment.¹ Both points are good, but from the number of front page columns that do appear in weeklies, it would seem that editors consider them worthwhile.

Whether editorial comment is found in a column on the front page or in carefully worded editorials on a special page, nearly all authorities agree that editorials are essential to a weekly newspaper. In his book on country newspapers, Allen states:

The news function of a community paper is the most important, but by no means the only one. In addition to giving a complete coverage of the news events of the week, the editor has the task of interpreting this news, of calling the attention of his readers to the important things in the news, of giving them reading matter that is not strictly news, and of doing what he can with his pen to help matters in the town . . .²

To this should be added the comments of Thomas Barnhart, a contemporary authority on weekly newspapers, who stated in his book, Weekly Newspaper Writing and Editing:

No newspaper functions to the fullest without an editorial column. It is through clear, frank, well timed editorials that the spirit of a newspaper finds expression. It is through editorials that the editor speaks and it is by them that the reader is won to the policy of his favorite newspaper. It is in the editorial column that the editor comments on the news. It is here that he makes articulate the views of large groups of his readers. It is here that he strives for community betterment. It is here that he plays politics. It is here that he advances his creed of public service.³

¹Allen, op. cit., p. 187.

²Ibid, p. 179.

³Thomas F. Barnhart, Weekly Newspaper Writing and Editing, p. 235.

Problems Encountered in Gathering News

It would not be possible to discuss all the specific problems which arise in the day-to-day task of gathering news for a weekly newspaper. The editor and his conscience must decide whether, for example, he is going to print the ages of everyone who applies for a marriage license. Certain problems are common to nearly all weeklies, however, and some of them deserve consideration by anyone planning to enter the weekly newspaper field.

A Weekly Is Close to Its Readers. As stated earlier, the weekly is extremely close to its readers. To some extent, its success is dependent upon the degree of pride its readers have in "our paper." This is both advantageous and disadvantageous. A newspaper that is well received in a community will naturally attract the confidence of its advertisers, but at the same time many of the newspaper's readers have the feeling that they could do a better job of running the newspaper and they never hesitate to give the editor advice. The American Press magazine recently reprinted an amusing, but somewhat true, column written by H. M. Sutherland, publisher for 40 years of the Clintwood (Va.)

Dickensonian:

There are three things in this world in which all men are experts. These are (a) coaching a high school football team, (b) raising the neighbor's children, and (c) editing and operating a country newspaper.¹

¹H. M. Sutherland, "All Men Are Experts in Three Things: Coaching Football, Raising Neighbor's Children, And Running a Newspaper," The American Press, Vol. 71, No. 12, Nov. 1953, p. 12.

After explaining the tactics the average citizen would use in coaching the local football team and raising the neighbor's children, Editor Sutherland continued:

He is completely convinced that, if he had a newspaper all his own, Hell would certainly pop, and the world would be saved in the wink of an eye. In fact, if all these expert opinions about how to operate a weekly newspaper were laid end to end, there could be no question but that they would bridge the gap that now lies between Joe McCarthy and the Kremlin.¹

But this veteran editor doesn't believe that all of this is bad. As he put it:

Not that we have reached the point where we are refusing to accept any of this expert advice! On the other hand, we welcome it in the hope that some time something of worth may emerge. From time to time we have been sorely tempted to follow some of these opinions and suggestions but lurking in the background is the specter of a few libel suits which stifle that impulse. It would be an interesting experiment, however, and probably would attract unexpected attention.²

One way in which readers manifest this desire to give advice to the local editor is to bring in stories they have written and insist they be printed "exactly the way I have it written." Part of this results, perhaps, from the fact that the newspaper in the past has misspelled a name or got the facts somewhat jumbled, but nevertheless, stories written by subscribers usually do not conform to the newspaper's style and some of them are badly written. Therefore, it becomes the editor's unpleasant duty to either explain as best he can that the copy must be changed, and face the wrathful subscriber before the story is printed, or smile benignly when he is given the story, change it before it is set in

¹Sutherland, op. cit., p. 12.

²Loc cit.

type and take his medicine later. Most editors would agree that the former is the best tactic.

Editors interviewed in the survey were asked what their comments were when faced with this situation. Some of the replies included:

We usually tell them the story is rewritten to conform with our style and they seem to accept this.--S. F. Sibley, news editor, Anthony Republican.

We tell them, politely, that we are running the paper.--Leonard McCalla Jr., editor, Anderson Countian.

We try to edit copy to comply with newspaper standards. H. O. Dendurent, editor, Wamego Times.

We edit news according to our style book. If they want it exactly as written, it goes as classified.--LeRoy Allman, editor, Dighton Herald.

A newspaper must have individuality. Therefore we edit all news to match our style.--Ralph G. Hemenway, editor, Minneapolis Messenger.

It depends upon the individual what I answer.--Larry Marcellus, editor, Leonardville Monitor-Regent.

As long as I own the paper, I'll edit it.--Herbert Hickman, editor, Blue Rapids Times.

Our evaluation of a story is compared with other stories. Space is a problem, so we reserve the right to edit all stories.--Luman Miller, editor, Belleville Telescope.

Free Publicity. Another difficulty faced by a weekly editor is where to draw the line in giving publicity to organizations sponsoring civic events. All of the editors interviewed agreed that a newspaper should not be stingy in publicizing events of this kind, but at the same time they realized the problem of distinguishing between "news" and "free advertising."

Advertising is, of course, the bread and butter for a weekly and if editors give it away to any concern hiding behind the

guise of "public service," their columns would soon be filled with free advertising while their pocketbooks would be empty. Thus, 16 of the editors stated they required advertising before they printed a story of any event at which admission was charged, or perhaps more correctly, whenever the motive of an event was to make money. This is a difficult policy to enforce, because every 4-H club, service club and others sponsor money-making events to raise funds for some civic improvement. An exception to this rule usually is made for charity drives, of course. Nearly all of the editors agreed that this policy sometimes caused hard feelings toward the newspaper.

Reluctance of Sources to Give News. Surprisingly few of the editors reported resistance on the part of local officials in giving out news. In all cases the editors were able to get the news by one means or another.

Wayne Turner, editor of the Oakley Graphic, stated he had difficulty for awhile obtaining news from the police court, the justice of the peace court and various city officials. He said he had been able to get the news "by insisting that court records are public property and that it is to their benefit to have it printed." M. P. Roberts, co-owner of the Herington Advertiser-Times, reported the same difficulty with the police judge, but they got the news by using the same argument as Mr. Turner.

Robert Herzog, co-owner of the Ellsworth Messenger, said his paper had not been able to get news from the sheriff, but the deputy sheriff gave information freely.

Floyd Sibley, news editor of the Anthony Republican, and Wharton Hoch, editor of the Marion Record-Review, reported difficulty in getting news of oil activities in their counties. Since this information is not a matter of public record (except oil leases which are filed in the register of deed's office), the newspapers have no legal basis for insisting the oil industry supply this news. However, it is important news in any county and both editors said they had been able to get it by being persistent. Mr. Sibley said they followed daily newspapers that received a regular service from the oil industry to get tips on oil stories.

News Items Turned in Late. One of the newsgathering problems mentioned by three of the editors who were interviewed was the difficulty in getting readers to report local items, social events and club meetings while they are still news. H. O. Dendurent, editor of the Wamego Times, said many persons bring in stories long after the news value had been exhausted. He explained to each individual the importance of timeliness and in most cases, he said, they brought their stories to the newspaper earlier after that.

Club reporters, including home demonstration units and 4-H clubs, were the most lax in reporting their news while it was still news at the Leonardville Monitor-Regent, according to Editor Larry Marcellus. He contacted nearly all club reporters in his area and advised them of the necessity of sending in their news as early as possible.

Luman Miller, editor of the Belleville Telescope, reported

that many persons felt they had to "save" news and tell the newspaper all their stories at once. Consequently, many of the items and reports were too old. The Telescope had printed front page notices concerning this problem, with some degree of success, Mr. Miller said.

Giving the Newspaper Tips About News. A similar problem was that of training everyone in the community to be "reporters" for the newspaper. It is the editor's job to remind his readers time and again that anything going on in the community that is newsworthy should be reported so a news story can be written. Even in the smallest towns, it would require a super radar system of some sort to detect all the newsworthy events without the help of others in the community. As Wayne Turner, editor of the Oakley Graphic, stated: "It is impossible for us to be everywhere and it would help a lot if our readers would give us tips or send in write-ups of events which they know of." M. P. Roberts of the Herington Advertiser-Times also reported this as being one of their special problems. Both editors said they had reminded their readers of the importance of letting the newspaper know of news events, by running advertisements, printing notices on the front page, and commenting on it in the editorial columns. They reported some degree of success, but they were not completely satisfied.

News From Federal Agencies. LeRoy Allman, editor of the Dighton Herald, and Wharton Hoch, editor of the Marion-Record-Review, objected to the manner in which federal offices, such as the agricultural stabilization committee and the soil conservation

service, handle news stories emanating from the state and federal headquarters. Mr. Allman complained that these offices gave out mimeographed releases and no other information. He stated that his newspaper printed stories based on the releases, but with additional information from other sources. Mr. Hoch said he had experienced the same problem and he especially objected to the federal agencies treating most of the news as "classified" information and releasing it at their own convenience. When they did release the stories, Mr. Hoch added, he seldom ran them because they had lost their news value.

These and many other problems face the country editor day after day in his search for news and he is expected to make wise decisions in all cases. A standard answer cannot be given for any of the questions that are discussed here, but they must be treated in different ways, depending upon the situation. Every case is different.

INCOME OF A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

What a Weekly Has to Sell

A newspaper is both a public institution and a private enterprise. Every editor knows that to continue publishing a newspaper he must be a good businessman. And it seems to follow that to earn a good profit, a newspaper first must do a good job. If news is fairly and completely presented, subscribers will continue to read it, and if the merchants know the paper is well read, they will continue to advertise their products in it.

The country newspaper really has only three things to sell--circulation, advertising and commercial printing. Many weeklies have taken on a new sideline in recent years in selling office supplies, while others have developed specialties such as garage tickets or sale catalogues which they print in their job shops for customers outside their trade areas.

Expenses on a Weekly

The writer hoped to present a comprehensive study of the expenses of weekly newspapers, but unfortunately it was not possible to obtain substantial information on this subject from the editors interviewed. All except one editor agreed that expenses have risen. The average estimate was that costs are 25 per cent higher than five years ago. The exception was by an editor who has taken over more of the back shop work, thereby reducing his labor costs.

At the same time that costs have been rising, the prices newspapers charged for their services did not rise accordingly. Advertising rates advanced only 6.7 cents per column inch on the average in the past five years among the 19 papers visited, while subscription prices increased only 46 cents since 1948 for the same newspapers.

On the whole, however, publishers were able to cover rising costs, even though their rates were not increased correspondingly, because a larger volume of business was possible after World War II. Ten of the editors reported that an adequate profit margin had been maintained because of an

increase in volume, while eight said they had not kept up with rising costs. One editor said his advertising rates were high enough, but his job printing prices were too low. Nearly all of the editors seemed reluctant to raise prices of either advertising or job printing.

Circulation

Contrary to what many persons believe, circulation income contributes only a small part to a newspaper's gross profit. While most city newspapers sell their papers at prices lower than the cost of the newsprint on which they are printed, country newspapers make a small profit on each copy.

From a strictly business standpoint, however, a publisher must be concerned with his circulation since the amount he can charge for advertising depends to a large extent upon the newspaper's ability to cover the trade territory.

In these days of relative prosperity, circulation isn't as much of a problem as it was during the depression years. Nearly any editor who was in the business then can remember instances of accepting garden produce or chickens in exchange for yearly subscriptions, but today most subscribers pay cash, and fairly promptly, too.

Strict business methods should be applied to circulation, however, and the editor who lets subscriptions lapse for more than a year soon finds himself in trouble. If a large portion of his subscription list is delinquent, the editor may be hesitant about demanding payment because of the fear that a loss of

circulation will result. The best policy is to send monthly notices to those who subscriptions have expired or are about to expire. Several methods are used in notifying subscribers when it is time to renew, and most of them are good, so long as they are followed religiously and not put aside when time is pressing. One system used by the Kinsley Mercury proved fairly successful. A postcard is sent to each subscriber a month before the renewal date, advising him that his subscription is about to run out and urging him to renew promptly. This usually resulted in about one-third of the subscribers renewing before their subscriptions expired. To those who did not pay, another card was sent on the expiration date. If they did not renew then, the paper was allowed to run another month when a card was sent to the delinquent subscriber explaining that one more issue would be sent before his name would be removed from the mailing list and urging the subscriber to send a renewal promptly so he would not miss any issues. In the three years the writer worked with this system, not more than a dozen names had to be taken off the list each month because of delinquent subscriptions, and nearly all of these renewed shortly after they stopped getting the paper.

Other weeklies prefer to send letters instead of post cards and enclose an addressed envelope to the newspaper in which the subscriber can return his renewal, but this takes much more time and many subscribers prefer to stop in the newspaper office and renew. Getting them to come into the office also provides a good opportunity to ask them for more news.

Few of the editors interviewed concentrated to any extent on

attracting new subscribers. This is based somewhat on the belief that persons who are interested in what is happening in the community naturally will take the local paper. Luman Miller, editor of the Belleville Telescope, believed this was a mistake. Mr. Miller stated that his paper concentrated on such things as circulation, classified advertising and commercial printing to provide extra revenue, rather than depend upon increased advertising rates to cover rising costs.

"Advertisers are only going to spend so much anyhow," Mr. Miller said, "and if the rates are raised they will just cut down on the size of their ads."

The Telescope had a circulation of 3,970 and charged \$3.00 a year to persons living in the county and \$3.50 to persons living outside the county. Single copies were sold for 10 cents, and the Telescope sold 600 to 700 copies a week. Each week Mr. Miller delivered several hundred copies of the paper to drug stores and other outlets throughout the county, which were sold at the 10-cent rate. In 1953, the Telescope grossed \$12,500 on their circulation alone. Unlike most other weeklies, this was a sizable part of their total gross profit for that year.

Commercial Printing

The average weekly newspaper devoted three days a week to its newspaper. The last two and a half days were generally devoted to commercial printing, commonly called job printing. This work is an important function of the weekly newspaper shop because it supplies the community with the hundreds of various

printed forms necessary to conduct businesses today. Also, commercial printing provides work for the employees throughout the week, since the newspaper alone would not keep them busy for a full week.

It depends on the type of equipment available as to the kind of commercial printing that can be done. All of the shops visited had some equipment for this work and only three of the shops did not have automatic presses. Among the types of printing found most often in these shops were:

Circulars, hand bills, tickets, pamphlets, messages on post cards, posters, programs, imprinting bank checks, business letterheads, personal stationery, envelopes, labels, stickers, business cards, booklets (including women's club yearbooks), various ruled and unruled business forms, wedding announcements and invitations, greeting cards, ballots, school newspapers, and statements.

In addition most newspapers served as agencies for rubber stamps, sales books, engraved stationery and wedding invitations, lithographing, and other forms of graphic arts work for which they were not equipped.

Determining the price that should be charged for various commercial printing jobs is not always an easy task. Too often, in the past at least, the publisher would merely make an estimate and hope he could make a profit on the job. Since nearly every printing job is different, he would make a series of guesses as to what the stock would cost, the amount of time necessary for composition, press work, and then add a percentage for overhead, a rather misunderstood item. This usually resulted in high

profits on some jobs and losses on others.

One system that has been devised to assist publishers in estimating job printing prices is the Franklin Printing Catalog. Published by the Porte Publishing company of Salt Lake City, Utah, the catalog is revised several times throughout the year on the basis of paper costs, costs of labor, and other factors.

Since the Franklin Catalog is so widely used, the writer requested information from the Porte Publishing company as to how they gather the data necessary to figure commercial printing prices in all parts of the country. H. J. Ward, executive vice president of the company, answered the request. He replied:

The Franklin Printing Catalog is simply the detailing of costs of producing printing to all types of printing items. The starting point is the gathering of hourly cost rates from all parts of the country and from all kinds of plants. The result is the composite cost per hour for all kinds of standard equipment. These hourly rates are listed in section 35 of the Catalog to indicate the basis or level (sic) at which the individual tables are compiled. The costs are constantly changed as conditions change. Some new table is furnished each month. Each section in the catalog covers some particular kind of work. For example, section 1 - ruled stationery, section 2 - unruled stationery, section 3 - envelopes etc. Each different kind of printing is separated because each variety is produced in a slightly different manner as to quality, kind of paper or mechanical equipment used. Arriving at the value for each separate piece of printing listed is the applying of hourly cost figures in terms of production. In working out this process the most efficient piece of equipment is contemplated at the proper quantity. As the length of the run or the size of the piece of printing requires a larger press for doubling the form, or work and turn, this equipment change is automatically handled. The finished table thus reflects the correct mechanical production of the order. While it is obvious that no one printer will have the perfect press or presses to run every job, some printer has the proper equipment, so the most efficient operation applies in compiling the figures.¹

¹H. J. Ward, executive vice president, Porte Publishing company, Salt Lake City, Utah, letter to the writer, Dec. 14, 1954.

Since quality is a factor, also, in determining prices for commercial printing, and paper prices vary throughout the country, a great deal of figuring is required to devise a system that can be used universally. Mr. Ward explained how this is accomplished:

Examples of actual finished pieces of printing are used as illustrations in the various tables to serve as guides in classifying the work as to quality or extent of composition where that item is a factor in classification. Because there are various degrees of quality, depending on the intended function of the printing, there are corresponding variations in costs, depending on the quality produced.

After the mechanical value has been determined on a scientific basis the correct amount of paper and ink is added to provide a complete figure for the user. Because paper costs vary in different parts of the country, and Canada, due to freight differentials, a sliding scale of paper costs are provided. By selecting the local paper cost as a guide to using the proper line in the table, the finished value is localized to any one printing plant. As costs of paper go up or down the selective process is also applied.

In the Catalog are comments as to relating the tables to any one plant or area. If hourly costs are obtained in a plant, by using a cost system, it is possible to determine the exact relationship by comparing the local cost to the hourly rates provided in the tables. This step is important as cost levels vary in different parts of the country depending on the local cost level established by general economic conditions.¹

Eleven of the editors interviewed said they used the Franklin Printing Catalog in determining job prices. Five of those who used it, however, believed that the prices were sometimes out of line, that the charge to the customer was too high in most cases for the country shop. Therefore, they trimmed down the price a little, depending on the job. The other six editors who used the guide said they charged at the full rate.

¹Ward, op. cit.

The eight publishers who did not use the Catalog said they depended on their experiences in job printing to determine prices. They each had a system of determining the cost of stock, the time necessary for composition, presswork, etc., which was satisfactory if experience showed that such methods of figuring produced profits.

Since a large number of the jobs printed in a country weekly shop were to be repeated, many publishers did not bother to re-figure the price when a job was to be printed again a year or so later. In many cases, especially where difficult composition was involved, the type was left "standing," that is, stored until it was to be used again. Whenever a repeat job was to be printed, the publisher merely looked into his ledger to see what was charged for the same job the last time it was printed. This often meant, then, that increased costs in paper, labor, machinery, etc., were not covered, resulting in a decreased margin of profit or a loss.

The writer once figured the price of 4,000 circulars for a Dollar Day promotion and discovered that the charge being made barely paid the cost of mailing. The circulars were printed in the newspaper's plant and mailed on its third class mailing permit, which required one and a half cents postage for each piece. This was supposed to be included in the charge for the job, but the original price for printing, folding and mailing the circulars had been set five years earlier and never changed. In the meantime, third class mailing rates were raised from one cent to one and half cents. Newsprint, labor costs, ink and all other

costs had raised, also. The price charged for the circulars was not raised, resulting in a loss each time they were printed. Needless to say, the price was raised and nearly all jobs were figured each time they were printed thereafter.

Advertising

As a medium for advertising, the country newspaper is generally recognized as being outstanding. The reason for this is that weeklies are so well accepted in the small communities because they are concerned with local names and events. Genuine reader interest is higher for the well managed, ably-edited weekly than for any other publication entering the local field.¹

Thus, the merchant views the country weekly newspaper as an important vehicle for displaying advertising messages because the reader's interest has been built on a foundation of friendly and personal interest. He is the first to profit from the paper's immediate reception in the home. Likewise, he is assured that his advertisements benefit by the implied recommendation given his advertised products. His advertisements are accepted as reliable and dependable if they appear in the local newspaper.²

Any newspaper's success as an advertising medium and therefore its success as a business, is measured in terms of its pulling power. If advertisements in the newspaper bring customers into the merchant's store, the merchant will continue to advertise. In turn, the newspaper must maintain a large circulation in its trade area and this is dependent upon the ability of the

¹Thomas F. Barnhart, Weekly Newspaper Management, p. 33.

²Loc cit.

editor to publish a good newspaper.

Weekly newspapers are concerned primarily, of course, with local advertising, but other types of advertising are important, too. Besides local retail display advertising, paid for by local merchants, the weekly deals with nationally advertised products, sometimes called "general" or "national" advertising. Classified ads are important, too, and weeklies that qualify as legal publications derive considerable revenue from legal advertising. Special pages and special editions are more and more common among weekly papers, although this is often overdone. Professional and non-commercial advertising is still another source of income, and "reader" advertisements are quite popular with the small merchant and persons or groups who cannot afford to purchase display space.

Although principal attention is focused on local advertising, the other forms of advertising should not be overlooked. The Belleville Telescope is an outstanding example of what can be done with classified advertising. The Telescope has had at least a full page of classified advertisements every week for several years. Instead of raising local advertising rates the Telescope has concentrated on classified advertising and circulation to provide extra income.

In 1953, for example, the Telescope grossed \$6,000 on classified advertising alone. Figuring on the basis of one full page of classified ads each week, the Telescope received \$115.38 a page for this advertising. The top rate the newspaper could have charged a local advertiser for a full page would have been \$84.

Of course classifieds require more composition and makeup time than display advertising and it is more work for the bookkeeper, but when it is considered that this is extra income from advertising that is often passed up, it would seem that more newspapers could profit by devoting a little more time to pushing it.

Selling Advertising. For a few years after World War II, advertising was not a difficult service to sell. People saved money during the war when they could not buy many commodities and once producers' goods started rolling off the production lines, they were eager to buy. Consequently, each merchant was anxious to advertise in an effort to persuade people to spend their money with him. But there is evidence in the last year or so that indicates advertising is not such an easy service to sell any more. It is a strange phenomenon that when business is good and people have more than enough money to take care of their needs, merchants are eager to advertise. But when money becomes more scarce merchants tend to cut down their advertising budget first thing, instead of maintaining it at a high level in an effort to persuade readers to spend their scarce dollars with them.

Thus, the newspaper advertising man in a small town knows that he must do more than merely recite the circulation figures of his paper to convince the merchant that he should advertise. He must first of all offer the merchant a service. He should be an advertising counselor to the merchant. Many of the large department stores in the cities hire full time persons to prepare their advertising. That type of work involves knowledge of merchandising, layouts, copy appeals, and other techniques.

Few of the weekly newspaper ad salesmen are thoroughly familiar with all these aspects, but in most cases they are better acquainted with them than the average small-town merchant.

One service which the newspaper can perform is to supply the merchant with a choice of mats which help to illustrate the products he is trying to sell. Several good mat services are available in the United States. These services supply new mats on a monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly basis, from which stereotypes can be made in the newspaper plant. Various arrangements can be made, depending on the company dealt with. Most services send a new supply of mats each month, thereby keeping up with style changes and furnishing new mats for special seasons of the year. By keeping these for two or three years, the newspaper can build up a stock of mats that will present a wide choice from which the advertiser may choose.

Only one of the newspapers visited did not use a mat service. Because there is some difference in the various services, the publishers were asked which service they used. Eleven newspapers used the Metro service; four purchased from the Meyer-Both company; and three used the Stamps-Conhaim service.

The publishers mentioned that many manufacturers supplied their dealers with mats of their products and urged that they be used in newspaper advertising. Some companies even paid part of the cost of local advertising if their mats were used. These were prepared by advertising specialists, of course, and were well-planned ads. Other companies supplied merchants with small mats of their products which could be included in advertisements

planned by the newspaper or the merchant.

It was found in the survey that most merchants preferred to use their own mats because they were exact reproductions of their products, whereas mats furnished by a service seldom showed a product exactly like the one being sold. For this reason, 14 of the papers found that merchants usually preferred to use their own mats when they had them.

Nevertheless, seven editors stated they tried to make layouts for most of their advertisers. Even though the merchant might not use the layout which the newspaper had prepared, the ad man would make more advertising sales than if he merely asked a merchant what he wanted to advertise, the publishers believed.

The layouts must be attractive and contain appropriate items. Through their contact with merchants, most ad men know what the merchants are trying to sell at a particular time. For example, perhaps the ad man notices that a hardware merchant has a good supply of window coolers and the weather has been especially conducive to the use of coolers. Using this as his cue, he could prepare an attractive layout and present it to the merchant. Perhaps the hardware man has some new mats which he has just received from the manufacturer and he may prefer to use one of those, but the idea for advertising coolers originated with the ad man and he has made a sale.

Unfortunately, however, ad men on weekly newspapers are cramped for time and they sometimes cannot find the extra hours necessary to make layouts. Thus, 12 of the editors interviewed said they did not prepare them for most of their advertisers.

Most of them replied that they would, however, if they could find the time to do it.

Theoretically, a newspaper ad salesman for a country weekly should call on every store in town each week, but this becomes a discouraging task when a few merchants repeatedly refuse to see the value of advertising. Nevertheless, seven editors said their ad men did call on every store each week and seven others said they tried to see every merchant at least once a month. But the majority of ad men called regularly on only those merchants who had become steady customers.

Various other services were offered the merchants to help them obtain better results from their advertising. All of the newspapers furnished tear sheets, or pages from the newspaper containing a merchant's ad, when they were requested. Sometimes these were needed to prove publication so the merchant could collect from the manufacturer for advertising his product, when such arrangement was possible. More often they were used in the merchant's window or near the sales counters as displays to attract the attention of customers to special items on sale that week. This was especially true of grocery stores.

One publisher said he furnished grocery stores with cards, upon which were printed, "As Advertised," which could be placed next to the items in the store that were advertised that week. Many of the publishers tried to obtain special mats for advertisers when they were wanted. Sometimes a newspaper can get mats from a manufacturer that for some reason cannot be obtained by a merchant. More often, however, special mats were purchased

through the mat service which the newspaper used.

Advertising Rates. Many publishers of country weeklies feel that advertising rates have gone about as high as "the traffic will bear." Yet, since advertising is responsible for the largest portion of the total gross income, it is extremely important that rates be held high enough to allow the newspaper a fair profit. For some reason, though, publishers seem very reluctant to raise rates when it becomes necessary. This is evident from the survey which showed that 11 of the 19 publishers have not raised rates in the past two years, while the prices of nearly everything else have gone up.

The average local advertising rate among the 19 papers was 44 cents per column inch. On the average, this was only 6.7 cents higher than it was five years ago, representing an increase of only 17.9 per cent, while total costs increased 25 per cent.

On the other hand, only two of the publishers reported any reaction on the part of advertisers when they did raise rates. Two said there was very little reaction and one said he was forced to loosen his contract rates somewhat, but the other editors admitted that there were no objections from advertisers.

There were many variations in the rate structures. The purpose of a rate structure, according to Barnhart, is to:

. . . provide a system of rates sound enough to prove profitable to the newspaper and attractive enough to the buyer of newspaper space to enable him to advertise his merchandise adequately.¹

¹Barnhart, op. cit., p. 226.

Rate structures usually are based on a flat rate, with all advertisers paying the same basic rate per column inch. Most of the papers visited charged for their advertising on this basis. Six of the papers used a "sliding scale" rate, wherein the advertiser was given a lower rate if he used so much space during a specified time. The average spread among the papers using this system was from 52 cents to 39 cents. There were, of course, many variations of this system, as to the number of column inches necessary before the first drop in the rate, the period covered, and other stipulations. But basically, the idea was that the advertiser who used the most space earned a lower rate. In fact, many publishers called this system the "earned rate."

Almost all newspapers, whether a metropolitan daily or a country weekly, distinguish between local or "retail" advertising and national or "general" advertising. The difference is that local advertising is placed in the newspaper by a local merchant, whereas national advertisements are placed in the paper by a national manufacturer through an advertising agency. A differential in rates usually exists between the two types of advertising, with national ads being charged for at a slightly higher rate. Only one of the newspapers visited used the same rate for both local and national advertising. The average rate charged for national advertising was 54 cents per column inch, a difference of 10 cents over the local rate.

Among the arguments for this higher rate is that national advertising is subject to a 15 per cent commission by the agency placing the ad. In addition, the agency usually deducts two

per cent for paying cash. Also, the newspaper is often required to pay an additional 10 to 15 per cent to a representative whose job it is to sell advertising agencies on using weekly newspapers as an advertising media. This may seem like too many "hands in the pot," but representatives, such as the Kansas Press Service, have increased national advertising lineage in weekly newspapers considerably through their contacts with advertising agencies. The individual publisher couldn't possibly make personal contacts with all the major ad agencies in the United States. As the representative of several hundred newspapers, however, the Kansas Press Service can do a job of selling agencies on the use of weekly newspapers in Kansas to advertise their national products.

National advertisers object to the higher rate, however, and point out that the newspaper does not have to pay a salesman to solicit the national ads, but that it comes to him "through the door," thereby cutting down his selling costs. They also say that the ads come to the newspaper in mat or plate form, thereby cutting composition costs in the back shop. This debate has been continuing between newspapers and national advertisers for many years and it seems unlikely that it will be settled at any time soon. Nevertheless, weekly newspapers derive considerable income from this source and it is to their advantage to see that such advertisements are well handled by following instructions on the insertion order, running the ads on the dates specified, seeing that they are well printed, and sending tear sheets promptly when requested.

Milline Rate Vs. the Visimilline Rate. National advertisers base their ad space on the agate line instead of the column inch, so that it is necessary for weekly newspapers as well as dailies to plan their national advertising rates so they are divisible by 14, the number of agate lines to the inch. From this rate system evolved a method of comparing the cost of advertising in newspapers of varying circulation. This method is called the milline rate.

The milline rate is the cost of one line per million circulation. The formula for determining the milline rate is:

$$\text{Milline Rate} = \frac{1,000,000}{\text{Circulation of Newspaper}} \times \text{line rate}$$

Thus, if newspaper "A" has a circulation of 1,000 and a line rate of .04 cents, the milline rate would be:

$$\frac{1,000,000}{1,000} \times .04 = \$40.00$$

On the other hand, if newspaper "B" has a circulation of 100,000 and a line rate of .40 cents, its milline rate would be:

$$\frac{1,000,000}{100,000} \times .40 = \$4.00$$

Obviously, the milline rate is unfavorable to the smaller newspapers and since a large percentage of weekly newspapers have circulations of less than 5,000, their milline rates are extremely high. The milline has become an accepted standard of the advertising industry and it is used by many advertisers and agencies to determine the size of the schedule to be used, and in some cases a limited milline is set for the placement of advertising schedules.

Press associations, composed mainly of weekly and small daily newspapers, object to this discrimination and they have been trying to persuade national advertisers and agencies to base their schedules on another system, known as the visimilline, which considers readership as the important point, rather than circulation alone. The Kansas Press Service has been a leader in this campaign. The formula for the visimilline rate is:¹

$$\text{Visimilline} = M \times P$$

M -- Milline rate or rate per line per million circulation.

P -- Average number of pages per issue.

The Kansas Press Service supports this rate in the 1955

Kansas Newspaper Directory by stating:

It is probable . . . that the small newspapers are unduly penalized by the general use of the milline rate and that a modification is indicated in view of studies of attention value such as have been conducted by Dr. George Gallup, Dr. Daniel Starch and others. These studies clearly indicate that newspapers containing 30 to 40 pages are not read thoroughly but that attention is spotted on certain items, and the purpose of the studies thus far has been to determine what type of material receives the most attention.

Newspapers differ not only in the number of pages which they contain on the average, but also in their general make-up, the closeness with which material is packed and the type of material used. Therefore it is probable that the attention value would not be exactly proportional to the number of pages. However, that factor will undoubtedly be the most influential in determining the attention value of any particular item in a newspaper--which is only another way of saying it will determine the chance of any individual advertisement being seen and read.²

If the visimilline were adopted as a standard of value

¹Kansas Newspaper Directory, 1955, Kansas Press Service, p. 7.

²Loc. cit.

instead of the milline, weekly newspapers would have the advantage. An example of how this would work in four cities shows:

| | Circulation | Milline | Av. No. Pages | Visimilline |
|--------|-------------|---------|------------------|-------------|
| City A | 400,000 | \$1.69 | 48 | \$81.12 |
| City B | 25,000 | 3.45 | 20 | 69.00 |
| City C | 10,000 | 5.22 | 16 | 83.52 |
| City D | 5,000 | 6.77 | 10 | 67.70 |

Naturally other factors must be considered, such as general excellence of the newspaper, its acceptance in the community, etc. These are difficult values to measure, especially on such a large scale, and it seems unlikely that national advertisers will accept visimilline until they can be shown concrete proof of its validity. However, visimilline indicates that the small publisher is at last on the track of a method which will make it possible for him to compete with the larger newspapers for national advertising.

Other Advertising Problems. One of the major advertising problems encountered on a weekly newspaper is persuading merchants to turn in advertising copy early enough that it can be set in type and madeup without creating a bottleneck in the back shop. This problem arises from the fact that the papers are published only once a week and merchants seem to assume that once copy is turned over to the newspaper it is transformed by some magical process into type ready to be printed. Seven of the publishers stated this was one of their major problems. They have tackled it in various ways, but none reported much success in overcoming it.

Publisher Ralph Hemenway of the Minneapolis Messenger said that he placed a Monday deadline on display advertising. If copy

had not been turned in by then, it was not printed in that week's paper. This seems to be a rather drastic step, especially since the deadline is so early. Mr. Hemenway admitted that it took years for merchants to become adjusted to this policy, but he stated that once they knew the deadline would be observed by the newspaper, the merchants had their copy ready on time. Floyd Sibley of the Anthony Republican said they were not successful when they refused a grocery ad that had been turned in late, after the same thing had happened several weeks in a row, but when the same grocer's ad was turned in late another week they denied the request to read proof on the ad before it was published and found that this was more successful.

It would seem that this problem could partially be overcome by doing a better public relations job with advertisers. Perhaps a letter to each merchant periodically, explaining why advertising must be turned in early, would help. Even better, a special open house for merchants to demonstrate how a newspaper is printed would impress on them the time involved in preparing an ad for the press. If nothing else, frequent reminders in the newspaper of the deadline on advertising and citing some of the advantages of turning in copy early would keep it in the minds of most merchants. Larry Marcellus of the Leonardville Monitor-Regent tried this with some success.

EMPLOYEES ON A COUNTRY NEWSPAPER

The labor problem, which has become so acute in many country printshops the last few years, is a direct outcome of the smallness of the country newspaper enterprise. The

city newspaper plants are reasonably large, which means that specialization has come--it has been found more economical for one man to do linotype work, one man hand composition, one man make-up, and the like. In addition to this, many publishers, unfamiliar with cost accounting, have been slow to advance selling prices, with the result that printers' wages, until recently, could not advance as rapidly as in other lines of work; the inevitable result was a steady drift out of the printing trade, especially during the World War, when the "cost-plus" method of handling war contracts led to inflated wages.¹

This was written in 1923, a period similar to the one in which weekly newspapers are now operating, and nearly the same points could be made today concerning the labor problem in rural newspapers.

Because of the skilled and semi-skilled nature of the work involved, many publishers have been faced with the problem of getting adequate help. At nearly every press meeting which the writer attended in the last few years, this was a problem commonly discussed, both in general meetings and informal groups.

The average number of employees for the weekly newspapers visited was five, including both the front and back shops. The Herrington Advertiser-Times topped the list with 11 employees, not counting the co-publishers, while the Leonardville Monitor-Regent was operated entirely by the publisher and his wife, except for a part-time employee at Riley who gathered news and advertising.

The Leonardville plant was the only man and wife newspaper visited, although this type of newspaper was fairly common throughout the state. Most of the newspapers having less than

¹Atwood, op. cit., p. 80.

500 circulation were of this type. They were commonly called "man and wife" shops because the entire force usually was composed of those two persons. The gross income for newspapers of this size generally was not large enough to afford hiring an extra printer. The publisher on most of these newspapers was, therefore, a printer first and an editor second. He trained his wife to run the front office, or to operate the linotype machine so she could set type while he solicited advertising or gathered news.

In this type of shop labor did not present a problem. As Mr. Marcellus put it, jokingly of course, "A man's wife is the best help he can get on a newspaper because she can't quit."

But any newspaper large enough to require the help of several persons is faced at some time with a personnel shortage. This shortage usually exists in the back shop, because printers are needed more than front office employees. The average of the papers visited was three in the back shop and two front-office employees. The newspapers also averaged one part-time employee who worked three days a week, usually in the front office either gathering news items or helping with the bookkeeping.

Salaries Paid on the Papers Visited

Although not enough of the editors interviewed responded to the question of how much they paid their employees to make the answers especially significant, the figures are included here for general information which has a bearing on the problem of getting adequate help. In the back shop, the jobs were broken

down into three categories. In the country newspaper shop, no one is necessarily a specialist, although the employees usually are assigned a specific type of work for which they are responsible. Therefore, it is understood that a person who is hired as a linotype operator is responsible primarily for the setting up of type. A printer is generally considered as the "floor man," that is, the person who composes the advertisements, makes up the newspaper forms, puts in corrections, etc. He may or may not be a linotype operator. The foreman, on the other hand, generally is an all-around man. Besides supervising the work of other employees, he may be required to work at both jobs. No special category was listed for pressmen, because there isn't enough of this type of work on a weekly newspaper to keep one person busy all the time and the press work is spread out among all the employees.

The average salary paid in each category, the number of papers responding, and the highest and lowest salaries reported:

Linotype operator -- 9 newspapers
 Average salary -- \$63.55 a week.
 Highest salary -- \$82.00 a week.
 Lowest salary -- \$32.00 a week.

Printer -- 15 newspapers
 Average salary -- \$58.00 a week.
 Highest salary -- \$80.00 a week.
 Lowest salary -- \$32.00 a week.

Foreman -- 9 newspapers
 Average salary -- \$83.88 a week.
 Highest salary -- \$105.00 a week.
 Lowest salary -- \$66.00 a week.

In each of the first two groups, the low salaries of \$32.00 a week were paid to women, which lowered the average. Although

many women become very competent linotype operators, their wages were lower than that of men doing the same work.

The average number of hours worked in the back shop each week was 46.

Salaries paid to front office employees were about the same as back shop wages, except that the two skilled jobs, news editor and advertising solicitor, were a little higher. Again, not enough answers were obtained to be conclusive, but they do afford a comparison.

News Editor -- 4 newspapers
 Average salary -- \$79.87 a week.
 Highest salary -- \$92.50 a week.
 Lowest salary -- \$72.00 a week.

Advertising Man -- 4 newspapers.
 Average salary -- \$79.37 a week.
 Highest salary -- \$95.00 a week.
 Lowest salary -- \$68.50 a week.

Reporter -- 2 newspapers.
 Average salary -- \$54.50 a week.
 Highest salary -- \$65.00 a week.
 Lowest salary -- \$40.00 a week.

Society Editor -- 7 newspapers.
 Average salary -- \$37.92 a week.
 Highest salary -- \$44.00 a week.
 Lowest salary -- \$30.00 a week.

Bookkeeper -- 3 newspapers.
 Average salary -- \$33.66 a week.
 Highest salary -- \$37.00 a week.
 Lowest salary -- \$32.00 a week.

The average number of hours worked by the front office was 44 hours, although none of the newspapers paid their front office employees on an hourly basis. The news editors and reporters, especially, were required to put in many extra hours each week.

Obtaining Help for Weeklies

There was a time when weekly editors were not concerned with the employee shortage problem. In most of the country shops few extra printers were required because there wasn't enough business. The editor, in most cases, was the best printer in the shop and he depended upon this to get him through any help shortage.

Every old-time editor also has stories to relate about the "tramp" printers who roamed the country in the early days. These nomadic creatures traveled and lived for short periods wherever they could find work. Some of them even hit the same towns about the same time each year. Editors didn't exactly welcome them, but they seldom had difficulty in finding work. They did spread around a lot of "tricks of the trade" which they picked up in their journeys.

"Tramp" printers have disappeared, or at least they are not called such any more. Generally they are termed "floaters," and editors are wary of them. The writer hired a linotype operator a few years ago who boasted of having held 57 different jobs in seven years. He stayed one week and then moved on.

Fifteen of the editors interviewed said they have had considerable difficulty in hiring printers when the need arose. Two of the editors stated they never depended upon hiring trained printers, because they maintained a "home" training program, and therein seems to be the answer to the problem of obtaining back shop help.

This means hiring a high school boy or someone else who

resides in the community and training him to be a printer or reporter or in some other capacity. Although only eight of the editors stated they were making an effort to train someone new all the time, each said they had done so in the past. The Herington Advertiser-Times had seven "home" trained employees on their staff out of a total of 11. The average for all the papers was three, counting both the front office and the back shop.

All but one editor agreed that "home" trained employees stayed with the newspaper longer than employees who were trained elsewhere. This seems logical, since they would be working in the communities where their close relatives reside. The editor who disagreed, however, said it had been his experience that "home" trained employees learned the trade and then struck out for the larger cities where they could earn more money.

Various reasons were given for the difficulty in hiring trained printers. Eight editors believed it was because of a general shortage, which seems to point out the necessity of training local persons, again. Also, 16 editors believed that colleges in general, and specifically Kansas State College, should train printers, even though Pittsburg State Teacher's College now has such a program. Six editors said they would send young men to Kansas State College for a short course in printing if such a course were offered. Four others said they would if it were at all possible, and four others were undecided. This course, naturally, would present merely the fundamentals of printing, but the editors felt this would be helpful in later training in the home shop.

Five editors thought salaries was the factor which made the hiring of trained printers difficult. Undoubtedly this was a factor, because printers' wages in the city were considerably higher than in the small town, although living expenses were lower in the latter.

The necessity of living in a small community was the reason given by five other editors. Life in the small town naturally is different than the city and many printers cannot adjust to small town living, just as many persons who were born and reared in a small town cannot become adjusted to city life.

One editor stated it was because of the housing shortage, and certainly every community has faced this problem.

Whatever the reason, it is a certainty that trained printers have been difficult to find for the weekly newspaper. On the basis of the talks with editors it seems they must do all they can to encourage young men to enter the trade and especially to maintain a training program in their own shops. The union has not reached into the weekly shops as it has in most of the large daily newspaper plants, so this does not pose a problem. Also, once a newspaper finds a good employee it would seem important that he be satisfied with his work as well as earn a good wage.

EQUIPMENT IN A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

One of the ways in which weekly newspapers have fallen considerably behind the daily newspapers is in equipment. This is understandable, however, in view of the tremendous expense involved. Although nearly all printing equipment is built to last

a lifetime, the initial expense is sometimes more than a small newspaper can afford.

Publishers were asked to estimate the value of their equipment, just as it appeared on the floor, and the average estimate for the 19 plants was \$20,600. The estimates ranged from \$5,000 to \$42,600. Most publishers were conservative on their estimates, too. The actual replacement value would be much higher.

A newspaper shop can be overequipped as well as the opposite, and it is difficult to say which is most detrimental, because money invested in machinery that is not being used is wasted, while a plant that is poorly equipped cannot produce efficiently.

The kind of equipment found in weekly newspaper plants depends on their sizes. Table 1 lists the major equipment in the 19 plants visited.

Few weekly newspapers in the nation do not have type setting machines of some kind anymore, and many have two or more. It is interesting to note that newspapers in the second group of Table 1 all had two typesetting machines, while only two newspapers in the smaller classification found two machines necessary. Evidently two machines were sufficient in the larger classification, too, since only one of the newspapers in the 2,500 to 4,000 circulation group had a third machine.

Multiple-magazine machines were most common, since they are capable of setting advertising copy as well as "straight matter." The model 14 Linotype was the most popular machine. This machine has three magazines (that is, it can handle three sizes of type), one imposed above the other so that by turning a lever, one or

Table 1. Equipment in 19 Kansas weekly newspaper plants,
according to circulation

| | Circ. 500-1,500 | : | Circ. 1,500-2,500 | : | Circ. 2,500-4,000 |
|--|--------------------|---|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| Number of papers | 8 | | 6 | | 5 |
| Linotype machines | 10 | | 12 | | 11 |
| One linotype | 6 | | 0 | | 0 |
| Two linotypes | 2 | | 6 | | 4 |
| Three linotypes | 0 | | 0 | | 1 |
| Models | | | | | |
| Model 5 Linotype | 3 | | 1 | | 3 |
| Model 14 Linotype | 4 | | 2 | | 5 |
| Model 8 Linotype | 0 | | 5 | | 1 |
| Model K Linotype | 0 | | 1 | | 1 |
| Model L Linotype | 1 | | 1 | | 0 |
| Model 18 Linotype | 0 | | 0 | | 1 |
| Model 19 Linotype | 0 | | 1 | | 0 |
| Model 31 Linotype | 1 | | 0 | | 0 |
| Model C Intertype | 1 | | 1 | | 0 |
| Newspaper presses | | | | | |
| Babcock, Cottrell or other hand-fed cyl- inder press | 8 | | 5 | | 2 |
| Duplex, Cox-O-Type or other web perfect- ing press | 0 | | 1 | | 3 |
| Automatic job presses | | | | | |
| Kluge, 10x15 | 0 | | 0 | | 1 |
| Kluge, 12x18 | 3 | | 4 | | 3 |
| Miller | 1 | | 0 | | 1 |
| Rice | 0 | | 1 | | 0 |
| Little Giant | 1 | | 0 | | 2 |
| Kelley | 0 | | 1 | | 0 |
| Heidelberg | 1 | | 1 | | 0 |
| Davidson offset | 0 | | 2 | | 0 |
| Multilith | 1 | | 1 | | 0 |
| Hand operated job presses | | | | | |
| Chandler & Price | | | | | |
| 10x15 or smaller | 8 | | 8 | | 5 |
| 12x18 or larger | 1 | | 1 | | 5 |
| Other makes | 2 | | 1 | | 3 |
| Other major equipment | | | | | |
| Ludlow | 0 | | 1 | | 0 |
| Strip caster | 0 | | 0 | | 1 |
| Engraving plant | 0 | | 0 | | 1 |
| Fairchild engraver | 0 | | 0 | | 2 |

another of the magazines may be brought into position for use. On the Model 14 there is also an auxiliary magazine on the right side which contains larger size matrices for headlines or display type. The Model 31 Linotype is very similar to the Model 14, but it is a newer machine and does not have an auxiliary magazine. Models 5, 8 and Model C Intertype are also three-magazine machines without auxiliary magazines. Models 18 and 19 are two-magazine machines, while Models K and L are generally used strictly as "straight matter" machines.

A flat-bed drum cylinder press was the most common type newspaper press found in the weekly newspaper plants. These presses range in size from two pages, six columns, to four pages, eight columns. The drum cylinder is fed by hand and only one side of the sheet is printed at a time. After a press "run" is made, the sheets are turned over and the other side is printed.

The cylinder press is relatively slow, requiring from 3 to 4 hours to print 2,000 copies. This means that a weekly printing an average of 12 pages a week must make three press runs, and to do this the first four pages must be made up for the press at least by Wednesday morning. The total press time would be 9 to 16 hours, depending on the condition of the press, the efficiency of the person operating it, and the degree of quality demanded.

Weeklies having more than 2,500 circulation cannot, as a rule, devote as much time to press runs as a cylinder press would require, so it wasn't unusual to find that three out of the five papers in that circulation group had web perfecting presses. These

presses print eight pages at a time from a continuous web of paper which enters the press at one end and comes out as folded papers. They are capable of printing 3,000 to 5,000 papers an hour, which cuts down the press time considerably. They will print two, four, six or eight pages, so any combination can be obtained for printing more than eight pages by making two or more press runs and placing the sections together. This press requires more skill to operate than the drum cylinder, however, and it is considerably more expensive.

Since nearly all weeklies also specialize in commercial job printing, automatic job presses have become almost a necessity. Only one of the papers visited did not have one, and the owner stated that it was at the top of his "want" list. The 12x18 Kluge was by far the most popular automatic press in the 19 shops. Offset presses had not become very popular among the smaller papers, possibly because of the need for plate-making equipment and the fact that they were not generally understood by many country printers. Two Davidson offset presses were found, though, as well as two Multilith machines, which operate on the offset principle.

All of the plants also had one or more hand operated presses which were used for short runs that would not utilize the efficiency of an automatic press. The most common handfed press was the 10x15 Chandler & Price. Plants that had web-perfecting presses for their newspapers also had maintained their cylinder presses which they used for printing such jobs as the high school paper, large signatures of books, ballots, etc.

Little other major equipment was found in the 19 shops. Only one plant had a Ludlow machine, a type-setting machine capable of producing large type sizes. The principal difference between the Linotype and the Ludlow is that matrices on the Ludlow are set by hand instead of by striking the keys on a keyboard. The advantage is that there is an unlimited supply of large type and type faces are always new. Also, the type does not have to be distributed, as is the case with handset type that is used over and over.

Only one of the shops had a strip-caster. This machine casts strips of metal which are used for spacing between lines of type or around ads and for making border of various sizes and design.

Engraving plants were a rarity among the weekly newspapers. Besides the equipment necessary to produce photo-engravings, it is a process that requires a skilled person. Only one newspaper had an engraving plant. Two shops, however, rented Fairchild Scan-a-Gravers, an electronic machine that makes engravings on plastic plates. These machines were not sold. They were rented by Fairchild Graphic Equipment, Inc. The rental charge, between \$147 and \$185 a month, was so high that most weeklies could not afford them, but the two shops that did rent the machines helped pay the cost by making engravings for other newspapers. A number of daily newspapers in the state rent Scan-a-Gravers, so that any weekly today can receive excellent service on engravings. All of the newspapers visited had used this type of engraving, and many persons believe the machine is responsible for increased use of pictures in weekly newspapers.

In addition to this equipment, it is necessary to have many other tools and machines, including:

Folder for folding newspapers, if a cylinder press is used; paper cutter with at least a 26-inch blade; composing stones large enough to hold at least eight newspaper pages; many sizes and faces of job and advertising type in cases and cabinets; stitcher for stapling pamphlets and small booklets; perforator; paper punch; proof press; melting furnace for remelting metal; mat casting box; power metal saw; leads; slugs; rules; furniture; chases; quoins; quoin keys; and scores of other articles, such as brayers, planers, mallets, line gauges, make-up rules, and a general assortment of mechanic's tools.

Maintenance of equipment in a country weekly plant is a troublesome but extremely necessary task. As with any type of machinery, periodical inspections and repairs save time in the long run, even though it may seem unnecessary when it is being done. On linotype machines, for example, the devices which take up the slack between words in a line of matrices (called space-bands), thereby preventing the molten metal from squirting on through instead of being molded into a line, must be cleaned every day for best performance. Similarly, the molds must be cleaned and polished occasionally, as well as the pot plunger, the magazines and the matrices. If these things are not done, they will cause trouble--and it usually happens at a rush period, such as just before press time when the last type is being set.

One newspaper kept a chart by each machine on which the date was written each time a certain part was cleaned. It served as

a reminder to the person in charge of maintenance.

Usually, more than one person was responsible for maintenance, although in a few shops one employee was designated as the machinist and only minor repairs were left to other employees. In the survey, it was found that the owners were responsible for this task more than any other person. Next to the owner, the shop foreman was the person usually given the job, while in a few shops other employees were in charge of maintenance. In rare cases, usually in case of a major break-down, a specialist was called in to take care of repairs.

Although most weeklies use equipment that is many years old, if it is kept in good condition it can give long service. Printing equipment companies can supply almost any part. If parts are replaced when they become worn beyond repair and other adjustments are made on the machines, there is little need to supplant old equipment with new at very frequent intervals. This was corroborated by answers from the editors interviewed. Only two publishers carried on a regular replacement program. Furthermore, 14 of the 19 publishers felt they had sufficient equipment to handle their work loads. Of course many of them admitted to having "hope" lists of equipment which they would like to install as soon as they had funds to do so.

THE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER EDITOR

The weekly newspaper editor is generally portrayed as being a small, gray-haired little old man, who wears a green eye-shade and bi-focal glasses and who emits wise, countrified remarks at

the drop of a piece of type. He is considered an expert on the local scene, but at sea when it comes to matters of national or international concern.

Henry Keezing, a Nieman Fellow who is now editor of the Thomaston (Conn.) Gazette, summed it up in the Nieman Reports:

. . . The editor is never pictured on his own merits, he's taken in relation to those about him. There are certain basic ingredients for this formula. There's the forgetful, elderly woman, a country correspondent who thinks it's big news when the first pussy-willow blossoms. There's the bookkeeper, a standard fixture for umpty-eight years with the paper, who knows everybody's business. Then there's the editor himself, mixing his days between selling advertising, interviewing salesmen, running the linotype machine, the printing press, and occasionally dashing off a smashing editorial.

The net result of all this is that the American public has come to accept weekly newspaper editors as synonymous with "cute busybodys."

The fact of the matter is that the contemporary weekly editor is a conscientious journalist. His job is one which entails every fundamental of the writing profession. The difference between him and his fellow daily newspaper writers can be summed up in one word--diversity.

While the man who works for a daily is a specialist, the weekly newspaper editor must spread his talents out over a wide area. Nevertheless, the weekly editor is aware, keenly so, of his responsibilities.

The weekly editor is as aware of changes, modifications and technical advances in his profession as is a doctor in his. The editor must master the fundamentals of brief, factual reporting. He must be capable of doing makeup. He must be able to write headlines. He must know the value of the news he handles, the importance of his editorials, the worth of his pictures.

He must have the fullest conception of deadlines, of printing limitations and possibilities. He must be able to write a coherent lead to a story. He must know how to edit another's writing.¹

¹Henry M. Keezing, "Weekly Editing--Not All It's Cracked Up to Be," Nieman Reports, April, 1954, pp. 23-24.

All this, Mr. Keezing contends, has been the result of competition--not necessarily local competition, because the number of two-newspaper towns has been waning for many years, but competition from daily newspapers that come into the area. These papers are sharply edited, neat appearing and interesting. The local weekly editor has been compelled, in most cases, to follow suit. The effect has been better country weekly newspapers.

But what are the advantages of being a country editor? Are the problems discussed in previous sections any more harrassing than in other types of work? Most of the editors whom the writer interviewed didn't think so. But a majority of them did believe that their problems were not understood by the public. Therefore, the newspapers receive little sympathy when the paper is late because of a press break-down, or typographical errors change the spelling of someone's name. Unlike most other businesses, mistakes made by a newspaper are public property. Everyone who takes the paper knows about them, laughs at them, and sooner or later cusses the editor because of them. These things, the editors say, must be shrugged off, but filed away as warnings not to make the same mistakes in the future. In other words, the editor must develop a tough hide, but allow enough criticism to seep through his epidermis to keep him on his toes.

Long hours are an occupational hazard of this profession, although compared with many druggists, doctors and other professional men, they probably aren't any more extreme. The editors interviewed worked an average of 57.7 hours a week, however, which is considerably longer than any of the employees of a

weekly.

In spite of these adversities, 15 of the editors replied with an emphatic "yes" when asked if they would own a weekly newspaper if they could start over again. Only two stated they were not sure, while two other editors hedged and did not answer the question. They probably could be placed in the "no" group.

Changes in ownership among Kansas weekly newspapers are common. Every editor interviewed had owned or had part ownership in some weekly newspaper before purchasing his present paper. The average length of ownership among the 19 papers was 15.2 years. A. Q. Miller of Belleville had owned the Belleville Telescope for 50 years, although his sons now operate the paper.

One measure of the success of an enterprise, at least by standards today, is financial return. Using this as a basis, weekly newspapers can be considered successful. Fifteen publishers were willing to reveal their earnings for the previous year. The average gross profit for the 15 newspapers was \$38,800. Even more important, the average net profit returned to the publishers from their businesses, including any wages they paid themselves, averaged \$8,160 before taxes. Because of the various size newspapers involved, there were extremes. The lowest net profit was \$4,500, while the highest was \$17,000. The average net profit represented 21 per cent of the average gross profit.

The editors stated several other reasons besides the monetary return for liking the weekly newspaper business. Independence, contacts with people, opportunity to boost local

improvements and events, and living in a small town were some of the answers given by editors as to advantages of owning a weekly newspaper. A few of the answers to this question were:

M. O. Hill, Westmoreland Recorder: Being in general contact with people and in a position to boost things of value. That is, being of service to the public.

H. F. Beason, Smith County Pioneer: I like the regularity of it; it's a stable business. Also, I like printing and newspaper work.

Herbert Hickman, Blue Rapids Times: Economically, it's a good business in a country town. Even during the depression I made a good living and was able to keep my help from starving.

H. O. Dendurent, Wamego Times: Independence to a certain degree; being able to form your own editorial policy; saying what you think without worrying about the boss's ideas; carrying out your own ideas.

Wharton Hoch, Marion Record-Review: It's a pleasant living and one which offers opportunity for personal satisfaction in seeing a community grow and improve.

Wayne Turner, Oakley Graphic: Being of service to the community. There is always a place for a newspaper in good or bad economic conditions. Good monetary return.

Mack Nations, Kinsley Mercury: Controllable overhead. Larger percentage return on investment.

Ralph Hemenway, Minneapolis Messenger: Being your own boss; better standing in the community and the state.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is obvious from the preceding discussion that a country editor occupies a unique position in a rural community. He is a custodian of public affairs; a virtual watch-dog over the events, big or little, which transpire daily in the thousands of small communities of our nation. He can, and often does, influence the actions of elected officials in his area; his advice is often

sought on matters of public issue which are settled at the polls; and he is frequently asked to cooperate with some project that needs wise publicity to succeed.

He is an objective chronicler of history, for the thousands of words printed in his newspaper each week determine what persons interested in past events will write about that community 100 or more years from now. A personal type of journalism prevails for these newspapers, based on the everyday comings and goings of commonplace people. And these events, although limited in scope as to importance, are collectively significant to our way of life, because the emphasis in the small towns is upon the common welfare and the individual good.

At the same time, the weekly editor is a business man and a private individual. Although his actions and decisions may have great effect upon the public, he is not an elected official. Yet his decisions may result in a personal financial loss. That is a cross he is forced to bear if he is to maintain a position of respect in his community.

It seems impossible that anyone could carry out this role to any degree of excellence, and few do. Editors are subject to human frailties, the same as a grocer, a store clerk, a business executive, or a laborer. But because of his position in the community, the weekly editor must consider himself a public servant first, and a private individual second.

This means, then, that editors must constantly strive to publish better newspapers. Since local events are of major importance to a weekly, methods of covering the news must be

expanded so that everything of importance in the community finds its way into print. This sometimes means training individuals who are not actually on the payroll of the newspaper to be on the alert for news tips; in fact, making the entire readership so much a part of the newspaper that everyone becomes a virtual reporter.

This awareness needs to be carried a little further; to the point where the public becomes alarmed if the editor is not permitted to cover school board meetings, or to report probate court actions, or if he is threatened when he prints names of persons who break the law. The editor himself must solicit the support of the public in these ideals.

There is another reason for the need to improve country newspapers. Daily newspapers are constantly expanding their coverage. Already, in many areas of Kansas and doubtless in other parts of the nation, daily newspapers are struggling for dominance far outside their normal trading areas. It isn't unusual, for example, to see a reporter and a photographer from a newspaper printed more than 100 miles distant, at a local county fair or other civic celebration. The dailies still haven't been able to cover the local scene as completely as the weeklies, but with faster service they are capable of beating out the local paper on many good stories.

Also, radio and TV have discovered the small community. Although they are still primarily entertainment media, they have made inroads upon the advertising revenue in the towns where weeklies operate. To compete with these media, it will become

increasingly important for the weeklies to maintain strong positions in their communities.

From a business standpoint, it seems apparent from the survey that weekly publishers need to become better businessmen. Few kept comprehensive records of their business transactions, and in these days of climbing prices it is necessary that every cent be accounted for. Also, publishers need to keep a closer watch on their own prices, and not be hesitant about increasing advertising and subscription rates, as well as prices for job printing and other services, when it is apparent that costs are eating up their profits.

Publishers must pay higher salaries to attract the persons equipped to do an efficient job, not only in the back shop, but in the front office, too. There is little incentive for a trained reporter to work on a country weekly, unless it is a personal love for a small town or the desire to become a weekly newspaper owner. Similarly, more persons need to be encouraged to enter the printing trade, particularly in the small towns. Publishers can do much to alleviate this shortage by maintaining a training program in their own shops, by improving working conditions, including higher salaries, and by acquiring better equipment.

As to the editor himself, it would seem that he must be a firm believer in his community. Admittedly, many persons enter the weekly newspaper field because they hope to make enough money to move on to bigger things. Without a desire to improve the community and to present a week-by-week picture of important events, however, the editor will not hold a firm and respected

position in the community for very long.

Finally, the weekly editors must strive for a future with weekly newspapers in it. For many years, persons who are supposedly experts have prophesied that weekly newspapers are doomed. They have based their predictions upon the idea that in a few years weeklies will have no service to perform. These prognosticators believe that other media will take over the task of reporting local news. To some extent, as pointed out earlier, this is already true. But at the best, other media could render this service in only a purely impersonal form.

The danger lies in too much complacency. Weekly editors need to be aroused to the situation and urged to do something about it. Better newspapers, both from a news and business standpoint, are necessary now to insure that weekly newspapers will be a part of the future.

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sity of North Carolina Press, 1926.

APPENDIX

Table 2: The first newspaper published in each county in Kansas¹

| County | Name of Newspaper | Place of Publication | Date |
|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Leavenworth | <u>Kansas Weekly Herald</u> | Leavenworth | Sept. 15, 1854 |
| Douglas | <u>Kansas Pioneer</u> | Lawrence | Oct. 18, 1854 |
| Atchison | <u>Squatter Sovereign</u> | Atchison | Feb. 3, 1855 |
| Shawnee | <u>Kansas Freeman</u> | Topeka | July 4, 1855 |
| Doniphan | <u>Kansas Constitutionalist</u> | Doniphan | May, 1856 |
| Bourbon | <u>Southern Kansas</u> | Fort Scott | July, 1856 |
| Wyandotte | <u>Wyandotte City Register</u> | Wyandotte | May 2, 1857 |
| Lyon | <u>The Kansas News</u> | Emporia | June 6, 1857 |
| Franklin | <u>Kansas Leader</u> | Centropolis | June, 1857 |
| Coffey | <u>Ottumwa Journal</u> | Ottumwa | Aug. 29, 1857 |
| Miami | <u>Southern Kansas Herald</u> | Osawatomie | November, 1857 |
| Marshall | <u>Palmetto Kansas</u> | Marysville | Dec. 9, 1857 |
| Jefferson | <u>Grasshopper</u> | Grasshopper Falls | June 5, 1858 |
| Geary | <u>Junction City Sentinel</u> | Junction City | August, 1858 |
| Jackson | <u>The Cricket</u> | Holton | 1858 or 1859 |
| Johnson | <u>Johnson County Standard</u> | Olathe | March, 1859 |
| Linn | <u>Linn County Herald</u> | Mound City | April 1, 1859 |
| Riley | <u>Kansas Express</u> | Manhattan | May 21, 1859 |
| Chase | <u>Kansas Press</u> | Cottonwood Falls | May 30, 1859 |
| Morris | <u>The Kansas Press</u> | Council Grove | Sept. 26, 1859 |
| Brown | <u>Brown County Union</u> | Hiawatha | May, 1861 |
| Wabaunsee | <u>Wabaunsee Patriot</u> | Wabaunsee | Sept. 7, 1861 |
| Osage | <u>Osage County Chronicle</u> | Burlingame | Sept. 26, 1863 |
| Nemaha | <u>Nemaha Courier</u> | Seneca | Nov. 14, 1863 |
| Allen | <u>Humboldt Herald</u> | Humboldt | Nov. 25, 1864 |
| Anderson | <u>Garnett Plaindealer</u> | Garnett | March, 1865 |
| Saline | <u>The Salina Herald</u> | Salina | February, 1867 |
| Pottawatomie | <u>Pottawatomie Gazette</u> | Pottawatomie | July 17, 1867 |
| Cherokee | <u>Baxter Springs Herald</u> | Baxter Springs | October, 1867 |
| Ellis | <u>Hays City Railway Advance</u> | Hays City | Nov. 9, 1867 |
| Ellsworth | <u>Ellsworth Advocate</u> | Ellsworth | March, 1868 |
| Neosho | <u>Neosho Valley Eagle</u> | Jacksonville | May 2, 1868 |
| Labette | <u>The Oswego Register</u> | Oswego | May or June 1868 |
| Greenwood | * <u>The Eureka Herald</u> | Eureka | July 10, 1868 |
| Woodson | <u>Frontier Democrat</u> | Neosho Falls | October, 1868 |
| Washington | <u>The Western Observer</u> | Washington | March 25, 1869 |
| Crawford | <u>Crawford County Times</u> | Girard | April 16, 1869 |
| Montgomery | <u>Independence Pioneer</u> | Independence | Sept. 11, 1869 |
| Wilson | <u>Wilson County Courier</u> | Fredonia | Jan. 20, 1870 |
| Dickinson | <u>The Western News</u> | Detroit | Jan. 20 or 21, 1870 |
| Butler | <u>Walnut Valley Times</u> | ElDorado | March, 1870 |
| Cloud | <u>Republican Valley</u> | Clyde | May 31, 1870 |

Table 2 (cont.):

| County | Name of Newspaper | Place of Publication | Date |
|------------|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| Sedgwick | <u>The Wichita Vidette</u> | Wichita | Aug. 13, 1870 |
| Cowley | <u>Cowley County Censor</u> | Winfield | Aug. 13, 1870 |
| Ottawa | <u>Solomon Valley Pioneer</u> | Lindsey | Sept., 1870 |
| Marion | <u>The Western News</u> | Marion | Sept., 1870 |
| Republic | * <u>The Bell(e)ville Telescope</u> | Bell(e)ville | Sept. 30, 1870 |
| Elk | <u>Elk Falls Examiner</u> | Elk Falls | Feb., 1871 |
| Mitchell | <u>Mitchell County Mirror</u> | Beloit | April, 1871 |
| Sumner | <u>Oxford Times</u> | Oxford | June 22, 1871 |
| Clay | <u>Clay County Independent</u> | Clay Center | Aug. 31, 1871 |
| Russell | <u>The Kansas Pioneer</u> | Bunker Hill | Nov., 1871 |
| Harvey | <u>The Sedgwick Gazette</u> | Sedgwick | Jan. 19, 1872 |
| Osborne | <u>Osborne County Express</u> or <u>Osborne City Times</u> | Arlington | Feb. or Mar. 1872 |
| Jewell | <u>Jewell City Weekly Clarion</u> | Jewell City | Mar. or Apr., 1872 |
| Reno | <u>The Hutchinson News</u> | Hutchinson | July 4, 1872 |
| Barton | <u>Arkansas Valley, or</u> <u>Arkansas Valley Echo</u> | Great Bend | July, 1872 |
| McPherson | <u>McPherson Messenger</u> | McPherson | Dec. 19, 1872 |
| Smith | <u>Smith County Pioneer</u> | Cedarville | Dec., 1872 |
| Lincoln | <u>Lincoln County News</u> | Lincoln Center | March 5, 1873 |
| Rice | <u>Rice County Herald</u> | Atlanta | May, 1873 |
| Pawnee | <u>The Larned Press</u> | Larned | June 10, 1873 |
| Chautauqua | <u>Howard County Messenger</u> | Boston | July or Aug., 1873 |
| Phillips | <u>The Kirwin Chief</u> | Kirwin | Aug. 2, 1873 |
| Edwards | <u>Kinsley Reporter</u> | Kinsley | Sept., 1873 |
| Ford | <u>Dodge City Messenger</u> | Dodge City | Feb. 28, 1874 |
| Rush | <u>Walnut Valley Standard</u> | Rush Center | Dec. 24, 1874 |
| Rooks | <u>Stockton News</u> | Stockton | Jan. 6, 1876 |
| Norton | <u>Norton County Bee</u> | Norton | Jan. 1, 1877 |
| Stafford | <u>The Stafford Citizen</u> | Stafford | Nov. 30, 1877 |
| Barber | <u>Barbour County Mail</u> | Medicine Lodge | May 21, 1873 |
| Kingman | <u>Kingman Mercury</u> | Kingman | June 14, 1878 |
| Gray | <u>The Cimarron Pioneer</u> | Cimarron | July 2, 1878 |
| Pratt | <u>Pratt County Press</u> | Iuka | Aug. 15, 1878 |
| Harper | <u>Anthony Journal</u> | Anthony | Aug. 22, 1878 |
| Hodgeman | <u>Hodgeman Agitator</u> | Hodgeman Center | March 1, 1879 |
| Trego | <u>Wa-Keeney Weekly World</u> | WaKeeney | March 8, 1879 |
| Finney | <u>The Garden City Paper</u> | Garden City | April 3, 1879 |
| Meade | <u>The Pearlette Call</u> | Pearlette | April 15, 1879 |
| Ness | <u>Ness County Pioneer</u> | Clarinda | May 3-10, 1879 |
| Graham | <u>The Western Star</u> | Hill City | May 15, 1879 |
| Kearny | <u>Lakin Eagle</u> | Lakin | May 20, 1879 |
| Decatur | * <u>Oberlin Herald</u> | Oberlin | June 12-19, 1879 |

Table 2 (concl.):

| County | Name of Newspaper | Place of Publication | Date |
|----------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Rawlins | <u>Atwood Pioneer</u> | Atwood | Oct. 23, 1879 |
| Gove | <u>Grainfield Republican</u> | Grainfield | Jan. 28, 1880 |
| Lane | <u>Lane County Gazette</u> | California | Jan. 29, 1880 |
| Sheridan | <u>Sheridan County Tribune</u> | Kenneth | June, 1880 |
| Cheyenne | <u>The Cheyenne News</u> | Wano | Oct. 2, 1880 |
| Comanche | * <u>The Western Star</u> | Coldwater | Aug. 23, 1884 |
| Clark | * <u>Clark County Clipper</u> | Clark City | Sept. 25, 1884 |
| Kiowa | <u>Greensburg Rustler</u> | Greensburg | Jan. 15, 1885 |
| Thomas | <u>Thomas County Cat</u> | Colby | March 12, 1885 |
| Scott | <u>The Western Times</u> | Scott Center | May 27, 1885 |
| Hamilton | * <u>The Syracuse Journal</u> | Syracuse | June 12, 1885 |
| Grant | <u>Grant County Register</u> | Ulysses | July 21, 1885 |
| Seward | <u>The Prairie Owl</u> | Fargo Springs | Aug. 27, 1885 |
| Logan | <u>Oakley Opinion</u> | Oakley | Oct. 12, 1885 |
| Sherman | <u>The New Tecumseh</u> | Gandy | Nov. 9, 1885 |
| Wichita | <u>Wichita Standard</u> | Leoti City | Nov. 19, 1885 |
| Haskell | <u>Ivanhoe Times</u> | Ivanhoe | Dec. 12, 1885 |
| Wallace | <u>Wallace County Register</u> | Wallace | Jan. 2, 1886 |
| Morton | <u>The Frisco Pioneer</u> | Frisco | Jan. 6, 1886 |
| Stevens | <u>The Hugo Herald</u> | Hugo | Feb. 13, 1886 |
| Stanton | <u>Veteran Sentinel</u> | Veteran | March 19, 1886 |
| Greeley | <u>Hector Echo</u> | Hector | April 1, 1886 |

*Still published under the same name.

¹G. Raymond Gaeddert, "First Newspapers in Kansas," Kansas Historical Quarterly, Vol. X, No. 4, Nov. 1931, pp. 408-411.

Table 3: Weekly newspapers included in this study and positions of persons interviewed.

| <u>Name of Newspaper</u> | <u>Person Interviewed</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Leonardville Monitor-Regent</u> | Larry Marcellus | Publisher |
| <u>Blue Rapids Times</u> | Herb Hickman | Publisher |
| <u>Westmoreland Recorder</u> | Oliver Maskill M. O. Hill | Editor Publisher |
| <u>Wamego Times</u> | H. O. Dendurent | Publisher |
| <u>Belleville Telescope</u> | Luman Miller | Editor |
| <u>Smith County Pioneer</u> | H. P. Beason | Co-Publisher |
| <u>Phillipsburg Review</u> | Dennis Glaser | Editor |
| <u>Kinsley Mercury</u> | Mack Nations | Publisher |
| <u>Jetmore Republican</u> | Howard M. Wilson | Publisher |
| <u>Ellinwood Leader</u> | H. Martin Glen | Publisher |
| <u>Ellsworth Messenger</u> | Robert Herzog | Co-Publisher |
| <u>Herington Advertiser-Times</u> | M. P. Roberts | Co-Publisher |
| <u>Marion Record-Review</u> | Wharton Hoch | Publisher |
| <u>Minneapolis Messenger</u> | Ralph G. Hemenway | Publisher |
| <u>Dighton Herald</u> | LeRoy Allman* | Publisher |
| <u>Anderson Countian</u> | Leonard McCalla* | Publisher |
| <u>Anthony Republican</u> | Floyd Sibley* | News Editor |
| <u>Oakley Graphic</u> | Wayne Turner* | Editor |
| <u>Rooks County Record</u> | Leon Hamilton | Publisher |

*Interviewed by mail questionnaire.

Questions asked all persons interviewed
in this study

Name of newspaper _____ City _____

Name of publisher _____ Person
Interviewed _____

Date of interview _____ Circulation _____

Type of weekly newspaper (county seat, non-county seat, etc.)

Part I -- News

1. How many persons on your staff are responsible for gathering news, including society, personals, and sports?

2. Who writes the "front page" news?

3. How frequently do you cover:

| | | | | |
|---|----------|------|-----|------|
| a. city government (com mtgs.)? | Ev. Mtg. | Most | Oc. | Nev. |
| b. court house offices? | Ea. Week | Most | Oc. | Nev. |
| c. school activities? | Ea. Week | Most | Oc. | Nev. |
| d. agricultural agencies, such as Extension, SCS, etc.? | Ea. Week | Most | Oc. | Nev. |

4. What is your policy on publicity for public events?

5. Do you require advertising for a public event when admission is charged?

6. How many country correspondents do you have?

7. Are they trained by you in any way?

8. Do you edit their copy?

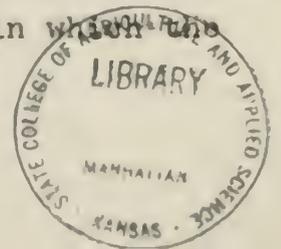
9. Do you provide tips to correspondents or other written instructions or aids?

10. Do you have a regular editorial column?

11. If not, do you write editorials when the occasion warrants it?

12. Do you edit or re-write news stories brought into the office by subscribers? If so, do they seem to resent it?

13. What do you tell them if they object to the way in which the story was re-written?



14. Do you have any news sources who are reluctant to give you news?
15. If so, have you been able to get the news anyhow? How?
16. What would you say are your principal problems in gathering news?
17. What attempts have been made to solve these problems and how successful have they been?

Part II -- Labor

1. How many full time employees do you have?
2. How many part time employees?
3. How many do you employ in the back shop?
4. Please classify them as to their jobs and salaries.
5. What is your work week in the back shop?
6. How many do you employ in the front office?
7. Please classify them as to their jobs and salaries.
8. What is your work week in the front office?
9. How many of your employees are "home trained"?
10. Do you find that "home trained" employees stay with you longer?
11. Have you had trouble hiring printers or other help?
12. If so, what would you say is the cause of it?
13. Do you think colleges, particularly Kansas State College, should train printers?
14. If so, would you send students there for a short course?
15. What would you say are your biggest troublespots concerning employees?
16. Have you been able to solve them? How?

Part III -- Rising Costs

1. How much would you say your total costs of operating have increased or decreased in the past five years? (percentagewise)

2. Do you keep records on your expenses?
3. What is your advertising rate?
4. How does this compare with your rate five years ago?
5. When was the last increase? How much?
6. Do you feel that sufficient increases have been made to cover your rising costs in the past five years, or have you had sufficient increase in volume to maintain an adequate profit margin?
7. Do you use the Franklin pricing list for job printing?
8. If so, do you charge the prices recommended?
9. Or do you use a cost accounting system, or both, to determine job printing prices?
10. What reaction have you had from advertisers whenever rates have been increased?

Part IV -- Equipment

1. Do you have:
 - a. Linotype or Intertype? b. What models?
 - c. What kind of newspaper press?
 - d. Ludlow? e. Elrod?
 - f. Automatic job presses? g. How many and what makes?
 - h. Other job presses? i. Engraving plant?
 - j. Rent Fairchild engraver?
 - k. What other major equipment?
2. What was the last major piece or pieces of equipment added to your shop? When?
3. Do you have any regular replacement program?
4. Who takes care of your equipment?
5. Do you feel you have sufficient equipment to handle your volume of work?
6. Would you please estimate your investment in equipment alone?
7. In general, would you say your equipment is in (excellent, good, fair, poor) condition?

Part V -- Advertising

1. What percentage of advertising will your paper average?
2. How do you encourage your advertisers to prepare their copy early?
3. Does your advertising salesman call on every store each week? At least once a month? Call regularly on only those who have become steady advertisers?
4. Do many of your advertisers prefer to use their own mats or make their own layouts?
5. If so, do you prepare layouts for most of your advertisers anyhow?
6. Do you have an advertising mat service? If so, which one?
7. Do you give extra copies of your proof books to your biggest advertisers?
8. Do you furnish tearsheets for local advertisers when they ask for them?
9. Do you offer any kind of merchandising service or other help?
10. What is your biggest advertising problem?
11. Have you been successful in solving it?

Part VI -- The Editor

1. How long have you owned your present newspaper?
2. How many hours do you work each week, including such things as covering meetings and anything else connected with your business?
3. Do you feel that your community understands the problems of publishing a newspaper?
4. If you don't mind, please tell what your net profit was for last year, including any salary you might have paid yourself?
5. What was your gross?
6. If you had it to do over again, do you think you would own a weekly newspaper?
7. What do you think are the advantages of owning a weekly newspaper?

MAJOR PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN PUBLISHING
A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER IN KANSAS

by

DONALD LEROY ALEXANDER

B. S., Kansas State College
of Agriculture and Applied Science, 1949

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

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requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Technical Journalism

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INTRODUCTION

The weekly press of America maintains a strong hold on the hearts of thousands of small communities through its concern with only local happenings. The purpose of this thesis was to investigate some of the problems that are peculiar to weekly newspapers in Kansas. Also, the writer hoped to gather practical material for use in a course in Rural Press which he proposed to teach at Kansas State College.

The writer visited 19 Kansas weekly newspapers in August, 1954, which supplied most of the information used in this thesis, although some material from books and articles was used whenever it was applicable.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEWSPAPER IN THE UNITED STATES

The first newspaper in America was Publick Occurrences, published by Benjamin Harris in 1690 at Boston. It was suppressed after one issue. The first daily newspaper was the Pennsylvania Evening Post, founded by Benjamin Towne in 1783. As settlement progressed westward, newspapers followed. Technological developments improved methods of printing newspapers, and the number of papers, especially weeklies, mounted steadily. Since 1914, however, the number of newspapers has declined, caused by a shift from a rural to urban population, consolidations of newspapers, and many other factors.

THE NEWSPAPER IN KANSAS

The first newspaper in Kansas was the Kansas Weekly Herald, published in 1854 in Leavenworth. By 1886, every county in the state had a newspaper. Today, Kansas has 355 newspapers--303 weeklies and 52 dailies.

NEWS IN THE COUNTRY NEWSPAPER

Local news is paramount in weekly newspapers. Because these papers are so provincial, a feature type style of writing is better adapted than the formal style found in city newspapers. The editorial is still important in the country newspaper, too, and many weekly editors have turned to the front page column to editorialize on local situations.

Many of the problems a weekly editor must solve are the result of being so close to his readers. Other problems weekly editors face include the decision of where to draw the line between publicity and "free" advertising; sources who are reluctant to give the news; persons who turn in late news items; failure of readers to give the newspaper tips about news stories; and similar problems that occur in the weekly search for news.

INCOME OF A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

Primarily, a weekly sells circulation, advertising and job printing. Costs have risen 25 per cent in five years, but prices have not kept pace. Weekly publishers have maintained a steady profit margin, however, because of increases in volume.

Typical advertising problems for a weekly newspaper include such things as convincing non-advertisers of the necessity of advertising; getting a fair share of the national advertising revenue; raising rates without losing advertising; and such technical problems as getting merchants to turn in ad copy early.

EMPLOYEES ON A COUNTRY WEEKLY

The average number of weekly newspaper employees was five, three in the back shop and two in the front office. Weeklies have the problem of getting adequate help, and one of the solutions is to train local persons. Salaries, on the whole, are low.

EQUIPMENT IN A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

Weeklies have fallen behind daily newspapers in the use of time and labor-saving equipment, principally because of the high purchasing cost. The average equipment valuation for the weeklies visited was \$20,600. Since equipment is expensive, maintenance is important.

THE WEEKLY NEWSPAPER EDITOR

Nearly all weekly editors said they would "do it again," in spite of perplexing problems and long hours. The average weekly earned \$38,800 gross and \$8,160 net. Few editors gave monetary return as a reason for their devotion to the weekly newspaper business. Most of them cited independence, contacts with people, opportunity to boost civic improvements and living in a small town.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The country editor occupies a unique position in a rural community. He must view the passing scene in his community with an objective eye, and at the same time consider his business interests. The two are not always compatible and these interests sometimes clash.

Weekly editors must constantly strive to publish better newspapers, in order to insure a future with weekly newspapers in it, or else competing media could bring about the demise of the rural press as it is known today. This means, then, that editors must improve methods of getting the news, by increasing staffs, when necessary, and making the entire readership so much a part of the newspaper that everyone becomes a virtual reporter.

Also, publishers need to become better businessmen. Comprehensive records should be kept of income and expenses, and prices of the weekly newspaper's services should be kept up-to-date.

Higher salaries should be paid to attract better qualified personnel, and the editor himself must be a firm believer in the community to maintain a strong position.

