

# THE RURAL PRESS IN KANSAS

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## INTRODUCTION

The past decade has witnessed a change in the attitude of college-trained journalists toward that modest member of the newspaper family, the country weekly. Not so long ago students in schools of journalism were imbued with the idea that the first rung on the ladder of success had been reached only when a job had been secured on a metropolitan daily; the small town daily or weekly was thought to offer little opportunity.

Today, many feel that even the small weekly offers an opportunity for a trained newspaper man to do about everything that could be done anywhere else in making a newspaper, and perhaps excels in affording opportunity for him to enjoy at first hand all the pleasures and profits, as well as all the griefs, of his chosen profession.

So marked has become the interest in rural journalism that universities in which journalism is taught are taking steps toward furnishing courses to train students for that particular field. To mention only two examples, the School of Journalism of the University of Missouri recently leased two weekly papers for laboratory purposes, and placed Mr. Omar D. Gray in charge of courses in rural

journalism, and the University of Minnesota has employed Mr. Thomas F. Barnhart, formerly of Everett, Washington, to specialize in courses in the field of rural journalism.

This revival of interest in the small-town newspaper is not evident among students of journalism alone. The Publishers' Auxiliary, a weekly trade paper for newspaper men, a few years ago, as the usual thing, carried from two to three columns of "newspapers for sale," and most of the papers were in small towns. Today, one-half to three-fourths of a column suffices; and behold, a new column has made its appearance, headed "Newspapers Wanted."

So much as evidence that the small-town newspaper offers ample field for study and investigation, and as ground for the belief that there is a quickening of interest in this particular field.

A natural interest, because of past experiences in the rural weekly field, resulted in this particular problem's being chosen for further investigation. Credit for its successful conclusion goes largely to Dr. Helen O. Mahin, of the department of journalism, the University of Kansas, under whose counsel and direction the study was made. Valuable and timely suggestions have been given, also, by Prof. L. N. Flint, head of the department of journalism, and W. A. Dill, W. R. Harley, and J. J. Kistler, other faculty members, who have had practical experience

in the rural weekly newspaper field, and by Dr. Carroll D. Clark of the department of sociology.

Chapter VI has been made more practical by the assistance of such Kansas newspaper men as H. L. Clark, of the Osborne County Farmer, O. W. Little, of the Alma Enterprise, field manager for Kansas, R. T. Lemons, of The Logan Republican, and, in other states, particularly Neil R. Murray, of the El Monte (Calif.) Herald, and Louis Graves, of the Chapel Hill (N. C.) Weekly.

---T.C.R.

Lawrence, Kansas.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

An attempt has here been made by the same method employed by writers in at least two other states<sup>1</sup> to deter-

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1. Malcom MacDonaid Willey, Ph. D., for the state of Connecticut, and Gayle Courtney Walker, for the state of Nebraska.
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mine to what extent the rural press of Kansas is the socializing force it could and should be. In brief, the problem, as will be outlined more fully in succeeding chapters, is to determine the types of material or news to which the Kansas weekly press is devoting its space. To be more exact, to determine just what percentage of total reading space is devoted to each of 20 major news categories. To that end, 20 carefully chosen Kansas weekly papers have been studied and their contents classified.

It was not deemed sufficient, however, to conclude the study when the facts had been found and statistically presented. While some studies of this type are devoted entirely to fact-finding, it is evident that such a study is more or less futile if no application is made of the facts.

A study based on a group of newspapers would be falling far short of its possibilities should it fail to point out the factors it discovered which seemed to contribute



to the success of the better papers of the group. Likewise, practices which are detrimental and which contribute to the mediocrity of other papers should not go unchallenged.

Accordingly, throughout this study, and particularly at its conclusion, has pertinent comment been made on the facts that came to light.

It is hoped that this work will make it possible for editors to check and compare the content of their own papers with that of the average Kansas paper as established by the study, or with any individual paper in the group.

In addition to the information obtained on Kansas papers as a group, consideration has been given to the contrast in contents of four classes of Kansas weekly papers, i. e., (a) papers in towns smaller than 1,000; (b) those in county seat towns without competition; (c) those with weekly competitors; and (d) weekly papers competing with dailies. Added facts are brought to light by a comparison of the contents of Kansas, Connecticut, and Nebraska papers, made possible by a comparison of the results of this study with the results of the studies in the above mentioned states by Messrs. Willey and Walker.

In the final chapter of the study, an attempt has been made to investigate, as thoroughly as possible, the various factors which seem to contribute to the success or failure of the country editor and his newspaper.

This has necessitated contact with a number of country editors, as well as an examination of the many criticisms which have been so freely directed toward the rural weekly, in books and magazines.

While this part of the study lends itself least to scientific and methodical analysis, it is interesting and practical from the standpoint of one interested in the rural newspaper field from a practical point of view.

## CHAPTER II

THE POSITION OF THE RURAL WEEKLY

The rural weekly newspaper is like its city cousin in many respects. For one thing, its success is bound to be determined largely by the aptitude, ability, and training (not necessarily school training), of the editor-owner, and his conception of the function of a newspaper in a community.

As a daily newspaper must be conducted in an efficient, business-like manner, so must a weekly. As a metropolitan paper should keep ever in mind the interests and welfare of its community, so must the rural weekly. But there is an important difference in the methods which the two may employ most effectively to advance the welfare of their respective territories. A daily in a large town can assume a crusading attitude; it can point an accusing finger at an inefficient police commissioner and demand his removal; it can uncover corrupt political practices and demand reform; it can campaign vigorously for park improvements, charities funds, building programs, and other such projects. This, in part, is made possible by the fact that few of the readers of a large daily know the editors or the reporters—the paper is an impersonal institution.

Let us examine the position of the man who chooses to be editor, owner, publisher and advertising manager of the home-town weekly. He not only knows the town marshal, the postmaster, the leading political aspirants, and everyone else, but, <sup>and</sup> more to the point, they all know him and every member of his family. Whatever appears in his paper is accepted as if he were speaking, and as a personal matter. Unless he is a commanding individual-- a natural born leader, which is too much to expect of every country editor--should he choose to "bawl out" the town marshall, the latter would take it as a personal insult, and either settle with the editor personally, or at least cease abruptly his friendly greeting when accosted on the street.

The greatest service the home-town weekly renders comes not through crusades and campaigns, but through thoroughly understanding the community and explaining it to itself; little by little, week after week, developing a community consciousness and an awareness of social unity.

Norman Talcott, as editor of "Our Town," of Greenwich, Conn., expressed this idea when he said, ". . . The newspaper should express it [public opinion], should interpret it, should strive to understand and portray the forces that are at work producing it. One of the chief purposes of a newspaper should be to understand the com-

munity and explain it to itself and to the outside world."<sup>2</sup>

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R. H. V. Atwood, The Country Newspaper, p. 58.

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however,

All this need not be taken to mean that the country editor must be a spineless, weak-kneed individual, calloused from straddling the fence. He must constantly take a stand on questions of importance, and may frequently take the lead in furthering important projects.

#### A Socializing Factor

The fact that there is not an imposing array of vices and crimes in each small town against which the local paper can array itself makes it necessary that it serve its community in a somewhat less conspicuous manner. This fact complicates even more the task of the student who attempts to study the effectiveness or importance of the rural weekly, for the value of such a paper to its community cannot be measured by the number of reform campaigns it undertakes and carries through successfully.

That the country weekly is an important socializing factor, most people will readily admit. Just where it ranks, compared with other socializing forces such as the church, the school, the radio, the magazine and the motion picture, is a question very much open to discussion.

We should like to be able to determine, after a careful study, the exact extent of the socializing effect of the newspaper. Manifestly this is impossible, since no community can be found where other forces are not also operating. It cannot be shown definitely, for instance, exactly to what extent any particular action, the formation of any particular public opinion, is the result of newspaper reading, nor how much of the sum total of social thinking is attributable to the press. As yet no method has been devised by which such a study could be made.

#### The Indirect Approach

However, quoting Mr. Willey, "It does not follow that, because a direct approach is wanting the problem is entirely without solution. While it may not be possible to evaluate directly the influence of the country press, for example in shaping the opinion relating to the educational policy of the town school system, if on study of the paper it is found that for a long period of time it has not mentioned at all in its columns the school system of the community, then, obviously, the newspaper has had no part in forming the public opinion on the local school matters for the particular community. If not a line of type is devoted to political matters in a given paper, it can be argued that the paper has had no deliberate part in shaping the opinion of its readers with regard to political controversy."<sup>3</sup>

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3. Malcolm MacDonald Willey, The Country Newspaper, pp. 20-21.
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This suggests a way for determining, to some extent at least, whether a newspaper is fulfilling its duties as a socializing influence, which is, by a careful analysis of the paper, to determine the relative amounts of space being devoted to the various types of news. An evaluation can then be made of the completeness with which the paper prints material bearing upon the life of the community. Balance is, of course, essential. A community paper that devoted all of its space to church news and neglected entirely school news, political news, economic news and all the rest, would obviously not be meeting its obligations to the community.

Accordingly, in making a study of Kansas newspapers, as represented by twenty selected papers, the news content has been classified, using the following major categories:

- Religion
- Education
- Clubs, lodges, societies
- Sport
- Human interest, features
- Editorial and opinion
- Economic, farm news
- Politics
- Personal mention
- Magazine material.

In conjunction, another classification, to be explained in more detail later, was made to determine the relative amounts of space devoted to the following:

- Local news
- County news
- State news
- National news
- Foreign news
- Miscellaneous.

Still a third sub-division of the survey was directed toward discovering:

- Percentage of reading matter
- Percentage of advertising.

This classification was made on a basis of the total space of each paper, whereas the two classifications previously mentioned are made on percentage of reading matter only, disregarding advertising.

A record was also kept of:

- Percentage of shop-set news
- Percentage of syndicated plate matter
- Percentage of cartoons and comics.



## CHAPTER III

PIONEER STUDIES IN THE FIELD

As already suggested, the present study follows the method used by M. M. Willey, Ph. D., in studying the weekly papers of Connecticut, and it goes without saying that a study of Mr. Willey's system and organization has made the present study much easier. At least two considerations seemed to recommend the adoption of his method. In the first place, it represents a combination of the best features of all the studies made by others up to his time, and no better method is available.<sup>4</sup> In the second place,

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4. The result of Mr. Willey's study was published in 1926.
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it makes possible a comparison of Connecticut and Kansas weekly papers on a basis of content, as revealed by the two studies. In addition, on the basis of this study, Kansas and Nebraska papers may also be compared, since the same method was used by Gayle Courtney<sup>walsh</sup> in studying Nebraska weekly papers in 1929.

A short survey of previous works is enough to convince even the casual observer that the method used by messrs. Willey and Courtney<sup>walsh</sup>, and adopted for this study, is the best that has as yet been devised. As a matter of fact, attempts

to study the problem upon the basis of statistical analysis have been relatively few. A short review of some of the preceding studies may not be amiss in this connection.

Frances Fenton,<sup>5</sup> in an attempt to demonstrate the

5. Frances Fenton, *The Influence of Newspaper Presentation Upon Crime*. The University of Chicago, 1911.

suggestive power of the press in certain instances, confined her analysis to two major categories or types: social and anti-social. She classified news items under the following heads, with reference to their potential social influence: regular news, cultural, literary, editorial, sporting, market, notices.

A. T. Street, in an article in the Chicago Tribune, July 25, 1909, analyzed papers for the purpose of determining the amount of space devoted to news of crime.

As early as 1893 J. G. Speed attempted to classify newspaper content to demonstrate its degradation between 1881 and 1893. He classified it under the headings: editorial, religious, scientific, political, literary, gossip, scandals, sporting, fiction, historical, music and drama, crime and criminals, art.<sup>6</sup>

6. The Forum, Vol. 15, pp. 705-711.

In 1900, Delos F. Wilcox published a study in newspaper analysis which approached scientific treatment. His main categories were: news, illustrations, literature, opinion and advertisements, with several subdivisions under "news" and "advertisements."<sup>7</sup>

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7. Annals of the Academy of Political Science, Vol. 16, pp. 56-92.
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In 1910, J. E. Rogers published a study, "The American Newspaper," said to have been based on a study of 15,000 newspapers. The same year, B. C. Matthews classified the news in a New York daily for three months under the headings: demoralizing, unwholesome, trivial, worthwhile.<sup>8</sup>

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8. The Independent, Vol. 48, pp. 82-86.
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In 1912, A. A. Tenney published results of a study in newspaper analysis undertaken in conjunction with a group of graduate students at Columbia University.<sup>9</sup> Under

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9. The Independent, Vol. 73, pp. 894-898.
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six major categories he classified the contents of seventeen New York dailies.

In 1913, T. R. Garth developed a method of classifying news content and applied it to fifty-five issues

of the Richmond, (Va.) Times Dispatch and twenty-seven other papers.<sup>10</sup> He used thirty-two categories of classi-

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10. School and Society, Vol. 3, pp. 140-144.

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fication, including: war, sports, education, government, society, politics, business, finance, transportation, religion, benevolence, crime, noted persons, persons not noted, births and deaths, marriage, divorce, industries, safety and accidents, art, amusements and recreation, exposition, science and discovery, jokes, improvements, household arts, literature, theater, fashions, inventions, weather, agriculture;

More recently, C. C. Taylor made a study of newspaper content, using 243 Missouri weekly newspapers. In an attempt to determine from what sources the weekly newspapers are drawing their material he classified their contents on a basis of: local, town, and county. Under other categories a more detailed classification was made in a later study.<sup>11</sup>

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11. Additional information on the above cases, with criticisms of the individual works, will be found in Willey, The Country Newspaper, pp. 24-32.

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The gradual development in the above studies tends to show that it is possible to classify newspaper content

objectively. The three essentials in classification, according to Willey, are:

1. The system of categories must be applicable to all general newspapers.

2. It must be so constructed that it will be possible to make comparisons between different papers of the same date, the same papers at different times, or different papers at different times.

3. It must give a maximum of precision and reduce the subjective element to a minimum.

## CHAPTER IV

SELECTION OF PAPERS

With Kansas weekly newspapers numbering approximately 458,<sup>12</sup> obviously no extensive study could be made

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12. Figures taken from Ayer's American Newspaper Annual and Directory for 1929.

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to include all or any major portion of them. The task of selecting representative papers then presented itself and proved to be no small problem. Obviously, the papers selected should be well distributed geographically, and should represent towns of all sizes, with due regard for the fact that approximately two-thirds of the weekly papers in Kansas are published in towns lower than 1,000 in population.<sup>13</sup>

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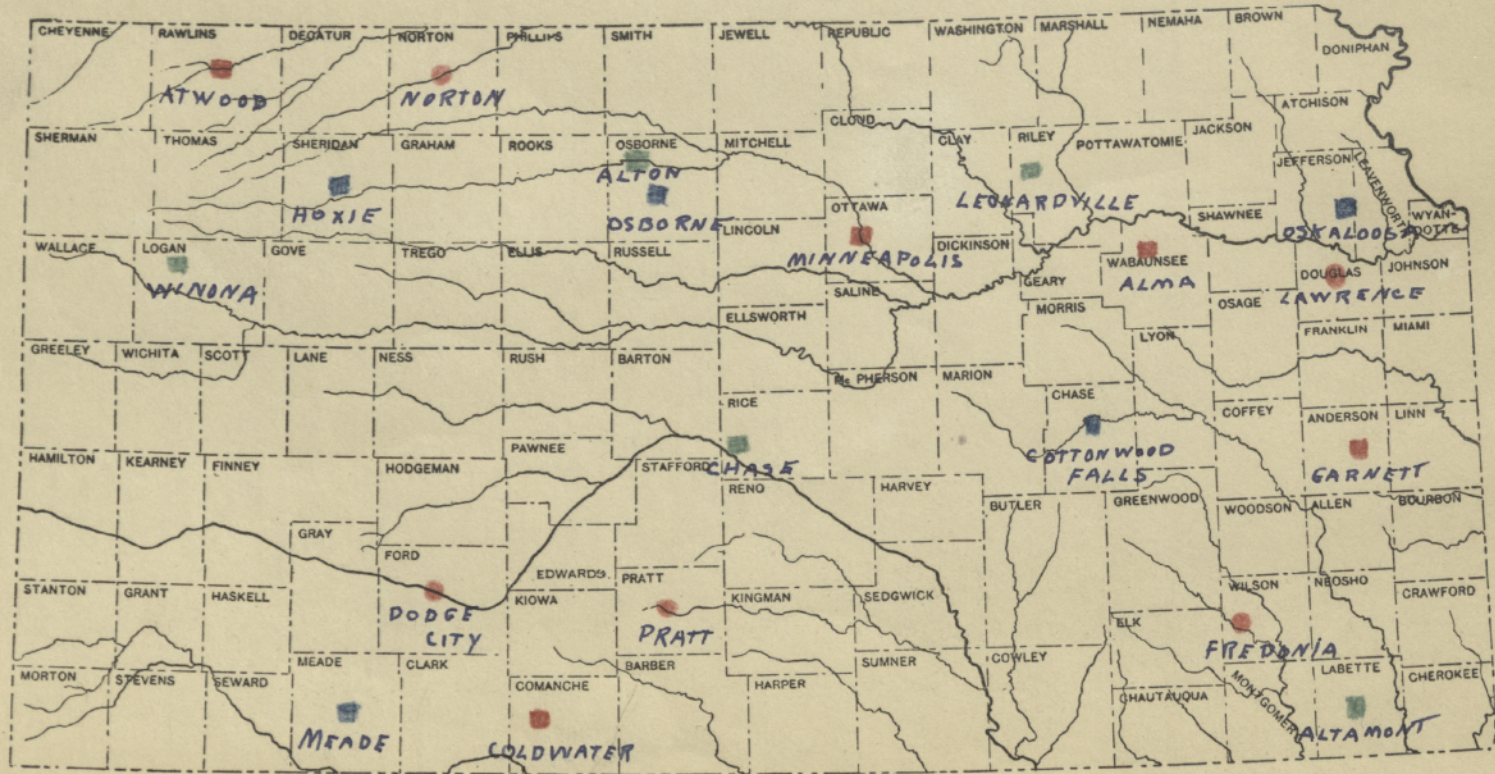
13. The 1930 census lists 153 Kansas towns with a population of 1,000 or more, and N. W. Ayer's 1929 Newspaper Directory lists 414 towns in which papers are published.

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At the same time, in order to contrast their content (if there proved to be any contrast), it was desired to study the four classes of papers already mentioned:

1. Small-town papers.
2. County seat papers with no competition.
3. Papers with weekly competitors.
4. Papers with dailies as competitors.

Map Showing Geographical Distribution of Papers  
on Which the Kansas Study is Based



- Small-town papers
- County Seat papers, without competition
- Papers with weekly competitors
- Papers with Dailies for competition

A trial study proved beyond question that no more than twenty papers could be successfully studied without devoting full time to the work, which, obviously, a student is not at liberty to do, and it seemed desirable to study at least five papers in each of the above classes. This made necessary a slight sacrifice in the desire to have at least thirteen papers in towns of fewer than 1,000 persons, since many of the towns with two papers, particularly those with dailies, are above 1,000 in population. As finally decided upon, the group contained ten papers in towns of less than 1,000 and ten in towns of more than 1,000, only to have the 1930 census figures show one of the smaller towns to be of more than 1,000, after the study was nearly completed.

However, with nine papers in towns smaller than 1,000 and four of these in towns smaller than 500, it is felt that due consideration has been given the small-town paper.

In selecting papers for this study, only papers that had been in existence at least twenty years were considered, with the hope that at some future period a study can be made to determine whether any material change has occurred in the amount of the various types of news. The papers are listed in Table I, giving information as to the number of pages, circulation, subscription price, population of town of publication, and names of the editors, which in a majority of cases means the names of the owners also.



TABLE I--The Papers Studied

Paper--Place of Publication	Editor	**Circulation	Usual No. pp.	Subscr. Price †	Town's Population#
<b>Small-Town Papers:</b>					
The Alton Empire--Alton	Harry M. Kurtz	450	4	\$1.50	383#
Logan County News--Winona	F. D. Joslyn	490	4	1.50	324
The Leonardville Monitor--Leonardville	Isaac Moon	600	4	1.50	392
The Altamont Journal--Altamont	Frank E. George	1500	4*	2.00	598
The Chase Register--Chase	Groat & Groat	255	4*	1.50	278
<b>County seat papers, no opposition:</b>					
The Oskaloosa Independent--Oskaloosa	Roberts & Son	1200	8	2.00	733
Chase County Leader--Cottonwood Falls	W. C. Austin	1556	8	2.00	963
The Meade Globe-News--Meade	Keith C. Cox	973	8	1.50	1552
The Hoxie Sentinel--Hoxie	W. B. Daniels	1500	8-12	2.00	800
Osborne County Farmer--Osborne	C. E. Mann	2500	8-12	2.00	1881
<b>With Weekly Competitors:</b>					
The Anderson Countian--Garnett	Leonard McCalla	1600	8	2.00	2768
The Alma Signal--Alma	Carroll & Carroll	1450	8	1.50	811
The Coldwater Talisman--Coldwater	Lawton Stanley	560	4*	2.00	1296
Minneapolis Messenger--Minneapolis	R. G. Hemmenway	1750	8	1.50	1741
The Citizen-Patriot--Atwood	Littell & Littell	1200	8	1.50	1166
<b>With Daily Competitors:</b>					
The Norton Courier--Norton	F. M. Duvall	1175	4*	2.00	2767
The Pratt Union--Pratt	S. P. Gebhart	2120	8	1.50	6322
Lawrence Democrat--Lawrence	Henry Albach	1000	4	1.00	13726
The Dodge City Journal--Dodge City	Fred Sailors	1900	8	1.50	10059
Wilson County Citizen--Fredonia e	Jno. S. Gilmore	1900	4	2.00	3446

\*Carry also 4 pages ready print--not considered in analysis

\*\*Circulation figures from Ayer's American Newspaper Annual and Directory, 1929.

†Population figures are from 1930 census report.

‡In a great many cases papers which charge \$1.50 per year or less, have a higher rate for out-of-county or out-of-state subscribers. The minimum rate is listed here.

eThe Wilson County Citizen, published semi-weekly, is the only paper in the group published oftener than once a week.

Five issues of each paper were checked, with the idea that if sufficient variation of content in different issues was found to warrant, the work would be carried further with five or more additional issues. The results seemed to indicate that five issues were sufficient to picture adequately the relative amounts of the various types of news, since no great variations in different issues of the same paper were found. In a majority of cases the issues checked represented one from December, 1930, and two each from January and February, 1931.<sup>14</sup>

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14. Willey, in his study of Connecticut papers, carried on for a year in order to check seasonal variations in the news, only to find that what any person acquainted with the routine of a weekly newspaper would have surmised was true. Early in December the amount of local news decreased, showing plainly the encroachment of holiday advertising upon news space. When December advertising reached its peak, demanding that extra pages be added, the amount of magazine material used shot up, reflecting the fact that syndicated plate matter, Christmas stories, etc., were used to accompany the added pages of advertising, instead of local news being increased. Any country editor or printer will vouch for this practice. Mr. Willey found, also, that school news increased near the close of school, reaching its peak with commencement, then slumped until September. Likewise cultural news, including church, club, lodge and society, slumped during the summer months, due to vacations and such factors, then picked up again in September and October.
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## CHAPTER V

THE ANALYSIS OF KANSAS PAPERS

With the advent of the first daily paper in America in 1784,<sup>15</sup> it can be readily imagined that the

15. The American Daily Advertiser, Philadelphia, was the first daily paper in America. (Combined with the North American in 1839, which in turn was merged with the Daily Public Ledger in 1835).

Pessimistic soul saw the doom of the weekly, in spite that of the fact, the country had existed for eighty years served by weeklies only, and, as a matter of fact, had been able to pull through the Revolutionary war, dependent upon weekly papers for the dissemination of general information.

Likewise, each succeeding development in the dissemination of news has been hailed as meaning the speedy extinction of the weekly paper. With the advent of the telegraph, the telephone, and more rapid means of transportation, making more complete coverage of news and greater circulation possible for the dailies, it was felt by many that the day of the successful weekly was past. With the advent of the radio the same hue and cry was raised, predicting destruction, not only for the weekly, but for all newspapers.

Nevertheless, some 11,000 weekly papers in approximately 8,000 small towns in the United States continue to be published, more or less successfully.

And the strange thing about it is that the conception of the place and function of the rural weekly has changed little since or because of the advent of modern inventions. True, the very earliest papers in the Colonies limited themselves largely to foreign news, and a little later a great deal of space was devoted to essays of various types, advocating one cause or another, expressing some individual's or some group's opinion. All of this has, of course, changed.

The scope of the news and the function of a country weekly paper have probably never been better defined than by Horace Greeley, in a letter which he wrote in 1860 to a friend about to enter the country field. He said in part:

"Begin with the clear conception that the subject of deepest interest to an average human being is himself; next to that he is most concerned with his neighbors. Asia and the Congo stand a long way after these in his regard. It does not seem to me that most country journalists are obvious<sup>\*</sup> to these vital truths. Secure a wide-awake correspondent in every village and township in your county.... who will promptly send you whatever

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\* Sic.

of moment occurs in his vicinity, and will make up at least half of your journal of local matter thus collected, nobody in the county can long do without it.\* Do not let a new church be organized or new members be added to one already existing, a farm be sold or a new house be raised, a mill be set in motion, a store be opened, nor anything of interest to a dozen families occur without the fact duly, though briefly, chronicled in your columns. If a farmer cuts a big tree or grows a mammoth beet, or harvests a bounteous yield of wheat or corn, set forth the fact as concisely and unexceptionally as possible. In due time obtain and print a brief historical and statistical account of each township--who first settled it, who have been its prominent citizens, who obtained advanced years therein, etc. Record every birth as well as every marriage or death. In short, make your paper a perfect mirror of everything done in your community that your citizens ought to know."<sup>16</sup>

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16. Phil C. Bing, The Country Weekly, pp. 17-18.

We find solace for the country editor who feels he doesn't run a news-paper, because everyone already knows all the news he prints before it is printed, in the words of Don. C. Seitz:

"There is interest in almost everything that happens, could you but find it. Above all, be particular to print the things about which your constituency is already

informed by personal contact. Nothing is so interesting as to read about an event we have seen wholly or in part. The reader likes to compare the printed report with his own recollections.<sup>17</sup>

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17. Don. C. Seitz, Training for the Newspaper Trade, pp. 50 ff.

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Modern developments in news distribution, if they mean anything to the country editor, mean that more than ever his paper must become a local institution, must contain material not to be found in daily papers, <sup>and</sup> magazines, nor to be heard over the radio.

#### Local News in Kansas Papers

with Mr. Willey

In the present study it is safe to assume<sup>18</sup> that the function of the country weekly newspaper is to print news of significance to the area of publication and circulation, and that the country paper that does not devote its news columns largely to local matter can scarcely be classed as an effective socializing agent. 'Make your paper a perfect mirror of everything done in your community that your citizens ought to know,' wrote Greeley. Obviously, this is impossible unless the contents of the local paper pertain in a large measure to local matters.<sup>18</sup>

18. Willey, The Country Newspaper, p. 51.

One phase of the problem, then, in which we may well interest ourselves is, "What proportion of the reading matter in the average Kansas country weekly is related to the community of publication? What percentage to the county of publication? What percentage is state news? What percentage is national news? And what percentage is foreign?"

TABLE II

Showing percentages of Local, County, State, National and Foreign News, as found in 20 Representative Kansas weekly papers.

Papers	Types of News				
	Local	County	State	Natl.	For'n
The Alton Empire	31.12	28.53	3.53	3.67	1.93
Logan Co. News	22.23	12.46	10.08	3.32	.39
The Leonardville Monitor	37.28	35.11	7.89	3.68	.00
The Altamont Journal	59.12	25.40	5.76	6.90	.00
The Chase Register	50.88	7.98	6.05	5.27	1.78
The Oskaloosa Independent	20.61	33.04	8.11	3.23	.60
Chase County Leader	41.56	31.11	3.23	2.89	.16
The Meade Globe News	52.60	9.37	11.25	5.83	1.02
The Hoxie Sentinel	38.53	29.04	9.25	3.57	.16
Osborne County Farmer	55.28	25.04	10.53	2.89	.38
The Anderson Countian	31.36	29.29	4.29	28.02	.32
The Alma Signal	19.42	35.15	8.98	8.98	1.28
The Coldwater Talisman	31.10	10.70	4.01	3.67	10.36
Minneapolis Messenger	39.95	53.21	3.01	.40	.80
The Citizen-Patriot	41.94	31.61	3.03	11.85	.30
The Norton Courier	43.61	11.96	3.72	16.22	2.92
The Pratt Union	51.18	13.96	6.33	14.54	.16
Lawrence Democrat	17.80	18.26	18.26	16.43	2.28
Wilson County Citizen	45.78	32.43	7.41	5.37	.25
The Dodge City Journal	21.13	30.91	20.35	10.76	.39

(See Append. B. for absolute inches on which percentages are based).

Our interest in Table II centers, temporarily, at least, in the first column, which gives the average percentage of local news found in each of our twenty papers—news which the editor selects and himself prepares for his readers. It will be seen that the Lawrence Democrat ranks lowest with 17% local material, while The Altamont Journal is highest with 59.12%. It is interesting to note, in passing, that The Altamont Journal, although published in a town of only 598, has a circulation of 1,500 at \$2.00 a year. The information in this column is made clearer in Table III.

It can be seen by referring to Table III that only two papers have less than 20% <sup>of</sup> local news, and two have between 20% and 30%, seven between 30% and 40%, four from 40 to 50%, and five exceed 50%, although none reaches 60%.<sup>19</sup>

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19. It would, perhaps, be well to consider here a question that may be raised. Is it not necessary to take into account the absolute amount of material printed? An eight-page paper may actually be printing more inches of religious news than a four-page paper, yet in percentages the four-page paper may rank the higher, although it is printing fewer actual inches. There are two sides to most any question. In the first place, the question of balance among the various types of news must be considered. The space that is available for reading matter must be allocated among all the possible types of reading matter that the paper is printing. From the point of view of presenting to the readers a well-balanced picture of the community activities, balance must be obtained among the various types of



news. This being the case, the important matter is not so much the absolute inches in any category as it is the proportion of one type of news to another. The important fact is the adequacy with which the paper is serving as a reflector of community activity, and this involves the question of the manner in which available space is used; it involves a matter of ratios. It may be that a large paper can give more news space, in absolute inches, to any type of material, but if each paper is accurately picturing the community, approximately corresponding proportions of news will appear in each. (See Appendix B for the absolute number of inches in the papers studied.)

TABLE III

Showing percentage of Local News Content in  
20 Kansas Weekly Papers.

Less than 20% Local News . . . . .	2 Papers
Lawrence Democrat . . . . .	17.80
The Alma Signal . . . . .	19.42
20 to 30% Local News . . . . .	2 Papers
The Dodge City Journal. . . . .	21.13
Logan County News . . . . .	22.28
30 to 40% Local News . . . . .	7 Papers
The Coldwater Talisman. . . . .	31.10
The Alton Empire. . . . .	31.12
The Oskaloosa Independent . . . . .	31.36
The Anderson Countian . . . . .	32.75
The Leonardville Monitor. . . . .	37.28
The Hoxie Sentinel. . . . .	38.53
Minneapolis Messenger . . . . .	39.95
40 to 50% Local News . . . . .	4 Papers
Chase County Leader . . . . .	41.56
The Citizen-Patriot . . . . .	41.94
The Norton Courier. . . . .	43.61
Wilson County Citizen . . . . .	45.73
50 to 60% Local News . . . . .	5 Papers
The Chase Register. . . . .	50.88
The Pratt Union . . . . .	51.78
The Meade Globe-News. . . . .	52.60
Osborne County Farmer . . . . .	55.28
The Altamont Journal. . . . .	59.12*

\*No paper contained as high as 60% local news.

Just what percentage of local news a paper should carry, obviously, no one can say with an air of finality, although it is safe to say that less than 30% is too little. Willey, in discussing his study of Connecticut papers concludes that a paper devoting more than one-half of its news space to other than local news is by sheer weight of proportions relegating local news to a secondary place, and is, therefore, not the socializing factor it should be.

On such a basis we should be forced to conclude that three-fourths of the Kansas papers are falling short of their possibilities in this respect, since only five out of the twenty studied showed a local news content of 50% or more.

Mr. Willey discovered that only one-fourth of the Connecticut papers achieved the 50% standard; one-fourth of them falling below 30%. Only one-fifth fall below 30% in Kansas. More variation was found in the local news content of Connecticut papers, they ranging from 3.96% to 90.22%, while in the Kansas study, the variation was from 17.80% to 59.12%. Evidently Kansas editors are more nearly of one mind as to what should constitute a good local newspaper. Further proof of this statement is found in the fact that seven of the twenty papers studied were in the 30% to 40% local news content class.

In contrasting the local news content of the four classes of weekly papers studied, other interesting

facts, made clear in Table IV, come to light. For one thing, the county seat papers, with no competition, as a group outranked the three other groups on a basis of local news content, with 41.71%. Small town papers, representing five towns ranging in population from 278 to 598 ranked second with 40.13%. Weekly papers with daily competitors ranked third and those with weekly competitors were lowest in local news content.

TABLE IV

Showing local news content of different classes of Kansas weekly papers.

Weekly papers with weekly competitors . . . . .	32.75%
Weekly papers with daily competitors . . . . .	36.02%
Small-town papers*. . . . .	40.13%
County seat papers with no competition. . . . .	41.71%

\*The largest town in which a paper of this group was published had a population of 598.

The interesting fact to note at this particular point is that county seat papers with no competition—those with the field to themselves and considerable county patronage assured—render a better news service (on a basis of attention to local news) than do any others, as a group. In other words, they do not take advantage of their favored position to slight the news. This fact gains added impor-

tance farther along, for it turns out that this same group of papers ranks highest in local-plus-county news, also. And, as will be shown later, the total percentage of advertising to reading matter is only slightly higher in unopposed county seat papers. In fact, it seems entirely possible, from the facts obtained here, that residents in a one-paper weekly town receive better news service than do people in towns where two papers are attempting to cover the field.

#### Local-plus-County News

Without doubt, in a study of Kansas country papers more importance should attach to "local-plus-county"<sup>20</sup> news than to purely local or town news, for in

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20. Use of the word "county" in this conjunction might be misleading. Obviously, in a study of this sort, strict adherence to county lines could not be observed in studying the "incidence of interest" or source of news. Town-plus-surrounding-community is what is meant. In the case of county seat papers this might be approximately the county, since most county seat papers attempt to represent the entire county.

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practically every instance the town is the center of a much larger territory from which the newspaper draws patronage and to which it is obligated. It goes without argument that the paper is as vitally concerned in the

success of its surrounding rural community as it is in the town itself. A majority of the residents of Kansas are dependent, indirectly at least, upon the productivity of the soil, even though many are grocers, bankers, barbers, etc. Figures would probably show <sup>that</sup> at least 50% of the subscribers to the average Kansas weekly paper reside outside the city limits of the town of publication. So we repeat, the "local-plus-county" news classification is the important one to be considered in evaluating the Kansas weekly as a socializing factor.

TABLE V.

Showing percentage of Local-Plus-County News as revealed by a study of 20 Kansas papers

Logan County News . . . . .	34.74%
Lawrence Democrat . . . . .	36.06%
The Coldwater Talisman . . . . .	41.80%
The Dodge City Journal . . . . .	52.04%
The Oskaloosa Independent . . . . .	53.65%
The Alma Signal . . . . .	54.57%
The Norton Courier . . . . .	55.57%
The Chase Register . . . . .	58.86%
The Alton Empire . . . . .	59.65%
The Anderson Countian . . . . .	60.65%
The Meade Globe-News . . . . .	61.97%
The Pratt Union . . . . .	65.74%
The Hoxie Sentinel . . . . .	67.57%
The Leonardville Monitor . . . . .	72.39%
Chase County Leader . . . . .	72.67%
The Citizen-Patriot . . . . .	73.55%
Wilson County Citizen . . . . .	78.26%
Osborne County Farmer . . . . .	80.32%
The Altamont Journal . . . . .	84.53%
Minneapolis Messenger . . . . .	92.80%

Table V shows the percentage of local-plus-county news as found in each of 20 Kansas weekly papers studied, ranging from lowest to highest. It will be noticed that all but three papers contain more than 50% news dealing with town and community; that eleven of the twenty have more than 60%; while seven go above 70% and four above 75%.

Mr. Willey, in his study of Connecticut papers, assumed that a rural weekly paper should devote at least 75% of its space to local-plus-county news, but discovered that only five of the state's thirty-five papers did so. Reducing the standard to 70%, he found that only eleven papers, or slightly more than one-third, could meet it. Even if he assumed that 50% of total reading space devoted to this type of news was sufficient, still only half the Connecticut papers met even this requirement.<sup>21</sup>

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21. Mr. Willey seems to interpret Greeley's statement (already quoted on page 19) to mean that 50% of total reading space should be devoted to local news. A careful analysis of the statement discloses that Greeley meant "Town-plus-County or -plus-Community."

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Comparing results of the Kansas and Connecticut studies, if the standard be put at 50%, 85% of the Kansas papers qualify (17 out of the 20 analyzed), as compared with a little more than 50% (18 out of 35)<sup>22</sup> in Connecticut.

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22. In his discussion Mr. Willey says, "if it is assumed that the local paper should devote 50% of its reading space, as a minimum, to the "local-plus-county" community area, only 17 of 35 Connecticut weeklies are above the minimum." However, in two tables which he presents, he shows 18 of the 35 papers with more than 50% in this category. (See Willey, The Country Newspaper, pp. 59-60-61.)

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If the standard is raised to 70% slightly more than one-third of the Kansas papers qualify and slightly fewer than one-third of the Connecticut papers. Four out of twenty Kansas papers and five out of thirty-five Connecticut papers rank above 75% in this respect, giving the Kansas papers only a slight edge.

Mr. Courtney<sup>Walker</sup>, in his study of Nebraska papers, taking the group as a whole, discovered that only 52.5% of them ranked above the 50% "local-plus-county" news standard.<sup>23</sup>

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23. Journalism Quarterly, Vol. 7, No. 4, p. 299.

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The five Kansas papers which rank highest in local-plus-county news content have a higher combined circulation than any other five papers in the group, and this, too, with a subscription price of \$2.00 per year for three out of the five. One of them has a circulation three times the size of the town's population in

which it is published. Three others are in fairly large towns, but have strong competition to meet. Thus it would seem that there is a positive correlation between high percentage of local-plus-county news and large circulation.

In contrasting the local-plus-county news content of the four classes or groups of weekly papers studied, we find that here the county seat papers without opposition again rank highest.

TABLE VI.

Showing "Local-plus-County" news content of different classes of Kansas weekly papers.

Weekly papers with daily competitors . . . . .	55.89%
Small-town papers . . . . .	62.03%
Weekly papers with weekly competitors . . . . .	63.49%
County seat papers with no competition. . . . .	67.23%

The fact that weekly papers with daily competitors rank lowest in this classification may be explained in part by the fact that a majority of them are in fairly large towns, where they attempt to cover their towns thoroughly, but are less interested in the surrounding community.

County seat papers would naturally be expected to rank high in such a classification since their duty



to the whole county is generally accepted. That the county seat papers without opposition rank highest is possibly an explanation as to why they are without opposition. If they were not covering the field adequately, opposition would soon appear.

State, National, and Foreign News

TABLE VII.

Showing percentages of state, national and foreign news as found in 20 representative Kansas weekly papers.

	State	National	Foreign
<u>Small-town papers:</u>			
The Alton Empire	3.53	5.61	1.93
Logan Co. News	10.08	3.32	.39
The Leonardville Monitor	7.89	3.68	.00
The Altamont Journal	5.76	6.90	.00
The Chase Register	6.05	5.27	1.78
<u>County seat (Unopposed):</u>			
The Oskaloosa Independent	8.11	3.23	.60
Chase County Leader	3.23	2.89	.16
The Meade Globe-News	11.25	5.83	1.02
The Hoxie Sentinel	9.25	3.57	.16
Osborne County Farmer	10.53	2.89	.38
<u>With weekly competitors:</u>			
The Anderson Countian	4.29	22.02	.32
The Alma Signal	6.93	8.98	1.23
The Coldwater Talisman	4.01	3.67	10.36
Minneapolis Messenger	3.01	.40	.80
The Citizen-Patriot	3.03	11.85	.30
<u>With daily competitors:</u>			
The Norton Courier	3.72	16.22	2.92
The Prett Union	6.33	4.54	.16
Lawrence Democrat	18.26	16.43	2.23
Wilson County Citizen	7.41	5.37	.25
The Dodge City Journal	20.35	10.76	.39

In Table VII is found a segregation of state, national and foreign news. In this table the papers are not graded on a basis of their content as revealed by the analysis, but remain in their original groups, as designated.

It was possible to make a rough estimate of what percentage of its reading space a rural paper should devote to town and community news, and to point out which papers were fulfilling their obligations in this respect, merely by showing the percentage each devoted to these types of news.

However, in studying the amounts of state, national and foreign news in the various papers, the figures themselves tell very little, and it would be absurd to maintain that each and every paper should devote a given percentage of its space to, say, state news. Many factors enter in; for one thing, careful consideration must be given the location of each paper before intelligent comment can be made regarding its attention to state news.

For example, a rural weekly paper located midway between Kansas City and Topeka, where daily papers from one or both of those cities are found in a majority of homes, will need to devote considerably less space to state and national news than will a paper in the western end of the state where large dailies circulate less easily.

and freely, and where many families receive no daily paper.

A paper in a community such as the first mentioned could not be censured severely if it devoted very little space to national news, and its attention to state news could logically be confined largely to election time, or such other times as important questions which the editor wished to stress were before the people.

State News. The Chase County Leader, with 3.28%, ranks lowest in percentage of state news, while the Dodge City Journal is highest with 20.35%. These two examples seem to bear out the contention outlined above. The Chase County Leader, at Cottonwood Falls, published in the shadow of the famous Emporia Gazette, and circulating in a territory covered also by Wichita dailies, could render little service in the dissemination of state news.

The Dodge City Journal, representing the other extreme, is a considerable distance from any large state daily, and, furthermore, is in a territory not easily accessible to dailies with the exception of those in Hutchinson. It is not surprising, therefore, to find it devoting considerable space to state news. It likely also attempts to compete, to some extent, with the daily published in Dodge City, in giving state news.

The Logan County News and The Meade Globe-News, both carrying high percentages of state news, are near the western edge of the state, somewhat outside the pale of large daily papers. The Osborne Farmer, with a high percentage of state news, is also in the western half of the state, with somewhat the same condition applying. The editor and the owner of the Farmer<sup>24</sup> are both promi-

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24. C. E. Mann, editor, is a state representative, and B. P. Walker, owner, is state printer.

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nent state figures which accounts to some extent for that paper's interest in state news. The Lawrence Democrat, published half-way between Kansas City and Topeka, in a community where many daily papers circulate, ranks second highest in percentage of state news carried. This fact, while puzzling at first, apparently is explained further along in the study. The analysis revealed this paper with a high percentage of editorial opinion, most of which is devoted to state problems, questions, and arguments.

National and Foreign News. These two types will be considered together, since an important factor which affects both must be considered.

As will be seen in Table VII, two papers devote more than 16% of their total reading space to national

news, and in each case, more than 2% more to foreign news, a third paper devotes 28.02% to state news. The question naturally arises: Why will a country weekly editor spend his time and effort in preparing and presenting national and foreign news to such an amount? The answer is: He doesn't. The national and foreign news to a large extent represents syndicated plate matter--material which the editor receives in plate form, at small expense, and uses to "fill-up" whatever space is left after the ads and shop-set news are all in the forms.<sup>25</sup>

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25. This type of filler will be discussed more fully in a following section. Since it is made up by the syndicating company for use in any paper in the United States, with the time element not important, the result is mostly national and foreign news of magazine type.
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It will be seen that six of the twenty papers contain more than 10% national news, and that eight contain more than 10% national and foreign news combined. One paper contains the astonishing amount of 10.36% foreign news. Reference to Table IX shows that the same paper uses a large amount of syndicated plate matter.

While it is felt that a contrast of the four groups of papers as regards state, national and foreign news, shows little of importance, nevertheless Table VIII

shows that the same paper uses a large amount of syndicated plate matter.

TABLE VIII

Showing state, national and foreign news content of different classes of Kansas weekly papers.

	Types of News		
	State	National	Foreign
Small-town Papers	6.65	4.56	.82
County Seat - no competition	8.48	3.68	.46
With Weekly competition	4.66	10.58	2.61
With Daily competition	11.21	10.62	1.20

It is, perhaps, important to note that weeklies competing with dailies, as a group, give more attention to both state and national news than do any of the other three groups. The group of weeklies with weekly competitors ranks unusually high in national news, due principally to one paper of the group, The Anderson Countian, which devoted the astonishing amount of 28.02% of its total reading space to state news.

Shop-Set vs. Syndicate Material

Any person ever associated with a rural weekly newspaper knows the general meaning of plate matter or "boiler plate." It is syndicate material received in plate form, at low cost per column,<sup>26</sup> and of such a nature that

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26. The price varies, but \$2.00 to \$3.00 per page is the usual price.

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it can be used in any paper from Elkton, Maryland, to Reno, Nevada, any time from several months to several years after its release.

The much discussed question of whether a majority of it is of any value, except as "filler" to avoid the expense of setting more type on the linotype, is one suitable for a separate study and will not be gone into thoroughly here.

Suffice it to say that much so-called "boiler plate" of a semi-advertising nature, given the editor without charge, finds its way into the columns of weekly papers of the country, to the ultimate profit of the concern working the hoax.<sup>27</sup>

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27. An interesting article on this particular question by Carroll D. Clark, Ph. D., University of Kansas, will be found in The New Republic, for Jan. 20, 1926, Vol. 45, pp. 236-39.

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At the same time it should be acknowledged that the Western Newspaper Union, specializing in the furnishing of syndicated plate matter to newspapers at moderate cost, is furnishing a service which many papers would find it difficult to get along without -- a service that can be used to advantage by the editor who gives the proper attention to selecting the material he uses. The above organization boasts that it has made available to country editors stories for which the author originally received \$1.00 per word for his work. And they were available for the country editor only shortly after they were released to the leading daily papers of the country.

The amount of plate matter used by Kansas rural weekly papers is considered here only because it has an important bearing on some types of news; namely, national and foreign, as already pointed out, and magazine material.

Table IX shows the percentage each of shop-set material, plate matter, cartoons and comics, magazine material and national plus foreign news to total news space, as found in the Kansas papers studied. The national plus foreign column is given merely to show the correlation between high content of plate matter and high content of national and foreign news.

Obviously, syndicate matter intended for use any place in the United States, if it has any news interest



at all, will be national or inter-national in scope. A great deal of it is historical or travelogue in nature. Much of it, of course, is fiction, while some is devoted to recipes and home topics of various sorts.

TABLE IX

Showing percentages of shop-set material, plate matter, cartoons and comics, magazine material and national-plus-foreign news, as found in 20 Kansas papers.

Paper	Type of News				
	Shop-set	Plate	Cart. & Comics	Mag.	Nat'l. & Foreign
<u>Small-Town Papers:</u>					
The Alton Empire	79.78	20.22	.00	14.51	5.60
Logan Co. News	56.45	40.68	2.88	35.00	3.71
The Leonardville Monitor	31.73	17.60	.66	17.93	3.68
The Altamont Journal	97.80	2.20	.00	.77	6.90
The Chase Register	69.00	23.00	3.00	21.93	7.05
<u>Co. Seat, No Competitors:</u>					
The Oskaloosa Independent	64.83	29.21	6.30	28.65	3.83
Chase Co. Leader	82.69	17.31	.00	16.47	3.05
The Meade Globe-News	83.33	16.18	.49	13.06	6.85
The Hoxie Sentinel	89.31	8.57	2.12	14.37	3.73
Osborne Co. Farmer	98.31	1.69	.00	2.24	3.27
<u>With Weekly Competitors:</u>					
The Anderson Countian	96.14	1.91	.95	3.82	23.34
The Alma Signal	70.63	22.47	6.90	19.90	10.26
The Coldwater Talisman	53.18	44.14	2.68	30.10	14.03
Minneapolis Messenger	98.01	1.99	.00	3.01	1.40
The Citizen-Patriot	94.22	5.18	.60	9.42	12.15
<u>With Daily Competitors:</u>					
The Norton Courier	81.13	18.08	.79	14.89	19.14
The Pratt Union	89.77	9.57	.51	11.55	4.70
Lawrence Democrat	74.43	25.57	.00	7.30	18.71
Wilson County Citizen	90.79	4.87	4.34	5.62	5.62
The Dodge City Journal	94.52	.50	5.08	11.15	6.45

An examination of Table IX shows that the amount of plate matter used ranges from 1.69% of total news space to 44.14%, and that nine of the twenty papers fill more than 15% of their news space with this type of material. Five papers devote less than 9% of their space to plate matter and three have less than 3%.

It will be seen by the same table that in every case a paper with a high percentage of plate matter has a high percentage either of magazine material or national-foreign news or both. As already explained, plate matter could scarcely avoid falling into one of these categories. Only by chance could syndicated plate matter ever pertain to the town or county of publication.

Newspaper men and journalists are well aware of the fact that weekly papers are severely criticised for <sup>and</sup> devoting so much of their space to plate matter, <sup>so</sup> it is felt that a lengthy discussion on the subject here is unnecessary. One fact which warrants this criticism is that little time or effort is given <sup>to</sup> its selection by the editor. In fact, the writer knows from experience that much of it is run without any member of the force going to the trouble to read it.

In the analysis of Kansas newspaper content no attention was given the ready-print section of papers which use that service. In other words, a paper with four

pages of home-print and four pages of ready-print was figured as a four-page paper and only the locally printed pages were analyzed. (Only four of the twenty papers studied were of this type.) Almost everyone is aware of the fact that paper can be secured from the Western Newspaper Union, with one side of the sheet already printed, almost as cheaply as the blank paper can be purchased.

While no doubt some rural subscribers read the ready-print section of their home-town paper, in other cases it is undoubtedly true that the editor uses it merely to double the number of pages in his paper. Few editors pay much attention to what appears in the ready-print section, although they have the liberty of designating the types of material they desire used therein.

In a few cases papers which use the ready-print service also use a high percentage of syndicated plate matter. One paper studied in particular has a ready-print section of four pages, and, in addition, of the four pages of home-print, more than 40% is plate matter. It is needless to point out that such a paper is less than 30% a local paper.

Perhaps it is a coincidence, but if so it is an interesting one, that of the six papers with the highest percentage of plate matter, only two have circulations above 600, whereas the six papers with less than 10% plate matter

have subscription lists ranging from 1200 to 2500.

As a whole, Kansas weeklies give little space to cartoons and comics. As shown in Table IX, five of the twenty papers studied carried no cartoon or comic strips, and nine devoted less than 1% to them, while one devoted as high as 8%.

Mr. Courtney, <sup>walker</sup> in his study of Nebraska papers, found an average of 23.8% of total reading space occupied by plate matter, which, he concluded, was too much.<sup>28</sup> Com-

28. Journalism Quarterly, Vol. 7, pp. 299.

binning plate matter with comics and cartoons (it is assumed this is what Mr. Courtney did) it is found that Kansas papers average only 17.39%.<sup>29</sup>

29. It is not possible to compare Kansas and Connecticut figures at this point without considerable difficulty, since Mr. Willey separated each news category on a basis of shop-set or plate matter. That is, state, national and foreign news, as well as magazine material, religious, educational news, etc., were divided to show what percentage of each was shop-set or plate matter. He found, of course, that a high percentage of foreign news, magazine material and such was plate matter, while a high percentage of state, educational and religious news was shop-set. These facts did not warrant such a separation in this study.

TABLE X.

Showing percentage of shop-set material as contrasted <sup>with</sup> plate matter plus cartoons and comics, as found in different classes of Kansas weekly papers.

	Shop-set Reading Matter	Plate Matter, Cartoons & Comics
Small-town papers	74.58	23.36
With weekly competitors	83.05	16.95
Co. seats, no competitors	83.61	16.39
With Daily Competitors	86.15	13.85

While the small-town paper ranks lowest in percentage of shop-set reading matter, and papers with daily competitors rank highest, there is little variation as between groups, showing that <sup>of</sup> users/plate matter are found among all types of papers. The small-town paper, with smaller force and less equipment would be expected to resort more to the over-at-hand plate matter when advertising is low.

#### Advertising and Reading Matter.

The percentage of total space devoted to reading matter is perhaps of sufficient interest to warrant the presenting of Table XI, showing the percentage of space occupied by both news and advertising in Kansas papers.

The statement is often heard that a paper must <sup>of</sup> run close to 60% advertising in order to show a profit, leaving 40% for news. Applying that ratio as a basis, without going into the merits of the case, we find that

only four, or one-fifth of the Kansas papers studied carry an average of 60% or more <sup>of</sup> advertising, but several others come close to it; twelve of the twenty carrying more than 50% advertising. The lowest percentage of advertising found in any paper is 33.83, while the highest is 68.24%.

TABLE XI.

Showing percentages of advertising and reading matter as found in 20 representative Kansas weekly papers.

	Reading Matter	Advertising
<u>Small-town papers:</u>		
The Alton Empire	53.00	47.00
Logan Co. News	42.47	57.53
The Leonardville Monitor	40.86	59.14
The Altamont Journal	56.81	43.19
The Chase Register	31.76	68.24
<u>County seats, unopposed:</u>		
The Oskaloosa Independent	61.45	38.55
Chase County Leader	49.05	50.95
The Meade Globe-News	39.77	60.23
The Hoxie Sentinel	43.78	57.22
Osborne County Farmer	37.34	62.66
<u>With weekly competition:</u>		
The Anderson Countian	57.56	42.44
The Alma Signal	66.13	33.87
The Coldwater Talisman	63.88	36.12
Minneapolis Messenger	40.83	59.17
The Citizen-Patriot	33.60	66.40
<u>With daily competition:</u>		
The Norton Courier	62.46	37.54
The Pratt Union	48.10	51.90
Lawrence Democrat	46.80	53.20
Wilson County Citizen	57.66	42.34
The Dodge City Journal	45.79	54.21

The figures in Table XI do not point definitely to the profitableness of Kansas papers, nor offer basis for comparison, since they are on a percentage basis and some were four-page papers and others eight-page.

It will be found by referring to Table IX, page 41, that as a rule, papers with a high percentage of advertising run little plate matter, although there are exceptions to this rule. This would seem to indicate that editors generally consider plate matter of little value, and eliminate it when space is at a premium. Without doubt the average reader will profit more from reading a paper crammed with ads than he will <sup>from</sup> one crammed with plate matter.

Carrying through our contrast of the four different classes of Kansas newspapers, we present Table XII, showing advertising percentages of the various groups. The news content is, of course, in inverse proportion, as for this particular purpose all space in the paper was figured as either advertising or news.

TABLE XII

Showing percentage of advertising found in the different groups of Kansas papers.

County seat, no Competition . . . . .	54.02%
Small-town . . . . .	52.16%
In daily field. . . . .	47.87%
With weekly competitors . . . . .	47.60%

While the variation between groups is not great, the indications are pretty clear that papers in towns of one paper are in the more favored position.

Religion, Education, <sup>Sports,</sup> Economics, and Politics.

TABLE XIII

Showing the percentage of total reading space devoted by  
20 Kansas papers to religion, education, sports,  
economics, and politics.

	Reli- gious	Educa- tional	Sport	Eco- nomic	Poli- tical
<u>Small-town papers:</u>					
The Alton Empire	7.90	13.01	2.68	13.75	2.43
Logan Co. News	3.50	.74	2.44	12.27	.35
The Leonardville Monitor	7.93	11.18	1.17	13.10	.54
The Altamont Journal	4.69	3.16	4.31	12.59	5.33
The Chase Register	9.36	22.47	5.01	10.87	.00
<u>County seats, unopposed:</u>					
The Oskaloosa Independent	5.24	2.92	6.42	12.62	4.57
Chase County Leader	2.72	4.09	2.47	6.88	5.89
The Meade Globe-News	9.79	16.67	8.46	16.77	1.39
The Hoxie Sentinel	8.06	8.48	2.74	13.71	1.07
Osborne County Farmer	11.05	9.01	3.62	12.90	3.75
<u>With weekly competition:</u>					
The Anderson Countian	7.16	2.70	1.27	15.92	9.40
The Alma Signal	5.77	5.12	.48	8.98	6.26
The Coldwater Talisman	6.68	14.38	.68	8.69	.34
Minneapolis Messenger	6.02	6.02	4.01	6.42	3.41
The Citizen-Patriot	3.03	6.99	6.68	37.99	4.55
<u>With daily competition:</u>					
The Norton Courier	4.52	13.89	.26	17.81	2.92
The Pratt Union	3.89	4.38	2.92	14.61	1.94
Lawrence Democrat	4.10	3.66	.45	35.61	2.26
Wilson County Citizen	5.37	5.11	2.81	8.43	4.60
The Dodge City Journal	2.34	12.72	2.34	20.35	1.95



For the purpose of attempting to get a more accurate check on the socializing influence of the Kansas weekly, we next consider the percentages of space it devotes to the following subjects: religion, education, sports, economics, and politics.

It need scarcely be pointed out that a paper, to be socially significant, must devote considerable space to each of the above types of news. Just what amount a paper should devote to each we may not be able to decide here.

Economic News. As would be expected, economic news is devoted almost entirely to agriculture in Kansas rural weeklies. The economic or farm news is found in the third column of Table XIII, but is shown more graphically in Table XIV.

It will be noticed that two papers devoted more than  $1/3$  of their total reading space to economic news, which is undoubtedly too great a proportion. Five papers devote less than 10% to farm news, but nine fall in the class devoting between 10 and 15%, which, considering the many demands made for the rural weekly's space, is a fair proportion.

It must be said further, that a majority of the farm news found in the Kansas papers is of a high order, being material furnished either by the state's agricultural college, or the local farm agent, and meant to apply specifically to immediate problems.

TABLE XIV.

Showing percentage of economic (farm) news found in 20  
Representative Kansas papers.

With less than 10% Economic News . . . . .	5 Papers
Minneapolis Messenger . . . . .	6.42%
Chase County Leader . . . . .	6.88%
Wilson County Citizen . . . . .	8.43%
The Coldwater Talisman . . . . .	8.69%
The Alma Signal . . . . .	8.96%
With 10% to 15% Economic News . . . . .	9 Papers
The Chase Register . . . . .	10.87%
Logan County News . . . . .	12.27%
The Altamont Journal . . . . .	12.59%
The Oskaloosa Independent . . . . .	12.62%
Osborne County Farmer . . . . .	12.90%
The Leonardville Monitor . . . . .	13.10%
The Hoxie Sentinel . . . . .	13.71%
The Alton Empire . . . . .	13.75%
The Pratt Union . . . . .	14.61%
With 15% to 21% Economic News . . . . .	4 Papers
The Anderson Countian . . . . .	15.92%
The Meade Globe-News . . . . .	16.77%
The Norton Courier . . . . .	17.81%
The Dodge City Journal . . . . .	20.35%
With More than 35% Economic News . . . . .	2 Papers
Lawrence Democrat . . . . .	35.61%
The Citizen Patriot . . . . .	37.99%

A comparison of economic news as found in Kansas and Connecticut papers shows clearly the difference between the two states. In Connecticut, half of the papers devote less than 5% of their space to economic news. In Kansas, no paper (among the 20 studied) devotes as little as 5% to this type of news. Take the farm news from the economic category and papers from the two states would likely rank near the same.

In contrasting the various groups of Kansas weeklies on a basis of economic news the group having daily papers as competitors ranks highest with 19.36% of total reading space devoted to this type of news. The other groups are: papers with weekly competitors, 15.60%; county seat papers, unopposed, 12.57%; small-town papers, 12.51%.

The most interesting fact about the economic or farm news found in the papers studied was the consistency with which a majority of the papers devoted <sup>from</sup> around 12 to 15% of their space to this type of news.

Sports. The amount of space Kansas weeklies devote to sport news is comparatively small, ranging from .26% to 8.46%, but averaging only slightly more than 3%. Most of this is devoted to high school athletics. In this category the county seat papers, unopposed, led with 4.74% of total reading space devoted to sport news. Weeklies with daily competitors pay the least attention to sport, as this group devoted only 1.75% of total space thereto. Papers with weekly competition gave 2.62% to sport, while small-town papers gave 2.67%.

Educational. Column two of Table XIII shows the amounts of space devoted to educational news by each of the twenty papers studied, and surprising variations are found. One paper, the Chase Register, devotes an average of 22.47% of its total reading space to educational news, while The

Logan County News gives only .74% of its space to this category. The average of all papers is 8.33%, with eleven of the twenty papers falling below this average. As a group the small-town papers score heaviest in this category with an average of 10.11% devoted to educational news. Unopposed county seat papers are next, with 8.23%; papers with daily competition, 7.95%; those with weekly competitors, 7.04%.

Religious. As a group Kansas weekly papers devote an average of 5.95% of their total reading space to religious subjects and discussions, with eleven papers again falling below the average. One paper devotes as high as 11.05%, while the lowest is 2.34%. By groups the county seat papers, unopposed, devote the greatest percentage of their space to religion, 7.37%. Small-town papers devote 6.67%; those with weekly competitors 5.71%; and those with daily competitors, 4.04%.

Political. The striking feature of the analysis of political content of twenty Kansas weekly papers is that one paper pays no attention at all to politics, and three others devote less than 1% of their total reading space to politics. The average for all papers is a little less than 3.19%, with small-town papers as a group lowest, with 1.93% of total reading space devoted to political matters. Papers with weekly competitors devote most space to politics, 4.79%; which may be taken as basis for the general belief that

political factions usually are to blame (or thank) for the two-paper towns. However, county seat papers unopposed devote almost as much space to politics, 3.34%. Weekly papers competing with dailies devote only 2.73%.

Club and Lodge News, Human Interest or Feature Material,  
Editorial, Personal Mention, and Magazine Material  
Club and Lodge News.

The inconsistency of the rural press in apportioning its space to various news categories is extraordinary, as has been shown throughout this study. The amount of space devoted to club and lodge news, as shown in column #1 of Table XV is a typical example. Three papers devote less than 2% of total reading space to club and lodge news, with one devoting only .96% to this type of news. At the other extreme, three devote more than 10% of all reading space to club and lodge news, with one devoting 13.98%. The average for all the twenty papers studied is 5.75%, with 13 falling below the average and 7 going above. It is difficult to say just how much space a paper should devote to reporting the activities of clubs and lodges. It is a well known fact that every small town has close to a half dozen fraternal orders and perhaps a greater number of clubs and societies of various sorts. They are a news source which should be covered briefly and concisely, yet

TABLE XV

Showing percentage of total space devoted by 20 representative Kansas papers to: Club and lodge news, human interest or feature material, editorial opinion, personal news, and magazine material.

	Clubs Lodges	Fea- ture	Edi- torial	Per- sonal	Magazine material
<u>Small-town papers:</u>					
The Alton Empire	1.92	5.61	8.54	29.48	14.51
Logan County News	1.99	4.17	13.71	18.64	35.00
The Leonardville Monitor	4.27	.29	5.03	37.59	17.93
The Altamont Journal	4.17	2.80	17.01	45.09	.77
The Chase Register	2.63	.50	4.12	24.30	21.93
<u>County seats, unopposed</u>					
The Oskaloosa Independent	5.01	1.19	5.79	27.48	28.65
Chase County Leader	8.64	3.13	8.94	41.07	16.47
The Meade Globe-News	6.25	3.08	9.67	18.83	13.06
The Hoxie Sentinel	7.10	1.56	11.40	34.86	14.37
Osborne County Farmer	5.67	3.78	9.70	38.03	2.24
<u>With weekly competitors:</u>					
The Anderson Countian	5.25	1.91	9.22	43.31	3.82
The Alma Signal	.96	2.24	6.58	43.17	19.90
The Coldwater Talisman	10.70	10.03	1.02	16.38	30.10
Minneapolis Messenger	10.84	.01	3.81	56.82	3.01
The Citizen Patriot	13.98	.60	8.81	8.81	9.42
<u>With Daily competitors:</u>					
The Norton Courier	3.19	3.98	10.90	26.60	14.89
The Pratt Union	4.70	.97	16.55	38.14	11.85
Lawrence Democrat	4.58	.46	20.09	20.54	7.30
Wilson County Citizen	8.69	2.15	.50	56.02	5.62
The Dodge City Journal	4.53	12.32	7.04	29.55	6.45

yet adequately. The papers which devote less than 2% of reading space to this type of news are overlooking a good news source. Again, the paper which devotes nearly 14% of all its reading space to this type of news will likely slight other important news. In fact, the one paper which devoted

13.98% of its reading space to clubs and lodges gave only 6.99% (see Table XIII) to education and 3.03% to religion. By no stretch of the imagination could one conceive the clubs and lodges of a community as being worthy of more space than the educational institutions and all the churches combined.

Comparing the four classes of papers studied on the basis of space devoted to clubs and lodges, we find them ranking as follows:

Small-town papers . . . . .	2.99%
With daily competitors. . . . .	5.13%
County seats, unopposed . . . . .	6.53%
With weekly competitors . . . . .	8.34%

Feature Material. It was many years ago that Greeley said in telling a young friend how to run a country weekly, "... Obtain and print a brief historical and statistical account of each township—who first settled it, who have been its prominent citizens, who obtained advanced years therein, etc." A clear admonition not to overlook the importance of feature material, yet in a majority of Kansas weeklies the advice goes unheeded. As shown in column #2 of Table XV, six out of the twenty papers studied devote less than 1% -- one inch out of a hundred -- to feature material. With an average of 3.03% for all papers, twelve fall below this average. Two papers devote more than 10% of their space to human interest or feature material. Little contrast is found among the classes of papers, i. e., small-

town papers, county seat papers unopposed, papers with daily competitors. The paper with the highest percentage of feature material is found in the group competing with daily papers, but in the same group are found two papers with less than 1% of space devoted to this type of material.

The type of material classified as feature or human interest was purely local, shop-set material, the object being to discover what attention was being given this type of news by the editor. Much of the plate-matter and syndicated material of various sorts could, quite properly, have been included, and would have materially increased the percentages. Such material was not included for the reason that we are more interested in what the editor himself is doing along the feature line than we are in what syndicates are furnishing. Obviously, the feature material furnished by outside agencies can be only general, in interest, and cannot, except in rare instances, be of specific local application. Practically every community offers scores of possibilities for feature stories, based on old buildings and landmarks, pioneer residents, early settlers, and the "good old days," as we all so enthusiastically look back to them, whether we be thirty or ninety years of age. It is a well-known fact that whenever and wherever old acquaintances get together, the time is spent talking of by-gone days and the future is left largely to



care for itself (unless it be near election time!) Obviously, the weekly paper, if it hopes to be a vital and necessary part of its community, cannot afford to pass up the opportunity to join in the discussion of the "good old days." And, of course, this represents merely one type of feature material. The field is wide, and offers the country editor unlimited opportunity to build up reader interest. Much desirable material for feature articles and stories will come to a paper unsolicited, when readers find the editor is interested in it.

As an example, in one of the papers studied, The Alton Empire, was found an interesting series of feature articles carried on almost by their own momentum. An article appeared in a Salina paper concerning an old wooden chest found in that vicinity. Immediately, a resident of the Alton community reported to the editor of The Alton Empire that he owned a similar chest, containing old township and school records of historical value. The fact was duly recorded in The Empire, and the week following, another resident reported some antiquated article in the possession of his family. So it went, for several weeks, each succeeding story resulting in others being turned in.<sup>30</sup>

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30. See four issues The Alton Empire, for Feb., 1931.

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C. E. Williams, veteran correspondent for both The Alton Empire and the Osborne County Farmer, is the source for

many fine feature articles which appear in these two papers. His stories deal usually with first buildings, first settlers, <sup>with</sup> how towns, settlements and communities received their names, pioneer hardships and privations, and <sup>with</sup> humorous and pathetic incidents which have happened in the county. However, he has been known to take the University of Kansas student directory and write a very readable story on the names found there.

TABLE XVI.

Showing percentage of space devoted by 20 representative Kansas weekly newspapers to the personal news item.

Less than 20%	4 Papers
The Citizen Patriot . . . . .	8.81%
The Coldwater Talisman. . . . .	16.38%
Logan County News . . . . .	18.64%
The Meade Globe-News. . . . .	18.83%
20 to 30%	6 Papers
Lawrence Democrat . . . . .	20.54%
The Chase Register. . . . .	24.30%
The Norton Courier. . . . .	26.60%
The Oskaloosa Independent . . . . .	27.48%
The Alton Empire. . . . .	29.48%
The Dodge City Journal. . . . .	29.55%
30 to 40%	4 Papers
The Hoxie Sentinel. . . . .	34.86%
The Leonardville Monitor. . . . .	37.59%
Osborne County Farmer . . . . .	38.04%
The Pratt Union . . . . .	38.14%
40 to 50%	4 Papers
Chase County Leader . . . . .	41.07%
The Alma Signal . . . . .	43.17%
The Anderson Countian . . . . .	43.31%
The Altamont Journal. . . . .	45.09%
More than 50%	2 Papers
Wilson County Citizen . . . . .	56.02%
Minneapolis Messenger . . . . .	56.82%

Personals.. News of the "interest in persons" category, as would be expected, ranks consistently high in all the papers studied, except one, which devoted only 8.81% of total space to the short, gossipy personal news note. The amount of space devoted to this type of news is shown in column #4 of Table XV, but more clearly in Table XXI, where it will be seen that four papers only devote less than 20% to the personal item; six between 20 and 30%; four, 30 to 40%; four 40 to 50%; and two, more than 56%.

This is in striking contrast to the findings of Willey in his study of Connecticut papers.<sup>31</sup> Only one out

31. Willey, *The Country Newspaper*, p. 105.

of thirty-five Connecticut papers devoted more than 19% of its total reading space to the "interest in persons" category, two devoted less than 3%, and 15 devoted less than 10%.

Mr. Courtney<sup>walker</sup> found that Nebraska papers devoted from 14 to 58% of their space to personal news, with a majority of them devoting between 30 and 35%, which approximates the situation in Kansas.<sup>32</sup>

32. *Journalism Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 4  
December, 1930, p. 301.

Evidently Connecticut inhabitants are less interested in seeing their daily goings and comings recorded in

the personal column of the home-town newspaper, as all Connecticut papers rank far below the average Kansas or Nebraska paper in presenting this type of news. It is surmised that there is not the friendly community interest in the East that is found in the Middle West, of which Kansas and Nebraska are representative. In Kansas or Nebraska there is a community spirit which goes far towards leveling social and financial inequalities, and allows the home-town paper more freedom in recording the happenings about town. Racial and social differences are less easily surmounted farther east.

Magazine Material. Under this category is included material which is not news in the strictest sense in that it gives no account of a timely event, but gives an interesting fact of some nature. Material of special interest to women is included. (See appendix for fuller description.)

It has previously been shown that there is a strong positive correlation between the amounts of national and foreign news and plate matter as found in Kansas weekly papers. It will now be shown that there is even a stronger positive correlation between plate matter and magazine material.

To bring out this point Table XVII is presented, giving only the amounts of plate matter and magazine material

as found in the twenty papers studied. Only a glance is required to note the close relationship between amounts of plate matter and magazine material in the various papers. As a matter of fact, in nine out of the twenty papers studied, there is a variation of less than 2% between the total amounts of plate matter and magazine material.

TABLE XVII.

Showing positive correlation between amounts of magazine material and plate matter as found in 20 representative Kansas papers.

Paper	Plate Matter	Magazine Material
The Altamont Journal	2.20	.77
Osborne County Farmer	1.69	2.24
Minneapolis Messenger	1.99	3.01
The Anderson Countian	1.91	3.82
Wilson County Citizen	4.87	5.62
The Dodge City Journal	.50	6.45
Lawrence Democrat	25.57	7.30
The Citizen-Patriot	5.18	9.42
The Pratt Union	9.57	11.85
The Meade Globe-News	16.18	13.06
The Hoxie Sentinel	8.57	14.37
The Alton Empire	20.22	14.51
The Norton Courier	18.08	14.89
Chase County Leader	17.31	16.47
The Leonardville Monitor	17.60	17.93
The Alma Signal	22.47	19.90
The Chase Register	23.00	21.93
The Oskaloosa Independent	29.21	28.65
The Coldwater Talisman	44.14	30.10
Logan County News	40.68	35.00

From one point of view, we might contend that the editor is wise in securing his magazine material in plate form, for undoubtedly it is thus secured much <sup>more</sup> cheaply than it could be put into type in his own plant, and the quality is unquestionably better.

We fear, however, that magazine material is printed with little thought other than to "fill up" the pages, for if an editor were carefully choosing his material it is doubtful if he would devote so high a percentage of his space to material so general in its interest. Fourteen of the twenty papers studied give more space to magazine material than to either religious or educational material; in five of them the total amount of magazine material exceeds the space devoted to personal news, and in three, it exceeds the space devoted to local news — news originating in or about the community of publication.

As will be seen in Table XVII, twelve of the twenty papers studied devote more than 10% of their total reading space to magazine material, while four of them devote more than 20% to it, one devoting 35%.

The question naturally arises, how much more could the papers which devote 30% of their space to this material accomplish if that space were devoted to live local news? It is likely that 10% of total space devoted to magazine material would be more than sufficient. It will

be noted that the Altamont Journal, the big-little paper with 1500 circulation at \$2.00 each, in a town of only 598 population, devoted less than 1% <sup>of its space</sup> to magazine material. The Osborne County Farmer, another outstanding paper, devotes only 2.24%.

Little is gained by contrasting the different groups of papers studied on the basis of magazine material. We find weeklies in the daily field low with 9.42%; weeklies with weekly competitors next, with 13.25%; county seat papers unopposed carry 14.96%, and the small-town paper ranks highest with 18.03%.

Though we be tempted to censure Kansas weekly papers for the large amount of space they devote to magazine material, they are on an infinitely higher plane in this respect than are Connecticut weeklies. Mr. Willey discovered, to his dismay<sup>33</sup> that eight of the thirty-five Connecticut papers

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33. See Willey, The Country Newspaper, p. 66 f.

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devoted more than 50% of their space to magazine material, and that more than half of them devoted one-third or more of their space to this type of material. Only one Kansas paper devoted as much as one-third of its space to magazine material; 35% was the most any Kansas paper devoted, whereas one Connecticut paper devoted as high as 71%, and another carried 65%.<sup>34</sup>

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34. It is possible that some of the Connecticut papers which ranked so high in magazine material content carried ready-print sections, which were included in the analysis of the paper. Ready-print sections or "patent insides," as they are frequently referred to, would naturally boost sky-high the total magazine material. In the Kansas study the ready-print sections of the four papers which used them, were not analyzed. This action has been already partly explained. An 8-page paper with 4 pages ready-print is usually found in a town which warrants only a 4-page paper. The additional four pages of ready-print is just that much "thrown in for good measure" by the editor because it costs little more, and makes the paper appear twice as large.

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Little contrast is to be found between Kansas and Nebraska papers on the basis of magazine material. Seven Nebraska "papers established the mode at between 10% and 15%," according to Mr. Courtney.<sup>35</sup>

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35. Journalism Quarterly, Vol. 7, No.4, Dec. 1930  
p. 302.

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### Editorial.

Discussion of the editorial content of Kansas weekly papers has purposely been reserved until last, in order that this phase of the study might be developed somewhat more fully.

In the first place, it is realized that listing the number of column inches the average paper devotes to editorial material does not begin to tell the whole story. Editorial



material can be roughly classified under four sub-categories: (1) Original editorials by the editor, (2) editorials clipped from other papers and magazines, (3) opinion expressed in communications to the editor, and (4) syndicated editorials.

TABLE XVIII.

Showing the percentage of editorial material found in 20 representative Kansas weekly papers.

Paper	% Editorial matter
<u>Small-town papers:</u>	
The Alton Empire . . . . .	7.54%
Logan County News . . . . .	13.71
The Leonardville Monitor . . . . .	5.03
The Altamont Journal . . . . .	17.01
The Chase Register . . . . .	4.12
<u>County-seat papers, unopposed:</u>	
The Oskaloosa Independent . . . . .	5.79
Chase County Leader . . . . .	8.94
The Meade Globe-News . . . . .	9.67
The Hoxie Sentinel . . . . .	11.40
Osborne County Farmer . . . . .	9.70
<u>With weekly competitors:</u>	
The Anderson Countian . . . . .	5.89
The Alma Signal . . . . .	6.58
The Coldwater Talisman . . . . .	1.02
Minneapolis Messenger . . . . .	3.81
The Citizen-Patriot . . . . .	8.81
<u>With daily competitors:</u>	
The Norton Courier . . . . .	10.90
The Pratt Union . . . . .	16.55
Lawrence Democrat . . . . .	20.09
Wilson County Citizen . . . . .	.50
The Dodge City Journal . . . . .	7.04

It was found next to impossible to tabulate the editorial content of the twenty papers studied, separated into the above four sub-categories, owing to the fact that material in the various categories was frequently not found in measurable quantities. We submit, therefore, in beginning this discussion, Table XVIII, showing the amounts of all editorial material found in the twenty papers studied.

It will be seen that all but five of the twenty papers devote 5% or more of their reading space to editorial material, and that three devote more than 15%. For a 4-page paper, 5% of the total reading space would be slightly more than one-half of one column. In an 8-page paper it would be more than one column.

In view of the fact that half of the papers devote more than 8% of their space to editorial matter, and that as a group they average 9.55%, little fault can be found with the amount of space devoted to editorial opinion. If the subject could be dismissed without further consideration, we would be forced to the conclusion that Kansas weekly papers are assuming a position of constructive leadership, and undoubtedly are strong socializing factors.

A careful reading of the editorial matter in the twenty papers studied soon dispels any such illusion. To begin with, it was discovered that a scant one-half of all the editorial matter was written by the editor. The other

half is clipped from papers, magazines and publicity sheets sent out from one source or another. Of the half which is original, much of it is of the humorous-column type, with an occasional constructive treatment of a local problem.

TABLE XIX.

Showing the percentage of editorial material in Kansas papers, presented graphically.

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Less than 5%	4 Papers
Wilson County Citizen . . . . .	.50%
The Coldwater Talisman . . . . .	1.02
Minneapolis Messenger . . . . .	3.81
The Chase Register . . . . .	4.12
5 to 10%	10 Papers
The Leonardville Monitor . . . . .	5.06%
The Oskaloosa Independent . . . . .	5.79
The Anderson Countian . . . . .	5.89
The Alma Signal . . . . .	6.58
The Dodge City Journal . . . . .	7.04
The Alton Empire . . . . .	7.54
The Citizen-Patriot . . . . .	8.81
Chase County Leader . . . . .	8.94
The Meade Globe-News . . . . .	9.67
Osborne County Farmer . . . . .	9.70
10 to 15%	3 Papers
The Norton Courier . . . . .	10.90
The Hoxie Sentinel . . . . .	11.40
Logan County News . . . . .	13.71
15 to 21%	3 Papers
The Pratt Union . . . . .	16.55%
The Altamont Journal . . . . .	17.01
Lawrence Democrat . . . . .	20.09

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Those original editorials which are not of the short, wise-cracking paragraph type, deal to a large extent with such subjects as: The Economic depression, high taxes, the high

automobile death rate, the plight of the farmer, and Kansas blue-sky laws. Rarely, indeed, is a vital local problem discussed in a straight-forward, forceful manner.

After a careful study had been made of the twenty papers on which the foregoing portion of this study is based, it was felt that perhaps the project should be enlarged to determine whether or not the twenty papers gave an adequate picture of conditions over the entire state.

Accordingly, some 200 papers, all that are available in the University of Kansas library reading room, were checked. Nothing was found which seemed to change the conclusions already reached. For one thing, it was discovered that 95 out of the 200 papers made no pretense at maintaining an editorial column of any sort. The other 105 had editorial columns, filled with the types of material already mentioned.<sup>36</sup> The content of the average Kansas

36. In this check all papers with a column that could, by any stretch of the imagination be considered editorial, were counted as having editorial columns.

weekly editorial column will now be discussed somewhat at length.

Editorializing the news. For a great many years the idea has prevailed that weekly papers, while not maintaining an editorial column, freely editorialize their news. A study of Kansas weekly papers impresses one that this is

not the case. While this practice is occasionally resorted to by some editors who might be termed "of the old school," the "younger crop" of Kansas editors either have an editorial column or else opinion material is almost wholly absent from the papers. To say the least, they do not practice mixing their comment with two-thirds of the news items.

News from the State House. Approximately one-third of the Kansas papers carry columns of State news, written by various men in Topeka. Some of these columns are 99% news, and are correctly treated as such by the papers using them. A majority, however, are flavored politically to the extent that they should be treated as editorial material. A few papers evidently realize this fact, and place them in an editorial position. Others treat them as news. All such columns seemingly carry a "by" line, enabling the reader to know the exact source of the material he is reading.

Communications to the Editor. The absence of original opinion expressed by the editor is paralleled by a lack of expressed opinion by his subscribers. Only infrequently does a communication to the editor appear in the Kansas rural press.

The Paragrapher's Sprightly Art. Without being thoroughly conversant with the condition in other states, we are tempted to label Kansas the premier state in the

production of luscious, spicy paragraphs—short comments on any and all subjects with a decidedly humorous twang.

Seven of the twenty papers on which this study is based have original editorial columns of the short paragraph variety. Not given entirely to witticisms, but predominantly so; occasional constructive paragraphs are found in most of them, and three papers have longer editorials as the occasion demands.

Casting about for a motivating force for the interest in humorous paragraphs, attention is directed to the fact that a majority of the dailies of the State have columns in which the most juicy of the weekly paragraphs are copied. Topping the list is the Kansas City Star, with its "Kansas Notes" column, in which a great many Kansas weekly and daily papers find their best efforts reproduced. Just how great an incentive this situation furnishes is difficult to say. Without doubt, it furnishes some incentive for the writing of this type of material.

Clipped Editorials. As previously pointed out, one-half of all the editorial material appearing in Kansas weekly papers is clipped from magazines, publications, and various other sources. Sad to relate, a part of this turns out to be free publicity material from the publication of which persons other than the editor reap a profit.

As a typical example a dissertation recently appeared in several Kansas weekly papers (at least two in this study<sup>37</sup>) with the opening statement:

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37. See The Meade Globe-News for Feb. 12, 1931, and The Coldwater Tallisman, same date.

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"There is good authority for the statement that fully 87 per cent of all personal property that the people of the United States leave to others when they pass on is in the form of life protection."

Then followed several paragraphs (about as many as the editor probably had<sup>read</sup> before reaching for his scissors and glue pot) dealing with the value of life insurance in general. All of which sounded like fair editorial filler, but no doubt a few editors were surprised when they saw the last paragraph of this filler, after it appeared in the paper. It read:

"The experience of Modern Woodmen of America, the world's largest fraternal insurance society, with more than a billion dollars of life insurance protection in force in distributing the sum of \$455,000,000 in death benefits to beneficiaries during a period of 48 years, shows the great protective principle in operation of that vast sum, 90 per cent went to widows and children and the remaining 10 per cent to blood relatives and dependents of certificate holders."

Fortunately not all clipped editorials are so subject to criticism. The busy editor may perhaps be excused, if, in the day's rush he clips an editorial from a paper in an adjoining county which exactly expresses his own opinion of the Kansas blue-sky law, instead of taking time to write his own.

An editor can be readily forgiven for clipping an editorial which reiterates his own often-expressed contentions as to why people should subscribe for or advertise in the home-town paper. He may even feel that it carries more weight because it proves that other editors believe and argue the same as he does.

Whatever the reason, the fact remains that many Kansas editors are prone to clip editorials with which they agree, rather than write their own. Be it said, also, in their favor, they usually give credit by attaching the name of the paper from which the article is taken. Some clipped material appears in Kansas papers without a credit line, but it is philosophical material of a general nature to which no paper has a claim of originality.

The Constructive, Original, Editorial. Although they be relatively few in numbers, there are Kansas weekly papers which assume a constructive leadership in community affairs, and reflect this leadership through their editorial columns. Not all of them are in large towns, either.

The Altamont Journal has frequently been referred to in this study as one of the best, considering the size of the town in which it is published. It devotes 17% of its space to editorial material, and does not hesitate to be a bit in advance of the crowd with its views. The following is a typical example of boxed editorials, frequently found on its front page:



"Why Not a Community Auction: A Community Auction for Altamont should be arranged for this spring and summer. Altamont, located in the center of the county is an ideal place for a community public auction of all kinds of live stock and other articles. With cooperation and boosting, an auction in Altamont would grow to be a big monthly event, and people for miles around would come here to buy at the auction as well as buy from the merchants. One of the things most desired for a successful public auction is a first rate auctioneer, and this community has one of the very best in Col. Dave Christmann.

"Commercial club members, business men and citizens, let's get something started. We must work and pull together for the best little town in Kansas. Let's go." 38

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38. The Altamont Journal. Feb. 19, 1931.

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The above type of editorial naturally would not be found in any rural paper every week. Only a paper already in a position of leadership could hope to achieve attention by its use, and then only infrequently.

Week in and week out, a paper could best devote its editorial column to explaining and interpreting the industrial, economic and social position in which we find ourselves. Then, when occasion demanded it could expect to secure prompt action by such an editorial as the above.

A fact too obvious to be overlooked in this connection is that the papers with vigorous, original editorial columns are edited by men who are themselves vigorous and energetic natural-born leaders, so to speak. They are men who play in or direct the community band, serve on the City Council, and are active in about every civic and fraternal organization in town.

It is equally obvious that not all country editors have the physical and mental qualities to fill such a niche. If they did, many of them would not be inclined to remain in a small town. It is as impossible to mould all country editors into natural-born leaders as it would be so to mould any other group picked at random.

Summary. When two-thirds of the editors of the State do not assume an active leadership editorially it is a bit difficult to argue convincingly that they are all wrong. The situation is somewhat analagous to <sup>that of</sup> the war-time mother who proudly watched her son march away to war, with colors flying and the band playing, then exclaimed "Did you notice, they were all out of step but Jim?"

Nevertheless, there is something to be said on both sides of the question. Weighing heavily on the one side we have the one-third who believe that a carefully edited, constructive editorial column is a decided asset to a weekly paper.

The possibilities of the editorial column are well summed up in the following statement, with which the writer heartily agrees:

"Newspapers by their editorials can perform two peculiarly important services to the public. First, they can show the relation of the state, national, and international questions to the home and business interests of the readers . . . . . Second, newspapers in their editorials can point out the connection between local questions and state-wide, nation-wide, or world-wide movements. Only as questions at issue in a community are shown in their

relation to larger tendencies, will the average reader see them in a perspective that will enable him to think and act most intelligently."<sup>39</sup>

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39. W. G. Bleyer, The Profession of Journalism, P. 12.

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Nevertheless, a great many Kansas editors with years of experience seem to agree more with the statement once made by Don C. Seitz:

"Have no editorials unless they be little elaborations of facts. The tendency to blow the bugle is almost irresistible if the horn is handy ..... The small community is a sensitive community. The editorial lash cuts it more deeply than any blow that can be dealt. Lay low and print the news ..... Do not try to improve the community any faster than it wants to be improved..... This does not mean that a man need be a coward or a sneak because he runs a country paper. It means that the community does not require his advice or his guidance and that when he tries to sell it something it does not want he makes a mistake. They do want the news and they will pay for it." 40

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40. Don C. Seitz, Training for the Newspaper Trade, p. 154.

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Additional comment relative to the value of an editorial page in the country will be found in the concluding chapter, under the discussion of "newspaper personality."

## CHAPTER VI

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE SMALL-TOWN PAPER.

One is all but convinced, after reading even a portion of the criticism that has been directed toward the country newspaper, that practically everybody knows exactly how a small-town paper should be run—that is, everybody except the men who are running it. . . . As one editor recently remarked, "It is easy to learn in a short time all about how to edit a country weekly—all you have to do is ask someone who never edited one."

Let it be believed that what is said in this chapter is entirely the criticism of an "onlooker," let it be said now, that eight years from the "inside" of the country weekly contribute to the tempering of whatever criticisms <sup>here</sup> are made.

The criticisms which may justly be aimed at the average country weekly paper fall chiefly under the following headings, each of which will be discussed in turn more fully:

- There is
1. Lack of journalistic training or aptitude.
  2. The business or "front-end" is neglected for the "back office."
  3. New methods and improvements are accepted with great hesitancy.

1. "There is lack of Journalistic Training and Aptitude." Everyone is familiar with ex-lawyers, ex-school teachers, ex-politicians, and ex-postmasters who sometime or other found themselves with nothing much to do and decided to become newspaper editors. In the case of the postmaster, he probably turned "editor" first, in order better to boost the proper politicians and thus earn the postmastership, or else, after securing his job, bought a paper to help keep it.

The surprising thing about such a condition is that such transplanted newspaper editors succeed as well as they do.

It would be out of place to argue that every newspaper editor or owner should be a graduate of a school of journalism, but it is a truism that the more training, the more background, a man has for any job, the greater will be his success. Part of his training may be obtained in a university, or it may be all from actual experience; in either case he should be trained, and should study thoroughly the business he expects to enter.

In this twentieth century no man expects to become a lawyer, a doctor, or a preacher without several years of training for the job. It is realized that, even though it were permitted, a man entering one of those professions without training would not be able to hold his own with his competitors. The same is coming to be more and more true in

all businesses and professions, although the weekly newspaper lags somewhat behind the procession. If a man owns the only paper in a small town and refuses to sell, nothing can be done about it, regardless of how poor a newspaper man he may be. It isn't as easy to bring in a new newspaper as it is a new lawyer or a new doctor.

It is a well-known fact that the country editor is a busy man. Besides being his own editor, manager, advertising solicitor and bookkeeper, he is frequently, also, linotype operator and pressman. With all these duties he should, by all means, be highly skilled at news gathering and writing, as well as at "ad" writing and soliciting, in order to accomplish the utmost along these lines in the limited time he has at his disposal.

A young man of the writer's acquaintance is "getting over" in a big way as editor of an Illinois weekly because, in addition to thorough training, he took with him to the job several months' experience as reporter for the International News Service, where he had learned to think and write with great speed -- he already wrote well.

The country editor, unless particularly fitted by aptitude for his life work, should, in order to render the greatest service and get the most enjoyment from his profession, be well trained for his work. Education in this sense, may be said to mean profiting by the other

person's experiences without having the same experience yourself.

For example, a recent book on the market<sup>41</sup> deals

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41. The Country Newspaper and Its Operation, by J. C. Safely. D. Appleton and Company, 1930.

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specifically with the problems of the country editor. The author, after many successful years as editor and owner of country papers, tells concisely his solution of many problems which confront every country editor. Every editor should read it, but few will.

There are many such books dealing with news sources, how to handle various types of news stories, feature material, editorials, newspaper problems, and better business methods. Most of them are written by men of practical experience and any editor who reads even one of them thus secures a short-cut to conclusions he would require several years of painful experience to reach.

If he reads any number of such books, he acquires a small education which means he is able to profit by the other person's experiences, as well as by his own.

Weekly editors in particular need to secure a sense of news values and of how to handle various types of news stories. And, as has been called to their attention times without number, a majority of them need to adopt some headline scheme or style—not necessarily bold, screamer

heads--but headlines of some sort.

In one small Kansas town some time ago, a minor railroad crossing accident occurred. It was the first one in the history of the town, since the railroad is a small branch line, with two trains a day. Rather miraculously, no one was killed, although three or four were painfully injured.

The following issue of the local paper carried a two-paragraph account of the accident, buried on an inside page, with no headline whatever. The same paper later carried a three or four-line announcement to the effect that the local postoffice had been moved, but failed to say where. Former residents of the town naturally wondered what building the postoffice had gone into, or, perhaps, if it had been moved to a neighboring town!

The above examples are only two instances of inadequate news handling. A half-hour's reading in any good journalism text book would lead to discovery of the importance of "who, what, where, when, why, how," as regards news writing, and would be a half-hour profitably spent.

2. "The business or "front end" is neglected for the "back office." Several small-town newspaper editors were interviewed on this particular point. A majority of them talked while making-up pages, feeding job presses,



or running a linotype, and were strong in their belief that they were \$30.00 a week ahead of where they would be if they paid an average printer that amount to assume responsibility for the back office.\*

One man, who has owned a half-dozen or more weekly papers at various times, and made money on each, was emphatic in his statement, "The front-office is where the money is to be made, if any is, and don't let anyone tell you differently."

He did not mean by his statement that the average country editor can profit financially by hiring all his back-office work done, but he did mean that the business must be looked after first, must be pushed and pushed hard by the editor-owner. If he can find time after that to help out in the back-office, well and good.

It is likely that a paper grossing \$9,000 annually or above will profit most by the editor-owner devoting practically his entire time to the business end. One grossing below that, as one editor put it, "is a hard proposition to buck," for the owner must economize by doing part of the back-office work himself. Then in times of stress, either front or back office duties must be neglected, and it appears easier to neglect the front office without inviting immediate disaster.

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\* A small newspaper is usually thought of as having only two departments, the editor's office, where he keeps books, prepares copy, and carries on his business transactions, and the mechanical department, where the type is set, and the paper printed. These are frequently referred to as "business- or front-end," and "shop, or back-office."

It can easily be surmised that the neglect of front-office duties costs the average small-town publisher many dollars annually. National advertising agencies, for instance, claim they are practically prohibited from placing more advertising with the smaller newspapers by the latter's poor bookkeeping systems and slipshod methods of doing business; that checking copies are not forwarded promptly and properly rendered, are two of the oft-repeated charges.

Following is the statement of a man who placed several thousand dollars worth of advertising in weekly papers during 1930:

"I placed last month a display campaign in 56 papers, with the schedule ending Nov. 14. On Dec. 19, I had not received statements from 10 of the publications, the list of delinquents having been reduced by 4 in response to a letter Dec. 11 in which all were requested to forward statements with tear sheets. Six of these delinquent publishers are in Kansas. Can it be that the need for money in business does not affect these publications?"

"Another troublesome factor in this same campaign was the tendency to disregard use of the definite address to which statements and tear sheets were sent. Conformity to the request enabled us to mail checks the day after the statements were received; while statements to the Company instead of the specific department were delayed as much as eight days in reaching us for payment.

"If publishers would realize that we are buying a service, they would make that service good from the acknowledgment of the order to receipt of payment for the space used." 42

Dealing with various advertising agencies makes system almost impossible with the country editor. Some agencies demand statements as soon as the ad has been published; others want them the first of the following month. Some want checking copies of each issue of a paper containing an advertisement, as it is published. Others want only "tear sheets," (pages torn from the paper) and want these mailed with the statement. The publisher about has to make over his bookkeeping system for each agency he deals with.

One large advertising agency recently volunteered the following information, and it was published in many periodicals and magazines which reach the country editor:

"We are sent thousands of checking pages without date-lines, and hundreds of bills are carelessly made out in the publisher's office. As a suggestion: Be sure that every page in your paper carries a date line which shows:

1. Name of the paper.
2. Name of the town.
3. Name of the state.
4. Date of publication.

If you do this fully 50% of the trouble we now have in checking will be done away with.

"As a suggestion in billing, be sure that your bill shows:

1. Name of the town.
2. Name of the state.
3. Name of account be billed.
4. Date of insertion.
5. Space billed on each date.
6. Rate at which service is billed.
7. Cash discount rate." 43

But, sad to relate, advice such as the above goes largely unheeded. A check on Kansas weekly papers shows that only one-third of them carry a folio or running head at the top of each page, giving the requested information—information which a folio should carry anyway, whether the editor ever intended to obtain an inch of foreign advertising or not. Several papers in Kansas carry no folio of any sort. In other words, only by turning to the front page can the name of the paper, date and location of publication be determined. An advertising agency which had taken and filed a "tear sheet" from such a paper, without going to the trouble to write on the desired information, would <sup>later</sup> find it of no value whatever. Obviously, it is too cumbersome in an office where hundreds of papers are received for checking purposes to file the entire paper.

The complaint is frequently made that, due to poor business methods, it is difficult to subscribe for a small-town paper and get it started coming, and next to impossible to stop one after it gets started. Such accusations are, no doubt, overdrawn, and are based on one such experience only. However, among several examples of poor attention to business uncovered in this study was one in which a subscriber mailed a check to an editor, requesting that the paper be sent to a relative. Two additional letters and a visit to the office were required before the paper was actually started. The

visit found the editor too engrossed in back-office details to give much attention to his visitor.

A survey of the country press of New York State showed that the average editor devoted 20 hours a week to editorial work, 17 to mechanical work on the paper, and 19 to job work, <sup>44</sup> making a 56-hour week, and allowing no time

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44. M. V. Atwood, The Country Newspaper, p. 6.

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for business supervision. Many editors do their bookkeeping and answer correspondence at home after work hours.

The country editor who appended to his questionnaire the statement, "500% overworked," was probably exaggerating only slightly. Two suggestions are offered the country editor who feels <sup>that</sup> ~~he~~ must keep his nose to the grindstone in the back-office in addition to his other duties, in order to make ends meet.

(1) He should give a fair trial to the proposition of devoting his time and efforts to the front-office—editing a better paper, mixing more with his advertisers and subscribers, present and prospective, and conscientiously and energetically attempting to secure more business. He is apt to find that his time thus spent will earn more than the \$30.00 a week he would save by replacing a printer in the back-office.

(2) He should charge enough for his services (for

his advertising space and for his newspaper) to yield a profit sufficient to pay himself a living wage for his front-office work.

Instead, however, too many small-town editors have their capital invested, stand all the risks of the business, perform their writing, editing, and other duties connected with the business in a perfunctory manner, <sup>and</sup> then in addition hold down a full-time job as printer, receive a printer's wages for it all, and think they are making money.

No other business is conducted in such a manner, and no one is to blame for the newspaper owner's plight but himself.

A check of 288 Kansas weekly papers reveals that only 16% receive \$2.00 a year for subscriptions, while 9% ask only \$1.00. About 60% receive \$1.50. Two dollars per year should be a standard price for all but the very smallest papers, and they should receive \$1.50. The editors who didn't raise to those prices during the war years have no one to blame but themselves.

In checking Kansas papers for subscription rates, it was surprising, indeed, to find that 15% of them do not carry this information. In other words, there are approximately 60 papers in the State of Kansas for which a newcomer to the neighborhood could not subscribe without either

making a special trip to the office of publication or writing the editor a letter to ask his subscription price.

There are also thirty or more papers in the State enjoying second-class mailing privileges without going to the trouble of carrying, in their mast head, or elsewhere, the second-class mailing permit, as required by postal regulations. Only the laxness of the local postmaster and the fact that third and fourth assistant postmaster generals are already overworked and too busy to take notice, permits their being mailed.

3. "New Methods and Improvements are Accepted With Great Hesitancy." Apologies are often made for the small-town paper to the effect that "the editors and owners are really just printers, and not editors or journalists in the true sense of the word." It will be granted that many are making their living as printers; since they not only spend most of their time in the "back-office" attending to mechanical details, but are satisfied that they are making money when their total income equals the wages of an average printer.

Issue will be taken immediately with the statement that they are "printers." The papers, poorly printed, poorly folded, poorly arranged typographically, which represent rural Kansas, or any other state, are mute testimony that the owners know as little about the printing trade as they do about journalism as a profession.

It should, in all fairness, be emphasized that there are a great number of well-edited, well-printed weekly papers in Kansas. If the one-third or one-half of them, for which the foregoing indictment holds true, were owned by men who were even good mimics and would only copy after their exchanges, all papers could be creditable typographically at least.

Rural editors, it seems, are modern and up-to-date in everything except their own business. They do not hesitate to own and ride in motor cars of the latest model, and to keep abreast of the times along such lines as their clothing, and the houses they live in. But with their newspapers it is different. In many of them, headlines are as inconspicuous as they were in the days of Benjamin Franklin. Front pages are decorated with display advertisements, in accordance with thirty-year-ago methods, and on the inside pages display advertisements are scattered to the four corners with a few tossed into the center for good measure, in spite of the fact that the pyramid method has been accepted and used by the better papers for many years.

Of 288 Kansas papers only 104 pyramid their display advertisements, while 184 do not. If only papers eight pages in size and above are considered, about half of them use the pyramid style of page make-up.

A majority of Kansas weekly papers, 160 out of 288, do not carry display advertisements on their front pages, and



there is, without doubt, a steady increase in the number of papers which reserve front page space for news only. Particularly is this true of papers of eight pages or more. Naturally it is sometimes difficult for a four-page paper to confine all its ads to the three remaining pages, although many of them do.

It has been recognized for several years that reducing to the 12 or 12½ em column affords the editor a painless increase in advertising rates, and also reduces his paper stock cost, since it either adds an extra column to each page, or reduces the size of the page. (Seven 12-em columns will go on the same size sheet, by reducing margins slightly, as will six 13-em columns.)

Nevertheless, 223 out of 288 Kansas weeklies still stick to the old 13-3m column, although the cost and trouble involved in the change is slight.

Thus we might continue for several pages to enumerate the backward tendencies of many rural editors.

#### No Cost Systems

The amateurish appearance of the small-town newspaper can often be traced to the poor equipment with which it is produced, which in turn can be traced to the lack of any knowledge of costs, including reserves for depreciation. Presses, line casting machines and type faces are continued in use long after they should have been discarded as uneconomical.

This is necessary because the editor or owner has not figured his depreciation as part of his actual expense, and does not have a reserve with which to buy new when the old is worn out. A complicated cost system is not required for the figuring of depreciation, insurance, taxes, etc., into the cost of every job printed or every inch of advertising sold. A very simplified system will make the above possible--yet the average plant is operated without any cost-system at all.

The El Monte, (California) Herald

With a desire to present the outstanding features of some small-town weekly paper more than ordinarily successful, the El Monte (California) Herald was finally selected. Some Kansas paper could as well as not have been used, but the above choice was made in order to avoid any prejudices which might accompany the placing of some one Kansas paper on a pedestal as an example for the rest. Also, editor Neil R. Murray, of the El Monte Herald, has been frank in telling to what he attributes his unusual success.<sup>45</sup>

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45. The El Monte Herald is frequently mentioned as one of the outstanding weekly papers in the United States. See Stewart Robertson, Introduction to Modern Journalism, p. 317.

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He was for several years city editor of large dailies, finally quitting the desk of the Omaha Daily News

in order to buy a small paper of his own. We'll let him tell his own story:

"When we entered the Weekly Newspaper business in El Monte, we were imbued with the idea that there is no good reason why a country weekly should not be just as good a newspaper as the dailies in the big city, although on a smaller scale. Hence, we determined to apply daily newspaper principles in the publishing of our newspaper. Accordingly, we made up the first page of our weekly just as carefully as we had each day, for several years, made up the first page of the city daily, and we applied the same general rules of first page dress and make-up.

"I want to assert at the beginning that, to attain success, the weekly newspaper must be clean, constructive and comprehensive. In fact, we may call these the "Three C's" in the successful editing of a country newspaper.

"It Must Be Clean: To be clean a newspaper must be accurate, truthful, and in no sense sensational. Accuracy is stressed as of paramount importance in our office. Mistakes cause much unfavorable comment on Main Street.

"It makes us proud when El Monte ministers tell their congregations that they have yet to see an unwholesome item of news in our newspaper, and urge their people to become subscribers. We would much rather be able to hear that kind of praise than to have them say that our newspaper is the greatest money-maker in the weekly field, but that it publishes news that they do not want their children to read.

"It Must be Constructive: A country newspaper that is not constructive cannot succeed. The editor of a country newspaper must be fair-minded. He must be ready to take firm stand in a constructive way for the betterment of his community. He must in no sense use his newspaper as a "spite sheet" to punish persons who have incurred his displeasure in a personal way.

"It Must Be Comprehensive: Every week of the world a representative of the El Monte Herald calls every home with a telephone in El Monte and vicinity. Many calls have to be repeated before the number is obtained. This effort, this expense, is well worth while, however, as it gives us direct contact with many items of news concerning families who have no telephones. Thus we have comprehensive,

heart-to-heart contact with our community life. In covering your field comprehensively, you must do promotive work. One such project on our newspaper which has created much interest and good will is our annual golf tournament.

"To my mind country editors do not use sufficient printers' ink themselves. In El Monte every reader knows of the growth and development of the El Monte Herald, because we have kept them posted. We tell of circulation gains. We publish in full all letters from advertisers commending the Herald as an advertising medium. We tell our hopes and aims at the beginning of each new year." 46

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46. Taken from an address by Neil R. Murray, editor-owner of the El Monte Herald, before a group of newspaper editors.

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Glancing at Mr. Murray's El Monte Herald, the reader is impressed by the fact that his paper is, in the first place, accurate. He carries the following message in one ear of his paper: "El Monte 155 — If you find a misstatement or an error in the El Monte Herald, please call above number and notify the editor."

Few papers, indeed, bother to be so accurate, and a majority of them, if making such an offer, would need to install additional telephones.

Above all, his paper is comprehensive. It isn't a sheet with all the <sup>advertisements</sup> that could be sold, filled in around with whatever news is necessary to fill the pages. Advertising is unusually heavy, which results in a 12-page paper as a general rule. The reading space of two pages is devoted to school news. All news is written up comprehensively. A report of a Boy Scout Sunday afternoon outing includes the

names of the 40 scouts participating, the sponsors, the activities engaged in, and other incidental details. Six inches of space is devoted to the meeting of a men's Sunday School class, giving all its plans, and various committees' names. A meeting of the Girl Scout Troop draws three inches of space, giving names of members, of hostess, scout leader, and other details. A Chamber of Commerce luncheon speech is reported in full; a local merchant who attended a business convention is interviewed and high-lights of the convention<sup>are</sup> given. Good newspaper reporting is in evidence throughout--just as good as can be found in the average daily.

The El Monte Herald has a metropolitan appearance, both on front page and throughout, including a well-balanced headline arrangement, a live editorial page, and a personal column by the editor.

A majority of rural editors could read one issue of the El Monte Herald, and improve their own papers 50%, provided they profited at <sup>by</sup> all/ what was before them.

### Newspaper Personality

Personality for a newspaper may sound like something intangible--and it is, but, like people, some newspapers have it and some do not. How often, in glancing over a small community newspaper, does one become aware, perhaps

at times subconsciously, of a woeful lack of something, and put the sheet aside with, "Oh well, it's only the local paper."

Does this ever happen with a well-printed, neatly folded paper, where the front page is devoted to news, displayed under proper headlines, well balanced on the page? To a paper where "ads"\* are pyramided and the news is carefully departmentalized, with perhaps an editorial column, set leaded, double width? The answer is no.

Newspaper personality depends on two things: content and typographical arrangement; and fully one-half of the Kansas papers could be improved in both respects.

Throughout this study it has been strikingly noticeable that some papers were easily read and easily classified (among them the Osborne Farmer and Minneapolis Messenger) because of their organization and departmentalization. Others defied, not only classification, but reading as well, due to lack of organization. Personal items, obituaries and country correspondence were mixed and scattered over all the pages, seemingly wherever the editor chose to set them down.

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\* In newspaper offices the word "advertisement" is seldom heard; it has been shortened to "ads," which no doubt, in time, will be accepted in common usage.

## CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study of Kansas weekly newspapers, while not assuming to be conclusive or final, because of the limited time over which the study extended, nevertheless suggests some rather definite conclusions.

Our object, as stated in the beginning, was to determine, if possible, the socializing influence of the Kansas rural press; to attempt to determine with what degree of success the press interprets the community to itself--"helps the citizen to understand his own community and its relation to the outside world."

In the beginning it was suggested that the direct influence of the rural press would be difficult to ascertain, owing to the many other factors at work in the same field. But it was suggested that some value would be derived from knowing precisely how much material of various types was to be found in the columns of the papers. At least this would permit the conclusion that if certain types of news material are not found in the papers, certainly the papers are not contributing to the development of an intelligent citizenship as related to those topics.

In reviewing the previous studies which had been

made along this line, attempting at the same time to formulate a method to be used, the conclusion was gradually reached that the method used by Willey, in studying Connecticut weekly papers, and by Courtney, for Nebraska papers, could wisely be adopted to our study of Kansas papers.

Accordingly this method, with minor alterations, was adopted. Mr. Willey, it might be added, arrived at this method by combining what seemed to be the best features of methods used by other students during the past twenty or more years.

The method, already explained in detail, consisted of carefully reading the papers and classifying the contents under twenty main categories. The amount of space given each category, based on the column inch as a unit of measurement, was then determined.

The method used stood the test in that it proved satisfactory for the use intended. No method, however, could be perfect. In this case it was found that, even with twenty main categories, considerable material could not be classified, and had to be placed in a "miscellaneous" column.

Among the significant facts which seem to stand out as a result of the study we mention the following, each of which will be explained in detail:

1. Kansas weekly papers are deficient in the amount of local news they print.
2. Kansas weekly papers rank high in the amount of socially significant news they print.



3. Kansas weekly papers avoid their responsibilities as community leaders, as evidenced by the absence of original editorial material.
4. Kansas weekly papers without competition seem to serve their communities as well as do papers with competition.
5. Kansas weekly papers show evidence of antiquated journalistic and business methods.

1. "Kansas weekly papers are deficient in the amount of local news they print." This conclusion seems logical in view of the fact that only five of the twenty papers studied devoted as much as 50% of their space to local news, news which directly concerns people who reside in the town of publication. Surely a paper making pretense of being a local institution should devote at least 50% of its reading space to local material. The fact cannot be too strongly stressed that with the radio and the ever-increasing circulation of daily papers and magazines, the local paper must present material which is not to be found in papers or magazines, nor to be heard over the radio. It must be a local institution.

If 50% of a rural paper's reading space should be devoted to local material, it is no doubt safe to assume that at least 75% should be devoted to "local plus county" news (this would include the town and all its trade territory). However, it is found that only four of the twenty papers studied devote as high as 75% of their reading space

to the town of publication and surrounding community; nine fall below 60%, and three fall below even 50%.

State, national and foreign news are handled sparingly by Kansas papers as a rule, and, as previously pointed out, the location of a paper and the question of whether the territory is well covered by daily papers are important factors in determining how much space a paper should devote to this type of news.

Kansas weekly papers lay themselves open to severe criticism by devoting a high percentage of their reading space to magazine material, mostly syndicated plate-matter, with no local significance--mostly material that can be found in magazines and scrap books. Three of the twenty papers studied devote more than 25% of their total reading space to this type of material. Twelve of them devote more than 10% of their reading space to it. The presence of a high percentage of this type of material tends to transform what should be a local paper into a magazine of an inferior sort.

2. "Kansas weekly papers rank high in the amount of socially significant material they print." From the standpoint of socialization, of helping the citizen to understand his own community and its relation to the outside world four of the major categories are undoubtedly important. They are: religion, education, economics and politics.

Kansas papers cannot be criticised for ignoring the presence and importance of the church in their communities. As a group they devote an average of almost 6% of their total reading space to religious matters. Several give 7% to 10% and one, more than 11%. In no paper does church news occupy less than 2% of the total space.

On educational matters Kansas papers as a group again rank well, but here the 8.33% ranking of the groups does not give an adequate picture. One paper gives less than 1% of its space to educational matters, while at the opposite extreme we find a paper with 23.47%. It so happens that the paper with 1% devoted 35% of its space to magazine material filler. A good school-news column would, no doubt, yield this paper large returns in reader-interest, not to mention the fact that it would be fulfilling one of the obligations of a newspaper to the community.

Kansas weekly papers assume their economic obligations and acquit themselves with credit, judged by the amount of space given to this type of news. Kansas is predominantly a farming state, and it is only to be expected that the rural press should devote its space generously to economic news of a decided agricultural flavor. A majority of the papers give 10% to 15% of their space to economic news. A few papers are open to the criticism of becoming

too much engrossed with present economic conditions, devoting more than 35% of their space to economic news.

With fourteen of twenty papers devoting less than 5% of their total reading space to political news, and four of these falling below 1%, it is a foregone conclusion that rural Kansans cannot be gaining, from their weekly papers, an adequate picture of their local political and administrative problems. While Willey, in his study of Connecticut papers, is prone to criticise a similar lack of political information in Connecticut papers, there is, of course, something to be said in favor of the home-town paper's not getting too deeply into politics.

Political situations do need airing in the rural press occasionally, and an editor should not hesitate to take a stand on questions which arise. At the same time an 8-page paper which consistently devoted 5% (about 24 inches) of its reading space to partisan political arguments would soon convince its political opponents that there should be another paper in town--and there would soon be one. Bitter experience has taught many editors that too much dabbling in politics does not pay, particularly where one paper is attempting to serve all political factions.

3. "Kansas weekly papers avoid their responsibilities as community leaders, as evidenced by the absence of original editorial material." As has already been shown, Kansas papers as a group give 9.55% of their total reading

space to editorial matter, which, on the face of things, looks like a fairly good showing. However, the wind is taken out of our sails by a closer investigation, which reveals that most of the editorial material is clipped from other papers and magazines, and deals with such general and harmless subjects as economic depressions and high taxes.

And further, a great deal of the original editorial material is of the humorous paragraph type, with only an occasional constructive idea. We are forced to conclude that most rural papers in Kansas, and elsewhere, avoid almost entirely their editorial responsibilities to the community.

4. "Kansas weekly papers without competition seem to serve their communities as well as do papers with competition." County seat papers with no competition, i. e., papers in towns where competition might seem warranted, as a group, fall about 6% short in total percentage of space devoted to reading matter, as compared to papers with either daily or weekly competition. This 6% is reflected in a higher percentage of advertising.

Papers with no competition rank highest in the following news categories: Local, local-plus-county, religious, educational, and sport. They rank lowest in amount of space devoted to cartoons and comics, national news,

and foreign news, which, as has been pointed out, is usually found in plate form, and used merely as "filler."

The county-seat papers, unopposed, rank ahead of papers with weekly competitors in the percentage of space devoted to state news and editorial matter.

5. "Kansas weekly papers show evidence of antiquated journalistic and business methods." There are a great many Kansas weekly papers owned and edited by men of energy and ability, who produce papers that are a credit to the owners, the communities they represent, and to the State, and they are not all in the larger towns either.

At the same time, many men evidently engage in the newspaper business without previous training or knowledge of the game and, sad to relate, never learn. A majority of the latter class, if they read their exchanges and were good mimics, could improve their own papers 50%. Usually they slight all correspondence and the business and generally to devote their time to the "back-office." On this basis they should be good printers, but one glance at their papers with a hodge-podge of poorly set advertisements scattered all over the pages, poorly inked, poorly printed, poorly folded, is proof that they are not. No improvement is noted from year to year. While up-to-date papers adopt the pyramid ad style, reduce column widths, remove ads from the front page, adopt a head-line system, and keep abreast

of the times generally, these way-faring brethren plod along, oblivious to the march of progress, never attending an editorial association conference of any sort nor reading anything printed in books or magazines concerning improvements in their business.

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## A P P E N D I C E S

On the following pages are found appendices A. and B. Appendix A. explains some of the terms used, and, in particular, explains the types of news listed under the various news categories as used in Chapter V.

Appendix B. shows the work-sheets containing the actual figures in inches as secured in analysing the twenty papers studied. Other information concerning each paper studied is also given.

### Appendix A.

Each of the categories used in classifying and analysing the content of Kansas weekly newspapers is explained below.

**THE UNIT OF MEASUREMENT.** The inch is the unit of measurement used in determining the relative amounts of space devoted to the various categories.

**READING MATTER.** For the purpose of this study all space was counted as occupied either by advertising matter or reading matter. Thus the space devoted to comic strips and cartoons is counted as reading matter space. In the analysis headlines were counted as a part of the news. Since the headline is one of the best scales by which to measure the importance of a news story, it seems sound to include it.

All percentages are based on reading matter only, except in Table XI on page 46, showing the percentage of advertising to reading matter. Here the entire space in the paper is included.

**SHOP-SET,** Refers to material put into type in the shop where the paper is printed. Either linotype, intertype, or linograph slug casting machines are found in the plants of all papers studied, except two. These two still use the hand-set methods.

**PLATE MATTER.** Syndicated material furnished the editor in plate form, ready to be put into the columns of the paper, is known as plate-matter, sometimes referred to, for no logical reason, as "boiler plate." In some cases, the editor receives some of this material in mat form and casts his own plate.

**CARTOONS and COMICS.** The term needs no explanation. Kansas papers devote only 2.18% of their reading space to this material.

**ADS.** Everything for which the editor receives, or should receive, direct financial return, is classified as advertising.

**LOCAL NEWS.** News originating in the town of publication or in the immediate vicinity.

**COUNTY NEWS.** Not necessarily the news originating in the county of publication, as bounded by exact county lines, but the news of the surrounding community, including at least the trade territory of the town.

**STATE NEWS.** News originating within the state, or directly concerning affairs of the state, political, historical, economic, regardless of origin.

**NATIONAL NEWS.** Pertaining to occurrences or matters national in scope.

**FOREIGN NEWS.** Pertaining to inter-national matter and affairs.

**RELIGIOUS NEWS.** Included material in which the emphasis is on any phase of church or religious activity.

**EDUCATIONAL NEWS.** Mostly news concerning the local schools, or any of the institutions of higher learning, but included also material aiming consciously toward the cultivation of the mind.

**CLUBS, LODGES.** All accounts of fraternal or club activities.

**SPORT.** Material referring to all major and minor athletics, recreation and personal news about athletes as such.

**HUMAN INTEREST AND FEATURES.** Shop-set material in which the news element is not paramount; stories about children, animals, historical places, buildings or events.

**EDITORIAL AND OPINION.** Original editorials, clipped editorials, syndicated editorials and communications to the editor.

**PERSONALS.** Local items, recording the goings and comings of the residents of the small town, such as are found in great numbers in the average rural weekly; Births, weddings, etc., all material usually found in society or personal columns. Main characteristic is "interest in persons" element.

**ECONOMIC.** Principally farm news, but includes also news of labor, industry, commerce, finance, transportation, price and supply of necessities.

**POLITICAL.** Any matter pertaining to political parties, their activities, campaign plans, discussions of policies and candidates, platforms, and political conventions.

**MAGAZINE MATERIAL.** Stories, fashion hints, radio advice, cooking and canning recipes, home decoration hints, fiction, and a wide variety of material that has none of the timely interest that characterizes news. In short--the stuff that scrap books are made of.

**BACK-OFFICE.** A term commonly used around a newspaper office to denote the part of the building in which the machinery is located, where the mechanical work incidental to issuing a paper is actually done.

**MISCELLANEOUS.** While little mention is made of the miscellaneous material, obviously some material defied all efforts to classify and could not be placed definitely in any category, so was relegated to miscellaneous.





SMALL TOWN

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

PAPER The Leonardville Monitor TOWN Leonardville(392) COUNTY Riley

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	Ads	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCELLANEOUS	RELIGIOUS	EDUCATIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM. INT. FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL	
12-25-30	338302	36	0	264602	123	7456	9	0	76	43	83	0	9	5	15	13542	6	0					
2-5-31	320253	67	0	282602	114	10524	7	0	70	23	16	0	7	0	45	1738	0	74					
1-15-31	361328	21	12241602	89	1485249	0	23	23	27	17	0	0	0	29	103124	0	35						
2-12-31	292225	67	0	310602	101	9930	0	89	19	35	0	3	0	9	13315	3	77						
2-19-31	246178	68	0	356602	58	1130	0	0	75	17	17	41	0	0	0	90	6	0	75				







COUNTY SEAT  
No Competition

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

PAPER The Okaloosa Independent TOWN Okaloosa(753) COUNTY Jefferson

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	Ads	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCEL- LANEUS	RELIG- IOUS	EDUCA- TIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM. INT., FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL	
12-26-30	6632792581	36285948	120	107	8	40	9	379	16	44	21	22	2	40	104	49	3	361					
2-6-31	688452203	33260948	138	247	67	0	1	235	40	22	25	43	10	28	198	87	33	202					
1-16-31	633380235	18315948	105	210	50	18	8	242	45	18	22	38	9	48	150	125	30	148					
2-20-31	580461	80	19	339	948	148	250	32	8	0	122	34	11	63	50	0	56	130	24	31	101		
2-27-31	393290103	0	555	948	86	139	63	22	1	82	19	0	14	30	11	5	139	75	29	71			

COUNTY SEAT  
No Competition

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

(1044)

PAPER Chase County Leader

TOWN Cottonwood Falls COUNTY Chase

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	Ads	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCELLANEOUS	RELIGIOUS	EDUCATIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUMINT. FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL
12-25-30	293	278	15	0	419	713	163	96	0	0	0	14	10	8	14	0	21	14	198	14	0	14
2-4-31	546	416	130	0	402	948	220	149	22	12	0	144	16	25	56	21	25	40	177	22	34	130
1-14-31	411	341	70	0	537	948	143	127	66	5	0	102	14	5	24	5	2	57	121	41	68	76
2-11-31	494	368	126	0	454	948	100	206	5	34	1	148	8	11	65	8	7	41	200	31	16	112
2-18-31	489	415	74	0	459	948	245	113	13	23	3	92	11	50	45	23	10	51	171	46	17	60

COUNTY SEAT  
No Competition

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

PAPER The Meade Globe-News TOWN Meade (1552) COUNTY Meade

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	ADS	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCEL- LANEOUS	RELIG- IOUS	EDUCA- TIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM. INT., FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL
12-25-30	315	284	31	0	833	943	162	22	54	25	0	52	39	44	40	13	2	23	50	54	0	50
1-29-31	490	367	118	5	458	943	208	34	66	8	3	171	35	35	31	38	50	39	80	93	6	104
1-15-31	343	298	40	5	605	943	163	69	40	4	5	62	32	55	17	28	4	24	50	79	16	38
2-12-31	373	319	54	0	575	943	214	12	52	40	0	55	51	102	18	56	23	36	53	43	2	24
2-19-31	364	288	76	0	534	943	234	35	0	28	11	56	43	69	9	46	0	60	48	48	2	39

COUNTY SEAT  
No Competition

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

PAPER The Hoxie Sentinel

TOWN Hoxie (800)

COUNTY Sheridan

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	Ads	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCELLANEOUS	RELIGIOUS	EDUCATIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM. INT. FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL
12-25-30†	358322	0	36	590946	140	31	80	22	3	82	22	17	20	7	2	30	87	82	16	75		
						1188																
2-5-31*	560478	82	0	628	198	194	0	32	0	78	26	56	64	29	25	20	190	79	0	71		
						1188																
1-15-31*	525471	54	0	663	184	185	43	0	0	113	23	16	45	10	3	159	162	27	0	80		
						1188																
2-12-31*	466413	53	0	722	231	140	5	11	0	79	16	66	22	14	0	40	224	23	3	53		
						1574																
2-19-31**	764710	54	0	910	256	230	30	23	0	170	35	80	40	13	17	43	234	156	2	89		

†-Eight Pages; \*-Ten Pages \*\*-Fourteen Pages.

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

COUNTY SEAT

No Competition

PAPER Osborne County Farmer

TOWN Osborne (1881)

COUNTY Osborne

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	Ads	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCELLANEOUS	RELIGIOUS	EDUCATIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM. INT. FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL
12-25-30	411	411	0	0	695	1106	201	194	50	29	0	37	61	33	22	5	35	55	156	40	4	0
2-5-31	478	458	20	0	623	1106	239	149	21	0	0	19	48	19	29	21	56	57	199	50	4	25
1-29-31	415	415	0	0	691	1106	247	110	44	0	0	14	39	50	12	33	8	39	200	34	0	0
2-26-31*	420	411	9	0	966	1586	206	122	66	2	5	19	54	39	35	8	2	27	154	63	38	0
2-19-31	417	403	9	0	639	1106	244	65	41	29	3	35	39	49	24	11	2	31	115	88	33	25

\* Ten Pages

WITH WEEKLY  
COMPETITORS

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

PAPER The Anderson Countian TOWN Garnett (2768) COUNTY Anderson

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	ADS	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCEL- LANEOUS	RELIG- IOUS	EDUCA- TIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM.INT. FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL	
						1092																	
12-25-30	667	631	36	0	425	1092	223	164	42	195	0	43	47	45	36	0	0	60	254	137	45	43	
						1092																	
1-15-31	654	633	0	21	438	1092	182	180	122	660		14	50	5	36	4	12	78	24	129	90	7	
						1092																	
2-5-31	617	603	14	0	475	1092	186	207	42	135	0	47	53	9	26	21	20	38	230	70	54	36	
						1092																	
2-12-31	582	554	20	8	510	1092	205	185	17	130	0	35	40	10	54	3	14	34	274	72	70	21	
						1092																	
2-19-31	621	621	0	0	471	1092	190	186	22	136	8	79	36	17	15	12	14	80	302	94	40	11	

WITH WEEKLY  
COMPETITION

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

PAPER The Alma Signal TOWN Alma (811) COUNTY Wabaunsee

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	ADS	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR 'N NEWS	MISCEL- LANEOUS	RELIG- IOUS	EDUCA- TIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM. INT., FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL
12-25-30	537	416	93	284	05942	108197	46	34	4	148	33	30	5	2	0	50	225	37	50	145		
1-15-31	649	531	175	212	293942	114220	66	87	5	157	40	20	16	0	0	35	306	31	72	129		
2-5-31	632	496	144	42	200 <sup>942</sup>	150256	55	42	7	172	42	27	2	2	30	55	231	105	41	127		
2-12-31	588	393	133	623	54942	112202	51	53	20	150	37	43	7	9	0	62	262	46	0	122		
2-19-31	657 <sup>444</sup>	152	612	285	942	118223	59	62	6	190	26	42	5	4	38	45	273	70	55	99		



WITH WEEKLY  
COMPETITION

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

PAPER The Coldwater Talisman TOWN Coldwater (1296) COUNTY Commanche

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	Ads	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCEL- LANEOUS	RELIG- IOUS	EDUCA- TIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM. INT., FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL
1-15-31	361125228	8	107468	95	20	5	14	38	190	16	60	23	0	31	0	50	27	7	147			
1-22-31	333249	76	8	135	468	107	20	27	11	27	141	14	96	24	5	18	5	14	39	0	118	
2-5-31	231128	95	8	237468	74	26	30	8	24	69	35	16	8	0	21	0	58	31	0	61		
2-12-31	268167	93	8	200468	113	47	0	21	22	65	18	42	79	5	7	0	70	22	0	25		
2-19-31	302128	166	8	166468	75	46	0	5	42	136	17	3	28	0	84	8	54	9	0	99		

WITH WEEKLY  
COMPETITION

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

(1741)

PAPER Minneapolis Messenger

TOWN Minneapolis

COUNTY Ottawa

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	ADS	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR 'N NEWS	MISCEL- LANEOUS	RELIG- IOUS	EDUCA- TIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUMINT, FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL	
						1106																	
12-25-30	460	460	0	0	646	1106	226	183	27	0	0	24	23	29	68	10	2	29	227	30	0	37	
						1106																	
1-15-31	497	497	0	0	609	1106	168	278	29	2	0	20	23	13	60	23	0	18	263	34	44	15	
						1106																	
2-5-31	465	465	0	0	641	1106	189	276	0	0	0	0	40	24	26	18	0	14	310	31	13	0	
						1106																	
2-12-31	516	516	0	0	590	1106	218	279	4	10	0	5	27	31	52	16	0	16	330	29	15	0	
						1112																	
2-19-31*	554	554	0	0	1666	1112	192	310	17	0	18	17	32	55	64	26	0	19	296	38	12	13	

\* Twelve page paper.

WITH WEEKLY  
COMPETITION

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

PAPER The Citizen-Patriot TOWN Atwood (1166) COUNTY Barling

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	ADS	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCELLANEOUS	RELIGIOUS	EDUCATIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM. INT. FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL
12-25-30	327	252	75	0	609	930	173	12	0	44	0	98	8	43	33	21	0	60	62	2	0	98
1-15-31	334	322	12	0	596	930	142	149	0	18	0	25	10	3	27	33	10	9	176	28	12	26
1-29-31	353	353	0	0	577	930	133	170	24	12	3	11	10	37	41	50	0	12	140	61	4	0
2-12-31*	332	324	0	8	832	1164	140	93	0	74	0	25	20	22	71	4	0	63	118	6	20	8
2-19-31	300	300	0	0	630	930	104	96	25	46	0	29	0	10	58	0	0	0	129	41	39	25
* Ten page paper.																						

IN DAILY FIELD

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

PAPER The Norton Courier TOWN B Norton (2767) COUNTY Norton

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	ADS	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCEL-LANEOUS	RELIG-IOUS	EDUCA-TIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM.INT. FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL
12-25-30	415277	124	1418	7602	112	5	14	97	2	185	12	30	0	0	0	0	75	64	59	5170		
1-15-31	433339	94	0	169	602	163	82	0	41	37	105	26	58	5	0	71	36	73	132	0	32	
2-5-31	367320	47	0	235602	192	42	54	56	12	31	21	96	5	0	3	37	98	56	24	27		
2-21-31	322294	28	0	280602	119	47	14	68	5	69	12	11	22	0	4	42	122	39	29	41		
2-19-31	344294	50	0	258602	232	48	8	42	0	14	14	67	31	6	0	17	145	50	0	14		

Editor or Owner F. M. Duvall Col. Lgth. 22 Cols. to Page 7 Usual No. Pages 8

Circulation 1175 (also 4 pages ready print)



IN DAILY FIELD

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart

(13,726)

PAPER Lawrence Democrat TOWN Lawrence COUNTY Douglas

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	Ads	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCEL-LANEOUS	RELIG-IOUS	EDUCA-TIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM.INT., FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL	
12-25-30	247165	82	0221468	22	5	67	15	0	13	41	7	0	0	0	34	21132	0	11					
1-15-31	228168	60	0240468	48	69	31	21	15	46	0	9	2	1	0	47	48	90	8	23				
1-29-31	194174	20	0274468	51	52	50	0	13	28	0	0	4	0	3	59	56	51	5	16				
2-12-31	228188	40	0240468	46	50	32	30	0	70	1	19	26	0	0	40	62	48	1	33				
2-19-31	198118	80	0270468	28	27	21113	0	9	2	8	20	1	1	43	42	70	11	0					

IN DAILY FIELD

Kansas Newspaper Analysis Chart  
(10,059)

PAPER The Dodge City Journal

TOWN Dodge City

COUNTY Ford

DATE OF ISSUE	READING MATTER	SHOP SET	PLATE	CARTOONS & COMICS	ADS	TOTAL SPACE	LOCAL NEWS	COUNTY NEWS	STATE NEWS	NAT'L NEWS	FOR'N NEWS	MISCEL-LANEOUS	RELIG-IOUS	EDUCA-TIONAL	CLUBS, LODGES	SPORT	HUM.INT., FEATURES	EDITORIAL & OPIN.	PERSONAL	ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	MAGAZINE MATERIAL
12-25-30	441392		4	454899	3011	13100	85	29	4	110	10	53	19	5	60	39	136	37	21	81		
1-15-31	474450		0	244569	30	51177	92	76	4	74	12	40	39	0	60	35	142	82	24	40		
2-5-31	496476		0	204339	3018	9165	78	9	0	53	17	152	20	11	77	20	133	43	3	20		
2-12-31	493469		0	244379	30	59165	97	115	0	77	11	20	6	11	45	43	185	147	0	25		
2-26-31*	650331		0	19	1210	150182	170	48	0	100	12	60	54	36	72	42	159	212	3	20		
					1360																	

\* Sixteen page economic special

