

Indiana Newspapers 1829-1860

By JAMES HANNAN BUTLER, A.M., Wisconsin

THE NEWSPAPER AND THE FRONTIER

In order to explain the progress of the establishment of newspapers in Indiana, mention should first be made of the size of the towns in which they were published and the constantly increasing population of the state. The setting for a story of newspapers in the commonwealth would be incomplete without this.

In the westward advance of the American frontier following the Revolutionary war, Southern Indiana was reached soon after settlements were made in Ohio. The early settlements were along the rivers. Along the Ohio river were the promising towns of Lawrenceburg, Vevay, Madison, Jeffersonville, New Albany and Evansville. On the Whitewater river were Connersville and Brookville. On the Wabash was old Vincennes, which had been settled by the French much earlier, and Terre Haute. Somewhat later Lafayette and Logansport were founded on the upper Wabash river. Comparatively early settlements, not on important rivers were Richmond, Corydon, the first capital of Indiana, located twenty miles from the Ohio river in Harrison county; and Indianapolis, the centrally located capital of the future.

The progress of a frontier line of eighteen inhabitants to the square mile, across the state of Indiana from 1830 to 1860 tells an interesting story.¹

By the year 1830 it had pushed into the state in two places. The lower extension was the larger of the two. It entered the state of Indiana near Cincinnati, Ohio, ran parallel to the Ohio river as far as Washington county, where it turned sharply north, then west, then north, and west again to the western edge of Lawrence county. Here it dropped almost directly

¹ All information concerning this frontier line was gained from: *Statistical Atlas of the United States based on the results of the Ninth Census of 1870.*

south to the Ohio river. Territory inside this line of eighteen to the square mile and which was therefore more thickly populated included the counties of Ohio, Switzerland, Jefferson, Clark, Floyd, Harrison, Washington, Orange, and parts of Scott, Lawrence, and Crawford. The upper section encompassed by this frontier line included the counties of Wayne, Fayette, Union, and Franklin, in rectangular form with Rush county making an almost square extension on the west side.

In the next ten years the influx of population was rapid. By 1840 the line, with the exceptions noted below, had reached approximately the northern boundaries of the following counties: Randolph, Delaware, Madison, Tipton,² Clinton, Carroll, Tippecanoe, Fountain and Vermillion. Two sections south of this line were not included: one of these included the hilly counties of Jackson and Bartholomew and the other was a larger triangular strip which had the three counties of Perry, Spencer, and Warrick, as a base and extended in a northward direction with the northern boundary of Clay county forming a blunt apex.

By 1850 the line had advanced across the state. There were still three sections of the state, however, where the population had not reached an average of eighteen to the square mile. One part included the rather barren counties of Martin and Dubois in the southwestern part of the state. Another included the counties of Adams, Wells, Blackford, Huntington, Whiteley and Noble. The third included these counties: Lake, Porter, Starke, parts of Marshall, Fulton and White; Benton, Warren, Newton, Jasper, and Pulaski.

In 1860 all territory in the state had received enough inhabitants to make its average eighteen or more to the square mile except an irregular strip in the northwestern part of the state. This strip contained practically all of the counties of Benton, Jasper, Newton, White, Pulaski, Starke, and part of Lake county.

While this expansion was taking place the newspapers were keeping pace. When settlements were sparsely populated and far apart newspapers were not numerous. When the towns grew in size two and in some cases three or more papers were supported.

² The line cut across the middle part of Tipton county.

Energetic editors appeared soon after a community reached any appreciable size. For this reason, a newspaper map showing counties having a newspaper or having had one, at a given date is similar to a map showing what counties the frontier line overran at that date. In a few instances newspapers were established in thriving towns some time before the frontier line of eighteen to the square mile reached the county. Examples of this are the settlements at New Harmony, Vincennes, Terre Haute, Indianapolis, Lafayette, and Logansport, all of which had weekly papers before 1830, at a time when the frontier line was far to the south and east. This situation might have been expected because a newspaper depended chiefly on a town for its support and at least ~~not~~ upon a whole county. Then, many of the towns were fairly large long before the county in which they were situated became thickly populated.

Several newspapers had been established in Kentucky and Ohio before one made its appearance in Indiana.

The honor of printing the first newspaper in Indiana belongs beyond a doubt to Elihu Stout, who on July 4, 1804, put out the first issue of the *Indiana Gazette* at Vincennes.⁵ About a year and a half later the plant was destroyed by fire. On July 4, 1807, Editor Stout began issuing the *Western Sun and General Advertiser*, after having returned to Frankfort, Kentucky, to get the type and press.⁶

The next paper to be published in Indiana, was the *Western Eagle*, which was founded at Madison in 1813, by Seth M. Leavenworth and William Hendricks, who had brought their press with them from Cincinnati. After a short sojourn the *Eagle* was moved to Lexington, Indiana, and the *Indiana Republican* took its place in Madison. In 1815 John Scott, a roving printer, founded the *Enquirer and Indiana Telegraph* at Brookville and about the same time an Ohio printer, William C. Keen, one of the joint founders of Vevay, established the *Indiana Register* at that place.⁷

Between the date of the admission of Indiana into the Union in December, 1816, and the inauguration of Andrew

⁵ *History of Knox and Davies Counties, Indiana.*

⁶ Logan Esarey, "Early Indiana Newspapers", in *Indianapolis News*, Feb. 1, 1913.

⁷ Logan Esarey, *History of Indiana*, Vol. II, p. 1101.

Jackson in March, 1829, one or more papers was established at the following towns: Salem, Vevay, Terre Haute, Greencastle, Brookville, New Albany, Indianapolis, Richmond, and Centerville.⁸

The establishment of a newspaper in a town as well as its success thereafter depended upon the revenue that might be derived from two sources: job printing and circulation to subscribers. Practically all of the early editors made pleas for job printing. A notice printed by the *Paladium* at Lawrenceburg is typical of the kind of job work they offered to do. The notice read as follows:

Blank Deeds, Mortgages, Summonses, Bills of Lading, and most other kinds for sale at this office.⁹

The fact that the early editor depended upon both circulation and job printing to earn a living makes it difficult to say what circulation was necessary to sustain a paper. In many cases an editor may have cast his lot with a town because of the promise of job work to be done. County seat towns often lured editors and held them because of the additional amount of job work and the printing of the official notices and reports of the various county officials who did business there.

Statements giving the net paid circulation were seldom given by editors before the Civil War. Occasionally if one was having unusual success he would tell how his list of subscribers was growing. On July 29, 1840, *The La Porte County Whig and Porter, Lake and Marshall Counties Advertisers*,¹⁰ in publishing a notice that its furniture and fixtures were for sale said they had "cost \$1,500 in New York about three years ago" and said "the subscription list is about five hundred and might easily be increased to double that number."¹¹ The *Madison Daily Courier*, on May 5, 1849, said:

When we issued our first number we had not even one subscriber; now before the first week has ended, we have over four hundred.

⁸ Logan Esarey, *History of Indiana*, Vol II, pp. 1102-1107; histories of Indiana counties which include those towns.

⁹ *Indiana Palladium*, Mar. 21, 1835, Lawrenceburgh.

¹⁰ This name was later shortened to *La Porte Whig* for obvious reasons.

¹¹ Jasper Packard, *History of La Porte County, Indiana, and its Townships, Towns and Cities*.

In speaking on the suspension of the *Portland Journal* in the winter of 1856-1857 one publisher said, "its circulation at that time was about three hundred copies."¹² It is said that for the *Spy* at Nashville in 1854, the first newspaper in Brown County, "a subscription list of about three hundred was secured."¹³ Immediately after the *Noble County Journal* was started in 1859, "a circulation of about five hundred was secured but was afterward about doubled."¹⁴ One Indiana historian has summarized the circulation of the town and city papers of Indiana as follows:

Few of the papers of Indiana before the war had a circulation of 1,000. The ordinary county seat paper of the forties had from 200 to 500 subscribers. The latter number included those that circulated outside the county. The Madison, New Albany, Terre Haute, Lafayette, South Bend, Fort Wayne, and perhaps a few other papers had from 500 to 700 subscribers. The weekly *Sentinel* and *Journal* had over 1,000 but the daily editions were less than 500.¹⁵

The valuation of newspaper and printing establishments varied greatly. According to the reports of the Sixth Census¹⁶ sixty-five printing offices in Indiana in 1840 were valued at \$58,505, or an average of approximately \$900 per plant. In sixty-nine printing offices, two hundred and eleven men were employed. Counties reporting the largest number of men engaged in printing, binding, and publishing were Marion, with eighteen; Floyd, with sixteen; Wayne, with fourteen; Vigo, with twelve; and Jefferson, La Porte and Tippecanoe with eleven. All other counties had less than ten men and as few as one engaged in the industry. This report gives the most complete information available on the amount of capital which the editor had invested in his plant.¹⁷ Earlier, of course, the plants were smaller, the average number of men

¹² *Biographical and Historical Record of Jay and Blackford Counties, Indiana*, 212.

¹³ *Counties of Morgan, Monroe, and Brown, Indiana, Historical and Biographical*, 696.

¹⁴ *Counties of La Grange and Noble, Indiana, Historical and Biographical*, 74.

¹⁵ Logan Esarey, "History of the Press in Indiana", in *Indianapolis Star*, Sept. 9, 1915.

¹⁶ *Compendium of the Enumeration of Inhabitants of the United States*. . . . Sixth Census, 292.

¹⁷ Even this report lists printing offices, newspaper plants, and binderies without discrimination.

employed less, and the amount of capital invested less. Later when steam power was introduced and telegraph service furnished, the cost of both equipment and upkeep was greater.

What information is available concerning the number of newspapers in Indiana shows a steady increase after 1835. In 1833 a *Gazeteer* was published by Douglass and Maguire of the *Indiana Journal* at Indianapolis, which contained a table of Indiana newspapers, showing by whom they were published and at what place.¹⁸ This book lists a total of twenty-nine papers in the state in the year 1833. In the year 1835 the *American Almanac* listed the name and place of publication of thirty-one newspapers and stated that, "In addition to the above, seven other papers are printed in the state making in all thirty-eight."¹⁹ In the Sixth Census (1840) reports, Indiana is credited with sixty-nine weeklies and four semi-weeklies and tri-weeklies, a total of seventy-three.²⁰ According to the census reports of 1850 there were eighty-four political papers in the state besides those classed as literary, miscellaneous, religious and scientific.²¹ In the next decade there was a considerable increase in the number of publications. In 1860 there were one hundred and seventy-two political papers of which thirteen were issued daily, five bi-weekly, and one hundred fifty-four weekly.²² This large increase in the number of political papers has been attributed to the "extraordinary political agitation" of the decade.²³

These statistics, however, give only the bare facts and although each decade showed an increase in the number of papers over the preceding one, such progress was not made without heroic efforts on the part of some editors to keep their papers alive.

Besides the hardships which the pioneer editors had to endure, some other features of the newspaper industry in the

¹⁸ John Douglass and Douglas Maguire, *The Indiana Gazeteer or Topographical Dictionary*, 200.

¹⁹ *The American Almanac and Repository of Useful Knowledge for the year 1836*, 253.

²⁰ *Compendium of the Enumeration of the Inhabitants of the United States*. . . . Sixth Census, 292.

²¹ J. D. B. De Bow. *The Seventh Census of the United States*, 1850, Table XLIX, p. LXV.

²² *Statistics of the United States Census in 1860*, Eighth Census, 321.

²³ *Ibid.* 320.

state were: the heavy mortality of the papers; the bitter rivalry of the editors; the rates they charged for advertising and subscriptions; and the general contents of the papers. These topics will be discussed in separate sections.

HARDSHIPS OF THE EARLY EDITORS

The pioneer editor in Indiana labored under difficulties that seem almost beyond belief in this day of rapid transportation, quick methods of communication, and improved machinery of all kinds. Yet he was not alone in suffering hardships, for the merchant, the teacher, the farmer and the preacher were laboring under the same harsh conditions of pioneer life.

No more vivid picture of pioneer journalism can be given, however, than the story of some of the adversities with which the early editor had to contend.

One of the curses of early journalism in Indiana was a shortage of paper at publishing time. Speculation as to why the pioneer editor was so often caught in this predicament leads to three possible reasons. In the first place many of them barely eked out an existence from week to week and probably seldom had enough "ready cash" to buy an appreciable supply in advance. Then, the uncertainties of their organs as business ventures made the laying in of a large supply of paper inadvisable. When both advertisers and printers were slow in settling their accounts, as will be shown below, it was only natural that the editors were careful about additional commitments. A third and most likely cause for frequent apologies about a lack of paper, rested in the uncertainties and difficulties of transportation. This was especially true of transportation in the winter and spring months when the streams were frozen or swollen and the roads impassable.

The problems of Editor Stout at Vincennes may be cited as typical examples of what many editor had to contend with until the middle thirties. In the spring of 1829 he gave this notice to his readers:

Want of paper compels me to furnish my readers with but half a sheet. I expect a supply before another publication day.¹

¹ *Western Sun*, May 9, 1829.

The delay apparently was longer than he had at first anticipated, however, and he was soon forced to make another apology. His appeal to his readers for patience was worded as follows:

My supply of paper has not yet arrived. I shall endeavor to make such arrangements as will prevent a similar misfortune for I do not look upon the fact of being out of paper as a fault, having taken the needful and usual steps to procure it, but as a misfortune.²

As a result of this shortage the two succeeding issues, May 23 and May 30, 1829, were about three-fifths their regular size. Instead of the usual four columns, there were only three. The usual four pages were printed.

A lack of paper of the proper size bothered this editor as late as 1834. He was compelled to reduce the *Sun* to a five-column sheet for the issues of October 4, October 11, and October 18, 1834. As late as the issue of July 5, of that year, he had used paper of this size. But after this day he had put out a six column paper. His announcement to his readers was worded as follows:

I am compelled to present the *Sun* to its numerous patrons today on a diminished sheet. Paper of the proper size has been expected for several days but has not yet arrived. I shall endeavor to prevent a similar mishap again happening.³

About the same time the editor of the *Indiana Republican* at Madison was having similar troubles and for one issue was obliged to put out a paper of five columns in place of the customary six columns. The editor's statement to his patrons is self explanatory. He said:

We are under the necessity of apologizing to our patrons this week on account of the size of our paper. We sent to Louisville for *Imperial* paper, but received superroyal, plenty of which we could have had at home; but we can assure our readers that as soon as we have an opportunity of sending to Cincinnati or Louisville again, our paper shall resume its former size.⁴

Another pioneer in the newspaper field, John Scott at Logansport, suffered greatly on account of his remoteness from

² *Ibid.*, May 16, 1829.

³ *Western Sun*, October 4, 1834.

⁴ *Indiana Republican*, October 7, 1830. Madison.

a paper mill. His hardships have been summarized for the first two years as follows:

It took Editor Scott about two years to complete the first volume, 52 numbers, of the *Pottawatomie and Miami Times*, of Logansport, 1829-31, due to the irregularity of the boats on the Wabash.⁵

Conditions did not seem to improve for this Wabash valley editor because in 1833 he had numerous complaints to make. He did not put out an issue from December 29, 1832, until February 14, 1833, giving two reasons for the suspension as follows:

It is due to our readers to state that the failure in the publication of this paper, for some weeks past, was owing to the absence of the Editor, and a disappointment in not receiving a supply of paper as soon as was expected.⁶

A short time later this notice appeared:

The person employed to bring us paper failed to do so, consequently we were unable to publish last week and are compelled to issue but half a sheet this week.⁷

Another apology was forthcoming two months later when he allowed four weeks to elapse between No. 52 of Vol. I and No. 1 of Vol. II.⁸

Even as late as 1847, the energetic Henry Ward Beecher, who edited a monthly agricultural journal at Indianapolis during the years 1845, 1846, and 1847, was caught without paper. He said the delay was on account of "not getting paper according to contract"⁹ and said further:

We have now made such arrangements as will in the future avoid such vexatious occurrences. This delay will throw the next number a little behind its proper time, after which its issue will be regular.¹⁰

Two instances may be cited of earnest, if eccentric and unusual, attempts to put out pioneer papers. Some allowance can be made because in each case the paper was the first in the community. The accounts that follow are self explanatory.

⁵ Logan Esarey, "History of the Press in Indiana," in the *Indianapolis Star*, Sept. 12, 1915.

⁶ *Cass County Times*, Feb. 14, 1833, Logansport.

⁷ *Ibid.*, March 21, 1833.

⁸ See *Ibid.*, May 9, 1833.

⁹ *Western Farmer and Gardener*, April, 1847, Indianapolis

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, April, 1847.

The first paper in Rushville, *The Dog-Fennel Gazette* (!), published by one Wickham, in 1832, seems, from the unique name bestowed upon it, to have been consciously grotesque. What the eccentric father of it used as a bed for his press we are not told, but it is affirmed that for his pressing power he utilized a heavy pole, one end of which was attached to a tree. Placing the form under the pole near the tree, so as to get a good leverage, he would squeeze off his impressions. The sheets were distributed printed on one side, and his patrons, after reading, would return the paper to be printed on the other side for another issue.¹¹

The other account follows:

The first newspaper published in Morgan County was established at Martinsville, early in the forties, by James Richards. The sheet was a small folio, was printed often upon paper obtained from the stores in town, and upon a small wooden press.¹²

In view of the numerous suspensions and the number of issues missed by these early Indiana editors it is not surprising that the eastern metropolitan journals, with their better facilities and equipment, looked on from a distance and criticized. Typical of what many of them must have thought is the comment of the editor of the *Boston Morning Post*, whose article was printed in an Indiana paper as an exchange. The eastern man said:

The Western Editors must have very good natured subscribers, for they make nothing of missing a publication day if it is not perfectly convenient to get out a paper. If they have a large amount of job work on hand they let the paper go for a fortnight, if the editor's cow gets lost in the woods he leaves his paper and hunts her up, and his subscribers don't grumble a word at his independence. The plan works better than it would here—for even in this goodly city, an omission like that and for such a reason, would cost an editor half his subscription list.¹³

Next to the inability to secure paper for printing probably the most serious blow to the pioneer editor was the failure to receive mail. Before the arrival of the telegraph the very existence of the newspaper depended upon the mails. Local news was not considered important in the thirties and forties but an

¹¹ George S. Cottman, "The Early Newspaper of Indiana", in *Indiana Magazine of History*, II (1906), p. 115. Cottman does not cite any authority for this statement.

¹² *Counties of Morgan, Monroe, and Brown, Indiana. Historical and Biographical*, 33-34.

¹³ *The Boston Morning Post* quoted in the *Indiana Palladium*, July 18, 1835. Lawrenceburgh.

editor considered himself unfortunate indeed if he could report nothing of interest concerning the state and national governments. Along with the news from Washington, came the eastern papers, another invaluable source of supply for the small town editor. From these eastern papers was clipped the report of happenings in the larger cities and the latest news from Europe and other parts of the world. Frank notices like the following were common until good roads were built and faster, surer, transportation insured:

The last mail papers are particularly barren of news of any importance.¹⁴

A Logansport editor made this honest admission:

In consequence of a failure of the mail, we have not been favored with our regular exchange papers, consequently we have nothing of any late importance from Washington.¹⁵

The same editor had previously decided to change the publication date of his organ from Saturday to Thursday, for, he said, "it will suit the arrival and departure of the mails."¹⁶ A Lawrenceburgh editor a few months later showed his dependence on the mails by two short paragraphs. The first read:

No letters or papers by the last Indianapolis mail. We understand, however, by travellers, that the bank bill is pending.¹⁷

The other continued:

Owing to the swollen state of the streams, we have not received our usual supply of Eastern news the present week.¹⁸

The postmaster's notice of the arrival and departure of mails to and from the Indianapolis office in 1829 shows how infrequently the capital city received deliveries. This notice, which appeared in the *Indiana Journal* for January 3, 1829, and subsequent issues, showed one arrival from and one departure every week to each of the following towns: Madison, Princeton, Terre Haute and Crawfordsville, Winchester, Brookville and Lawrenceburgh, Indiana, besides an Eastern

¹⁴ *Western Sun*, October 11, 1834.

¹⁵ *Cass County Times*, March 7, 1833.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, February 14, 1833.

¹⁷ *Indiana Palladium*, January 18, 1834.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, January 18, 1834.

mail via Dayton, Ohio, and one to Elizabethtown, Ky., via Bedford, Indiana. Ohio and Wabash river towns received some additional news, especially from New Orleans, but other inland towns did not even have the mail service that supplied Indianapolis.

Along with a shortage of paper and the slowness and irregularity of the mails the pioneer editor had to contend with labor troubles. Three and four line notices begging for apprentices and journeymen printers were common in the files of the newspapers during the thirties. The *Indiana Democrat*, at Indianapolis, on October 16, 1830, appealed for

One or two boys from 15 to 17 years of age, who could read and write

and said that "Boys from the country would be preferred." The *Indiana Republican*, at Madison, had on September 23, 1830, made a similar request. On February 7, 1829, the editor of the *Western Sun* in a notice "To Journeymen Printers" promised that

An industrious good workman willing to engage for moderate wages may have a permanent situation at the *Western Sun* office by making speedy application.

In 1831 the same thing had to be done over again. The wording of this latter notice leads one to the conclusion that the editor may have previously had trouble with an assistant of alcoholic habits. The notice read:

A good workman of sober and industrious habits will meet with constant employment by applying at the *Western Sun* office.

The appeal was printed on August 20, 1831, and for five consecutive weeks thereafter.

By 1837 the whole system of hiring apprentices in Indiana had reached such a condition of affairs that it was taken up by an editorial convention held in Indianapolis in that year. Three of the resolutions passed by that body were worded in such a manner as to need no further explanation. They are in part as follows:

Resolved, That as the practice on the part of apprentices of going from office to office, without passing through a regular course of apprenticeship and instruction is calculated to work not only injustice and in-

jury to the employer but also to throw upon the community a class of incompetent and ignorant workmen, therefore, it should be regarded as a violation of editorial duty for one editor or publisher to employ apprentices whether in or otherwise from the office of another without the approbation of the former.

Resolved, That any editor or publisher who shall seduce or entice either apprentice or journeyman from the employ of another, or shall employ such as have left the service of their employer in violation of good faith, knowing the facts of the case shall be held guilty of a breach of professional duty and honor . . .

Resolved, That it be recommended to the editors and publishers of Indiana to employ no habitually intemperate or otherwise notoriously immoral workmen.¹⁹

Whether or not the fact that the editors of the state went on record as being opposed to such practices enumerated above led to their discontinuance is not known.

But the heart of the editor was too stout to break down on account of these physical obstacles. One thing that urged him on to accomplish more things was the competition and the challenges of other editors.

THE HEAVY MORTALITY IN PIONEER JOURNALISM

One of the striking features of the history of journalism in Indiana from 1829 to 1850 is the exceedingly high death rate of the newspapers. So far as is known no estimate has been made of the ratio of failures to the number of enterprises launched yet it must be very high when compared with other business establishments. Two separate lines of investigation lead to this conclusion: one is the use of county histories and the other is the examination of the existing files of the papers of the state.

Almost all of the county histories give some space to the treatment of early newspapers and the work of the pioneer editors. In nearly every history the story is the same, that after a short run the paper was obliged to suspend publication. A history of Jackson county written in 1886 has the following to say about the journals of that county:

¹⁹ *Logansport Canal Telegraph*, June 24, 1837.

Not a few of the number have met with sudden deaths, and all of them have experienced the fiery trials and vicissitudes which have ever characterized the profession.¹

A history of Kosciusko county records the demise of the *Kosciusko Republican* in these words:

Rogers conducted the paper by issuing two or three weeks in succession, getting out a half sheet now and then, and often missing a week until . . . the suspension of the *Republican* altogether.²

Another writer summarized his views of the pioneer papers in this humorous but brief manner:

The early history of newspaper enterprises in small towns is usually a record of lives as brief as those allotted to the angels of Rabbi Jehosha:
Whose only office is to cry
Hosanna once, and then to die.³

One editor, after a run of a little more than a year, said when he was forced to suspend:

Our brightest hopes have been canceled by a full realization of everything hoped for.⁴

The statements made in the first issue of many an early newspaper leads one to the conclusion that the editor expected his paper to be an exception to the general rule and become a financial success. The trials of the *Tri-Weekly New Albany Democrat* is a case in point. On July 1, 1847, the first issue was published. The editor said his chances for success were good and that he had high hopes of being able to put out a good, successful, paper. His hopes were too high, however, for on November 25, 1847, after publishing five months, he gave up the enterprise. Fortunately he could fall back on the *Weekly Democrat* and make a living.

Another indication that many of the Indiana papers in the 1830's at least, were not proving financially successful may be seen in the frequent changes in partnership. If an editor was making much money there would be no incentive for him either to sell out or to take a partner into the business with whom he would have to share profits. A good example of how

¹ *History of Jackson County, Indiana*, 515.

² *Biographical and Historical Record of Kosciusko County, Indiana*, 666-667.

³ *History of Pike and Dubois Counties, Indiana*, 349.

⁴ *Counties of White and Pulaski, Indiana, Historical and Biographical* (Chicago, 1883), 100.

frequent some of these changes really were, may be seen by examining the files of the *Cass County Times* of Logansport from November, 1831, to December, 1833. From November 9, 1831, to February 9, 1832, inclusive, John Scott was the sole editor; from August 18, 1832, through November 17, 1832, John Scott and Joseph Hall were in charge; from August 18, 1832, through November 17, 1832, John Scott had a joint editorship with P. J. Van Derveer; from November 24, 1832, through May 30, 1833, John Scott was sole editor again; there was no issue between May 30 and July 11, 1833; from July 11, 1833, through October 10 of the same year the editors were W. J. Burns and J. B. Scott (not John Scott) and from October 17, 1833, through December 19, 1833, W. J. Burns was the sole editor. Thus it may be seen that there were five men at the helm some time or another during the twenty-five months in question.

Beginning in September, 1833, and continuing for two years, changes in the management of the *Indiana Palladium* at Lawrenceburgh are very similar to those in the Logansport paper. The editors of the *Indiana Palladium* for the period were as follows: From September 7, 1833, till July 12, 1834, D. V. Culley; from July 19, 1834, till July 25, 1835, D. V. Culley and V. M. Cole; from August 1, 1835, till October 17, 1835, V. M. Cole and E. Curtis; from October 24, 1835, till November 28, 1835, and beginning December 5, 1835, Milton Gregg and William A. Cameron.

The editors of Indiana newspapers realized in the middle 1830's, that journalism in general was in an unhealthful condition. The editor of the *Wabash Courier*, at Terre Haute in particular was alive to the situation. His views were being reprinted by various papers over the state. The *Sun* at Vincennes credited him with this statement:

Within in a month no less than three newspapers printed in Indiana have been discontinued—"yielded up the ghost"—though not without a struggle. How many more will follow ere long, the sickly, pale and battered exterior of some received at this office gives awful forebodings . . . the career of some has been so short, that, ere we could greet them a more unpleasant duty was imposed.⁵

⁵ *Wabash Courier*, Terre Haute, quoted in *Western Sun*, January 31, 1835.

The editor of the *Courier* thought that an editorial convention might be able to solve the problem. This idea was seconded by the proprietor of the *Indiana Palladium* who favored the proposition of holding a convention of editors in Indianapolis in the spring of 1835 to devise "some proper panacea for the debilitated condition of the press in general."⁶ The editorial convention was held early in May, 1835, but did not furnish the panacea as hoped for. The *Palladium* editor said to his patrons:

We regret to say that the convention was not so generally attended as it *might* or *ought* to have been,⁷

and inferred that it accomplished little. The problems must have been too big to have been solved by a two or three-day editorial convention.

The frequent suspensions of Indiana papers in the antebellum period must have been the result of a number of things. In the first place many of the editors were not good managers. They knew how to manage the literary department of the paper but were unable to take care of the finances. As a result unpaid subscriptions were numerous as were also unpaid advertisements. In 1839, 1846 and even in the 1850's the editors were still pleading with debtors to pay up.

Some of these evils might be summarized as follows: Subscribers were constantly changing their addresses without giving notice to the editors; in the excitement of election times men would order a paper and then would receive it for three or four years without settling; candidates would have their names announced before conventions or elections and many of them, especially the defeated ones, would neglect to pay their bills.⁸

Another reason for frequent suspensions lay in the fact that many editors overestimated their chances of success. Optimism was abundant in the personality of the pioneer editor. In some instances one editor would follow another into a community which had been unable to support a paper. But the incoming editor was often undaunted by the fact that one or more of the preceding printers had failed because of a

⁶ *Indiana Palladium*, Jan. 24, 1835. Lawrenceburgh.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 24, 1835.

⁸ Logan Esarey, "History of the Press in Indiana", in *Indianapolis Star*, May 2, 1915.

lack of patronage, and expected his own personality and ability to make for complete success.

In the periods of economic depression or "hard times" as they were called, the troubles of the editors were greater than ever and the mortality rate higher. In times of panic and when money conditions tightened, the whole community was hard hit and new subscribers were fewer in number and old subscribers were hard to collect from.

The percentage of newspaper suspensions continued high through the 1840's and 1850's and up to the outbreak of the Civil War.

PERSONAL AND PARTISAN RIVALRY OF THE EDITORS

One of the features of early journalism in Indiana was the bitterness with which rival editors attacked each other. Battles of words were frequent and the controversies often were long and drawn out. These disputes arose over various subjects such as the size and quality of their papers, statements and misstatements of facts, the appropriation of articles without giving proper credit to the author and most frequently, perhaps, over partisan politics. These squabbles were not confined to papers of any particular class or location but were entered into with apparent relish by city and town editors and by proprietors of daily, weekly, and monthly journals. Naturally some editors were loath to enter personal controversies while others reveled in word battles. A few examples will show how extensive the practice was in Indiana and that it continued from the beginning of the Jackson period until the Civil War at least.

The editor of an Indianapolis paper, under the caption "The Creature's at his Dirty Work Again", carried the following attack upon a downstate editor:

We can not take room to say anything to the editor of the *Political Clarion* at Connersville, but we will say to his readers that if they will read the following sentence from that paper of the 5th inst. we will again prove to them that no credit should be given to anything which may be said by the silly *cock-a-doodle* who edits that sheet at the bidding of a would be Congressman. . . . Now to prove that this soft shelled sophomore is entirely ignorant of what transpires within the limits of

the state in which he lives, or that he entirely disregards *truth* in any manner we need only to refer to the records. . . .¹

About a year later the same paper carried an attack upon another paper, this time the Greensburg *Observer*, in the following vein:

The abuse of low-bred malevolence tends only to make its author more infamous; and were it not that the poor *cratur* who hawes over his "beads" through the mud battery of the Greensburgh "Observer" has already sunk to the bottom of the pit of licentiousness and personal degradation we would reply to his wanton and weak remarks relative to our course on the rejection of the nomination of Mr. Van Buren. We despise the heartless slanderer, and therefore let Dowling drivel at us without notice, further than to pity his impotent attempts to bring himself into notice by belieing us. . . . However we promise him that if he will frame his remarks in such a manner as to allow us legal redress for his libels and assure us we can recover costs of prosecution against him, if he fails to sustain himself on a plea of justification for his slanders, by showing a sufficient amount of available property out of which to make costs.²

A few weeks before Andrew Jackson took the reins of the government from the hands of the second Adams the *Indiana Journal* made a vigorous complaint against the *Indiana Republican* at Madison for alleged copying on the part of the latter without giving proper credit. The concluding words of the attack are as follows:

But when a series of Legislative proceedings interlarded with the opinions and sentiments of members, and sometimes at considerable length is copied from this paper, as has been the practice it is believed with the *one* in question, it might not be amiss to give to it, that *credit* which is due.³

It was not long before the *Indiana Republican* was engaged in another personal altercation but this time in the role of accuser instead of the alleged offender. The following chastisement appeared in the columns of that paper:

Conductors of public journals who wish or expect to hold a respectable standing with their "brethren of the type" or in society generally, should treat even their opponents with civility and decency, becoming gentlemen. . . . We are led to these remarks by the managers of the

¹ *Indiana Democrat*, February 19, 1831, Indianapolis.

² *Indiana Democrat*, Feb. 25, 1832.

³ *Indiana Journal*, Jan. 17, 1829, Indianapolis.

Madison Herald. Scarcely a paper has been issued from that office since its establishment but what has something in it insinuated or positive against us. Most of these writers too have been concealed from the public by some fictitious signature. We could also have published several articles in our paper over similar signatures against the editors of the *Herald*. But we did not nor would not consent to stoop to such an unprecedented course against our opponents. We sought no controversy with them but have refrained as much as circumstances would permit, from any remarks which would bring them in collision with us. But it would not do. The same *long winded, hanging on talent*, which has so often distinguished one of the editors of that paper at the bar was still manifested.⁴

The editors concluded their harangue by quoting from the *Madison Herald* a reprinted editorial attack by the *Salem Annotator* in which the *Indiana Republican* was criticised. Then, as the last lash, they, in retaliation, printed an article they had been saving, an attack on the *Madison Herald* by the *Cincinnati American*.

That the editors of Indiana were cognizant of intense partisanship on the part of some of their members is evinced by resolutions passed at the editorial convention held at Indianapolis in 1837. At this date personal attacks were discouraged and part of the sentiment of the assembled convention was expressed as follows:

Resolved, That while editors may honestly differ in political matters discussion with regard to those matters of difference should be conducted calmly and with the weapons of reason, that sophistry and agitation should not be resorted to, and personal altercations, disrespectful personal allusion, and epithets of a reproaching nature should be avoided, being alike destructive of the dignity and usefulness of the press and should never be used in reference to any editor as long as he is an acknowledged member of the editorial corps.⁵

Resolutions of an editorial convention did not prove equal to the task, however, and editorial combats continued in the forties. The appearance of a new Whig editor, P. A. Hackleman of the *Rushville Whig*, called out some stinging personal paragraphs by J. P. Chapman, editor of the *Indiana Sentinel* at Indianapolis. Chapman spoke of the new editor in the following bitter language:

⁴ *Indiana Republican*, July 22, 1840. Madison.

⁵ *Logansport Canal Telegraph*, June 24, 1837.

Hackleman, the superlative fool who dubs himself editor of the Rushville *Whig*, is here in hope of getting himself elected a prosecuting attorney. His anxious mother certainly "don't know he's out" or she would have sent his dry nurse along. Such metropolitan associates as the dingy Barnett will hardly be enough to polish Hackleman sufficiently to make him a successful candidate for the office he covets. The midwife who assisted him into this breathy world hung him up by the mouth on a nail to dry; but it was found impossible to evaporate the superabundant sap in his composition and he was taken down in despair, but not before he had hung long enough to twist awry his most prominent feature, giving him, in addition to his man monkeyism, the hang-dog look for which he has ever been noted. The Legislature can certainly never stultify itself so much as to make such a jackass a prosecuting attorney.⁶

Reference to the *Journal* on the morning previous will show that Chapman's slap was a rejoinder to an article by Mr. Theodore Barnett, the editor of a rival Indianapolis paper. The attack which Chapman was so valiantly trying to match was written up in part as follows:

For two months past the celebrated George A. Chapman and his adjuncts at New Albany, and those who use him there, have been in a dilemma sufficient to draw tears from the heart of Gibraltar. We drew about eight weeks ago, an imperfect outline of this Chapman's moral profile, in which we sketched him as a low sneerer at the gospel of God; as a filthy amalgamationist, whose unveiled and unnatural debauches had caused him to be publicly cowhided in the streets of an Eastern city; as a vagabond and leprous wanderer among the factories of Liverpool, a prey to the ravages of a loathsome and horrible malady; as a habitual and lecherous drunkard, alternating between the gratification of the grossest lusts and intoxication with the regularity of a pendulum, and as an escaped felon, who had deliberately and willfully perpetrated the soul-damning crime of perjury in the County of Vigo, for which he was indicted, and from the penal effects of which he escaped by a legal technicality. We sketched him as this wretch whom the indignation of the moral community of Terre Haute, without distinction of party, had vomited forth on the town of Indianapolis.⁷

Further attempts to curb the intense personal controversies of the editors were made when another editorial convention was held in Indianapolis in 1846. At this meeting D. R. Eckles, of the *Indiana Patriot* at Greencastle introduced the following preamble and resolutions which were adopted.

⁶ *Indiana Sentinel*, Dec. 20, 1842, Indianapolis.

⁷ *Indiana Journal*, Dec. 19, 1842, Indianapolis.

Whereas, It is the opinion of this convention that personal controversy, abusive epithets and disreputable quarrels between editors in their respective papers—whether they are of the same political party or otherwise—tend to circumscribe the blessings of the freedom of the press, and to detract from the personal respect and honor of the profession, and of each of its members as men and politicians, and is believed to constitute one of the reasons for the illiberal and scanty patronage too often experienced in Indiana; therefore

Resolved, That we recommend to all those concerned, in conducting so highly responsible a business to themselves and to the whole country, to abstain from the use of language personally offensive and disreputable to each other; and that, as differ they must both as to men and measures, they should differ as men and gentlemen.⁸

Mr. Covington of the *Madison Weekly Courier* was quick to take to task his rival, the editor of the *Madison Banner*, for not attending the convention. In the same issue that carried an account of the proceedings of the convention, Editor Covington printed the following tirade in the form of an editorial:

We do not find the proceedings of the Convention recently held at Indianapolis, in the last number of the *Banner*. As the publication of the proceedings is to be considered as *approving and subscribing to them by the paper so publishing them*, are we to understand that our neighbor does not approve of the plan of doing away with personal controversy, abusive epithets, and disreputable quarrels . . . or would the subscribing to the above doctrines deprive our neighbor of his only weapons of warfare? We only ask for information.⁹

One week later the same editor said:

When our neighbor wants to privately electioneer for subscribers, it would be well enough for him not to tell that the type he uses is so much smaller than ours. We give as many columns of *bourgeois* type in this paper as he does and in addition, we give from two to four columns of *long primer*, which can not be found in his paper. His comparing documents will not do—as it is well known that he left out a large proportion of the President's message until we reminded him of the fact. We like an honorable opposition and wish we had it.¹⁰

Another example of the personal rivalry that often existed between editors in the same Indiana town, may be found in the *Democrat* of New Albany. The proprietor of the *Democrat* published an exchange from the *Bulletin* and his own answer in one issue. The statement of the *Bulletin* read:

⁸ *Madison Weekly Courier*, Jan. 24, 1846.

⁹ *Madison Weekly Courier*, Jan. 24, 1846.

¹⁰ S. F. Covington in *Madison Weekly Courier*, Jan. 31, 1846.

The public have become so familiar with the constant flinging of filth by such punts at candidates, that even respectable newspapers are hardly fully relied upon during a partisan campaign.¹¹

The reply to the exchange was couched in the following language:

Ha, Ha, Ha. Oh, hush! and we suppose that yours, neighbor, is one of those "respectable papers that can't be relied upon." We do not like to endorse the respectability of that sheet but that it is not "relied upon," the whole community knows. . . . Oh; re-lie-able, truthful sheet!¹²

That some editors had a just cause for grievance there can be no doubt. Henry Ward Beecher, who edited a monthly agricultural journal at Indianapolis for almost three years beginning in February, 1845, complained against some vicious practices of the time. Under the caption, "Editorial Estrays"¹³ he summarized some instances of plagiarism. He alleged that in some cases whole pages had been extracted from his magazine without giving one credit to the original publisher. In other instances he maintained that proper credit was given to the publisher but the credit was placed obscurely in the middle of the article instead of at the end. His third complaint was against the publishers who, he said, appropriated articles and made them appear original by cutting off the beginnings and ends and tacking on a few words of their own. He concludes his article by this frank statement:

In all sobriety, however, we would respectfully represent that we are not sensitive on this subject because we desire the praise of the articles but for a little more substantial reason. We desire to have our paper known throughout the State; and in no way can it be advertised so well as by the republication of this matter, *with its name attached*.¹⁴

Despite these criticisms and personal references there was a spirit of cooperation among the members of the editorial profession. Instances are common of the whole hearted welcoming of a beginning editor with his new paper.

¹¹ *Tri-Weekly New Albany Democrat*, July 10, 1847.

¹² *Tri-Weekly New Albany Democrat*, July 10, 1847.

¹³ *Indiana Farmer and Gardener*, July 12, 1845.

¹⁴ *Indiana Farmer and Gardener*, July 12, 1845, Indianapolis.

RATES: SUBSCRIPTION AND ADVERTISING

From the viewpoint of the journalist of the twentieth century one of the greatest weaknesses of the pioneer editors was the laxness of business methods. Until the state was well advanced in organization and settlement the editors were unable to, or at least did not solve the problem of collecting for services rendered. Advertisers were slow to pay for space. Readers were slower to pay for subscriptions. The editor gave constant reminders to both. Collecting seemed to be a continual worry.

At the beginning of the period, in 1829, Elihu Stout was charging \$2.50 for fifty-two numbers of his *Western Sun* but was willing to accept \$2.00 as payment in full if tendered in advance. Subscribers who received the paper by mail were asked to pay the postage. Those who wished to discontinue taking the paper must first pay all arrearages.¹ John Douglass, at Indianapolis, made similar terms for the patrons of his twice-a-week *Indiana Journal*. He asked \$2.00 per annum "if paid in advance and \$3.00 at the end of the year".²

In 1839, the editor of the Connersville *Watchman* had three plans of payment: \$2.00 if paid in advance, \$2.50 if paid in six months, and \$3.00 if delayed beyond the year.³

For the ill-fated *Tri-Weekly New Albany Democrat*, the terms were \$2.00 for one year in advance and \$5.00 for three subscriptions.⁴

Five years later Milton Gregg was putting out his daily *Tribune* at New Albany. He announced in Vol. I, No. 1, that the rates would be ten cents a week by carrier or \$5.00 a year by mail "payable quarterly in advance".⁵ The subscription rates for the *Daily Courier*, at Madison, in 1858 were the same but the weekly paper was only one dollar per year.⁶

The constant complaint made by the editors as late as the middle forties would indicate that subscribers were slow in paying arrearages. Almost every conceivable kind of appeal

¹ *Western Sun*, Jan. 3, 1829.

² *Indiana Journal*, Jan. 3, 1829, Indianapolis.

³ *Watchman*, Dec. 6, 1839, Connersville.

⁴ *Tri-Weekly New Albany Democrat*, July 1, 1847.

⁵ *New Albany Daily Tribune*, Mar. 22, 1852.

⁶ *Daily Evening Courier*, Nov. 17, 1858, Madison.

was made by the various editors of pioneer journals, to secure all or even part of the money due them. The situation was similar to that in Illinois where subscribers "were appealed to in prose and verse, they were cajoled, praised, lectured and denounced."⁷

Until as late as 1838 money was scarce in Indiana and the editors in many cases were willing to accept produce in payment for subscriptions when they could not get money. The files of the following newspapers revealed the fact that produce would be acceptable: *Western Sun*, Vincennes; *The Indiana Republican*, Madison; *Indiana Palladium*, Lawrenceburgh; *Cass County Times*, Logansport; and the *Post*, Bloomington.

Some of these pleas are so unique that they merit being quoted in full. John Scott's paper at Logansport named three places where produce would be received and the commodity acceptable at each place. The notice ran as follows:

Wood, Corn and Potatoes will be received at the market prices, if delivered soon in payment of this paper or old accounts. Wheat, oats and corn will be received at the highest market prices in payment for *Cass County Times* if delivered at General Milroy's near Delphi, at J. R. Merits, Tiptonsport or at Judge McCombs.⁸

One statement in the *Palladium* at Lawrenceburgh in 1833 read:

Flour, Corn, Oats, Pork, Potatoes, and Wood received at this Office in payment for papers.⁹

One month later the following paragraph was inserted:

Wood! Wood!! Cold types and frosty fingers are as uncomfortable companions as old age and poverty. Those who have promised us wood and others who wish to avail themselves of the privilege of making payment in this seasonable article, are advised that the roads are tolerably fair. "A word to the wise," etc. *Editor*.¹⁰

Five years later the proprietor of the *Post* at Bloomington was willing to accept almost any article as part or full payment for delinquent subscriptions. He stated that,

⁷ Franklin W. Scott, *Newspapers and Periodicals of Illinois 1814-1879*, in *Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library* (Springfield, 1910), Vol VI, p. xxix.

⁸ *Cass County Times*, Feb. 24, 1832.

⁹ *Indiana Palladium*, Dec. 14, 1833.

¹⁰ *Indiana Palladium*, Jan. 11, 1834.

Persons expecting to pay for their papers in produce must do so or the cash will be extracted.¹¹ Pork, flour, corn, and meal will be taken at the market prices. Also those who expect to pay us in firewood must do so immediately—we must have our wood laid in for the winter before the roads get bad.¹²

The whole plan of getting money from subscribers was so unsatisfactory by the end of the 1830's, that some of the more progressive editors were looking for a better method of being paid for their work. Late in 1839, it was decided that the adoption of a cash system would be most advantageous. July 4, 1840, was the date set for the new system to go into effect. After this time none of the editors of eleven papers, who became parties to the agreement, were to let papers go out without having first received the subscription price. The proprietors who entered the agreement and the papers they represented were: Douglass and Noel of the *Indiana Journal*; John Livingston of the *Indiana Democrat*; Edwin T. Gabriel of the *Connersville Watchman*; J. C. and D. Douglass of the *Logansport Herald*; Holloway and Davis of the *Richmond Palladium*; W. H. and J. J. Chandler of the *Evansville Journal*; Milton Gregg of the *Political Beacon*; Stuart and Kipp of the *Michigan City Gazette*; Mattingly and Green of the *New Albany Gazette*; C. Hay and Z. W. Rowse of the *Salem Whig*; and Hannum and Grubbs of the *Indiana Sun*.¹³

A cash system for newspapers was a step forward and although there were still many things that could be improved in the management of the newspapers the constant bickering and quarreling with subscribers was done away with. The papers with a large city circulation solved the problem sooner than those in the rural communities, which had a large mailing list. The former could leave collections in the hands of carriers and no patron need be more than a week or two in arrears.

The advertising rates of Indiana newspapers for twenty years after 1829 were surprisingly uniform.¹⁴ The rates at

¹¹ How this would be done he did not say.

¹² *Post*, Oct. 26, 1838.

¹³ *Tri-Weekly Journal*, Dec. 9, 1839, Indianapolis.

¹⁴ See *Tri-Weekly Journal*, Dec. 9, 1829; *Indiana Republican*, July 15, 1830, Madison; *Cass County Times*, Nov. 16, 1831; *Connersville Watchman*, Dec. 6, 1839; and *Tri-Weekly New Albany Democrat*, July 1, 1847.

which space was offered was one dollar for ten lines or less for one insertion and twenty-five cents for each additional insertion. Merchants and others who would agree to a yearly contract were given a liberal discount.

At the editorial convention held in Indianapolis in 1837, uniform advertising rates were agreed upon for Indiana publishers.¹⁵ The schedule as adopted confirmed the above rates and set the amount to be charged; for a square (250 ems) at \$10.00 per annum; for two squares \$15.50; and three squares \$20.00. The rate for a quarter of a column was \$25.00, for a half column \$35.00, and for a column \$50.00 per annum. Chancery notices, divorce petitions and foreign advertisements were to be paid for by cash in advance.

Although the editors did not have as much difficulty in collecting for advertising as they did for subscriptions yet there were many pleas printed in the 1830's and the 1840's for dilatory advertisers to come to the office and settle their accounts.

THE CONTENTS OF THE ANTEBELLUM PAPERS

Aside from minor characteristics peculiar to certain newspapers, the pioneer press in Indiana had some general features which were common to all. A composite picture of many papers published in the state any time between 1829 and 1849 would fit almost any paper. The similarity of style and of makeup or arrangement of subject matter is quite noticeable.

From the standpoint of the historian and those who are interested in the every day life of Hoosiers almost one hundred years ago, the absence of local news is regrettable. The pioneer papers were almost destitute of local references.¹ Exceptions to this were the local ads, a few communications and speeches, and accounts of some unusual events which came along occasionally.

Taking place of local news were the clippings from eastern and middle western newspapers. It may have been that in

¹⁵ All these rates in detail may be seen in *Western Sun*, June 24, 1837.

¹ See files of almost any pioneer journal; *Biographical and Historical Record of Adams and Wells Counties, Indiana*, 598; *History of Hendricks County, Indiana*, 428; *Counties of La Grange and Noble, Indiana Historical and Biographical*, 76.

using these exchanges the editors were following the line of least resistance. It apparently was much easier to copy bodily choice articles from the eastern press that came by mail than to ferret out enough local news to fill the same amount of space. Then, with only a punter or a printer and his devil, it may have been physically impossible to go outside the office to gather up and report local news. Yet the readers were apparently not critical concerning this method of preparing a large portion of their reading matter.

The successive issues of the *Western Sun*, during the month of July, 1830, reveal to what extent these articles were used and are typical of the practices of the period. Editor Stout's weekly journal carried exchanges for the publication of July 3 from the following papers: *Western Times*, *Ohio Monitor*, *Baltimore Republican*, *Louisville Public Advertiser*, *Budgeton*, *N. J. Whig*, *American Manufacturer*, *U. S. Telegraph*, *Cincinnati Gazette*, *Lynchburg Virginian*, *Pennsylvania Inquirer*, *New York Herald*, *New York Courier*, and *Inquirer*, and *Gazette de France*. Those used the following week were: *Macon Telegraph*, *Marietta Gazette*, *Texas Gazette*, *Evening Post* (Chillicothe, Ohio), *Ohio State Journal*, *Miami Times* and *Philadelphia Morning Journal*. The issue for July 17 depended upon an entirely new group, including: *New York Evening Post*, *St. Louis Times*, *Galena Journal*, *Baltimore American*, *Louisville Public Advertiser*, *Muskingum Messenger*, *Harrisburg Intelligence*, *New England Galaxy* and the *Mountaineer*. To complete the paper for July 24 the editor published clippings from: the *National Intelligencer*, *Dayton Republican*, *Louisville Public Advertiser*, *Frederick Citizen*, *Kentucky Nation*, *Kanhawa Register*, *New York Medical Inquirer*, and *Winchester Republican*. The last publication for the month, that of July 31, contained reprints from the *New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette*, *National Journal*, *Louisville Public Advertiser*, *Banner of the Constitution*, *Raleigh Star and Gazette*, and the *Nottingham Review*, an English paper.

In some issues the editor used two clippings from the same paper and in some few cases three. The nearness of Vincennes to Louisville and St. Louis and the fact that mail brought batches of papers from those towns quite often tend

to explain the frequent appearance of articles from there. When a paper reached the office of one of these early printers it was used freely. Editors in the towns on the Ohio river, such as Madison, Lawrenceburgh, and New Albany received news from New Orleans, from boat captains. Not long after the arrival of one of the larger boats there would appear news notes and exchanges from other towns along the river. During the period of the Mexican War editors were unusually anxious to get this kind of service.

After the introduction of the telegraph, eastern exchanges were not used so often, but Indiana editors still exchanged papers. In 1854 *Chapman's Chanticleer* in one weekly issue carried properly acknowledged articles from these papers: *Evansville Enquirer*; *Free Democrat*, Centerville; *Vincennes Patriot*; *Warsaw Republican*; *Brookville Democrat*; *South Bend Register*; *White River Standard*, Bedford; *Locomotive*, Crawfordsville; *Courier*, Madison; *New Albany Ledger*, *Sentinel*, Indianapolis; *Rushville Republican*; and *Goshen Democrat*.² The *Chanticleer* was a political organ and the articles were all on current campaign topics.

In using material from other sources the editors as a rule were frank and faithfully credited the article to its proper paper. Of course there were some cases of unfair tactics. In most cases unless an editor had taken on a war with a rival there was no complaint. Occasionally he would announce in his own columns that brother editors were at liberty to use any of his material, providing the proper acknowledgment was made. At times the proprietor would print notices similar to this: "Louisville and Cincinnati papers please copy". For example, Editor Stout of the *Vincennes Sun* in 1834 said that

the *Herald* a newspaper at Evansville publishes a statement by a Mr. Daugherty of an affray at that place . . . and the editor requests that it may be copied into all other papers. To gratify our new brother and to do an act of justice to the citizens of Evansville it shall have a place next week.³

About three weeks later the *Indiana Palladium* printed this:

² *Chapman's Chanticleer*, Jan. 26, 1854, Indianapolis.

³ *Western Sun*, October 11, 1834.

The Editors of the *Cincinnati Republican* and *Western Hemisphere* who recently copied from this paper an advertisement, signed "Walter Armstrong" will please discontinue it as the property is sold.⁴

Henry Ward Beecher expressed an opinion concerning the exchange of papers as follows:

We send our paper to many established journals, soliciting an exchange; an even one if they please, but otherwise we will, upon notification pay the difference willingly, for the benefit of the labors of our able contemporaries.⁵

The subject matter of this reprinted material was miscellaneous in character and included information about all kinds of human activities. The titles of some of these articles borrowed from other journals will indicate their varied character. One issue of the *Indiana Journal* carried these articles: "Minutes of the Proceedings of Congress"; "Bibb elected by the Kentucky legislature to succeed Col. R. M. Johnson whose term has expired"; "Surveyor lost in a Quagmire"; "U. S. Revenue Collected"; "Proposed boundary of the new territory of Huron"; and "Ohio man claims to be the brother of Jesus Christ".⁶ The next year, the editor of a Madison paper used the entire front page to print an exchange from the *Cherokee Phoenix* on the right of Georgia to extend her laws over the Cherokee nation.⁷

The advertisements of business establishments in the different towns give an indication of the types of stores there and the kinds of articles each had to sell. Such information sheds some light on the early local history of the communities.

In 1830 a Madison paper placed its commercial advertisements on the third and fourth pages.⁸ Commodities advertised were hay, wheat, queensware, tea, window glass, and gunpowder. By 1839 merchants were evidently beginning to see the value of advertising and the number of advertisers were increasing as well as was the amount of space used in each advertisement. A four page Connersville weekly in December of that year published sales notices of the following nature: real estate, commission packing, dry goods, fire insur-

⁴ *Indiana Palladium*, Nov. 1, 1834.

⁵ *The Indiana Farmer and Gardener*, Feb. 1, 1845, Indianapolis.

⁶ *Indiana Journal*, Jan. 3, 1829, Indianapolis.

⁷ *Indiana Republican*, Oct. 7, 1830.

⁸ *The Indiana Republican*, Oct. 7, 1830.

ance, hats, shovels, nails, yarns, boots and shoes.⁹ On the same page were the following notices: an administrator's notice regarding the settlement of an estate,¹⁰ patrons requested to pay butcher at once; apprentice wanted at the *Watchman* office; dissolution of partnership; a women's monthly magazine; a doctor's card; and an announcement that one Connersville man had a farriery¹¹ and blacksmith shop combined.

In one issue in 1847 the editor of the *Democrat* at New Albany, a tri-weekly paper of four pages of four columns each, used the entire first and fourth pages and a part of the third page for advertisements. The first two columns contained the following miscellaneous advertisements: farms and mills for sale, groceries and fruits, cheese, new books, corn, powder, wholesale drugs and chemicals, tobacco, window paper, vinegar, flour, and notices of a sheriff's sale, and a coming election of a school trustee. Columns three and four on this page were filled with tea advertisements. The content of the fourth page was similar to that of the first.¹²

The advertisements which appeared in the antebellum newspapers in Indiana should be of great value to the historian in attempting to interpret the life of the people in that period. Before the adoption of local news as a feature of the papers, advertisements were appearing. At that time no other part of the paper was as close to the daily life of the people in a given community as were the advertisements.

In pioneer days when the duties of a newspaper proprietor were laborious and the amount of revenue derived from the profession comparatively small, it was only natural for the editor to accept practically any kind of advertisement. By 1850 patent medicine advertisements were being inserted freely and seemingly without restriction. Choice positions were given to them and many appeared on the front page. They must have been welcome sources of revenue. One of the more pretentious advertisements appeared for weeks at a time in the daily *Tribune* at New Albany in 1852.¹³ It was in

⁹ *The Watchman*, Dec. 6, 1839.

¹⁰ This was appearing for the sixth consecutive week.

¹¹ A veterinary surgeon's shop.

¹² *Tri-Weekly New Albany Democrat*, Sept. 30, 1847.

¹³ *New Albany Daily Tribune*, June 30, 1852.

the interests of "Radway's Ready Remedies", and occupied two-thirds of a column. It was claimed that these remedies, three in number were so "prepared as to harmonize and act in unison with each other" and when taken separately or together would instantly stop pain. The claim for No. 1 of the trio, "Radway's Ready Relief", said, "It has cured in ninety cases out of a hundred", rheumatism, neuralgia, croup, diarrhoea, toothache, spasm, cramps, sick headache, chill fever, sore throat and influenza. As if to ward off the possible objections that might be raised by any "doubting Thomas" figures were presented to show that 70,000 cases of rheumatism had been cured in three large eastern cities and Michigan and Illinois. Whether it was modesty or the cost of advertising that prevented the company from making other extravagant claims is not known, yet one might suspect it was not modesty.

Since the above remedy did not attempt to cure quite all the diseases human flesh was heir to, a second remedy was offered for sale. This was "Radway's Renovating Resolvent" and was warranted to cure scrofula, humors, cancers, tumors, rickets, salt rheum, syphilis, epilepsy, ulcers, and fever sores.

If by chance the ailment was one not covered by the first or second remedy, a third called "Radway's Regulators" was recommended. Claims were made in the advertisement that No. 3 would cure indigestion, sour stomach, measles, liver complaint, dyspepsia, constipation, heart burn, smallpox, kidney complaint, and six kinds of fever.

To the historian, patent medicine advertisements of this and similar nature show that unscrupulous companies deliberately attempted to mislead readers who knew little about the problems of disease and health. They also reveal a low standard of the press. Advertisements of questionable character should have been rejected by the editor.¹⁴

Miscellaneous notices, which appeared rather frequently were lists of uncalled for letters remaining at the local post-offices,¹⁵ the schedules for outgoing and incoming mail, de-

¹⁴ But the practice is still carried on by some of the twentieth century papers.

¹⁵ The *Indiana Journal* of Indianapolis, on April 30, 1829, carried lists of unclaimed letters in these Indiana postoffices: Greensburgh, Bedford, Crawfordsville, Green Castle, and Bloomfield.

scriptions of estrayed or stolen animals and notices of various court proceedings. From 1829 until at least 1840 occasional warnings appeared against the public harboring fugitives from justice, runaway slaves, and "bound boys".¹⁶

Before the Civil War lottery notices were common. Much stress was placed on the liberal prizes offered but the individual was not told that he had only one chance out of hundreds to win anything.

Communications to the editor were published in many of the pioneer journals. Many of these letters were on political subjects and a larger number appeared during a campaign than at any other time. Some of these communications would not be considered worth reading today while a few were able presentations. Writers seldom signed their names to communications but instead preferred anonymity. To illustrate, the *Western Sun*, at Vincennes, from August 1, 1829, to October 1, 1831, inclusive, contained contributions to which the following names were signed: Humilus, Unus, A citizen of old Knox, Senex, Hays of the West, Je Latinebus Indianorum, Cassius, Vincennes, T., Don Quizzicus, Noah, Justice, No Jockey, and a Wanderer. Since they were in many cases anonymous there is no way to tell who wrote them. Even the editor may have made some of the contributions.

The newspapers show that the custom of drinking toasts was quite common in Indiana, in the 1830's. Toasts were given during important celebrations and especially at patriotic meetings. On July 4, 1835, at Lawrenceburgh, thirteen regular and five volunteer toasts were given.¹⁷ A few days later in the same town, when a celebration was held at the commencement of the Lawrenceburgh and Indianapolis Railroad, thirteen regular and twenty volunteer toasts were given.¹⁸

At the conclusion of a patriotic celebration of Washington's birthday at Logansport in 1832 toasts on the following subjects were given: General George Washington, the Army and Navy of the U. S., the suffering Poles, France, the Liberty Tree, Charles Carroll, General Lafayette, the memory of Simon Bolivar, Indiana, and the American Fair. After this,

¹⁶ Indentured apprentices.

¹⁷ *Indiana Palladium*, July 11, 1835, Lawrenceburgh.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, July 25, 1835.

twenty-three volunteer toasts were given which ranged from two to six lines in length when printed.¹⁹

Some of the papers carried contributions of poetry and prose from local writers. Toward the 1840's and thereafter more attention was given to this kind of material. Many of the short stories were from one to two columns in length and were reprinted from other newspapers. These stories were often melodramatic in character. The humorous articles, which were brief, centered around pioneer life. Puns were common.

THE NEWSPAPERS AND POLITICS

No history of Indiana newspaper development would be complete that did not show the intimate relationship which the paper bore to politics. The titles borne by many of the papers suggested their political alignment, while only a glance at the subject matter of others is required.

The very existence of many of the pioneer papers was dependent upon the results of elections. Many a paper took an active part in a political campaign only to die when the party it supported lost in the election. Others were launched as political organs with the intention of being kept in the field only till election day. In some few cases an editor of a daily or tri-weekly would put out a special political edition every week during a campaign. Some examples of purely political papers were: *Spirit of '76*, 1840; *Chapman's Coon Skinner*, 1844; *Whig Rifle*, 1844; and *Chapman's Chanticleer*, 1854; all printed in Indianapolis.

The pioneer journals seemed to go through a boom period during the progress of closely contested national and state campaigns. Journals already established increased their circulations and new ones entered the field. If the contents of the papers during the period 1829-1860 is any criterion, then Hoosiers were already thinking, talking and living politics. In campaign times political articles outnumbered every other kind. If there were two papers in a community they were usually on the opposite "sides of the fence" politically. If

¹⁹ *Cass County Times*, Feb. 24, 1832.

only single paper was in the locality, it usually supported the party that seemed strongest. In most instances an editor would move to another town when his clientele seemed hostile. One case is on record, however, where an editor "fopped" from the advocacy of Democratic principles to those of Whig. Samuel Meredith, editor of the *Peoples Advocate*, "finding that a Democratic journal could not be made to pay in Wayne County, changed the name of his paper to the *Wayne County Chronicle* and advocated Whig principles".¹

Sometimes stock companies composed of men of one political faith would set up an editor in business in order to have an organ of their own in the neighborhood. The *Pulaski Democrat* was a product of this sort of organization. According to one account it was founded in 1858,

when several prominent Democrats formed a sort of a stock company, purchased the necessary material and engaged . . . a Mr. James Mahaffie to manage and edit their party paper called the *Pulaski Democrat*.²

Elections were held every year and one was no sooner over than preparations were started for another. An example of an early announcement for office occurred in Knox County in 1831. Just nineteen days after the election in August, 1831, the editor of the *Sun* at Vincennes said,

I am authorized to announce James Burns as a candidate for sheriff at our next August election.³

The methods of the editors in getting their political messages to their subscribers varied with the editor and with the amount of material available. Editorials, jokes, accounts of meetings and rallies, communications and exchanges were all employed to inform and to influence (if possible) the reader.

If an editor survived an election with his paper and continued to publish it regularly, he found in the messages of the president and the governor and in the proceedings of the legislature and congress, another fertile source of supply. Much importance was attached to this kind of news throughout the entire period from 1829 to 1860.

¹ *History of Wayne County, Indiana*, 533.

² *Counties of White and Pulaski, Indiana, Historical and Biographical* (Chicago, 1883), p. 530.

³ *Western Sun*, Aug. 20, 1831.

Scott and Van Derveer used over half of one issue of their *Cass County Times* in 1832 to present one of Jackson's messages. Their statement to subscribers was,

The length of the President's message has excluded several articles intended for this number—they will appear next week.⁴

In October, 1833, the proprietor of the *Republican and Herald*, at Logansport said,

We are compelled to omit several editorials, as well as other articles, intended for this paper, in consequence of the great length of the letter from the President to the members of his Cabinet on the propriety of removing the deposits of the U. S. Bank. But we do not hesitate to say that after an attentive perusal of the document . . . the reader will not censure our selection.⁵

The explanation of the editor of the *Palladium* which accompanied the publication of President Jackson's message to congress on December 3, 1833, read as follows:

We have necessarily robbed our paper of its accustomed variety, and we have left over much interesting matter. Next week we will endeavor to bring up the deferred articles.⁶

In 1834, exactly one year later the same editor made an apology for taking up fourteen of the twenty columns in printing the message of Governor Noble to the Indiana General Assembly and that of Jackson to congress. He said,

We are indebted to the assistant postmaster at Cincinnati for the President's message which we give today to the exclusion of other matter. Our advertising friends will please excuse any neglect this week.⁷

The next year the message was unavoidably divided by the editor who hastened to explain. He said,

We present our readers, today, with about half of the President's Message. The first side of our paper was struck off before we received the message or we should have published the whole of it this week.⁸

Editor Stout expressed the same idea to his readers when he said:

⁴ *Cass County Times*, Aug. 18, 1832.

⁵ *The Logansport Republican and Indiana Herald*, Oct. 24, 1833.

⁶ *Indiana Palladium*, Dec. 4, 1833, Lawrenceburgh.

⁷ *id.*, Dec. 13, 1834.

⁸ *Indiana Palladium*, Dec. 19, 1835.

I have filled the *Sun* of today with the proceedings of Congress and of our State Legislature, almost to the exclusion of everything else. Believing this kind of reading more important than any other at this time I shall continue to do so during their sittings.⁹

The practice was still common in 1858. Editor Garber of the *Courier* at Madison announced:

Our readers will perceive that Mr. Buchanan's message occupies for the last two days a large proportion of our paper, to the almost total exclusion of other news.¹⁰

There are at least three reasons why the editors took such an interest in politics and government and printed so much of this type of news. In the first place the newspaper was a reflection of the interests of the people of Indiana. The people of Indiana became more interested in politics after Jackson, a western man, reached the presidency. It was only natural for the editor to try to give them suitable reading matter. In the second place, there was government printing to be done, federal, state, and local, which was worth working for. The way to get this printing was to line up with a party, fight for it desperately and claim the reward if victory resulted. Another reason which motivated some of the Indiana editors in entering the list for a particular political party, was the expectation or hope of getting an office. Success was crowning their labors as early as Jackson's second election. One historian summarized the situation at this time as follows:

There are evidences during the year 1832 that the editors of the state were receiving more political honors than formerly. George Kinard, editor of the *Indiana Democrat*, was elected to Congress from the Indianapolis district; John Ewing of the *Wabash Telegraph* was elected from the Vincennes district, David V. Culley of the Lawrenceburg *Palladium* came up as state senator from Dearborn, Alexander Morrison of the *Indiana Democrat* represented Marion and Hamilton counties in the Senate, Marks Crume and Caleb Smith of the Connersville papers represented Fayette, and James H. Wallace, an editor of Madison came up from Jefferson.¹¹

Many Indiana editors were active partisans during the period 1829 to 1860 on state and local issues and upon the

⁹ *Western Sun*, Dec. 25, 1834.

¹⁰ *Daily Evening Courier*, Dec. 10, 1858.

¹¹ Logan Esarey. "History of the Press in Indiana" in *Indianapolis* March 28, 1915.

big national questions such as: The Jackson-Calhoun-Clay fight, the bank, internal improvements, election of 1840, the Compromise of 1850, the Free Soil movement, the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the slavery controversy.

CONCLUSION

For the progress made by pioneer communities in Indiana, no little credit should be given to the early editors and their newspapers. Although the newspapers have often been controversial and partisan in character, have been irregular in publication, and have printed many things of trivial nature and omitted important matters, they have been, nevertheless of inestimable value to the state.

The press entered the state with the early inhabitants. It preceded by several years in many communities: free schools, public libraries, railroads and telegraph lines. When there were no schools its pages were one of the few sources of education. When there were no public libraries and books were too expensive for the average family, newspaper stories were read eagerly. When railroads and telegraph lines had not entered the state the pioneer traveled little and must have relied heavily on the local paper for news of the outside world. All the more credit should be given the editor because he worked courageously despite the presence of numerous hardships and handicaps.

In conclusion it may be added that we owe much to the files of antebellum papers for the aid they give in reconstructing the past. Their columns will be ever welcome aids in throwing light on the manners, thoughts, customs, ideas, amusements and troubles of our forefathers.