

The Kentucky Press

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How To Handle The Correspondence

Forty country correspondents contribute to the Memphis Democrat, weekly newspaper in Memphis, Missouri, the seat of Scotland county. The Democrat, always a strictly county newspaper, is 60 years old.

The following extract from the Kansas City Star gives a brief history of the paper: "The Memphis Democrat was established in the fall of 1872, and since August 26, 1900, has been under the ownership and management of Roberts & Bumbarger. On that date L. P. Roberts, who sold the Monticello Journal, and J. V. Bumbarger, of Kansas City, bought the paper from the late Dr. J. C. Gristy. The paper was conducted by them until Mr. Roberts' death in December, 1919.

"Since the death of the elder Roberts, his son, Wallace H. Roberts, has acquired his interest and the paper has continued under the same firm name 30 years.

"The Democrat took a leading part in advocating a new courthouse for Scotland county and a new school building for Memphis. Both these propositions were successful."

The Democrat's reputation of having a large number of country correspondents, has resulted in many inquiries from several different states, asking for details of the plan by which they are handled.

Sheets of paper 8½x11, or half size if preferred, are sent the correspondents of the Memphis Democrat. These sheets are ruled, as all the correspondents use either pen or pencil. Space is allowed at the top of the sheet for the name and address of the correspondent, no anonymous dispatches being printed. Also at the bottom of the sheet is a place to be marked with an X, if more paper or envelopes are needed.

The envelopes sent the country correspondents are stamped and contain the return address printed in large type in some brilliant hue. The reason for this is that it has been the experience of the editors of the paper that if the address doesn't cover the front of the envelope, some correspondents will employ the envelopes for their own personal correspondence by marking over the printed name of the paper on the envelope. Naturally, it makes it more difficult to do this when large type is used.

A pamphlet of suggestions is sent to

each correspondent. The following is embodied in this little booklet:

ACCIDENTS—Who was hurt; how; when; is it likely to be fatal? Present condition of the person injured. If death results and an inquest is held, give the names of jurors and the verdict in full.

BIRTHS—Give names of parents, place of residence, date in full of birth, sex of child. Don't neglect to report births.

CROPS—Report at intervals the crop conditions, prospects, yield, or any interesting or peculiar conditions.

DEATH—Give the name of the deceased in full, date of birth or age, date of death, place of residence, cause of death, date and place of burial, officiating minister or speakers, also society in charge, if any. Names of children, names of brothers and sisters. If a child, give parents' names. Give name of surviving husband or wife. If a prominent person, give a short biography. Poetry and eulogy not wanted.

IMPROVEMENTS—Improvements are always under way. Keep your eyes open for them. Importations of good stock, improved methods of farming or handling stock—all deserve good mention.

MARRIAGES—Give names of contracting parties, son and daughter of whom, residence, also bridal tour, and where they will reside. Do not give lists of presents.

MEETINGS—Picnics, socials, announce proposed meetings of societies, picnics, entertainments, etc. Give authentic reports of public meetings of unusual character and of social events.

NEW THINGS—Mention new houses new barns, new enterprises of any kind, new machinery installed, especially if a new kind or a kind not before used in the community.

SCHOOL—Note the opening and closing of the schools, give the teachers' names and where from, length of term.

NEW COMERS—Tell all about them. Names, where from, when did they arrive? Friends or relatives already here. Where do they live?

PERSONALS—Personals are important (but not a record of visits between persons in the same locality). Tell where the visitors from a distance are from, when they arrived, whom they are visiting, intended length of visit. In noting social gatherings, names of those present may

be sent. Mention in your news as many names as possible, slighting no one. Write all names plainly and spell correctly. Avoid using the same names every week. Do not mention too many members of any one family.

Don't write jokes. Don't play favorites. Don't ignore persons because you are not on friendly terms with them. Avoid scandals, personal quarrels, family difficulties and church troubles. Don't use this paper to get even with some one. The editors do not use it for that purpose.

Speak a good word for the paper whenever and wherever possible, and get the people interested in it.

Remember, no lists of presents, no descriptions of the bride's dress, no obituary poetry. This means that we want anything of local or general interest, but no "roasts" and that this paper is not a clearing house for family or neighborhood quarrels.

Be brief in small news; make important news complete. Say what you have to say and quit.

SPECIAL—If anything happens of especial interest on Tuesday or Wednesday, after you have mailed your letter, telephone the information to this office. If you do not have free exchange, we will pay the telephone expense.

These rules which have been set down for turning in correspondence from rural communities do not cover everything that might come up in the production of the newspaper. They have been used, however, and it has been compiled as the result of some experience in the field. No doubt other methods have been employed with success. The suggestions given the correspondents of the Memphis Democrat have been devised, of course, for people who have no knowledge whatsoever of what the newspaper desires in the way of news.

CLIO HARPER SAYS:

If you don't like your own stuff don't expect your readers to do so.

Some newspapers are easily worth 25 cents a year.

Trust in a good ad, but keep your eyes on the cash register.

Many a truth told in jest keeps you in hot water.

The Kentucky Press

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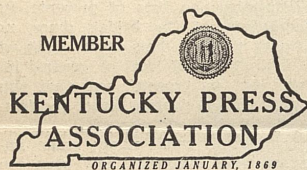
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ISSUES OWN ALMANAC

The Southington (Conn.) News issues an annual almanac which contains all the important items of information of the old-fashioned almanac, with a number of modern additions. There are pages devoted to advertising, to facts about Southington and to the services performed by the News. A review of the features and departments which are regularly carried and contribute largely to the reader interest of the News pays a high tribute to serial stories, news pictures, radio programs, fashion articles, Today's Geography and the Kitchen Cabinet department. The publication also carries an editorial laudatory of the Community Welfare campaign and the spirit of co-operation which it creates.

DOES YOUR TELEPHONE BUILD GOOD WILL?

Ad-Fax, the monthly house organ published by the Long Beach Press-Telegram, as it says, "in the interests of its friends and advertisers, for the discussion of mutual business problems, particularly those of advertising and merchandising," is a very clever publication, chock full of interesting things.

The October issue carries a front-page feature, "Smiling Over the Telephone," that every newspaper publisher should read. The association has occasion to call the officers of various members by telephone. It is interesting to note the manner in which those calls are handled. To some of the publishers we have suggested that they some day step out of the office and call their newspaper from an outside phone. Ad-Fax has the following to say about "Smiling Over the Telephone":

"The telephone is a vital point of contact between any business and the public. Rightly used it is a great builder of goodwill. Conversely, it can tear down more good-will in five minutes than can be built up with a year's advertising.

"No successful business man has to be 'sold' on the idea of greeting his customers properly. Yet some of them frequently forget that courtesy is just as essential over the telephone as in personal contact. In fact, telephone conversation is doubly important, because the party at the other end of the wire judges you solely by what you say, and how you say it. He can't see your smile. You have to put it into your voice."—Southern California Editor.

CORRESPONDENT'S PARTY TO BE ANNUAL EVENT

J. P. "Jodie" Gozder, editor of the Campbellsville (Ky.) News-Journal, has announced that he intends to make an annual event of a fish fry for correspondents of his newspaper because of the success of the first one held Saturday, September 19, at his Camp Laurel Crest on Green river. So far as could be learned Mr. Gozder is the first editor of a Kentucky weekly to plan an annual get-together for his news representatives.

Fifty-three guests signed the register at Mr. Gozder's log cabin, which is on the bank of Green river, approximately 12 miles from Campbellsville, for the fish fry.

The entertainment for the correspondents included a quartette composed of Misses Irene Caulk, Elizabeth Hackley and Margaret Edith Harding and Mrs. Virginia Cox. Floyd Cox accompanied them on the ban-juke. Professor Victor R. Portmann, instructor in journalism at the University of Kentucky, outlined entertaining and educational instructions as to the duties of correspondents. Donald McWain of the Courier-Journal and The Louisville Times was given a few minutes to discuss news sources for correspondents. The short speaking programme preceded the fish fry, after which there were running and hopping races, horseshoe pitching, swimming and other forms of entertainment.

"We hope to make the fish fry an

annual event," Mr. Gozder said. In the words of one who has had the pleasure of partaking of the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Gozder, "If Jodie and his 'Managing Editor' happen to invite you, don't miss it, brother, don't miss it!"

Be On Your Watch For This Solicitor

Dear Portmann:

I wish you would call attention to a fellow giving his name as A. B. Raley, who is "working" some of our publishers with a special advertising scheme, according to Joe Costello, of the Cynthiana Democrat, who has just written to me, suggesting that I get out a bulletin on him. I think a notice in the Press will be sufficient.

I quote from Joe letter:

"Our friend, Warren Fisher, has had a disagreeable experience with an advertising promoter by the name of A. B. Raley, and which cost Warren considerable advertising and placed his paper in a bad light with a few advertisers until they became acquainted with the facts. Raley also gyped us for \$5 and I think it would be wise to warn other Kentucky publishers who might become victims. Raley goes into a town and from his boarding house calls advertisers, making it appear that it is a long distance call from an adjoining city; he will tell the advertiser he represents the paper and is getting up an illustrated edition and will print several thousand extra copies. He takes the copy to the newspaper and contracts for space to be paid for when the issue is printed. He asks the publisher to make out the bills to the advertiser and tells the advertiser to make the check payable to the newspaper. In Warren's case he evidently cashed the checks here, because so far as I know he has never been heard from since leaving here.

"A warning to Kentucky publishers to get their pay in advance will save them work and loss of space. Raley is about 40, weighs 180 or 190; five feet ten inches, dark complexion, and has a scar on left side of face; is convincing talker and will take you in before you know it."

J. CURTIS ALCOCK,
Secretary of K. P. A.

A good news story is today's best seller—and soonest forgotten.

Half a stick of type has fattened many a Reno lawyer.

Head-lines may tell greater lies than epitaphs.

Politics is the life blood of a newspaper, often at high pressure.

Mid-Winter Meeting January 19, 20, and 21

At a meeting of the executive committee of the Kentucky Press association, held in Louisville, Saturday, October 8, it was decided to hold the annual mid-winter meeting of the association at the Brown hotel in Louisville, January 19, 20, and 21, 1933.

Erainard Platt, of the Louisville Courier-Journal, was appointed chairman of the program committee. Others named on the committee are R. L. Elkin, of the Lancaster Record; Joe Gozder, of the Campbellsville News-Journal, with President J. T. Norris, of the Ashland Independent, and Secretary J. C. Alcock, Danville Messenger, ex-officio members.

The program committee will meet later and complete arrangements for the meeting. The editors will meet on the evening of January 19th, when they will register and be guests of the Brown hotel at a buffet supper. Business sessions will be held Friday morning and afternoon, January 20, and again on Saturday morning, January 21. Those in attendance at the meeting will be given tickets to the Brown theater and a banquet dinner will probably be given during the meeting.

Keith H. Hood, of the Bedford Democrat, chairman of the newspaper promotion committee, and Thos. H. Stark, who has been working with Mr. Hood on the proposition, made a report to the executive committee, suggesting that prepared advertisements be sent to members of the Kentucky Press association, advertising the newspaper and job printing business. It was decided to wait till the first of the year before starting the work and the committee will continue to work on the plans and submit same at the winter meeting.

President Norris appointed J. C. Alcock, Carl Johnson, Geo. A. Joplin, Jr., G. B. Senff, Fred B. Wachs, and Joe Gozder on an advertising committee, the purpose of which is to advise members of the K. P. A. about fraudulent advertisers and to keep them posted on how to get advertising.

WEST KENTUCKY BODY RE-ELECTS ROBBINS

A Robbins, editor and publisher of the Hickman Courier at Hickman, was unanimously re-elected president of the West Kentucky Press association for his fifth term at the fall meeting held in Paducah Friday, September 23. J. R. Bradley, editor and publisher of the Enterprise at Providence, was elected vice-president of the association, while Miss Corrine Lowry, of Marion was re-elected secretary-treasurer.

A plan to retain an expert on retailing advertising and merchandising

to come into Western Kentucky and spend some time with each newspaper, holding schools for advertisers and salespeople and the general public, winding up with an advertising school for all the newspaper men of the district at Paducah, was discussed at the meeting and a committee composed of President Robbins and Ed Mammon, business manager of the Sun-Democrat at Paducah, was appointed to go into the matter more fully.

Another plan to buy cuts of news pictures of interest to all Western Kentucky through the central organization and develop a series of feature articles on various points in Western Kentucky, which would be rotated among the various newspapers, was also discussed and a committee composed of President Robbins, Joe T. Lovett, Murray Times and Ledger, and E. E. Ward, Jr., Hickman County Gazette of Clinton, were appointed to take the matter up and work out the details.

Round table discussions on "The Personal Touch," in the news columns in writing locals and personals, was led by Col. Henry R. Lawrence, editor of the Cadiz Record and dean of the newspaper men of Western Kentucky; on "Promotion" was led by Joe T. Lovett of the Murray Times and Ledger, and on "Local Features and Local Editorials" led by President Robbins.

PAYMENT IN ADVANCE

Prepaid subscriptions eliminate much bookkeeping and correspondence, save time and annoyance and reduce postage bills. They have put the business of publishing a country newspaper on an efficient basis and created respect for the calling. The ragged, down-at-the-heels publisher whom everybody "stood off" has disappeared, wherever the cash-in-advance plan has been put into effect.

The expiration notice supersedes the old-fashioned "dun" and gives less offense. Postal regulations require that a "dun" or statement of account must be enclosed within an envelope and carry a two-cent stamp. An expiration notice can be sent on a one-cent card. There are no disputed accounts where payment is required in advance.

Many people subscribe for newspapers because of some present interest or to obtain an immediate service. The interest or need may have vanished before the expiration of the subscription, leaving the subscriber cold to the matter of payment. Where cash in advance is required his interest is more likely to continue. Then there is the matter of subscribers who move away during the life of the subscription. No money is lost on these if payment in advance is exacted.

When payment is the rule no publisher ever breaks the postal regulations and thereby risks getting into trouble by permitting a subscription

to run for a year or longer past the due date. Every business man sleeps better with his money in the bank instead of on his books. Publishers are, or should be, business men.

Probably the best effect of the cash-in-advance system is in its tendency to improve publications. The publisher knows more accurately how much money he can depend upon from subscriptions and is in better position to spend it to the advantage of the publication. He must also issue a better page than otherwise if he would hold readers and obtain renewals.

MAILING SAMPLE COPIES

Recent questions sent to a field secretary by a member publisher in Michigan were so pertinent and contained such valuable information, that the questions and answers are included here, just as they were asked and answered:

1. What percentage of your circulation can be sent out as sample copies through the mail? Answer: Ten per cent of the total poundage sent through the mail, during a calendar year, to actual subscribers.

2. What rate does it pay? Answer: Reading matter, any zone, 1½ cents and second zone, 1½ cents; third zone, 2 cents; fourth zone, 3 cents, and so forth.

3. Is this a percentage of your entire paid circulation, both carrier and mail, or only of mail circulation? Answer: Ten percent of mail circulation only, on which poundage was paid during a calendar year, meaning from January 1 to December 31.

4. Is it possible to send out a large number of samples at one time, more than the permitted percentage of just that day's circulation, but have part of it count as samples against some other time? Answer: Yes, samples can be sent at any time, not to exceed ten percent of the total poundage in a calendar year, sent to actual subscribers through the mail, not more than three sample copies to any one person during the year.

5. In other words, can you send out during the year, say at monthly intervals, enough samples to total one-tenth (or whatever it is) of your entire circulation for the year? Answer: Send at any time, but only ten percent of total poundage mailed to regular subscribers in calendar year, not more than three copies to any individual.

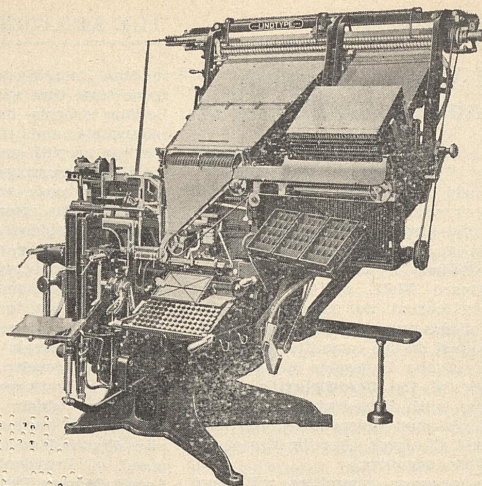
All answers based on Section 421, Postal Laws and Regulations.—Washington Newspaper.

SURE TO BE CAUGHT

The publisher who tries to sell anything he does not possess is headed for destruction. If he tries to sell the best printing on earth and doesn't produce it, he is bound to lose the confidence of the people with whom he has to deal.

TWO IN ONE

TRADE **LINOTYPE** MARK



from type like this

to

type like this

■ Practically the full range of ordinary typographic requirements is covered by the Two-in-One Linotype which sets both text and display from its single keyboard. On it you can set your body matter, your heads, your ads, your job-work.

Think of the speed.

Think of the economy.

Think of the convenience of being able to set all your composition on the Linotype. No running out of sorts, no worn type, no new type to buy, no distribution.

**MERGENTHALER LINOTYPE
COMPANY · BROOKLYN, N. Y.**

SAN FRANCISCO · CHICAGO · NEW ORLEANS
CANADIAN LINOTYPE, LIMITED, TORONTO, CANADA

Representatives in the Principal Cities of the World

Linotype Bodoni Family and Metro No. 2