

Frantic Newspaper Pace Reflected Hectic Times

The days of the "flash in the pan" newspapers, here today, gone tomorrow, in the early part of the 20th century found the late W. O. Smith and E. J. Murray, still living in Klamath Falls, in the thick of one of the most embattled periods of the city's growth and the most tense newspaper publishing era that has been recorded here.

Murray, now past 80, still keeps his finger upon the community pulse and recalls much of that turbulent era that left its mark upon the growing town.

His goal had been the newspaper publishing field from the time he was 16. He came to Klamath Falls via Portland in 1906, three years after Smith, who entered the business by accident.

Names of the Northwestern, the Republican, Klamath Chronicle, the Herald, later the Daily Record that had its founding in almost forgotten White Lake, a will-o'-the-wisp townsite, and the News are all enmeshed in the period of time following the turn of the century.

World War I was yet to be fought. It was the interim between the arrival of Smith and Murray and the end of the first global conflict that local historians remember as the "period of greatest civil strife and political upheaval" in the city's history.

At one time, with a population of possibly 3,000, the town boasted four newspapers. Each "carried the torch" for a separate faction, battling against one another over the now famed courthouse issue, class distinction, town expansion, political plums and "scoops."

Smith, who had been a lumberman, came here in that guise but had scarcely arrived when J. Wesley Hamaker, an attorney, decided to "get into politics," and to smooth the path bought the Republican and made Smith editor. Hamaker's bid for the state legislature fizzled and he immediately sold a 50 per cent interest in the paper to Smith for \$1,000, half the original price. Smith was launched as a publisher.

Murray, who came to Klamath Falls with wide experience as a newspaper publisher, became editor of the Republican which prospered mightily, swamped with paid land office and timber claim notices. By 1908 Smith was ready to enter the daily field in competition with the already established daily, the Herald, first started by the Fred Cronemiller family.

The Herald was four pages, five columns wide. The family was the entire staff with Mrs. Cronemiller, an excellent type compositor, doing all the printing, an arduous job in those days when every letter of type had to be set by hand from the "case."

Smith and Murray pooled funds to buy the Herald and with acquisition of the paper, the first Linotype typesetting machine was brought to Klamath Falls. The newspaper was housed in a building across the street from the present Willard Hotel.

Inevitably the Herald was drawn into the courthouse fight over location of the proposed building with "East and West supporters" at sword's point.

Circulation of the Herald skyrocketed to around 2,000 as the fight reached white heat.

By that time the Chronicle, a weekly, had died, smothered in indebtedness. The Northwestern surrendered also to "circumstances," and left the Herald alone in the daily field. Murray had sold his interest in the paper to Smith in 1916 and bought it back three years later to become sole owner. By that time the Republican and the Herald had also merged and farm people in outlying districts were getting a daily.

The Northwestern, subsidized in part by the Klamath Development Company, folded; the Klamath Express and the Pioneer Press were nearly forgotten. The Herald, with small capital but a "fierce spirit," continued in the daily field.

The Klamath News was started in the early '20s by Nate Otterbein.

Murray kept his versatile pen moving in and out of controversial editorial copy, envisioning railroad expansion, city improvements, improved county roads, bold advancement in the pine lumber industry.

Bruce Dennis, Ashland, and his associates became owners of both the Herald and the News and published both dailies in one plant in the basement of the Odd Fellows Building, below the present Dick Reeder's store.

In June of 1931 the papers became the property of Frank Jenkins and his associates, known as the Southern Oregon Publishing Company, with Jenkins as publisher. Jenkins, with Malcolm Epley Sr. as managing editor, published the News for morning readers, the Herald in the evening. Circulation was about 4,000, confined largely to Klamath Falls.

The old press, the first of its kind ever seen by Jenkins, could "do" 16 pages but was about ready to fall to pieces, and went soon after to the junk pile.

Publisher Jenkins had cut his eye teeth on the Eugene Register in 1912, starting well up the ladder in administration. That paper merged with the Eugene Guard in 1931. Southern Oregon Publishing Company, which also owned the Roseburg News-Review, purchased the Herald and the News shortly afterward.

The two dailies moved in 1936 to the present location of the Herald and News, the building that once had housed the old Northwestern.

Many factors determined merging of the two editions, the morning and the evening, during World War II and since that time only one daily has been published in the city.

With remodeling and expansion of the newspaper plant in 1957 a Hoe Printmaster Press, designed for use in cities of 10 to 50,000, and capable of running 35,000 copies per hour, was installed.

In May of 1960 the Herald and News affiliated with Scripps League, publishers of 14 dailies, and William B. Sweetland of Klamath Falls, Mont., became the publisher.

Today the paper has an approximate circulation of 15,000 and serves readers daily in Siskiyou, Modoc, Lake and Klamath counties.



W. B. SWEETLAND

David B. Worthington Starts Klamath Express

(Reprinted from News and Herald Jan. 30, 1937)

David B. Worthington, founder of the Klamath Falls Express, was a young man of long-range vision. Mixed in with his far-sighted faith in the Klamath country was a twist of impatience that carried him out of this land of promise many years before his dreams were turned to reality.

Worthington, widely experienced in the newspaper profession before he came to Klamath Falls, and after he departed, established the Klamath Falls Express on April 28, 1892, as the second weekly in this section of Oregon. He published in competition to the pioneer paper of the day, the Klamath Star.

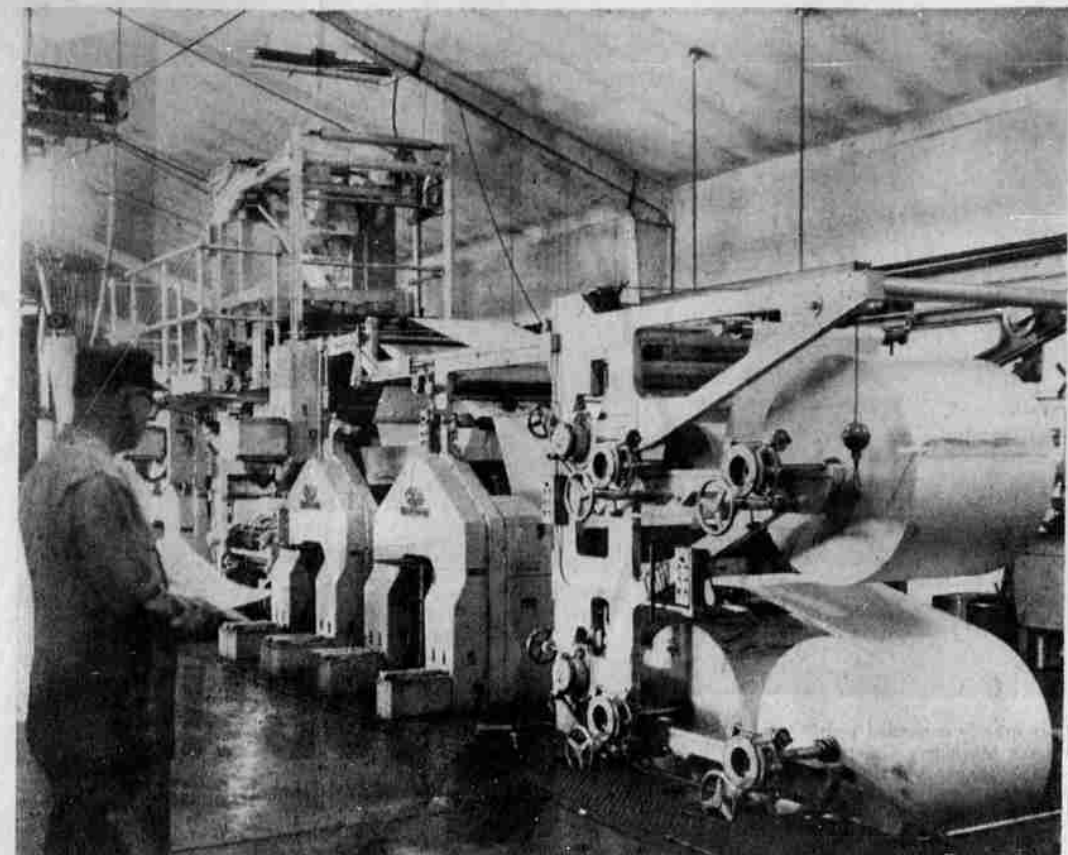
The Express passed through the weekly stage into a daily under interviewing officers of the U.S. Army, enlisted men and Modocs who could speak jargon English. His clipboard was his stout right knee and his dispatches went out by horseback.

There was no newspaper published here for several more years.

the ownership of J. Scott Taylor, was purchased in later years by A. C. Wrenn and the Klamath Development company to become known as the Pioneer Press and then lost its identity completely when Samuel M. Evans came to Klamath Falls with a magic bag of gold and founded the ill-fated Northwestern.

The Express rolled off its press as a Democratic sheet, opposed to the Republican policies of the once-independent Star. It was a newspaper, yes, but its primary reason for existence—like so many early-day journals—was to spread propaganda of the Klamath country rather than print the real news of the day.

The highlight of Worthington's career as editor and publisher of the Express was the souvenir edition of Jan. 10, 1895, an issue still familiar to many residents of Klamath County. It was a pretentious undertaking on high grade book-stock paper. The edition, in word and in picture, extolled the potentialities of this section of Oregon. The paper was circulated all through the United States and was individually responsible in encouraging many newcomers to seek their fortunes in this territory.



ONE OF THE MOST MODERN PRESSES in the West is the 32-page Hoe Printmaster at the Herald and News. A special wing was constructed on the newspaper building to house this press. The new press began running in March, 1958. Equipped with two color humps, the press has double fountains on each hump and two other sets of double fountains which enable it to handle color in a 16-page section. Cost of the press and building was between \$250,000 and \$300,000. The press speed is listed at 36,000 papers per hour. Shown here is Press Foreman E. S. (Buster) Bramlett.



E. J. MURRAY

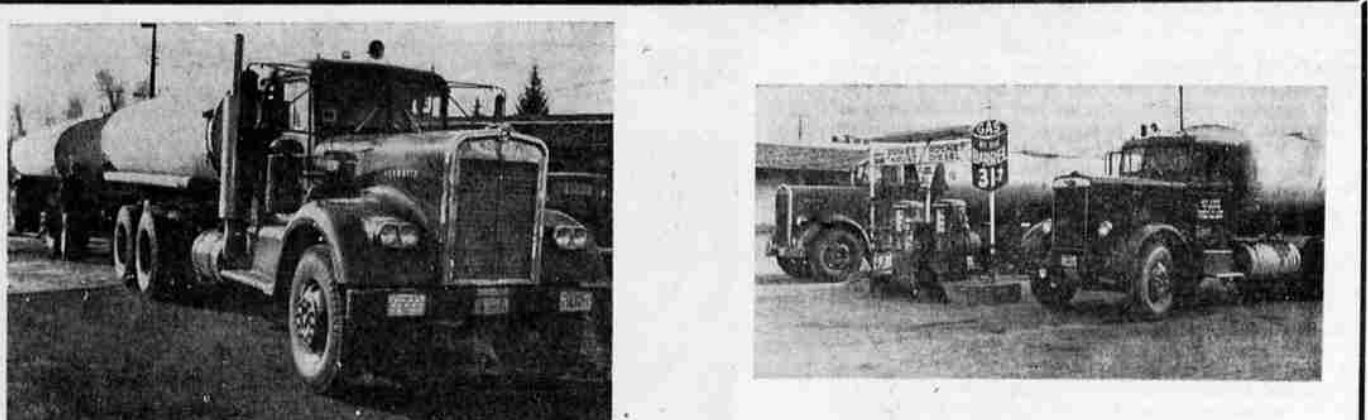


FRANK JENKINS

**THREE MILLION,
NINE HUNDRED NINETY
FIVE THOUSAND, EIGHT
HUNDRED FIFTY ONE ...**

Gallons Of Petroleum Hauled In '60

Yes, in 1960 we hauled into the Basin 3,995,851 gallons of petroleum products. Our miles traveled totaled 334,322. The big tankers shown at right are on the road continually bringing petroleum produce direct from the factory to you. Twenty-one employees in the Jay Hawk operation work continually to serve the Basin better. They live in the Basin, spend their \$100,000 yearly payroll here and are proud to be a small part of our growing community.



**DIRECT FROM
REFINERY TO YOU**

**BRINGING YOU
EVERY SAVINGS POSSIBLE**

JAY HAWK PETROLEUM

Town & Country Shopping Center and 2135 So. 6th



Station at S. 6th & Crest (Town & Country)



Station at 2135 S. 6th



Jay Hawk heating oil home delivery trucks