OUR OWN HISTORY.

The Origin and Development of the Deseret News.

FORTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION.

Reproductions of Salutatory and Valedictory Articles.

PERSONAL SKETCHES OF THE EDITORS.

Full Account of the Original Plant and Additions Thereto—The Growth of the Paper from a Small Beginning—The Men Who Have Set to the Editorial Chair—Samples of Their Writings—What the Editorial Tone of the News Has Been in the Past—A Sketch Appropriate for an Anniversary Edition.

BEYOND A DOUBT the DESERET NEWS ranks among the very first agencies, in influence and importance, that have operated to give form to public opinion in this intermountain region, from the early days of its settlement until the present time. The policies of this journal in the field of journalism, has been unique, and without contemporary prototype or counterpart. Its office has been identical with that of the modern secular newspaper; but in addition thereto it has been the exponent of a new and unpopular system of religion and theology, and it has also been obliged to perform the role of a political champion.

It has had a devoted constituency among whom its influence always has been very effective, and it has, during much the greater part of its career, been the object of intense animosity, which has made itself felt here in the Territory and in many parts of the nation. In fact the DESERET NEWS has, almost from its inception, been obliged to contend against the utterances and influence of many of the strongest papers in the different states of the Union.

In this long struggle it has been fair but bold and outspoken; and it has seized in as rapid succession as they were put forward, the favorite arguments and allegations of its adversaries, exposing their fallacy, and making plain the truth. No candid man can read the old files of the DESERET NEWS and fail to admire the skill and pluck exhibited in its editorial columns.

THE PLANT.

At the time when the Mormon Pioneer party set out from the Missouri River on their journey to an unknown destination in the far-off interior of the Rocky Mountain region, in the spring of 1847, the circumstances that surrounded them were of a character which would seem to forbid any preparation for an immediate founding of an advanced civilization when they should reach a place of settlement. But they were surprisingly well prepared to do this, and among the provisions made by them with this end in view, was the purchase of a small printing plant. Preparatory to making a start for the west, Judge W. W. Phelps went to Philadelphia, where, in behalf of the Church, he purchased and had shipped to Winter Quarters a small wrought iron hand press, called a Ramage press, and a limited quantity of type, ink, etc., the whole comprising what would now be called a very small printing plant. Mr. Joseph Hill, Sr., whose connection with the NEWS dates from January, 1852, and continued until 1890, states that his understanding has always been that the press and type with which the first volume of the DESERET NEWS was printed were conveyed across the plains by the Pioneer party. Mr. Hill possesses an excellent historical memory; has always taken much pride in noting the progress of the printing and publishing industry in this region, and is the best living authority upon its history. We have acknowledged our indebtedness to him for valuable aid in the preparation of this article.

In the early part of the year 1850, this printing plant was set up in the small adobe structure, immediately east of the present DESERET NEWS building, which is still standing, in a tolerable state of preservation. The paper was printed in that building for about one year, when the plant was removed to the second story of the present NEWS building, where it occupied a portion of the large apartment now occupied by the NEWS bindery. The plant remained here until the spring of 1851, when it was removed to the northern part of the building now occupied by the Tribune office. About the year 1853 it was again removed, this time to the upper floor of the Council House. In the spring of 1858, owing to the approach of Johnston's army, it was divided into two parts, one of which was conveyed to Fillmore and the other to Parowan. On the return from "the move" both parts were brought back to the Council House and remained there until about the year 1860, when the entire plant was removed to the quarters now occupied by the NEWS establishment.

In consequence of an increase in business a new building was erected in 1869, just east of the main structure, the two being connected by a bridge. The new building was designed for a press room, job department, and type foundry.

As above intimated, the printing plant was only a small one when the paper was first issued, in June, 1850, but in the year 1854 an additional supply of type and a larger press were brought to this city from St. Louis. In this same year, (1854,) Almon W. Babbitt, thinking to commence the publication of a paper, purchased in the East a hand press and a quantity of type and printing material, but immediately after the arrival of these articles, he abandoned his publishing enterprise and sold his outfit to the Church, and it was added to the DESERET NEWS plant. Thus before the close of the year 1854, the plant embraced three presses and a fairly good supply of job, book, advertising and newspaper body type.

From time to time, prior to 1857, additional material, presses, etc., were added, including a number of job presses. In the year last named a Hoe cylinder press was imported preparatory to issuing a daily. It was first propelled by a hot air engine, which was, a year or two later, supplanted by steam, and the latter has been ever since the motive power.

Almost from the first establishment of the paper its plant included a book bindery, and as the country grew this department also assumed the character of a blank book manufactory; and for many years the home demand for blank books was supplied by it. The NEWS bindery is today a first-class one in its facilities for turning out good work at moderate prices.

About the year 1871 a type foundry was added to the NEWS plant. The book publishing business of the establishment had by this time assumed extensive proportions, and the type foundry was added more for the purpose of encouraging home industry than because it was a profitable investment financially. For a number of years the body type of the paper, besides a number of fonts of book type, were turned out of the home type foundry.

In the year 1874 an edition of the Latter-day Saints' hymn book was issued, which was a home production in the fullest practicable sense of the word. It was printed at the NEWS office with home-made type on home-made paper, and was bound in the NEWS bindery. The material for the binding was imported because it could not be produced here.

From the early "fifties the NEWS establishment had done all kinds of book and job printing, and its plant has been gradually increased year by year until it is today the most extensive one between the Missouri river and the Pacific coast.

In 1891 a Bullock perfecting press, having a capacity of 2000 eight-page papers per hour, and a microtyping plant, were put in, and the accompanying engraving will give the reader some idea of this grand machine. It operates to a charm, and mechanically turns out first-class work.

GROWTH OF THE PAPER.

June 15, 1850, is the date of the first number of the DESERET NEWS ever issued. The number contained eight pages, 6½ inches wide by 9 inches long, divided into three columns. At the head of the first column on the first page are given the latitude and longitude of the city, as follows:

"Lat. 40° 46' 44"; lon. 111° 56' 34"."

This fact is eminently suggestive of the faraway location of the home in the desert which the Mormon Pioneers had chosen. Its situation was so far from all barometers of civilization that it had to be designated in the same way as that of a ship is when far at sea.

The columns named is occupied by an article, as follows:

PROSPECTUS.

DESERET NEWS.

MOTTO—"TRUTH AND LIBERTY."

We propose to publish a small weekly sheet, as large as our local circumstances will permit, to be called "DESERET NEWS," designed originally to record the passing events of our State, and in consequence, refer to the arts and sciences, embracing general education, medicine, law, husbandry, domestic and political economy, and everything that may fall under our observation, which may tend to promote the best interest, welfare, pleasure and amusement of our fellow citizens.

We hold ourselves responsible to the highest Court of truth for our intentions, and the highest Court of equity for our execution. When we speak, we shall speak freely, without regard to sect or party, when, the other man, we say, let him who has his eyes open, correct us in measures; and he shall receive a disciple's reward.

We shall ever take pleasure in communicating foreign news as we have opportunity; in receiving communications from our friends, at home and abroad; and solicit ornaments for the "NEWS," from poets and poetesses.

The first number may be expected as early in June as subscriptions will warrant—waiting the action of you subscribers.

Terms, 6 months, $2.50, invariably in advance.

Single copy 15 cents.

Advertising $1 for per square lines, and 50 each succeeding insertion. $4 for half square, or 8 lines.

TRAVELLERS AND MERCHANTS, 25 cents per copy, with the insertion of their names, place of residence, time of arrival and leaving. Companies of 20, and upwards, entered at once, 20 cents each.

A paper that is worth printing is worth preserving; if worth preserving it is worth binding; for this purpose we issue in pamphlet form, and if every subscriber shall preserve each copy of the "NEWS," and bind it at the close of the volume, their children's children may read the doings of their fathers, which otherwise might have been forgotten; ages to come."

Next follows a synopsis of a debate in the U. S. Senate, Feb. 6, 8 and 12 of that year (1850), the subject being the right of petitions. It related to slavery. Among the other contents of the number are an account of a "terrible fire in San Francisco;" President Zachary Taylor's message to Congress, delivered more than five months prior to the date of publication in the NEWS; an account of a dream said to have been had by John C. Calhoun, a communication regarding the Council of Health, organized under the auspices of the authorities of the Church early in 1850; an analysis of the waters of the Warm Springs; correspondence, etc.

A notice of the death of Oliver Cowdery, at Richmond, "on the 3d of March last, of consumption," is given, and A. Neibaur advertises as a "surgeon dentist," and Wm. McBride as a blacksmith.

The editorial column is given up to the following:

OFFICE OF DELIVERY.—The NEWS will be delivered at the Post Office. Subscribers from distant parts of the valley to order, but, for their convenience, we propose to forward packages, as we may have opportunity, to ALMON CALL, North Kanyon Ward; DANIEL MILLER, North Cottonwood; ISAAC CLARK, Brownsville; JOEL JOHNSON, Mill Creek; WILLIAM CLINDAY, Cottonwood; ISAAC HOMER, Utah Valley; PHINEAS RICHARDS, San Pete Valley; EZRA T. BENSON, Tooele Valley; and request them to act as our Agents. Subscribers will do well to inform us, in the above Agents, where they will receive their papers.

City subscribers can have their papers delivered for an additional 50 cents for the term, provided enough wish it, to employ a carrier.

"WANTED, at our office, flour, wheat, corn, meat, butter, cheese, tallow and pork in exchange for the NEWS."

The second number was dated June 20, 1850, and repeats the above prospectus. It contains correspondence, some "locals," etc., but no editorial property speaking.

Space will not admit of a further review of the intensely interesting book which comprises the first volume of the DESERET NEWS. It was only the beginning of what afterwards became a great paper, and its columns contain references to the beginnings, then being made in many lines, that afterwards developed into great things.

The size and style of the page remained unaltered until about the third year, after which, from time to time, the paper was enlarged, and in the course of a few years it acquired very respectable dimensions.

It was issued as a weekly until the year 1866, when a semi-weekly edition was published. By this time the population had increased and the mail facilities had been improved so far as to demand the more frequent publication, the weekly, of the leading newspaper in the Territory.

Two years later it was felt that the times justified a daily edition, and on Nov. 21, 1868, the first number of the DESERET EVENING NEWS appeared. The weekly and semi-weekly were continued, and ever since the last named date three editions of the NEWS have been issued.

In 1880, beginning with January, the weekly assumed a quarto magazine form, with a cover and table of contents, and took the name DESERET WEEKLY. It was given this form for convenience in binding, and its contents were thereafter selected from the columns of the daily with special regard for their permanent or historic value. The DESERET WEEKLY retains this form at the present time, while the daily and semi-weekly each contain eight large pages.

EDITORS.

The first editor of the DESERET NEWS was Willard Richards. He occupied the tripod from the date of the first issue until his death, which occurred March 11th, 1854. He was, at the time of his death, one of the First Presidency of the Church, Church Historian, and postmaster at Salt Lake city. He was a man of good education, intellectual tastes and superior ability.

Albert Carrington succeeded to the position of editor, which he retained until 1859. He was a college-bred man, possessed considerable ability, and was a writer of racing and sporting sketches. The issue dated March 9th, 1859, contains the salutatory of Judge Elias Smith, who, on that date, succeeded as editor. As a sample of the journalism of the day, the article is here reproduced:

TO OUR READERS.

"With the changes that are continually transpiring in the affairs of men, crowding them, often at short notice, in positions they least expected, we have in times past, had an extensive experience; and it seems there is no end to these vicissitudes. Each successive day presents something new that operates, more or less, in giving direction to the course men are pursuing in the various avocations of life. Of this fact we have long been convinced; and have endeavored to be prepared for any and every change that might occur to affect our course in either public or private pursuits. But notwithstanding all the caution used, we occasionally turn short corners, and find ourselves left behind our usual calculation; prompted to drive, without the least hesitation of the propriety, or of the nature of the work to be performed.

"This morning, without reflecting much on what we were doing, we took a seat in the DESERET NEWS office, which caused a very peculiar sensation to come over us, and induced us to inquire into the matter a little, as to what sort we were occupying, and whether we had a right to its occupation or not. A short investigation convinced us that we were in the "Editorial Chair," and taking from our pocket a document, we found that we had a right to the occupancy of the same for a time to come; and as clearly made to appear that we could not possibly be mistaken; and therefore, in accordance with a long established rule of action—though we doubted our ability to perform the duties then devolving upon us—we took a pen and entered at once upon the duties we had to perform, trusting for success in our new vocation upon the same principle, and to aid from the same source we have relied upon under other circumstances, in days which have gone before.

"In making this announcement to our readers we expect that they will, in some measure, be taken by surprise, as no change in the Editorial Department has hitherto been announced to them, but this cannot be avoided, as it was so far in the wind when our appointment to the duties required of us either of a paper so widely circulated and so ably conducted as the NEWS has been, from the time it was first started by the late Hon. Willard Richards, up to the present time.

"The late Editor, Professor Carrington, has, with untiring industry, conducted the NEWS for the last two years, under all the varied circumstances through which the people of this Territory have passed, during, and that no management, from the beginning, has been a matter of trust, in every position he has yet held. The responsibilities which devolved upon him, on really undertaking the Editorial chair, during the last year and a half years, have been weighty and of a character which I have indicated my ability to discharge to a satisfactory extent. It have succeeded in any good degree in giving satisfaction to those interested in the matter, or whatever edition contained, must be been accomplished thus anticipated. So that as it may, I have the satisfaction of believing that, although errors may have been committed, no malice has never been imputed.

"At the time of the commencement of the ninth volume, when I was unexpectedly promoted to the Editorial chair, the business of the establishment, in consequence of the "crusade" which had produced all business operations throughout Deseret, to an almost unheated extent, were in a very unhealthy condition, and the times were troublous and stormy. The obstacles which have had to be met and overcome, from time to time, have not been few nor of minor consideration. To enumerate them or refer to them in detail, would be a tedious task. To surmount them, has required much diligence and perseverance, and while regret is and has been measurably felt that the results were not as satisfactory as desired, pleasure is imparted from the fact that no available or unavoidable obstruction to the progress and prosperity of the institution now exists, and a prosperous future is bespoken for the establishment.

"Of Professor Carrington, who has been intrusted with the management of the office, editorially and financially, it is unnecessary to speak. His pre-eminent qualifications for the duties devolved, are well known to the public, and it might be deemed detracting to refer to them in this connection. For his prosperity and success in all his labors, the most warm and unfeigned assurances and wishes are hereby extended, with the firm belief that they will be reciprocated.

"There is one thing to which duty compels utterance, and that is the editorial position of the DESERET NEWS from the 9th day of March, 1859, to the 6th day of September, 1859, were entirely under my control and for their tone in other particulars, or matters, responsible. Some articles may have been inserted which were not personally duly examined, but, be whatever written, no excellence is pretended.

"With these brief reflections, and by expressing the hope that the future of the DESERET NEWS, and of all who are, or have been, or may be, connected with the office, may be more prosperous than the past, I bid its patrons and readers a hearty and undisguised farewell.

E. SMITH."

"TO OUR READERS GREETING.—

"In again undertaking the Editorial responsibilities, and the duties, and assuming the added responsibility of the conduct of its business affairs, we measurably realize the gravity of the important duties devolved upon us. At the same time we are aware that the reading matter of the NEWS and the healthy condition of its financial department, are subjects in which we all are, or should be, mutually concerned and interested. This view of the subject, a view that we trust is self-evident, enables us to enter the field of such arduous duties with less diffidence, as to results, than would otherwise attend us.

"In a change of administration the new incumbent is very properly expected to declare, more or less minutely, the policy he deems it best to pursue. Specifications being tedious, and promises, even sanctioned, being apt to be neglected or forgotten, it is thought sufficient for the present to state that we shall endeavor to make the NEWS as pleasing, interesting and useful as our talents, assistants and facilities will permit. To attain so desirable an end we shall endeavor to render our judgment as quick and correct as possible, and equally as pointed within our scope, and hope to be ably seconded not only by our immediate assistants, but also by the readers of the NEWS generally.

"In behalf of the present number we feel that, claim a little indulgence, for time would not permit us to examine the care in selections that we expect to in future; and on the same reason the original matter is not so varied, lengthy and carefully written as might be desired.

"We shall endeavor to give a dispassionate and reliable tone in the matter of the NEWS, at an time condescending to scurrility, misrepresentation, vituperation or abuse of any person, party, sect, or principle, but combining corrupters to the recital correct and fairly stated information we can obtain upon all subjects deemed worthy of notice.

"As to our politics, we have no; but we shall advocate the claims of the people of Utah to all the rights, immunities and privileges of citizens of the Federal Government."

In the same issue in which the above articles appear, it was announced that T. B. H. Stenhouse would act as assistant editor.

Albert Carrington's second term at the helm continued until 1867, when he was succeeded by George Q. Cannon. In the previous year (1866) a semi-weekly edition had been established, and the next year after Mr. Cannon became editor, viz., Nov. 21, 1868, the publication of a daily began. About the time when Mr. Cannon assumed editorial charge, a combination of conditions forced the paper to assume a more aggressive and controversial policy than it had ever previously pursued. The doctrine of polygamy was a great bone of contention among the American press, and the NEWS advocated it with great ability. A recently published biographical sketch of Mr. Cannon, speaking of his editorial control of the NEWS, says:

"The completion of the railroad across the continent brought the 'Mormon' people into closer connection with the rest of the civilized world, and greatly accentuated, in its examination, the peculiarities of their social system. Polygamy especially became, even more than it had been, an outstanding subject of discussion, and it was the duty of the NEWS to note and reply to or comment on numberless articles that appeared in the American and foreign press, upon this and other phases of the 'Mormon' question. Upon George Q. Cannon devolved the labor of conducting in behalf of the Church, and through its official organ, this great controversy, one of the mightiest that ever agitated the minds of men in any age. Few, even in the Church, have ever comprehended the magnitude of the mission that was performed by the editor of the DESERET NEWS during Geo. Q. Cannon's incumbency in that position. Not only was it necessary for the peculiar features of the faith and practice of the Latter-day Saints to be explained and defended before the world, but it was necessary to educate in them the members of the church at home, and the DESERET NEWS was a great power in the work of defense and education. Its teachings aided in giving form to the faith of the Saints, and its utterances and arguments were one and both that were read by thousands of Elders at home and abroad.

"The heaviest labors of the editor of the official advocate of the 'Mormon' people were by no means confined to a discussion of religious themes. 'Multiplied attempts were being made in Congress to invade the rights of the people, and the Federal judiciary in Utah inaugurated a persecution and oppression, equal to aught there. It devolved upon the NEWS to lead the resistance to the anti-'Mormon' measures introduced in Congress, and also to those that were adopted by the Federal officials and their sympathizers at home. That paper thus became, under the editorial charge of George Q. Cannon, an able and eloquent advocate of the principles of the American Constitution and the Declaration of Independence; and the powerful expositions of these principles which appeared in its columns and were the work of its editor, have left an impress upon the sentiments of the people of Utah, that will endure while the history of these times is read."

During Mr. Cannon's administration as editor he had able assistants in John Jacques, David Evans and John Nicholson. Mr. Jacques came to Utah from England in 1861, and took a position on the editorial staff of the NEWS in the spring of that year. He died in 1891. He did much of the editorial writing during his 30 years, which included the career of Judge McKean, and many of the editorials reviewing the doings of that official, which appeared in the NEWS, were written by Mr. Jacques.

David Evans was an Englishman, and a man of versatile and superior talents. He was an excellent violinist, and in his time ranked among the best stenographers in the United States. George Francis Train gave David Evans credit for following him more closely and accurately in reporting his lectures, than any other reporter had ever done, and Train was one of the most difficult of public speakers to follow verbatim. Mr. Evans' connection with the NEWS dated from about the year 1865 and continued until about 1875. He edited the telegraph and correspondence and read proof, etc.

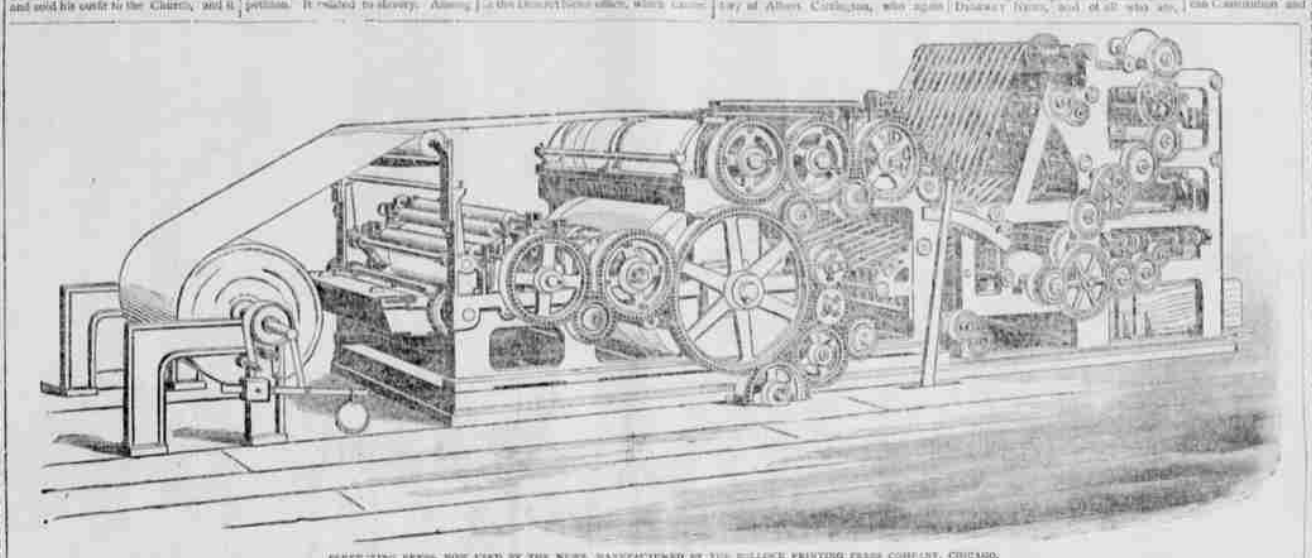
John Nicholson, then a young Scotchman, became connected with the business department in April, in 1868, but within a few months thereafter, was made city editor, a position he retained until he went on a mission to England in 1874. After an absence of over two years, he returned to Utah in the winter of 1876, and in the following spring became editor of the Ogden *Herald*. He held this position until the fall of 1881 when, being invited to accept the old position as city editor of the NEWS, he did so. He was soon promoted to the position of associate editor, C. W. Penrose being chief editor, and the two worked together in this relation until December, 1884, when Mr. Penrose went to England. The latter remained nominally the editor in chief, though as a matter of fact he was absent most of the time until near the beginning of the year 1890, when he actively resumed the duties of the position.

On the departure of Mr. Penrose for England near the close of 1884, John Nicholson became the sole editor much of and remained such until the return of Mr. Penrose, a period of five years, except that he was absent from duty for six months for additional substitutes. During those years the war waged by the government for the extinction of polygamy made the post of managing editor of the DESERET NEWS one of arduous work and great responsibility. To say that John Nicholson was fully equal to the requirements of the position is only to accord him the credit which his superiors and associates have given him without exception or reserve.

From the early part of 1890 until September 30, 1892, Messrs. Penrose and Nicholson remained editor-in-chief and associate, respectively, and on the last mentioned date the latter retired, when the paper came under the run out of a new firm.

George Q. Cannon was editor-in-chief from 1867 until 1872, in which year David O. Calder was made manager of both the editorial and business departments. His administration continued until 1877, when Charles W. Penrose became editor-in-chief. Mr. Penrose actively filled the position until his departure for England late in 1882, and upon the opening of the year 1883 he resumed it and continued it, with a vacation in the business and editorial control of the establishment was brought about, in September 1885, as above stated.

The Deseret News Publishing company leased the entire plant and establishment commencing September 1, 1892, and John Q. Cannon became editor-in-chief, which position he occupied by him at the present time. The present outlook for the paper is one of promise and encouragement, and there is every reason to believe that, whatever conditions may sweep over Utah, it will retain the confidence of the people.



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RAMAGE PRESS, ON WHICH THE FIRST VOLUME OF THE DESERET NEWS WAS PRINTED.