

Lots Of Responsibility Goes With News Reporting

News Writers Dig For Facts Before Writing Article

Reporters Cannot Forget Their Job, Must Keep Ear To Ground For Tips.

By Hilda Way Gwyn.

"It must be so, for I read it in the newspaper," says the reader. Thus with one casual toss, the responsibility of the news is thrown on the shoulders of the reporter or editor, who is ever at the mercy of the public to give him the news, likewise the public has the privilege to criticize the reporter's version of the story as it is unfolded in the paper.

Webster defines news as "fresh tidings," which is a very fine definition. The coverage and handling of news may have undergone many changes since Mr. Webster wrote that definition, but it still holds good. For the newspaper, whether weekly or daily must contain a "report of recent happenings" to attract and hold the reader interest.

The average person not familiar with pitfalls of putting out a paper casually picks it up and after scanning through it, little realizes the effort and time that has gone into either the gathering of the news, the creating of it into reading material, or the intricate mechanical means by which the copy is turned into the printed word.

Newspapering is about as stimulating a job mentally as can be found. The good reporter can't ever forget his work. He is on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for anything can happen at any time. His brain must emulate the common sponge when thrown into a liquid. He must form the habit of soaking up everything he hears, so that when he gets ready to write his story he will have all necessary information. Or an idle remark may be a clue to some spot news.

The honest editor and the good reporter are ever conscious of their part in shaping public sentiment, in their part in promoting sound and constructive ideas in a community, of the power and responsibility of the press to do a bit of crusading in a worthwhile cause that is slow in gaining enough momentum to get going. The live newspaper must keep one step ahead of the community in its vision. It is doubtful if the public generally speaking realizes or appreciates this type of service as it should.

On the big dailies where news is handled according to departments, reporters follow one line, but on the weekly, where the reporting is usually done by two or three persons, the field is wide open to every avenue of news. The reporter on the weekly can't let his mind get on one track. His interests must branch out in all directions.

The weekly newspaper editor or reporter must keep his ear to the ground and his hand on the pulse of the area the paper serves. He must carry in his mind a picture of the area, and anticipate what may happen, so that he will be ready when it becomes news. In the case of The Mountaineer, the field of coverage is not confined to this immediate community, but to Haywood county. What happens on White Oak is news just as what goes on in town.

Sometimes because the paper seeks news the public gets an idea that there is little to print or fill up the paper. Nothing could be more erroneous. There flows a steady stream of "free material" into every newspaper in the land. To the lazy editor or reporter it is pie laid in their lap. But to the live paper, it must be studied carefully before using, for one rarely gets something for nothing.

"Propaganda pains" might be hard for a doctor to diagnose, but not for the editor, who is a chronic sufferer. The freedom of the press must be protected and guarded by him.

Take a day's work of the average reporter on a weekly. It may cover the gamut of human emotions and happenings. From the cradle to the grave he or she literally wends his way, covering the news.

He may cover a court session. He may be called upon to interview a prisoner. Perhaps a man has committed murder. It is not al-

This Is Newspaper Week

(Continued from page 1, Section 2)

In a world of tyranny, free speech and a free press stand as a first line of defense for our way of life.—W. K. Kellogg, Kellogg Company.

A free press, in these modern times, includes not only newspapers and periodicals, but radio and motion pictures. Together we have common problems and obligations. So long as America has these unfettered mediums of expression dedicated to the public service, so long will democracy be secured.—Will H. Hayes, Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America.

If you would know the value of newspapers, you need only ask

ways easy to get that prisoner to talk, yet the conscientious reporter feels he cannot take the other fellow's word for what happened, and that it is only fair to ask the prisoner for his side.

A prominent citizen may die on press day. The facts of the man's life and the funeral details must come from the family. In a small community where each man knows his neighbor the story must be handled in an understanding manner. Often it is hard to approach the family in the freshness of their grief. In the long run it is the better plan, for an untruth in print later will hurt the family far more than the intrusion at the time.

Take an accident. Often several persons are involved. Such a story takes time. The officers must be interviewed perhaps first. Maybe the doctor will have to be contacted, for no mistake must be made as to the injuries suffered. The persons in the accident must give their version. Maybe two or three hours will be given to a story that covers a half column when printed. Yet the paper must have that news.

Maybe a couple of men have a fist fight or a more serious encounter. Back of that fight may be a story "rich, rare and racy." The big daily would have no compunction about airing it out in news style. It would make swell reading. It would be the kind of a story that would make people grab a paper the minute it came off the press.

But because everybody knows the parties concerned, the weekly may have to lay off the real facts, and let gossip publicize it by the grapevine route. Such a case is a tough break for the reporter. Often to ignore a story of this kind, for policy's sake or consideration of others is positively painful to the reporter with a flair for news, and an instinct for a good story. Then on the other hand he may be greatly relieved that he doesn't have to "touch the thing."

There may be a big wedding. It deserves a prominent place and a lot of description. The bride is usually excited and apt to leave out the very thing she wanted in the "write up for her scrap book," but she forgot to tell the reporter, who cannot always be a mind reader. Maybe between the reporter, the linotype operator and the proof reader the wrong colored dress gets on an attendant, it's a serious matter.

When a story of an important development breaks, there is keen excitement in the office of the weekly. For the editor and the reporters take great pride in announcing "good news" to a community. Maybe the story has been brewing for weeks, perhaps months, but when it appears in print, then it becomes a reality.

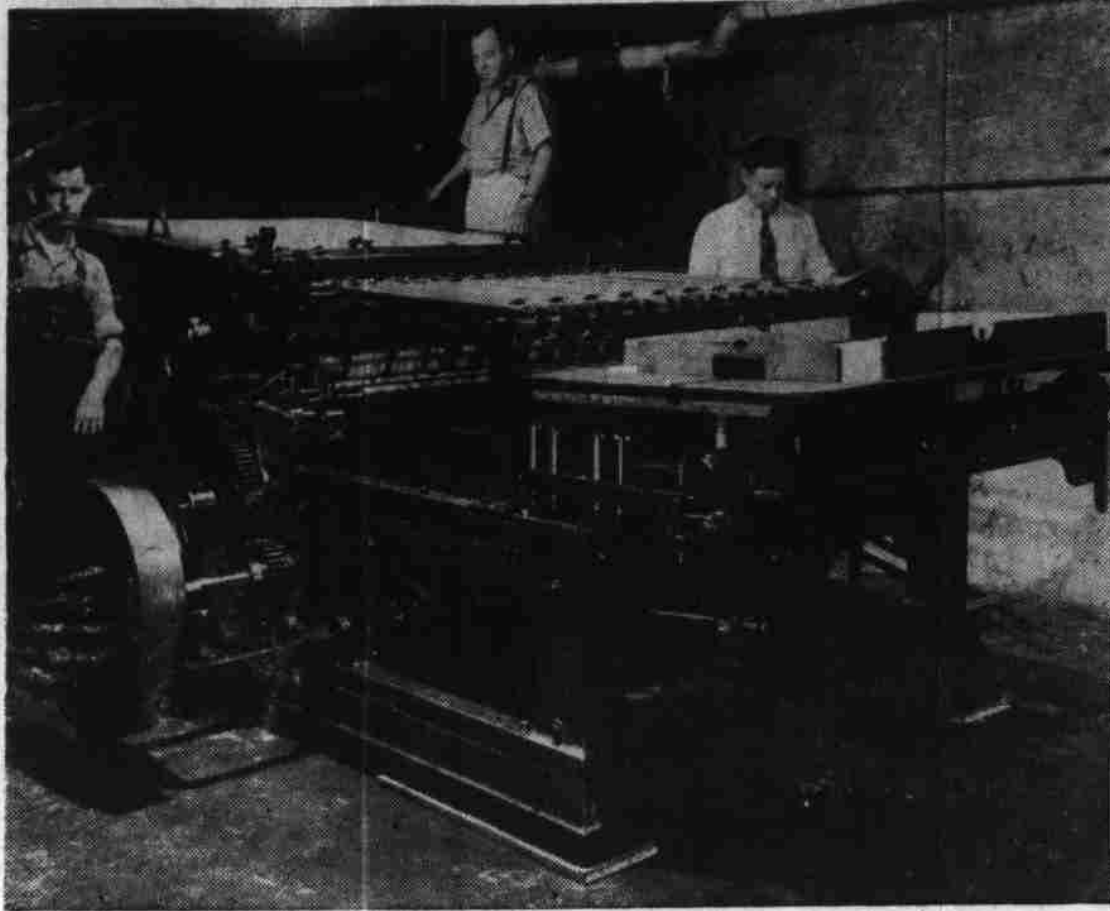
Then each week there are regular coverages that become like clock work to the reporter in routine work. Yet they must be included each week. There are agencies to contact for stories that give a good cross section of the life of the community. They may give out routine stories, yet they are news.

"By the way it may be all rumor, but I can give you a tip about something, but of course don't mention my name." What a familiar and welcomed greeting to the reporter. For that is the way he gets a lot of news. Then the fascinating task of unraveling the story gets in action. Following that clue may lead to a story with a "streamer" or it may end in a waste of time for the reporter, but he must take the story on and follow to the end.

There are many requirements for the reporter on the weekly newspaper besides an ability to write and an instinct for news. Above all it is necessary to develop an even philosophy of life that can steer one through mazes of criticism and the surging tides of public opinion. One must keep a level head with a clear outlook, swept clean of personal prejudice.

Take it week in and week out editing the weekly newspaper is an absorbing occupation, and while most of those engaged in such work have moments of disgust, despair, and disappointment, they wouldn't trade jobs with anybody. For there are too many bright spots along the way, and there is an eternal fascination about recording the life of a community or a county that "gets under one's skin."

This Is The Press This Newspaper Was Printed On



This is the 12-ton newspaper press on which The Mountaineer is printed. This press will be running Friday afternoon for visitors attending our "Open House". The press is capable of printing 40 sheets a minute. This press was installed new just two years ago.

yourself what would happen if we should suddenly be without them.—Cal Keller.

Freedom of the press has long been taken for granted in America. Events taking place in other parts of the world warn us to be on guard. In almost all continental Europe, freedom is dead. Our freedom is of vital concern to every citizen of the United States and Canada. But this is not particularly a newspaper problem. Ours are democratic nations. We need only to stop and to think what it would be like to have the press of our country shackled! Some dictator would censor every move. Our democratic way of life would be ended!

Fortunately our free press reflects democracy! Our nearly 12,000 uncensored newspapers in the United States and Canada give us the news and not propaganda. We have 12,000 watchful editors and publishers with active staffs free to think and to write our news without censorship.—Kiwanis International.

In Germany, Hitler tells the press what to print, Germany is "Hitlerized."

In Russia, Stalin tells the press what to print—and what not to print. Russia is "Stalinized."

In Italy, Mussolini tells the press what to print—and what not to print. Italy is "Mussolinized."

In Japan, France and all conquered countries, the press is under the heel of the dictators.

In the United States, no one tells the press what to print and what not to print. Free people—free thought—free assembly and free press.

The newspapers of the United States—daily newspapers—Sunday newspapers—weekly newspapers—tri-weekly newspapers—semi-weekly newspaper—bi-weekly newspapers—reflecting a free people are free to conduct or condemn all and sundry without fear of any OGPU or Gestapo—just as all Americans are privileged not only to think but to express their personal opinions good or bad—without approval of any man, woman, political party, or anything else.

THE GIANT OF THE AGES

By Arthur Elliott Sproul.
I came. Instant upon man's midnight burst midday.
The whole round world I survey with my tireless orbs. No act escapes.
Lightnings I harness to my ponderous car, and the earth quakes beneath the onset of its wheels.
In wrath I strip the glittering rags from hypocrites high placed, who naked cover in the all-searching light;
Yet I have tender moods, when my great heart throbs fast with sympathy for the oppressed of earth.
Sweet is it, too, to me, to breathe a benediction on the head of him who—thinking of God the while, not self—pours out his bounty to uplift his race.
Power immense is mine. The puny strivings of a king I make my jest. My word is law.
Feared am I, hated oft, loved seldom—yet I would not evil do, but good.
Imperfect yet, alas! despite my strength and lofty aims, because I human am and never else can be. Yet I may come near to Christ by patience and endeavor, like the humblest.
I am what I am made—not what I would be and may yet become.
I am The Press.

The world has never had a good definition of the word liberty.—Abraham Lincoln.

America's Weekly Newspapers

(Continued from page 1, Section 2)

serve control the nation's political majorities; 46 per cent of all the stores in the United States are centered in their territory, with sales last year totaling \$14,000,000,000 or 31 per cent of the national total.

Oh yes, when one starts playing with statistics on 10,000 weekly papers impressive figures turned up, and a dazzling picture can be painted!

But to one of the 1,900 subscribers to the average home town paper these figures mean nothing. On Thursday or Friday of every week this reader looks forward to seeing in his paper what happened to Mrs. Jones' proverbial cow, what cousin visited with which neighbor, or who was entertained at cards by whom, when, and where.

Biggest Little Things

Little things—but the biggest things in the everyday lives of us all.

Because only a little paper can

"cover" all these items which occur in the day of a person living in a small town, the average weekly paper has a peculiarly powerful appeal, its semi-gossipy "socials" fulfilling a fundamental human need.

The point here being made was beautifully illustrated when, in reply to a query from the writer as to whether or not she would miss her weekly paper if it ceased publishing, a lady answered with this question:

"Of course, young man. How else would I ever know what parties I hadn't been invited to?"

A Sound Future.

Human nature being what it is, weekly newspapers have the soundest future in the world. Tremendous dailies at low cost, radio, television, facsimile transmission, frequency cut very far into the reader-appeal of weeklies, because it is physically impossible for them to cover the activities of the neighbors of each person in their vast audience.

Only the home town paper has space for the social activities of the local church caretaker as well as those about the mayor's wife or the

Newspapers Serve Communities

By John E. Stempel
Professor of Journalism, Indiana University.

Show me a live town and I'll show you a newspaper that's on the job.

That is the message that business executives, traveling men, civic leaders and others who have occasion to compare various towns have brought me time and again. They see the newspaper as an important part of any community today—as important as the bank, the stores, the school and the church.

Were there no bank, business would be sadly handicapped—and yet a score or more small towns in the United States today have banks because they have a good local newspaper. When funds were needed to reopen a closed bank or establish a new one, a live newspaper editor on the job helped raise the money.

Support the Schools.

Millions have been spent in the last few years to give small towns and larger cities adequate modern school buildings. Hundreds of editors not only supported plans for buildings, but also they have seen the school building as more than a place for teaching pupils, and have encouraged folks from town and countryside to attend athletic events, school plays, and other activities, and these folks in turn have made the school the headquarters for various community meetings.

Merchants in hundreds of small towns have quit complaining about loss of business to nearby cities, and have started to see what they could do about it. In their local papers they have read articles about the improvement of stores in other towns, they have taken heed of their editor's suggestion to tidy up, and they have relied on surveys the editor has made to determine what kinds and quality of goods they ought to stock.

Here again the result has been more than mere economic improve-

ment. With the help of the newspaper they have brought folks to band concerts, old home days, editor counted 17 such events had sponsored in the course of year—and town and county Live newspapers have made towns.

Guardians of Public Interest Only two things are taxes and death—and their place in the weekly paper. Most public officials give service, and when the local newspaper tells them when they fail, and greets cost rise as a result, it is the local newspaper that calls attention to the need for Live newspapers that protect the town's welfare by government clean and officials honest.

The farmer today finds less hard for what he used to, and his wife, leisure. Why? In part because the instruction from the farm and home demonstrators; in part because of courses at the colleges of agriculture; but in large part the local newspaper told him the meetings at which he heard of these new things, and announced advances in a generation ago we worried about farm lands drifting from the farms to the cities. Today their interest back to the soil and the cause of the 4-H clubs, sponsored by the local newspaper.

The happy merchant and the happy farmer, the happy wife and the happy father, look to their newspaper for what their neighbors are doing, the knowledge necessary to be effective in business and in life—health and beauty and comfort in life and on the highway, a fun and pleasant recreation.

Show me a live town, show you a town in which newspaper is on the job, people informed, supporting interests, inspiring their talents and their talents.

Truth crushed to earth spontaneously upward, as per to the breeze man's able birthright.—Mary Eddy.

The only liberty I know liberty connected with one not only exists along with virtue, but which exist at all without them.—Burke.

The MOUNTAINEER

brings



EVERY WEEK
The Mountaineer
Goes Into Over
2500
HOMES

A horn of plenty for Haywood business is The Mountaineer. Results pour endlessly from effective Mountaineer advertising because this paper has entrenched itself thoroughly in the minds of Haywood people. It is practically and actually an institution whose presence can be noted in over 2,500 homes, in which it is read for concise reporting of the news of the day and advertising news, too. If your business can use a horn of plenty in advertising results, don't wait to get in touch with The Mountaineer office.

The MOUNTAINEER

"The Largest Non-Daily Newspaper West Of the Blue Ridge"

WOMEN!

Modern facts



61 years of use

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CARDUI