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## A History of The Hays, Kansas, Daily News

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A HISTORY OF THE HAYS, KANSAS, DAILY NEWS

being

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty  
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Arts

by

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University of Kansas

Date

May 16, 1962

Approved

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Approved

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Chairman, Graduate Council

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The Hays Daily News was founded in November, 1929, a time of unparalleled upheaval in the economy of the United States. The nation was just entering the early stages of the depression: businesses were failing; money was scarce. Despite forecasts of worse to come and ignoring the possibility that the economy might require years to revive, Frank Motz decided to enter the daily newspaper business in his home town.

As a former newspaper editor and publisher in other Kansas communities, he knew the risks involved in launching a daily newspaper, and his years as partial and sole owner of the Ellis County News in Hays had schooled him in the vagaries of business. Even so, he made his decision.

"Newspaper editors and publishers all over the state of Kansas thought I was foolish to try it, and most people in Hays thought I was plain nuts," Motz once told the writer.<sup>1</sup> But he was a determined man who would do everything within the limits of honesty to prove others wrong when he believed he was right. And there was no doubt that he thought his daily newspaper venture was right.

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Frank Motz, personal interview, 1957.

This stubbornness paid off, because the News not only stayed in business, but prospered and developed into a widely respected newspaper, and it marked trails that many other dailies in the state were to follow.

What is it that makes the News worthy of investigation? What, if anything, sets it apart from other small-city daily newspapers?

Its editor, primarily, made the News inimitable. Frank Motz was one of the last of a vanishing band of newspapermen whose most famous leader was William Allen White--the "old school" of personal journalists who called each other by their first (and other) names, who hewed to the party line but who stoutly maintained and frequently exercised the right to deviate, who used the pen and typewriter like a fencing foil, a hammer, or a two-by-four, depending on their mood and the issue in question.

Then there are the innovations the News fostered: In the thirties, the News was the smallest newspaper in Kansas to subscribe to the full services of the Associated Press; it was one of the first newspapers in Kansas to abandon the Saturday edition in favor of a Sunday issue; it was one of the first small-city Kansas dailies to use an electronic photo-engraving machine.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Statement by Mrs. Frank Motz, personal interview, April 2, 1962; statement by Frank Motz, personal interview, 1957.

Apart from Frank Motz and the innovations that highlight the history of the News are these characteristics: The paper's struggle for life during a time of national economic stress; its colorful and varied background which begins with Fort Hays, General George Custer, "Wild Bill" Hickok, "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Indians, the coming of the railroad, and the settlement of the West; its relative youth in the history of American journalism, and its maturity as the journalistic descendant of the Railway Advance, the Hornet, the Occasional, the German-American Advocate, the Star, the Sentinel, the Democrat, the Republican, and other early Hays newspapers.

Tracing the development of a newspaper involves more than dates and type and yellowing pages; it also involves the editor and the community he and the paper served. A history of this nature helps establish a record of a highly perishable but valuable commodity, the newspaper. Already, too little is known or can be learned about early newspapers in the city of Hays, which means that many records of the city's growth and developments have been lost. It is hoped that this study, which attempts to chronicle the background, founding, and development of this newspaper, will provide a guide of some value to any future studies of "Historic Hays."

Finally, the News is worthy of such an investigation because it is and has been an important segment of Kansas journalism, which has long been noted for contributing talented



men to the nation's major newspapers, and for the quality of its own journals. As Kansas historian William E. Connelley wrote:

From the first, Kansas regarded the press as her supreme asset. In no other state was the press, as a whole, ever equal to that of Kansas in either ability or enterprise. This high standard was set up in the stirring territorial period when Kansas was battling for freedom for herself and liberty for America. The fierce conflict which raged here attracted the brilliant minds of the times, and it can be truthfully said that it was the pen as much as the sword that made Kansas free.<sup>3</sup>

Although a great amount of material concerning early-day newspapers in Hays is available and was investigated for this report, much important information about the settling of this historic area of Western Kansas has been lost forever through carelessness and neglect. Newspaper editors of the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century were slipshod record keepers, apparently oblivious to any historic value their files might hold. Perhaps they had some justification for this attitude, for much information found in these early newspapers is grossly inaccurate, based more on hearsay and opinion than on fact. Also, many dates, ages, and other numerical data are not to be trusted implicitly, since proofreading of the hand-set type was often

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<sup>3</sup>William E. Connelley, A History of the Newspapers and Magazines Published in Kansas From the Organization of Kansas Territory, 1854, to January 1, 1916 (Topeka: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1916), p. 5.

neglected in the rush to "put the paper to bed."

Comparatively few issues of weekly newspapers published in Hays are available in the community. Fires, floods, and foolishness have taken a heavy toll of bound volumes, and those in existence are in poor condition. Because of this handicap, the history of several newspapers published in Hays is vague; even dates of first and last issues are in doubt. The Kansas State Historical Society Library in Topeka has proved to be a treasure-trove of some of these short-lived and little-known journals, but even its collection is incomplete.

Resources of the Hays Daily News are more plentiful. However, there are serious omissions in collections of bound volumes, and nowhere is there a complete record of the entire newspaper on microfilm, a fact much to be deplored, especially by researchers.

Other limitations, some less severe but no less vexing, are the lack of up-to-date histories of journalism in Kansas and the lack of more than minimal research in the history of Hays and Ellis County.

The report of this history has been arranged to provide, first, an understanding of the background and antecedents of the Hays Daily News; second, a thorough description of the first issues of the new paper; third, a brief insight into the character and personality of the founder and editor, and fourth, a survey of the evolution of the daily from 1929 to

the present. A summary of the study concludes the report.

Material for the study was found in a number of sources, the most important of which probably was the Kansas State Historical Society Library in Topeka. Others used extensively were Forsyth Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College; the City Library in Hays, and the office of the News Publishing Company. Mrs. Leota Motz was extremely helpful in providing facts and background information about her husband and their work with the Ellis County News and the Hays Daily News. Also valuable were comments on Motz by friends in Hays and elsewhere who knew him at various stages in his career.

Most of the early newspapers in the community were scanned and many were investigated in detail; an issue-by-issue survey of the Hays Daily News through 1935 was made, after which a sample study method was used to detect changes and trends in the paper.

To locate information on the early history of Hays and its newspapers for possible use in the report, historical materials on Kansas were checked carefully, and theses written on the Kansas press were examined for references to Hays newspapers.

## CHAPTER II

### ANTECEDENTS

When the Hays Daily News first went to press on November 11, 1929, in Hays, Kansas,<sup>1</sup> it was the twenty-fourth newspaper to be published in the city since its founding in June, 1867.<sup>2</sup> Twenty-two weekly newspapers had sprung up, flourished for varying lengths of time, and expired. The one remaining, the Ellis County News, was continued until 1955.<sup>3</sup>

Hays City was established in the center of Ellis County and along the Union Pacific, Eastern Division, Rail Road right-of-way north of Big Creek, a tributary of the Smoky Hill River. It received its name from Fort Hays, a military reservation constructed just south of the creek and the right-of-way to protect the railroad and the settlers from Indians.<sup>4</sup> Originally named Fort Fletcher and built fifteen miles farther down the creek, the name of the post

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<sup>1</sup>Hays Daily News, November 11, 1929.

<sup>2</sup>James H. Beach, "Old Fort Hays," Collections of the Kansas State Historical Society, XI (1909-1910), p. 571.  
/Hereafter referred to as Collections./

<sup>3</sup>Sales Ledger of the Ellis County News, Hays, Kansas.  
/Another weekly newspaper, the Ellis County Farmer and Victoria Visitor, was founded in Hays in 1949./

<sup>4</sup>Beach, op. cit., p. 572.

was changed to Fort Hays on November 17, 1866, to honor General Alexander Hays, who was killed in the Battle of the Wilderness during the Civil War.<sup>5</sup> On June 5, 1867, a flood nearly wiped out this fort and it was moved to higher ground at the present location.<sup>6</sup>

Early that spring, a group of land speculators, including William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody and William Rose, platted a town they called Rome one mile west of the present city of Hays on the south side of Big Creek. They hoped that railroad surveyors would look with favor on their settlement and establish a depot there.<sup>7</sup> A few permanent buildings were erected, but mainly it was a "tent town," described by a traveler in November, 1867, as

. . . not such an enterprising place [compared to Hays City]. It is rather going downhill. It is situated on the north side of Timber [Big] Creek, [actually on the south side] which separates the two towns. It comprises about a dozen dilapidated houses, the majority of which are saloons, where the proprietors deal out liquid lightning

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<sup>5</sup>General Order No. 22, United States Army, Headquarters, Department of the Missouri, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, November 17, 1866. [Although the date of this order is definite, the precise date when the name of the fort was actually changed has not been determined. Research by Dr. Raymond L. Welty, professor of history at Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays, indicates that word of the new name reached the fort between December 5 and December 8, 1866.]

<sup>6</sup>Beach, loc. cit.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 573; [Simon Motz], Historical and Biographical Sketches, (Old Settlers' Association of Ellis County [n.p., n.d.]), Vol. I, p. 10. [Hereafter referred to as Sketches.]

in quantities almost too incredibly enormous to mention, to the railroad men, who seem to possess an affection for the article that can only be appeased by huge draughts, which they are not loth to indulge in. This place defies all competition for wickedness. Julesburg or Ellsworth is not a patch on it. There is not a day passes but what a murder or theft is committed; which does not speak well for the morality of the community.<sup>8</sup>

Mrs. Cody recalled that her husband said the town was named Rome "because Rome's lasted for a long time, and we want our town to be remembered in history too."<sup>9</sup> At any rate, dreams of a fortune to be made in real estate vanished when the railroad made its decision to locate a depot in Hays City, rather than in Rome.<sup>10</sup> For many years a painted wood sign marked the site of Rome; then in 1961 a stone monument was erected a mile due west of Hays' Main Street.<sup>11</sup>

William E. Webb, member of a party of railroad surveyors from St. Louis, came to Western Kansas in 1866, bought land near Fort Hays (the SW  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 33-135-18W, now part of the town-site), and returned east. He came back to the area in June,

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<sup>8</sup>"Bypaths of Kansas History: Early Rome and Hays, Ellis County," Kansas Historical Quarterly, XVI (November, 1948), pp. 411-412. [Hereafter referred to as Quarterly.]

<sup>9</sup>Mrs. William F. Cody, "My Adventure Into the Far West," The Story of Old Fort Hays and Early-Day Reminiscences by Eye Witnesses. (Hays: Published under the auspices of the Fort Hays Frontier Park Committee [n.d.]). [No page numbers.]

<sup>10</sup>Beach, loc. cit.; Sketches, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>11</sup>Hays Daily News, June 18, 1961.

1867, platted a town, and gave it the name "Hays City."<sup>12</sup> A precise date of the laying of the tracks to Hays City has not been established, but the Junction City Union of Saturday, October 5, 1867, reported: "The railroad is progressing at the rate of two miles per day and is expected to be at Hays City this [Saturday] evening. Wednesday it was within six miles of this place."<sup>13</sup> Photographs taken by Alexander Gardner show the end of the track on October 19, 1867. According to the label on one photograph, this location was twenty miles west of Hays on that date.<sup>14</sup> If the rate of construction of two miles per day was correct, and if no delays occurred, the tracks would have reached Hays by October 8 or 9.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, a writer for the Junction City paper sent his editor a description of Hays dated October 12, 1867, "a few days before the arrival of the Kansas Pacific."<sup>16</sup>

Ellis County, of which Hays is the county seat, was organized in 1867. It was named for George Ellis, first lieutenant, Company I, Twelfth Kansas, who was killed in battle at Jenkins Ferry, Arkansas, April 30, 1864.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>"Biographies of Members of the Kansas Legislature of 1868," Collections, X (1907-1908), p. 279.

<sup>13</sup>Robert Taft, "Additional Notes on the Gardner Photographs of Kansas," Quarterly, VI (May, 1937), p. 177.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.    <sup>15</sup>Ibid.    <sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>A. T. Andreas (ed.), History of the State of Kansas (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883), p. 1289.

That Hays City was a wild town in a wild country is borne out by reports from several seasoned travelers of the day. John D. Cruise, a railroad telegrapher,

. . . saw a great deal of the toughness that used to predominate at Abilene, Ellsworth and Hays in 1867 and 1868. It was dangerous to go out after dark, and frequently in daylight. Human life was very cheap. "However," Mr. Cruise says, "if persons kept sober and attended strictly to their own business, it was not so dangerous as it appeared.

"The years 1867, 1868 and 1869 were characterized by a general Indian war in the west half of the state. A glance over those years, without being exact, shows that contemporaneous with the building of the Union Pacific Railway [The Union Pacific Rail Road, Eastern Division, became the Kansas Pacific Rail Road in 1869.<sup>18</sup>] through Western Kansas, on the immediate route and in the region south of the north line of the state, there were in the year 1868, 82 men and four children killed by Indians, 14 women ravished; hundreds of head of stock run off, and thousands of dollars worth of property destroyed."<sup>19</sup>

Another writer gave readers of the Atchison Weekly Free Press this description of the new settlement:

As I promised . . . I will give now a brief description of New Town [Hays] and Rome, near Fort Hays, on the U.P.R.R., E.D.:

New Town is by far the most enterprising of the two. It promises to be the largest and most popular town on the line of the road. Its age now does not exceed six months, and it excels all the towns on the line from Salina to Fort Hays, for business enterprise, and everything which tends to make a place worthy of note. Houses go up as if by magic, and are tenanted almost as magically.

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<sup>18</sup>William F. Zornow, Kansas: A History of the Jayhawker State (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), p. 137.

<sup>19</sup>John D. Cruise, "Early Days on the Union Pacific," Collections, XI (1909-1910), p. 529; p. 541.



The town is situated on a bluff, or rising ground, from which you can see the country for miles around. Fort Hays is plainly visible, with its tents of snowy canvas, which look, in the distance, almost as romantic as a fairy land. Occasionally the eye is greeted by a herd of buffalo on the distant hills, which tends to make a visitor think himself indeed where game is plentiful and where nature has most graciously lavished her charms. The town is laid out into lots which range from one to two hundred dollars each, in price.<sup>20</sup>

A correspondent for the Manhattan Standard wrote this description for his newspaper on May 8, 1869:

Hays City is progressing. It is quite "go-aheadish." In fact, it is decidedly so. The railroad passes through the town. Most of the business is done on the north side of the railroad. Almost every other building is a liquor saloon or a house of ill fame. Hotels and eating houses are also numerous.

The Seventh Cavalry has just been paid off, and the whole regiment is on a regular spree.

We made a visit to said town last night, by moonlight. Almost the first house, as we entered the town from the south, on the right, is the large wholesale liquor and clothing house of Ryan and Company.

On the left, near by, is the Santa Fe saloon, all ablaze with light, and soldiers staggering around in front are a good indication of what is going on within.

A little further up we cross the railroad. Over the street from the depot is a large gambling "hell." Here billiard and faro tables, chuck luck and monte banks, "horse-head," etc., are in full blast.

A little northwest of this is the notorious "shebang" kept by a Frenchman, name unknown, where was a dance under full headway. . . . Officers, soldiers, citizens, black-legs, gamblers, pimps, nymphs du pace, and all mingle here on a common platform. What is going on in this place is but a repetition of what is going on in a dozen different

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<sup>20</sup>"Bypaths of Kansas History, etc.," op. cit., p. 413.

houses in town.

As we return homeward we see various forms lying in the road, in the gutters, and puddles. Staggering forms are seen, supporting still more staggering specimens of humanity toward camp. Fights are frequent--some still shooting, some cutting, and frequent "fist mauling." Robberies are frequent. Men dead drunk are in no condition to defend themselves, and the temptation is too strong for a "dead beat" or a "strapped" blackleg to resist making a "raise." . . .

Such, Mr. Editor, is a brief, but truthful sketch of Hays City by moonlight.<sup>21</sup>

Another writer of the same period who may have been trying to "sell" the railroad by extolling the virtues of the communities along its right-of-way, gave a more peaceful portrayal of the young town:

Hays City is in the heart of the buffalo and Indian country and but for its close proximity to the Fort would be completely isolated as it is the only town within a radius of 75 miles. It was near here that the principal outrages were committed during the Indian troubles of 1868 and it was as much as a man's life was worth to venture half a mile from town. In former times it had a very bad reputation, as being the resort and abode of a large number of roughs and outlaws, but the law abiding citizens having taken matters into their own hands and hung a few of them, have so completely changed the order of things as to now make Hays City quiet and orderly in comparison to what it used to be. . . .<sup>22</sup>

D. C. Nellis of Topeka, formerly an early-day attorney

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<sup>21</sup>"Bypaths of Kansas History: Hays City by Moonlight," Quarterly, IX (February, 1940), p. 103.

<sup>22</sup>"Along the Line of the Kansas Pacific Railway in Western Kansas in 1870," Quarterly, XIX (May, 1951), pp. 209-210.

in Hays City<sup>23</sup> and author of a series of historical articles on Hays published in 1907, adds an interesting climax to the story of early days in Hays City:

From 1867 to 1873 Hays City was in an exceeding big boom of its existence and contained 2000 or more citizens, the most of whom were perfectly at home wherever they might take their hats off. Their principal necessity was whiskey and the supply of that article was never low. All who possessed the needful quarter of a dollar could get a whiskey glass full of the liquid to quench the delicious thirst. No pennies, nickles or ten cent pieces were evidenced on change, except as some tender foot [sic] might show one or more as curiosities. No article on sale was for less than twenty-five cents.

Of the individuals who congregated within the city limits were many who obtained even national recognition--among these were "Wild Bill" [James Butler Hickok], "Buffalo Bill" [William F. Cody], Judge Joyce and "Old Man Hodgeman" who usually "got religion" every year or so, and expressed himself as sincerely hoping that sometime after any one of his "conversions," and while it was still in force, some one would gently kill him in one of the numerous public displays enjoyed by the city nearly or quite every night.

But in 1871 the Union Pacific [Then called the Kansas Pacific] was extended westward as far as Sheridan, Colorado, and that city became the temporary emporium of the "happy-go-lucky" class of people who made Hays "howl" for four years or so. Hays then gradually subsided into much smaller proportions and many of its buildings were moved to Colorado, others were burned down--including the "Court House" which suffered this kind of fate two times prior to 1873; and again others, merely sod houses, were abandoned to the rats and other vermins [sic] which had accumulated in them.

Now those who lived (in family) at Hays when it took its turn for the better, should be remembered by name. While there were very many very bad people living there

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<sup>23</sup>Advertisement of D. C. Nellis, attorney of Hays City, in the Hays City Sentinel, March 23, 1877.

yet there were many nice and respectable families who had come to Ellis county for "better or for worse" in life. These were the Hays "400" and the present Hays folks should remember them by name.<sup>24</sup>

Nellis then listed a large number of the "nice and respectable" residents of that period. It is interesting to note among the names that of Simon Motz, who was to be the father of Frank.

Into this dubious environment was born volume I, number one of the Hays City Railway Advance, on November 9, 1867. Joseph Clarke, formerly of Leavenworth, was listed as the proprietor in the paper's masthead, but W. H. Bisbee and Willis Emery were associated with him in the venture.<sup>25</sup> Only two issues of this paper are known to be in existence today, number one and number sixty-six, dated June 23, 1868.<sup>26</sup> Number one is a four-page, four column paper with ten-by-fifteen-inch pages and thirteen-pica columns. The masthead on page one gives the following information:

THE ADVANCE  
(Tri-Weekly)

Published at Hays City, Ellis County, Kansas

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<sup>24</sup>The Republican [Hays], September 19, 1907.

<sup>25</sup>G. Raymond Gaeddert, "First Newspapers in Kansas Counties," Quarterly, X (May, 1941), p. 127, citing the Junction City Union, November 16, 1867.

<sup>26</sup>Hays City Railway Advance, November 9, 1867; June 23, 1868. Also, archives of the Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

Advertisements inserted at reasonable rates. All descriptions of work neatly and promptly executed. The "Advance" will be for sale at all News Depots. Subscription--75 cents per month, or \$8.00 per year--\$5.00 for six months. Address,

"THE ADVANCE"

Hays City, Ellis County, Ks.

Headlines on news items were set in a ten-point condensed old-style, or serif, type face in upper and lower case. Body type appears to be set nine-point leaded one point, making the columns very readable. The type appears to be fairly new, with few indications of chipped or mashed letters. The printing quality is generally good. Column one, numbering from the left, contains the masthead with the remainder of the space devoted to one-inch advertisements. Column two consists of a poem and several non-local miscellaneous news items. Column three is devoted to a part-news, part-editorial item entitled "EDITORIAL EXCURSION":

The excursion is over and the editors are home having arrived at Chicago on Friday last--a full week earlier than was anticipated. . . . The end of the Union Pacific railroad was reached by the party and about twenty-five of the number visited Denver. No accidents happened on the way and Indians and Buffalo were scarce.

Served 'em right for allowing themselves to be bamboozled into taking the North-Pole clap-trap route. Eastern folks will soon learn that the Kansas Branch is THE main line of the Pacific Railroad.

Page two includes one column of advertisements and three columns of news-editorials, which were considered news stories by journalists of the late nineteenth century. They usually





consisted of a few facts and a great deal of comment by the writer.<sup>27</sup> One such item is the traditional "first-issue" declaration:

We announce today the birth of the Hays City Railway Advance, with a hope that it may be long before we are obliged to announce regretfully its demise. It is a sturdy, sprightly youngster at the outset, and if its god-fathers cherish it as they ought, the paper will redeem in a more mature age the promise of its youth.

Another item on page two proudly acclaims the growth of the paper's birthplace:

#### THE NEW CITY OF WESTERN KANSAS

Probably no town in the state has ever grown as rapidly, and at the same time complied with the principles of permanent prosperity, as that of Hays.

But about three months, the infant giant has strode /sic/ forward to the front among the important railroad towns of the West.

.....

Another news story deals with the identity of one Wild Bill "Haycock," and there are articles on Fort Hays, the state and national elections, the railway, buffalo hunting, prairie fires, and the U. S. Express. A small "reader" advertisement notes that "J. E. Walker & Co. have changed their base, and are now located with a big stock of groceries, provisions and liquors on the corner of Front and Fort streets, next to the

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<sup>27</sup>Edwin Emery, Phillip H. Ault, Warren K. Agee, Introduction to Mass Communications (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1960), p. 69; p. 79.



Advance office." (Since Front is now Tenth Street, this would place the newspaper office as the second establishment east or west of Fort Street. See a later reference on Page 22.)

Page three features a letter from "A Friend" at Fort Dodge in column one, and the Big Creek Land Company took one and a half columns to describe land for sale around Hays City. The other half of column three is devoted to miscellaneous trivia and jokes, and column four is taken up with ads.

Column one on page four contains this interesting note: "Wanted.--We want an intelligent, industrious, moral youth to learn the printing business. Of course, one from the country would be preferred." Column one also contained this apology:

OUR ADVERTISERS.--It must not be understood that our advertisements in this issue present a fair exhibit of the business of Hays City. In the hurry of getting out the first number we have been unable to devote as much attention as we could have wished to this department of the "Advance," but before the end of the week our columns will give a reflex [sic] of a more flourishing trade than ever any town of a proportionate age could boast in Kansas.

Also in column one is the first report of a death, a cursory story about a "Scot" having been kicked by a mule in the stable. "His skull was broken in several places," the Advance laconically states. Column two is headed "Buffalo Chips" and consists of personal items, reader ads, and miscellany.

Column three is headlined "LATEST BY TELEGRAPH / Telegraphed Exclusively to the Railway Advance by the Western Union." This news of state, national, and international happenings originated in Leavenworth, and could well have been sent by a friend of Clarke's. Column four includes items on mail and trains, the post office, the Southern Overland (stage coach), and advertisements.

Several major changes were made in the Advance between the first and sixty-sixth issues: The latter consists of five thirteen-pica columns and the pages are 11 7/8 by 19 1/4 inches. Publishing three times a week apparently had become too great a burden, and the Advance made this announcement in column one, page one:

The Advance will be issued, until the Spring opening, every Tuesday and Friday at the old rates, viz: Per year, \$8.00; six months, \$5.00, or \$1.00 per month for any shorter time. Transient advertisements \$2.00 per square of ten lines for first insertion; each subsequent insertion \$1.00 per square. Special agreements will be made with quarterly advertisers in accordance with the amount of space occupied.

A business directory on page one lists ninety establishments in the town, and the newspaper includes itself: "Railway Advance, iron-clad, south Fort." A comment on page two regarding a move of the newspaper office must have been understandable to Advance readers:

We are snugly ensconced in our new office. The fact that it has been heretofore used as a sort of swag ken [sic] by a couple of honored limbs of the law, should not deter our friends from calling. Our p.p. (purity and

piety) will save us all from contamination.

An item in "Buffalo Chips" on page three deepens the mystery about the "iron-clad":

We no longer hail from the iron-clad. [This indicates that the editor had neglected to change the "house ad" in his own paper.] It's [sic] caloric properties were too much for us. Of two evils, choose the least. So, if from necessity, we were compelled to betake ourselves to the sulphurous [sic] regions mentioned in the Geod [sic] Book, Yuma or the "oven," we say either of the two first mentioned all the time. We are now located near the site of the old office [sic], on Front street, west of Fort, where we will be glad to meet and greet friends, more especially if they wish to present us with Judge Chase's photographs.

This issue is liberally spotted with "news" items and advertisements urging residents to subscribe for and advertise in the paper. Page two, column four, bears this note: "Subscribe for the Advance--the pioneer paper of the Buffalo Region. Now is the time. Send along a V [presumably, five dollars] and get the news of the Plains." Rates are listed in column five, page four, in this hopeful statement, which is reproduced as it appeared in the Advance:

THE HAYS CITY  
Railway Advance  
 the  
 Pioneer Journal  
 on the  
 Union Pacific Railway  
 (Eastern Division)  
 The Advance  
 will be published  
 Every Tuesday and Friday  
 in the afternoon. We need only refer to improvements already made in the paper to assure our readers that we shall strive to further deserve their patronage and approval.

## Terms of Subscription:

Per month.....\$1.00  
 Six months..... 5.00

## Advertising rates:

1 Square (10 lines or less) 3 months.....\$ 25.00  
 2 Squares ( " " " " ) " " ..... 35.00  
 3 " ( " " " " ) " " ..... 40.00  
 One-half column..... 75.00  
 One Column..... 125.00

Transient advertisements in all cases in advance, and no deviation made from this rule.

Local notices in "Chips," twenty-five cents per line, each insertion.

The large and increasing circulation of the Advance in Southern Colorado and New Mexico,

Renders it beyond doubt the most desirable and profitable Advertising Medium

By means of which to reach the trade of those Territories. Hays City being the eastern terminus of the two Great Overland Stage Lines, our facilities for obtaining the Freshest Intelligence

From Colorado and New Mexico are unrivalled.

We have made arrangements for correspondence for various localities in the newly opened Moreno Mines, As well as other points of interest in the West.

Business letters or correspondence should be addressed to "THE ADVANCE," Hays City, Kansas.

The editor of the Junction City Union did not regard future prospects for the Advance as bright. In announcing the printing of the first issue, he was bluntly skeptical:

The Hays City Railway Advance is the name of a tri-weekly paper which has made its appearance at the terminus of the road /the Union Pacific, Eastern Division, Rail Road/, and published by Jos. Clark /sic/, W. H. Bisbee and Willis Emery, all of Leavenworth. The thing looks like a huge joke, considering all things. They advertise for a boy to learn the business and add "one from the country preferred, of course." They evidently mean that they want a young Cheyenne.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Quarterly, X (May, 1941), loc. cit.

Exactly when the Advance ceased publication is not known. No mention of issues later than number sixty-six was found, and records of early-day newspapers in Western Kansas are far from complete. In 1907, the Republican, published in Hays City, made this reference to the Advance: "After a short life of only a few months it ceased to exist and Hays City and Ellis County was [sic] without a newspaper until the advent of the Sentinel."<sup>29</sup>

This statement is erroneous on two counts. First, the Advance obviously lasted longer than "a few months," and, second, there was a newspaper between the Advance and the Sentinel. Although no copies of it have been found, there existed in Hays for a short time a paper called the Hays City Times, founded in 1873 by two men named Allen and Jones. Evidence indicates that it did not survive long.<sup>30</sup>

The Hays City Sentinel was founded on February 19, 1874,<sup>31</sup> by Wallace H. Johnson, who also started and sold the

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<sup>29</sup>The Republican, June 22, 1907.

<sup>30</sup>Frank W. Blackmar (ed.), Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History, Embracing Events, Institutions, Industries, Counties, Cities, Towns, Prominent Persons, Etc. (Chicago: Standard Publishing Company, 1912), Vol II, p. 578; Hays Daily News, November 16, 1929; Andreas, op. cit., p. 1292.

<sup>31</sup>The Republican stated on June 17, 1906, that the Sentinel was started February 19, 1874, but the issue of June 22, 1907, set the date as February 14. Since no copies of the Sentinel's first issue were found, it was necessary to determine the publication date by calculation. Working on the

Iola Register, Salina Journal and Salina Republican, Russell Record, Topeka Daily Times, Beloit Gazette, and the Farmers Advocate in Salina.<sup>32</sup> Johnson operated the Sentinel until August, 1874, when the paper was purchased by Simon Motz, who installed a man named Reed as the editor. It was said of Reed that he was a typical newspaper writer: "He could edit a half column of very interesting reading matter with a few facts to base his subject on."<sup>33</sup> Reed and Motz sold out in December, 1874, to William P. Montgomery who continued the Sentinel as Hays City's only newspaper until 1876. Montgomery was assisted in editing the paper by his son, Frank C. Montgomery.<sup>34</sup>

The Sentinel consisted of four pages, each fourteen by 21 3/4 inches and containing six 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ -pica columns. The flag, Hays City Sentinel, was set in what appears to be eighty-four point type similar to but simpler than Old English. Headlines are twelve-point bold-face and body type appears to

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belief that a typographical error had been made in one of the Republican's statements, the researcher checked days of known issues of the Sentinel with a 200-year calendar. This revealed that in its early years, at least, the Sentinel was published on Wednesdays. In 1874, February 19 was a Wednesday and February 14 was a Saturday. February 19, therefore, had to be the date of Vol. I, No. 1 of the Sentinel.

<sup>32</sup>Hays Daily News, November 11, 1929.

<sup>33</sup>The Republican, loc. cit.

<sup>34</sup>The Hays City Sentinel, July 20, 1877.

be eight or nine-point. However, many local items usually printed on page three were set in varying sizes of type, some as small as five-point. It was consistently well composed and printed, as were many of these early sheets, whose editors and/or publishers were printers as well as reporters and editors.

A courageous but bombastic newspaper, the Sentinel waged war with the editorial broadsword and cudgel in the custom of the times. In frontier parlance, its editors "shot from the hip," and sometimes hit their targets. For example, in the issue of July 20, 1877, this note appeared: "One hundred Russians settled in Marion county last week. Marion county is welcome to them." Later that summer, the editors, apparently abused by the competing Star, resorted to poetry, of a sort: "Twinkle, twinkle, little Star; / How I wonder whose you are! / Up above the world so high. / Like a pea-nut in a slop bucket."<sup>35</sup> And later, this satiric remark appeared:

The Russell Record and Ellsworth Reporter have a monopoly of the newspaper business in their respective counties. Here, with two organized townships, we have three papers-- a fact illustrative of the kindness and long suffering of our people.<sup>36</sup>

Evidences of the Montgomerys' interest in Hays and Ellis County, however, are plentiful: They offered and received permission in 1876 to publish the county printing (legal notices,

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., August 9, 1876.      <sup>36</sup>Ibid., August 10, 1877.

commissioners' proceedings, and the like) at no charge, as a means of saving the taxpayers money,<sup>37</sup> and in September of that year they issued a "county edition" of 3,000 copies, 1,000 of which were to be distributed by the Kansas Pacific Railroad, to "set forth the advantages existing and the inducements the county can offer for emigration."<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand, one or both of the Montgomerys found it difficult, if not impossible, to avoid a flippant, sarcastic attitude. These are only a few samples:

We captured three Russian subscribers Monday, through aid of a twenty-five cent chromo.<sup>39</sup>

The Star gave its readers half a holiday, by only issuing half a sheet, last week.<sup>40</sup>

Local news is very scarce, in fact, so few and far between are the items that we are becoming discouraged. We have exhausted the snow; we have exhausted the Russians; organic weariness has smitten us; we are in despair.<sup>41</sup>

The Star issued a half sheet this week. Cause: Typos all drunk.<sup>42</sup>

The Star very candidly remarks that all great musicians have large ears; and the impression that the editor of the Star is a great musician, will crowd itself in upon us.<sup>43</sup>

Despite their barbed wit, the Montgomerys had financial

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., July 12, 1876.      <sup>38</sup>Ibid., September 6, 1876.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., August 9, 1876.      <sup>40</sup>Ibid., December 8, 1876.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., December 22, 1876.      <sup>42</sup>Ibid., February 2, 1877.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., February 9, 1877.



difficulties and were forced to close the Sentinel's doors in 1882. Frank moved the press and other equipment to Washington Territory, and the subscription list and advertising contracts were sold to J. H. Downing, editor of the Hays City Star.<sup>44</sup> This must have been a bitter pill in view of the long-standing and often acrimonious rivalry between the two papers. Hays City had not, however, heard the last of the Montgomerys.

The Ellis County Star was established by J. H. Downing who was brought to Hays City by Simon Motz in 1876.

A newspaper fight developed in Hays and the late Simon Motz, Hays pioneer and businessman, being without editorial weapons, set out to find a fearless newspaperman who would carry the war to the "enemy." "Jack" Downing was recommended by a mutual friend to fill that post and so in March, 1876, Mr. Downing came to Hays and founded the Ellis County Star in March of that year. Mrs. Downing assisted him with setting of type, making up forms and the printing of the paper, all hand work in those days, and for the next six years the Ellis County Star was one of the most widely quoted weekly newspapers of Kansas.<sup>45</sup>

April 6 was the date of the Star's first issue, however, not sometime in March as reported above.<sup>46</sup> Downing had worked for the Leavenworth Bulletin and as a traveling correspondent for the Leavenworth Commercial before coming to Hays City. Previously, he had gained journalistic experience on the Nonpareil, a daily paper in Council Bluffs, Iowa. In an

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<sup>44</sup>Hays Daily News, November 16, 1929; Republican, April 8, 1905.

<sup>45</sup>Hays Daily News, June 18, 1932.

<sup>46</sup>Ellis County Star, April 6, 1876.

interview published in the first issue of the Hays Daily News,

Downing stated:

"There was no money to be made in the newspaper business in those days. The newspaper was a political standard bearer. Party lines were more clearly drawn then than now and the editor was supposed to--and did--fight the battles of the party to which he owed allegiance. His only hope of reward was in an appointment to some more or less remunerative office."<sup>47</sup>

According to the interview, Downing edited the Star for fifteen years, then sold the paper to become chief clerk to the Board of Railroad Commissioners in 1888.<sup>48</sup> (This may have been a typographical mistake. It will be proved later that Downing sold the Star in 1887, not 1888. The error of the "fifteen years" statement cannot be explained.)

Downing's chief success in the world of journalism probably was the "scoop" he scored when he printed the first news of the Custer massacre on July 6, 1876. He described the circumstances this way for the Hays Daily News:

"The Star was the first paper in Kansas to publish the report of the Custer Massacre. We published the news at 5 o'clock p.m. on the 6th day of July, and the dailies contained it on the morning of the 7th. This is the first 'puff' that has ever appeared for the Star in its own columns, and we feel there is no egotism in referring to its special short story which appeared in the July 6, 1876, issue:

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<sup>47</sup>Hays Daily News, November 11, 1929.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

'WAR!

OUR TROOPS SURPRISED BY THE SIOUX!

General Custer and His Entire Command

KILLED.

(Special Dispatch to the Star.)

Wallace, Kansas

July 6, 1876

Editor Star:

News just received here that General Custer had a fight with 4,000 Sioux Indians on June 15th. General Custer and his entire command of five companies are reported killed. Every member of Custer's family was killed, including his two brothers, nephew and brother-in-law. The fight is reported to have taken place about thirty or forty miles below Little Big Horn Mountain. The troops were nearly all killed by the first volley fired by the Indians.

(Signed)

J.'

"A friend of mine whose name was Cushing, a telegrapher he was, had gone from Hays to Fort Wallace," said Downing. "He knew I printed the paper every Thursday. It was he who sent the first message over the wire to Fort Leavenworth, then headquarters of the Department of the Missouri, of Custer and his entire command on the Little Big Horn.

"But Cushing filed his message too late for the Leavenworth afternoon papers to get it in time for publication. Our forms were on the press and we had begun to print when I received the telegram. We stopped the press while I picked up a stick and put into type the news we had received, and at 5 o'clock we told our readers of the disastrous result of the expedition against the Sioux.

"The officers at the fort were excited. They came to the Star office and said the story couldn't be true or the post commander would have received word from Fort Leavenworth. I told them I knew every word was true but could not divulge the source of my information. To have done so would have cost my friend his job. The officers telegraphed Fort Leavenworth and a few hours later they received full confirmation of the story we had printed.

"Next morning the morning paper of Leavenworth printed news of the massacre. I knew then we had 'beat' every other paper in Kansas publishing news of the battle; and in later years, from all I could find, I was convinced we were 12 hours or more ahead of any other paper in the country."<sup>49</sup>

Like the Sentinel, the Star was a six-column paper of fifteen by 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch page size. Columns were set 12 $\frac{1}{2}$  picas wide in what seems to be eight-point type. Composition was generally good, but the printing was not always of the best quality. The flag was set in a clean, distinctive, old-style face, perhaps Caslon. Although Downing is listed as editor in the masthead in column one of the first issue, it is probable that Simon Motz, and perhaps other Republican leaders of the town, owned the paper, as indicated previously. In his notice to the public in the first issue, the new editor set forth his beliefs and aims for the Star:

#### TO THE PUBLIC

We have taken the advice given by Horace Greeley to young men [Downing was 33 years old at this time.<sup>50</sup>]: "Go West!" and have come to stay. With an experience of nearly eight years in Kansas journalism we believe we know something of the duties of a Kansas editor, and the missions of the Press. An editor may do much good in a community by detecting the errors into which men may gravitate, by raising the standard of life's objects and aims, and by showing the bright side of life. As we look into a mirror we behold ourselves, whether grave or

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., June 18, 1932. [The story of Downing's death in this issue states: "Mr. Downing observed his 89th birthday on Christmas Day, 1931." This places his birth date in 1842.]

gay, but we must remember that it is our shadow we see. Life is just what we make it. It is the mirror into which men ought to gaze and remember that they are mirrored.

We have chosen Ellis County as our home because we believe it possesses resources unsurpassed by any other Western county. The Great American Desert is here transformed into fields burdened with grain, more richly rewarding labor than was ever dreamed of in the older States. This county must in a short time take its place among the richest in the state. As a stock-raising region it has no superior. A rich soil, a salubrious climate, varied landscapes, an abundance of wood and water, with a people generous, brave and thrifty, there is no such word as fail known. These are our purposes for the future, and the reasons why we have chosen Ellis County as our home. We believe the mission of the Press is to build up rather than tear down, and to this end shall we labor.

Politically we are a Republican, and to some extent, partisan, but we believe a paper should never become so partisan as to become unmindful of the faults of men in public life.<sup>51</sup>

His paper was lively, newsy, and bright. As in the case of the Sentinel, most if not all of the national and international news was "boiler plate" and was used on pages one and two. Local news was reserved for pages three and four. This appears to have been the mode of the times, rather than the editor's personal evaluation of the news. Although Downing's writing was not amusingly impudent, as was the Montgomerys', he was not lacking in humor. His wit was mirthful, rather than satiric. His writing style was frequently loose in syntax and occasionally his grammar was faulty--characteristic of

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<sup>51</sup>Ellis County Star, April 6, 1876.

much newspaper writing of that period--but his sentences were free-flowing and easy to read. A study of many of Downing's highly personalized news items reveals a kind and generous personality who welcomed the German-Russian settlers to the county in the face of the Montgomery's coldness to the emigrants. He was a battler, though, always ready to square off with any opponent when the time was right--at least in print. This excerpt gives pointed proof:

FRANK C. MONTGOMERY

The above-named is the long-legged kangaroo who with the instincts of a hyena and the brains of a lobster, curls up in his boar's nest, and for the paltry sum of three dollars a week writes articles for the Sentinel, many of which are a tissue of falsehoods from beginning to end. If this cowardly, low-lived cur has achieved a reputation since a resident of Hays City, it is that of an infamous liar. . . .<sup>52</sup>

The merger of the Star and the Sentinel in 1882 produced the Star-Sentinel, the fifth newspaper to be published in Hays City. Downing used the combined name until May, 1886, when he dropped the Sentinel from the flag and only the Star remained.<sup>53</sup> However, the Montgomerys, who had lost a battle in 1882, won the war in 1887 by taking control of the Star, discarding the name, and picking up the Sentinel again. They continued publishing it until October 15, 1895.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., November 23, 1876.    <sup>53</sup>Ibid., May 6, 1886.

<sup>54</sup>Ellis County Free Press and Democrat, April 16, 1887; Hays City Sentinel, October 15, 1895.

The sixth Hays newspaper, the German-American Advocate, was begun October 4, 1882, by Charles Miller and Nathaniel Robbins, its editors.<sup>55</sup> The name was changed to the Advocate on November 22, 1884, but shortly after, on December 6 of that year, the paper became known as the Advocate and Ellis County Democrat. For the next issue, December 13, the name was reversed and the paper became the Ellis County Democrat and Advocate.<sup>56</sup> Harry Freese and O. G. Zellers were publishers of this combined paper, which was at times printed in both English and German editions. Freese became sole publisher early in 1885, and on December 26 that year the paper underwent still another name change, this time to the Ellis County Democrat.<sup>57</sup> Apparently not satisfied with the new title, Freese placed the party label in a less prominent position on May 22, 1886, and added a new designation to the name: the Ellis County Free Press and Democrat. A little more than two years later, he abandoned the political identification altogether and the weekly emerged as the Hays City Free Press.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>German-American Advocate [Hays], October 4, 1882.

<sup>56</sup>Advocate, November 22, 1884; Advocate and Ellis County Democrat, December 6, 1884; Ellis County Democrat and Advocate, December 13, 1884.

<sup>57</sup>Ellis County Democrat, December 26, 1885.

<sup>58</sup>Ellis County Free Press and Democrat, May 22, 1866; Hays City Free Press, September 29, 1888.

In the meantime, a familiar name had reappeared on the newspaper roster--the Hays City Times. This second attempt to establish a Times in the town was made by G. W. Sweet, and his effort was no more successful than the first, the paper expiring April 23, 1887, when W. P. Montgomery purchased it.<sup>59</sup> (The Kansas Historical Society Library lists volume four, number 35, as published on May 15, 1886, which would probably set the date of establishment in September, 1882.)

Also founded in this period was the Union, a newspaper published primarily as a communications media among the posts of the Kansas Department of the Grand Army of the Republic. Begun January 25, 1887, by Tune Bentley and a man named Burr, the Union had correspondents and distributors at Fort Hays, and gave full reports on all meetings of the local GAR post.<sup>60</sup> (No evidence of the date of its demise was found.)

Newspaper number fifteen in Hays City was the Ellis County Republican, founded by George P. Griffith on January 18, 1888.<sup>61</sup> A newsy, four or six-page paper, the Republican was one of the most successful newspapers of early Hays, having

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<sup>59</sup>Hays City Times, May 15, 1886; Ellis County Free Press and Democrat, April 16, 1887.

<sup>60</sup>Union, January 25, 1887 ff.

<sup>61</sup>Republican, January 25, 1908. [An item on p. 2 refers to ". . . January 18th, its (the newspaper's) 20th birthday."<sup>7</sup>



been published by Griffith until 1912.<sup>62</sup>

G. W. Sweet re-entered the newspaper business in Hays City in 1888, this time with a sheet titled the Democratic Times which he published until 1890.<sup>63</sup>

The seventeenth newspaper in the town was the Alliance-Pilot, a weekly established September 18, 1890, by the Alliance Central Committee of Ellis County with Joseph M. Chase as editor. This paper was committed to advocating matters of interest to farmers, laborers, and businessmen. Evidence indicates that the paper went out of business after the November election when the Alliance candidates were badly defeated.<sup>64</sup>

The next paper to be printed in Hays City was the Hornet, launched November 30, 1892, by S. L. Stigall and G. H. McQuary.<sup>65</sup> It, too, apparently led a short life, for no mention of such a newspaper is found after February, 1893.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., July 13, 1912.

<sup>63</sup>Democratic Times, December 11, 1890.

<sup>64</sup>Alliance-Pilot, September 18, 1892.

<sup>65</sup>Hornet, November 30, 1892.

<sup>66</sup>Chronological History of Kansas Newspapers (MSS in the Kansas State Historical Society Library, Topeka.) [This is a listing of newspapers on file in the library. While not totally accurate, it is an invaluable guide to the Kansas newspaper researcher. It will be referred to hereafter as Chronological History.]<sup>7</sup>

At last, a name of permanence, the Ellis County News, is found on the list of newspapers that have been born, lived, and died in Hays. Organized initially as the Ellis County Independent in 1897, the News was established November 4, 1899, by Miles H. Mulroy, who was joined by his brother, R. J., in 1902.<sup>67</sup> The brothers operated the weekly with first one, then the other listed as editor or publisher. In 1904 they abbreviated the name of the paper to the News.<sup>68</sup> Miles and R. J. were both listed as proprietors in July, 1905, but by November only Miles' name appeared in the masthead as publisher. By August, 1907, however, whatever rift had separated the brothers was healed, and both were listed as publishers.<sup>69</sup> In December, 1907, the News was sold to a stock company owned by B. M. Dreiling, Anthony Kuhn, and J. M. Schafer, and in 1908 the name of Herbert Baker appeared as editor in the masthead.<sup>70</sup> The pendulum swung back in 1909, and the paper was again named the Ellis County News.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Winifred Gregory (ed.), American Newspapers 1821-1936: A Union List of Files Available in the United States and Canada (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1937), p. 201; Chronological History.

<sup>68</sup>Ellis County News, September 2, 1904.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., August 22, 1907.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., December 5, 1907; September 10, 1908.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., April 9, 1909.

Officers of the company were listed in the March 17, 1911, issue as A. A. Dreiling, president, and Alex Schueler, Jr., secretary. Directors were A. A. Dreiling, John S. Bird, J. H. Leiker, B. M. Dreiling, and P. P. Huser.

Still another name change resulted on July 20, 1912, when the News purchased the Ellis County Republican from George Griffith and became known as the Ellis County News-Republican. The July 27 issue was the first for the newly-renamed paper, which also featured another change: The News Publishing Company was shown to be the publisher and B. M. Dreiling was the editor.<sup>72</sup> (This name, News Publishing Company, is still the title of the corporation that owns the Hays Daily News.) But the evolutionary era of this newspaper was not yet complete. John S. Bird became editor in 1916, leaving his position as a teacher at the normal school to enter the weekly newspaper business as a part-owner.<sup>73</sup> He was joined in 1922 by Frank Motz, an experienced newspaperman whose roots sank deep into the history of Hays.<sup>74</sup>

In 1924 Bird and Motz bought the Hays City Free Press, owned and operated at that time by A. L. Clark and his son, Vernon.<sup>75</sup> Another merger, another name. This time the paper

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<sup>72</sup>Ellis County News-Republican, July 27, 1912.

<sup>73</sup>Hays Daily News, November 16, 1929.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.      <sup>75</sup>Ibid.

became the Ellis County News and the Free Press, a title which persisted until 1936 in spite of its awkwardness.<sup>76</sup> Frank Motz was listed as editor in 1927, after purchasing Bird's interest in the paper, but with the advent of the daily paper in 1929, Motz turned the editorial helm of the weekly over to Bird again.<sup>77</sup> Bird left the News early in 1930 to pursue other business interests.<sup>78</sup> Succeeding editors of the weekly have included B. M. Dreiling, Alois F. Bieker, Donald Doane, Victor C. Leiker, Jabez M. Funk, and Walter M. (Pat) Taylor, Jr.<sup>79</sup>

As pointed out previously, the name of the weekly was changed one last time in 1936 when the Free Press part was abandoned, and once again the Ellis County News emerged. But the increasing problems of personnel, news copy, advertising, and financing that accompanied the daily paper made the weekly more and more difficult to cope with. Finally, it was discontinued on August 25, 1955,<sup>80</sup> the last of a long line of weekly newspapers that had existed in Hays almost since its

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<sup>76</sup>Ellis County News and Free Press, February 6, 1936.

<sup>77</sup>Hays Daily News, November 11, 1929; November 16, 1929.

<sup>78</sup>Chronological History; statement by Mrs. Frank Motz, personal interview, April 2, 1962.

<sup>79</sup>Payroll ledger, Ellis County News, office of the News Publishing Company.

<sup>80</sup>Sales ledger of the Ellis County News.

beginning in 1867.

But the story of newspapers that preceded the Hays Daily News would not be complete without mention of what was undoubtedly the most unusual of all the daily's forebears, Clark's Occasional, founded in 1913. Even contemporaries of this little sheet were puzzled by it:

Perhaps the most unique newspaper in Central Kansas is "Clark's Occasional," the third issue of which has just appeared at Hays City of date of October 13. It has no regular time of issue. The publisher, A. L. Clark, is a life-long printer. For several years he published the Logan County News at Winona. He later was foreman of the Hays News for several years. He makes a specialty of job work and displays a nice line of job type.<sup>81</sup>

It might be thought that the Occasional should not be included in this study, for after all, a primary definition of a newspaper is that it is a regularly-issued disseminator of news and advertising,<sup>82</sup> and the editor quoted above doubts the Occasional's periodicity. However, the paper carried many small news items and advertisements and each issue bears volume and issue numbers, indicating that Clark intended publishing the paper with some regularity. And, although it was truly "occasional," appearing in June, October, and December, the sheet was numbered consecutively. The first

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<sup>81</sup>Clark's Occasional [Hays], December, 1913.

<sup>82</sup>William G. Hale, Law of the Press (St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing Company, 1948), p. 653.

two issues each consisted of twelve six-by-nine-inch pages with type set thirteen picas in two columns per page. Four pages of the second issue were printed on purple paper, and the October and Christmas numbers were printed in red, green, and black ink on white paper. Clark was completely honest about the purpose of the little journal:

1200 COPIES THIS ISSUE

As stated in our first issue, the Occasional is printed solely in the interest of our job printing plant, and we are much pleased and very thankful to the business men of Hays for the royal [sic] support both in job work and advertising. The business has greatly exceeded our expectations. We hope to continue to merit your support.--A. L. Clark, the Job Printer at the Free Press Office.<sup>83</sup>

The Occasional ceased publication after the December issue in 1913.<sup>84</sup>

Such, then, is the varied and colorful background for the appearance of the first and only daily newspaper to be published in Hays, the Hays Daily News. The various newspapers issued in the city during the sixty-two years between the establishment of Hays and the founding of the daily paper are part of the town's historical pattern, and the daily is a natural product of its environment. But this newspaper is also a product of its heritage, for its founder-publisher-editor was a pioneer and the son of a pioneer in the community,

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<sup>83</sup>Clark's Occasional, op. cit., July, 1913.

<sup>84</sup>Chronological History.

and he knew and worked with several of the old-time editors mentioned here. The Hays Daily News and Frank Motz were, and are, "institutions" of the community.

[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page]

There was no daily paper published in the town...

The publication of this newspaper was a great help...

Prepared by the author, 1914, revised 1925.  
1925

## CHAPTER III

### THE FIRST ISSUES

When Volume I, Number One of the Hays Daily News was published on Armistice Day, November 11, 1929, it culminated years of dreaming and planning and nearly a year of work and preparation for Frank Motz and his staff.<sup>1</sup> The idea of a daily newspaper in Hays had germinated and grown in Motz's thoughts for many years because he recognized the need for a more frequently-issued news medium as the community and area grew in population and prosperity. He saw that Hays was becoming the business, educational, medical, and news center of north-central and northwest Kansas. To disseminate the news that stemmed from this source, a daily newspaper was not only desirable but required, he believed. Also, he knew that newspapers from Salina, Topeka, and Kansas City could not adequately serve the region, arriving as they did a day after publication, and being unable to cover adequately the happenings of this large area as well as others they served.<sup>2</sup>

Motz gave the daily's raison d'etre in the first issue:

The publishers of this newspaper have had it in mind for a number of years to devote more space to agricultural

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Mrs. Frank Motz, personal interview, April 2, 1962.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



news of special interest to the farmers of Western Kansas. But the opportunity to build up the paper in this respect has been lacking until now. It has been necessary to meet a growing demand on the part of News readers in Hays for more "local coverage" each week. At the same time every effort has been made to keep step with a similar demand for community news outside Hays. And the News has done the best it can to keep abreast both requirements. The fact the publications had come to a parting of the ways and must specialize, so to speak, with a daily for the city and its territory and also provide a weekly paper catering to the agricultural interests primarily, largely explains "why the daily paper."

Besides, Motz was a daily newspaperman; all his adult newspaper experience had been with dailies, and he was determined to put himself back in the daily "harness."<sup>3</sup>

Before making any definite plans, however, he wrote to many of his editor friends all over the state asking their advice on starting a daily newspaper in Hays. They discouraged him completely. "Don't do it--you'll go broke" was the summary of their reactions. But Motz was not to be discouraged. Choosing Armistice Day, 1929, as their target date because it was an important day in those days and because people would remember it easily, he, his wife Leota, and other News personnel moved ahead with their plans and work.<sup>4</sup>

When the Motzes moved to Hays in 1922, they purchased a half-interest in the Ellis County News from John S. Bird, the owner, for \$10,000. Bird's health prevented his taking an active role in operating the weekly, and Motz took over

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

management of the paper. He immediately began measures to place the paper on a more solid financial basis, to buy more up-to-date equipment, and to renovate the building, which was in a run-down condition.<sup>5</sup> In 1924 the partners purchased the Hays City Free Press, moving in some of the equipment but disposing of most of it. Bird's interest shifted to other business enterprises, and in 1927 he sold most of his share of the weekly to the Motzes. Mrs. Bird, however, retained the building, which she owned, until after her husband's death in 1935.<sup>6</sup>

Although Motz had already added a rebuilt Linotype machine to the two in the weekly shop, one more was required for the greater amount of type needed for the daily. Other necessities, such as a carload of newsprint, which cost approximately \$5,000, brought the additional amount invested in the daily paper to nearly \$10,000 beyond the previous expenditures for the weekly paper.<sup>7</sup>

Besides more and better equipment, more people are needed to publish a daily newspaper than a weekly. Previously, the Ellis County News had operated with only four employees, but twenty were on the staff for the daily. Motz was editor and manager and Mrs. Motz was society editor.<sup>8</sup> Other personnel

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.    <sup>6</sup>Ibid.    <sup>7</sup>Ibid., April 3, 1962.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

included: Mildred Baker, reporter; Cecelia Dorney, advertising manager; Dan Pestana, circulation manager, and Chester Piatt, Claude Older, Lawrence Campbell, and Edward Frank, Linotype operators and compositors.<sup>9</sup>

At first, Motz edited news from the Associated Press, wrote all or most of the headlines, solicited advertising, wrote editorials--when there was time--and covered local news.<sup>10</sup> Three days of this burden were enough, though, and on November 14 he announced the hiring of Robert Slightom, who had taught at Fort Hays Kansas State Teachers College, as telegraph editor. However, Motz continued to edit some copy, his wife stated.<sup>11</sup>

One member of the staff who was to achieve a prominent position in journalism was Donald Doane, a student at the college when the daily was begun. Motz had learned of the youth's eagerness to "go places" when Doane was a waiter at a local cafe. Hiring him as an apprentice reporter, Motz helped and encouraged Doane and started him on the path that was to lead to an editorship on United States News and World Report. In November, 1929, he was sports editor of the Daily News while attending college. Later he became news editor.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Hays Daily News, August 18, 1930.

<sup>10</sup>Mrs. Frank Motz, loc. cit.

<sup>11</sup>Hays Daily News, November 14, 1929.      <sup>12</sup>Ibid.

Not one to count chickens until they grew feathers, Motz made certain the new daily would enter the publishing world with a chance to survive. Weeks ahead of the first-issue date, he wrote personal letters by the dozen and promoted the advent of the new paper in the Ellis County News, urging people to subscribe to the daily to assure its success. His efforts worked. By November 11 the total of paid subscribers had passed 500, and all were volunteers.<sup>13</sup> But Mrs. Motz noted that there was good reason for this seemingly blind optimism of Hays residents:

Those people paid their money before they ever saw a paper, but we had to have a subscription list before we dared start the paper. The people of Hays were anxious to have a daily. They realized they were far away from the cities, which meant they received their papers from Salina, Kansas City, or Topeka a day late, so they wanted a paper of their own. It was amazing how they responded.<sup>14</sup>

Part of the credit for the daily's successful beginning can be attributed to Frank Motz's background in the community: His father had been well-known and respected and his mother and her family were prominent pioneer residents. Motz had been born and reared in Hays and was acquainted with and liked by many people.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Hays Daily News, November 12, 1929.

<sup>14</sup>Mrs. Frank Motz, loc. cit.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

On the second day of publication, the subscription total rose to nearly 600<sup>16</sup> and continued to climb. In view of the facts that the population of the city at the time was 4,455,<sup>17</sup> and that the paper was only one day old, this circulation figure is admirable. As the staff expanded its news-gathering efforts into areas outside the city of Hays, it also extended efforts to build circulation into the small, outlying communities in Ellis County and beyond.

We began tapping the small communities by finding a key person in each town to line up subscriptions. We held contests of all sorts and gave away cars, bicycles, and anything else we could think of to people who brought in the most subscriptions. Residents of the small towns around us were anxious to have a daily, too, and they responded very well.<sup>18</sup>

The inaugural issue of the Hays Daily News landed on the steps and porches of its more than 500 subscribers with a definite thump, for it consisted of forty-eight pages in eight sections. Regarding this sizable beginning, Editor Motz said:

The News wishes its readers to know this, the first issue of the Hays Daily News, is no attempt at a spectacular effort to print a big edition. It is true, the number of pages is nearly double that of any issue of the weekly ever published but that is because the business men of Hays bought space in today's paper as

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<sup>16</sup>Hays Daily News, loc. cit.

<sup>17</sup>Official Census of Hays, Kansas, as reported in the Ellis County News, August 1, 1929.

<sup>18</sup>Mrs. Frank Motz, loc. cit.

they chose--and they elected to use from quarter to full page advertisements. Now, to fill the news columns accompanying the advertising the News decided it would be worthwhile to collect as much historical data regarding the old town as could be gathered together in odd moments in three weeks preceding the date of the first number of the new daily. So, the effort to give historical background to Hays and its institutions isn't intended to be comprehensive, yet we believe the reader will readily agree that more historical information of the town and county is to be found in today's News than ever before has been compiled for any one publication. Thanks to the News reportorial staff for that. And one word more: Virtually the whole of the material has been printed in the News from time to time in the last six years.<sup>19</sup>

Although publication of such a large issue was a major task, it was handled in stages to make the burden on all personnel as light as possible. Seven of the eight sections had been printed in advance so that on the day of issue there remained only the eighth section to print and the papers to be assembled.<sup>20</sup>

The paper's seventeen-by-twenty-two-inch pages each contained seven  $13\frac{1}{2}$ -pica columns with type set in eight-point on eight-point slugs. The flag carried the name, The Hays Daily News, in eighty-four-point Old English with the volume, place of publication, date, and number set off by rules. Page make-up was formal and balanced, typical of many newspapers of the day. Top headlines, those placed at the top of the front page, usually consisted of two lines of forty-

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<sup>19</sup>Hays Daily News, November 11, 1929.

<sup>20</sup>Mrs. Frank Motz, loc. cit.

eight-point condensed gothic type in capitals with three under-decks: three lines of twelve-point regular gothic set in inverted pyramid shape; one line of the same face and size in capitals set flush on both sides of the column, and the third in three lines of eight-point upper and lower case of the same face in an inverted pyramid. Number two headlines, next smaller and used lower on the page, were set in thirty-six-point of the same face as the top heads with twelve-point upper and lower case, inverted pyramid decks. All top decks of these headlines were stepped or staggered; that is, the first line was set flush with the left side of the column and the second line was indented (stepped) to be flush on the right side. In the case of three-line heads, used occasionally on stories of greater importance, the second line was centered in the column, leaving space on both sides, and the third line was set flush on the right. Two-column headlines were set in an attractive twenty-four point italic old-style (probably Caslon or Cheltenham) type face, and were also stepped. Other headlines used were one line of eight-point bold-face capitals for one-paragraph stories, a twelve-point staggered heading of the same face as that used in the under-decks noted above, and a three-line stepped head in eight-point capitals.

Page one of the first issue featured a four-column box display on Armistice Day. News stories dealt with the closing

of business houses for the day's observances; a state tax commission plea for rehearing; a judge's denial of murdering a girl; an arrest in an arson case; a train wreck that killed four; a banker's insanity when he committed suicide; a taste of candy for bloodhounds; a new bridge dedicated; a former minister found dead; a prediction of bad weather ahead, and a report on the potency of old cigars. It should be noted that there is no page one mention of this being the first issue of the Daily News, which seems remarkable. The wide range of material comprises an interesting newspaper, and the pleasant, dignified make-up adds easy readability. Motz's pride in the appearance of the new paper is evident in this editorial:

#### OUR NEW DRESS

This department trusts readers of the Hays Daily News will like its first page "dress." The heading and headline type faces were selected after a council of war that included all members of the "force" with Edgar Schowalter of the State Teachers College called in as expert consultant, and the advice of Schowalter didn't go unheeded, either, as it was his suggestion that directed attention to Old English headings--a style no one else previously had considered. And it was an Old English heading that finally was selected as the title line of the new Hays Daily News. The chief reason for this selection was to gain as sharp a contrast as possible to the heading of the weekly newspaper, the Ellis County News. Now that we have it we're just like a family with a new radio, the one we have is the best there is.<sup>21</sup>

Page two, which was and is the editorial page of the

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<sup>21</sup>Hays Daily News, op. cit.



News, bore the paper's masthead at the top of column one.

It contained this information:

THE HAYS DAILY NEWS

Established Armistice Day, 1929

Published daily except Sunday by the News Publishing Company. Frank Motz, editor and manager. Terms of subscription (delivered by carrier):

Daily in city-----	a week 10¢
Mail, 1 year in Kansas-----	4.00
" , 6 mos. " " -----	2.25
" , 1 yr. outside Kansas-----	6.00

Three editorials written by Motz occupied three-fourths of column one; a feature titled "What Other Editors Say" was more than a column long, and Judge J. C. Ruppenthal's column, "Rustlings," extended over one and a half columns. In addition to this editorial matter, eight news stories and two advertisements were printed on page two. Editorial headings are eight-point light-face capitals centered in the column and "What Other Editors Say" is eight-point bold-face capitals indented and staggered in a one-column asterisk box.

Headlines and make-up of other inside pages followed the style set by page one: a formal, vertical design with an emphasis on one-column headlines; an occasional two-column head, usually on a feature story, and almost always an illustration of some sort. This was usually a picture from the Associated Press matrix (mat) service. The latter feature helped make the pages of the daily bright and attractive to the reader, luring the eye to the page to inspect the picture, then, perhaps, to read the contents of the columns.

Attempting to establish a plan for the Ellis County News now that the daily had begun, Motz explained his hopes for the weekly's future:

Beginning with the issue of Nov. 14, the Ellis County News will be edited by John S. Bird. As announced in these columns previously, the weekly newspaper of the News Publishing Company will be largely a farm paper, although county seat news will by no means be neglected. The management promises no marked changes the first few months. Getting a daily newspaper "on its feet" and functioning properly will be a considerable task in itself and the changes planned for the weekly paper of necessity must be slow in developing.

No man in Western Kansas, perhaps, is more ably fitted to direct the editorial policy of the News under this new guidance than John Bird. He was born and reared on a farm in Rawlins County, Kansas. He was a farmer as a young man, and after receiving his college education, he straightaway re-engaged in farming. And in the "years between" John Bird has been doing a lot of other things [including teaching at the Fort Hays State Teachers College<sup>22</sup>] as people of Hays in particular know full well --but never for a moment has his interest in agriculture lagged. He has extensive farm holdings of his own and in addition he is head of a farming corporation that owns many thousands of acres of Western Kansas land, most of which is producing corn and wheat. Whatever farm topics Mr. Bird may choose to discuss in his editorials will, in the belief of the publishers, be timely and of special interest to the readers of this weekly newspaper.<sup>23</sup>

One of Motz's most prized additions to the office equipment was the teletype machine, which he referred to as the "automatic printing telegraph machine." A story on this

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<sup>22</sup>L. D. Wooster, Fort Hays Kansas State College: An Historical Story (Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1961), p. 36 (picture on p. 55).

<sup>23</sup>Hays Daily News, op. cit.

"modern miracle," as he called it, traced the development of the machine and its value to newspapers, then stated:

. . . The printers have been installed in the News office and their upkeep will be in charge of trained employes /sic/ of the United Telephone Company. One thousand of these machines are now in operation throughout the country.<sup>24</sup>

He noted that Kansas was one of only sixteen states in which the service was operated in 1929, and on December 26 he told his readers that Hays had "overnight, as it were, become the smallest city in the state with a newspaper supplying . . . a complete Associated Press daily telegraphic report of the day's news."

One characteristic of the Hays Daily News at this period was most unusual, if not unique. From the beginning, many headlines in the News lacked prepositions, and while it is accepted practice for newspaper headlines to lack verbs and sometimes subjects, prepositions are rarely, if ever, omitted by most headline writers. In the News they were not omitted consistently, but only when it appears that the headline writer thought he needed the space in the headline for a more important word or phrase. (In ten years of experience in journalism as a reporter, copy editor, headline writer, editor, and teacher, the writer has never seen another newspaper--weekly or daily--that used this technique.) One

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

example from the first issue of the daily will suffice to show the peculiar nature of the headings with prepositions omitted:

Only One Survivor Band Soldiers  
Who Fought Fight Beecher Island

A large number of pictures (referred to as "cuts" or engravings) were used in volume one, number one. Probably most of these were made for earlier uses of the stories they accompanied, or were borrowed from other sources, such as the college, since photo-engravings were expensive and had to be made in Topeka or Kansas City. Included among the "cuts" in the issue were football players at the college; the first German-Russian settlers (published for the first time, according to the caption); the church in Pfeifer, a neighboring community; the county school superintendent; Hays High School; Girls' Catholic High School (now Marian High School); Catholic College (now St. Joseph's Military Academy); J. H. Downing; St. Fidelis Church in Victoria, the "Cathedral of the Plains"; Munjor church; the manager of the telephone company, and the telephone exchange building.

Historical items referred to by Motz in the previously-quoted editorial included an interesting recollection by Mrs. Josephine Middlekauff, who came to Hays in 1867 as a child and who is still living; a sketch of Wallace H. Johnson, veteran newspaper publisher and founder of the Hays City Sentinel; a report of the worst fire in the city's history

in 1899, and the details of Downing's "scoop" on the Custer massacre in 1876. Also of interest was an article on Ben Hibbs, who had worked part-time for the Ellis County News and who later became editor of Country Gentleman and the Saturday Evening Post.<sup>25</sup> Other news stories concerned: the fact that Frank Motz had telephone number One; the establishment in Hays of the third Boy Scout troop in the nation and the second in Kansas; the English settlers in Victoria; the founding of Rome; the first oil well in the county, and a commentary on Hays by C. M. Harger, editor of the Abilene Reflector and member of the Kansas State Board of Regents. (Harger stated: "The state census report the other day showed Hays with a population of 5,106, a gain of more than 600 in the past year. . . . Fifteen years ago there were only 1,200 persons on the town site; 10 years ago there were about 3,000.") Interesting, too, in view of later developments in his career, is a feature article headed "Pageant of Kansas" by Hibbs.

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<sup>25</sup>Mrs. Frank Motz, loc. cit.; statement by Ben Hibbs in letter dated April 13, 1962. /Mrs. Motz said that Hibbs gave invaluable help on the weekly paper while teaching journalism and handling publicity at the college. She said he often visited the Motzes in their home to indulge in a favorite "vice," cigarette smoking. "At the time," she said, "Mr. Lewis, president of the college, frowned on every kind of bad habit, particularly smoking. Ben had been used to smoking cigarettes while he was in college and he just couldn't stand not smoking. He would come to our house and we'd draw the shades and Ben and Frank would sit around talking and smoking cigarettes." Hibbs corroborated this anecdote in his letter./

The next few numbers of the daily provide a mirror in which the reader may see reflected the approbation with which other editors all over the state greeted the first issue of the News, and one of the chief reasons for the success of the venture--the list of more than 500 paid-in-advance subscribers. Motz showed his gratitude for the community support in a two-column boxed editorial on page one of the second issue:

Daily News is Grateful for  
Fine Support from Hays

The News today received many fine compliments on its initial 64-page edition published yesterday, Armistice Day, and it goes almost without saying the News is grateful indeed to its friends for every word of encouragement given. The Hays Daily News began publishing with more than 500 "volunteer" subscribers and today, its second day on earth, if you don't mind, this number has been increased to nearly 600. If ever for a moment the management had mistrusted its judgment in launching a daily newspaper in Hays, this "rousing welcome" would, indeed, dispel the last doubt. But the fact is there never has been a time when the publishers didn't feel the venture in the daily field would meet the approval of the people in this city and community and enlist their full support, for Hays, be it known, has passed from the country weekly stage--it's a daily newspaper town now.<sup>26</sup>

Another clue to the business acumen of the News' "management," which, of course, was Frank Motz, is contained in this editorial in the November 12 issue:

GETTING SET

Today, the second day of its existence, the Hays Daily News has a list of paid-in-advance subscribers numbering

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<sup>26</sup>Hays Daily News, November 12, 1929.

nearly 600. There were more than 500 before a paper came off the press. And they are all "volunteers." However, those in charge of subscription and circulation are so far behind in the task of making necessary changes in the respective lists of daily and weekly News subscriptions that it will be another week before carrier boys can be supplied with route books. In the meantime, to guard against failures to deliver papers to all new daily subscribers, weekly subscribers of the News will receive the paper regularly until next Monday night. Beginning on that date, however, the carriers will deliver the daily only to daily subscribers.

It seems obvious that Motz knew that once the readers of the weekly became accustomed to receiving the daily, they would gladly become subscribers. This same method of building circulation is still used, especially for newcomers, newlyweds, and others who have not subscribed.

Another editorial in the second issue proves that the burden of publishing a daily newspaper had already become very real to the editor:

#### WE'LL SAY CHEERIO

This department has always held the canned editorial in high contempt and all samples of syndicated snappy paragraph services have been tossed in the wastebasket. But today, the second day of publication of a daily newspaper, with one person to edit and tack heads on oceans of Associated Press dispatches and keep an eye on home news as well, the writer would welcome with glad acclaim or anything gladder than that, a long roll of "cheerio editorials" and "pep paragraphs," the products of any pungent pen paragraphs.

Then, on the third day of publication, the weather added an extra weight to the burden, as this editorial plaintively states:

## AT WAR WITH THE WEATHER

The News is "short" on its Associated Press dispatches today because of what the "chief" tells us is "wire trouble" caused by the storm. Very little news not in garbled form came in this morning. This necessitated a rerun over the printers and cut down the amount of material that otherwise would have been put into type. However, there is this for which to be thankful: The shortage didn't happen on the first day of issue.

The telegraph typewriters are not an experiment and there is only an outside chance of difficulty so great that the news service would be largely impaired. To guard against mechanical difficulties the Associated Press furnished its members a "spare tire" in the form of a reserve machine; but pranks of the elements are hardly to be warded off.

By November 14, the fourth day of the News' existence, comments were being received from Motz's fellow editors, and all were commendatory. One letter he received brought special mention on the editorial page that day:

FROM CHARLEY HARGER

The first word of commendation regarding the new daily from out of town came--fittingly in this instance--from C. M. Harger, editor of the Abilene Daily Reflector and member of the board of regents. Mr. Harger sent the News this message:

"Abilene, Kansas  
November 12, 1929

Frank Motz  
Hays, Kansas

Congratulations on the splendid start of the Daily News. Hays should be proud of having so fine a daily--one with such an abundance of information and so artistic in appearance. The new Daily News is a valuable asset to the city and a credit to yourself.

C. M. Harger."

This department is publishing Mr. Harger's laudatory comment and personal reference with some justification, we trust the reader will agree, when we let it be known



Mr. Harger was head of the school of journalism at the University of Kansas when the writer was a student at K. U. in 1910, 1911 and 1912. He was our first "news-paper professor" and it was he who, with L. N. Flint of the same department, helped confirm a lurking suspicion in our mind we should engage in newspaper work. If there be any reading these lines who conscientiously feel a grave mistake has been made, let him direct his criticism at the paragrapher and not at Mr. Flint and Mr. Harger; they were trying to do as much to encourage all other tyros who came under their guidance.

But as we were saying it is timely that a kind word should come from our old teacher and if we have succeeded in pleasing him, we feel our first effort has in measurable degree, at least, been successful.

Apparently feeling the mounting pressure of daily newspaper work, the editor made a plea to his readers to help the News fulfill its mission in the community by supplying the newspaper with information for news stories:

Scores of friends of the News have urged members of the staff in the last few days they be permitted to "help make the new daily a success." Well, they'll be permitted all right, and they can help a lot. The reporters are hungry for more news--personals and news stories. The News, to please its readers, must have a generous proportion of home news daily if it is to become indispensable to the merchant as an advertising medium. . . . Yes, sir, you bet we need your help--and by you we mean every reader of the Hays Daily News. Just tell us the news you know--personals, parties, "comings and goings"--anything, briefly, that is of interest to you likely will be of interest to others; that's what constitutes the day's home news.<sup>27</sup>

By the fifth day of publication, more compliments were beginning to flow back to the News office, and it was apparent that Motz was pleased and flattered that his new adventure was

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<sup>27</sup>Hays Daily News, November 14, 1929.

so highly regarded. This item was given two-column play on page one November 15:

Charles E. Mann Congratulates Hays  
On Advent of its New Daily Paper

The News has received no finer compliment on its first issue than that which came in the mail today noon from Charles E. Mann, editor of the Osborne Farmer and former speaker of the house of representatives. Other editorial comment from the pens of Kansas editors regarding the first number of the daily will be found on an inside page of today's News.

"Osborne, Kansas  
November 14, 1929

Dear Mr. Motz:

I want to offer my congratulations to you and to the City of Hays for the marvelous edition you issued on Armistice Day as the initial number of the Daily News. It is the finest special number I have ever seen published in a town of less than 100,000. It would do credit to Kansas City, Topeka, Wichita, or any of the larger cities of the state. It is not only well printed and well edited, but it is chock full of interesting historical matter concerning Hays and this section of this part of the state. Hays certainly should be proud of it, and you and the News force are certainly to be congratulated in making this fine contribution to the achievements of Western Kansas. May the News live long and prosper, and every dream of its publisher be realized.

Sincerely and fraternally,

Chas. E. Mann"

The editorial page that day contained only a short paragraph by Motz. Eight inches were devoted to his regular feature, "What Other Editors Say," and nearly two columns were given over to "What Kansas Editors Are Saying / About the Hays Daily News." The following are selections from typical editorials

clipped from newspapers all over the state:

#### HAYS HAS A DAILY

The Hays Daily News is the latest daily paper to be launched in the Kansas field. It is Hays' first daily. That city has arrived at a population and a business development that made a daily possible. The News is in good hands. Frank Motz, the publisher and editor, is a University of Kansas man and has been for several years publishing the News as a weekly--and by the way a remarkably good one, excelled by none in the state. The Daily News has a wonderful field. Hays is now the "last big town" to the west, a position long held by Salina. It is a trade, news and educational center for a territory that demands the doings of the day while they are fresh. And the News with its full Associated Press service will fill the bill. It started with a 64-page special edition which indicates that Hays business men are back of it and it will win.--Abilene Reflector.

#### HAYS' NEW DAILY

Frank Motz made an ambitious beginning of daily issuance of the Hays News by printing a 64-page Armistice Day edition. The bulk of the first daily issue was devoted to historical sketches depicting early occurrences in and near Hays. The News Publishing Company, which has inaugurated the daily at Hays, also owns and publishes the weekly Ellis County News, which henceforth will be a farm paper edited by John S. Bird. Motz, editor and manager of the daily, is a native of Hays who formerly was a reporter for the Star. His father, Simon Motz, was a merchant in Rome, a town founded by "Buffalo Bill" Cody and others a half-mile west of the present site of Hays. Frank Motz also has been editor of the Parsons Sun--Clad Thompson in "Kansas Notes" in the Kansas City Star.

Somewhat more subdued was this appraisal in the Russell Record:

The first issue of the Hays Daily News reached this office yesterday. It was a 64-page edition, well edited and printed and full of news, history and advertising. Frank Motz is the editor of the Daily, while John S. Bird will edit the Ellis County Weekly /sic/ which will be published every Thursday.

The Western Kansas World at Wakeeney also maintained a formal

objectivity toward the new daily, mentioning the establishing of the paper in Hays as a "big step forward in the progress of the city, and the News Publishing Company has invested a large amount of money for new equipment and machinery made necessary by the daily."

Two more comments on the first issue are of further interest because of their origins. These were not printed in the News until the November 19 issue which included a column and a half of "What Other Editors Are Saying About the Hays Daily News":

The first issue of the Hays Daily News was put out Monday. It contained only 64 pages. Friends of Frank Motz have not doubted for a minute that he would make a fine success of the daily. The weekly News is one of the best weekly publications in the state. But Mr. Motz himself apparently decided to take no chances and got enough business the first day to pay for publishing the new daily for a year.--Pittsburg Headlight (Fred W. Brinkerhoff). Brinkerhoff and Motz had been friends since 1913 when Motz worked for the Pittsburg paper, of which Brinkerhoff was and is editor.<sup>28</sup>

Frank Motz, who was editor of the Parsons Sun for several years, transformed his weekly newspaper into a daily at Hays on Nov. 11. He broke out with a 64-page edition. No city outside of Hays is pulling stronger for the new Kansas daily than Parsons, where Motz is remembered by a multitude of friends.--Parsons Sun.

These first few issues of the new journal set what can be considered a pattern that the News followed in years to come, and, to some extent, still follows. Printing then, as

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<sup>28</sup>Letter from Fred W. Brinkerhoff, April 13, 1962.

now, was clear, sharp, and black with no evidences of broken type and dirty or damaged Linotype matrices. Make-up on inside pages, as well as page one, was consistently good, according to the styles of the period, and the paper has always been extremely readable. Typographical work was and is well done, and columns were relatively free of proofreading errors. Castings and engravings were clear, clean of ink scum and seldom, if ever, showed signs of faulty casting and basing. Although make-up in the early years was formal and balanced, it was not dull. A variety of type faces and sizes provided eye-pleasing change, and liberal use of multiple-column headlines gave horizontal relief from the vertical columns of grey type. Standing heads for feature columns were usually attractive, helping to dress up the pages, as did the liberal use of photographs (mats). By 1929 standards, writing was clear, brief, and concise. As the journalistic style of the time demanded, however, sentences and paragraphs were long and oftentimes sentence structure collapsed under the weight of excess verbiage. It appeared to be almost common practice to "back into" a news story lead; that is, to place relatively unimportant information ahead of the essential and most significant details of the first paragraph. Also, writing was more personal in the twenties and thirties, and leads beginning with such expressions as "Friends will be sorry to hear of . . ." were usual in local news items.

On the whole, however, most local stories were journalistically sound and well phrased. There was little regard for the laws of libel, though, and perusal of news written in 1929 can chill the heart of today's experienced newsman who knows that a libel suit is an ever-present danger.

Some evidence of the difficulty of making the transformation from a weekly to a daily newspaper already has been recorded, but in concluding this phase of the history it is interesting to note a minor problem that Motz had not counted on. This problem is brought to light in an editorial paragraph on November 15:

This department notes another outstanding difference between a weekly and daily paper--the editor's desk requires a wastebasket four times as large as the one which served the purpose on the weekly.

The Hays Daily News, Vol. I, No. 1





## CHAPTER IV

### FRANK MOTZ

When Frank Spafard Motz died on August 15, 1958,<sup>1</sup> newspaper editors all over Kansas paid their respects to his memory in different ways, depending on how well they had known and liked him.

Rolla Clymer of the El Dorado Times wrote: ". . . none was more friendly or kind. . . . He leaves behind . . . the enduring memory of a true man, true to his own rigid code, true to the ideals of his profession, true to his home community and true to his state."<sup>2</sup>

The Topeka Capital editorial writer said: "He made himself and his newspaper a force for good in his community and in his state, and his integrity has left a proud mark on the progress of the Kansas press."<sup>3</sup>

Marion Ellet noted in the Concordia Blade-Empire: "He cared tremendously--about everything. . . . His enemies loved him as loyally as his friends."<sup>4</sup>

Elton Carter, Norton Telegram editor, remembered that

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<sup>1</sup>Hays Daily News, August 17, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>El Dorado Times, August 18, 1958.

<sup>3</sup>Topeka Daily Capital, August 18, 1958.

<sup>4</sup>Concordia Blade-Empire, August 18, 1958.

"A part of his character less known to people generally was his genuine feeling of sympathy toward others."<sup>5</sup>

Pat Taylor, editor of the Ellis County Farmer and formerly the news editor of the Hays Daily News for nine years, had many experiences with which to support this statement: ". . . while on the outside he was hard as nails, deep inside, well-concealed, he was as soft as a jelly bean."<sup>6</sup>

The Great Bend Daily Tribune paid this tribute: ". . . Editor Motz in some ways resembled the fighting editors that pioneered our state. Yet in spite of his outspokenness he tempered his writings with a gentleness that was in accord with the times."<sup>7</sup>

Fred W. Brinkerhoff, editor and publisher of the Pittsburg Headlight and Sun and his former boss, said: "When he formed an opinion about an issue, he reported that conclusion just as he had formed it. So far as was apparent he never published an opinion because someone wanted him to do so or refrained from publishing one because somebody did not want him to publish it. Over a long period of years the Motz editorials in the Hays News contained the most uninhibited

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<sup>5</sup>Norton Daily Telegram, August 16, 1958.

<sup>6</sup>Ellis County Farmer [Hays], August 21, 1958.

<sup>7</sup>Great Bend Tribune, August 18, 1958.

expressions of opinion appearing in the state."<sup>8</sup>

"He was honest to a fault, and one of the kindest men I've ever known," said his wife Leota.<sup>9</sup>

Such was the complex nature of Frank Motz, founder, editor, and, to use his own term, manager of the Hays Daily News until August 15, 1958.

Frank Motz was born December 17, 1884, in Hays, the only surviving child of Simon and Bertha Hall Motz.<sup>10</sup> His father, who has figured previously in this study, was one of the first residents of Rome and Hays City. Simon Motz had come west from Centre County, Pennsylvania, as a young man to prospect for gold in Colorado, and, when the Civil War broke out, had joined the Colorado infantry. After the war he came to Kansas, settling in Ellis County in 1867. Owner of a large general store in Hays City, he was the town's first mayor and until his death in 1908 one of its most prominent citizens.<sup>11</sup> Although not a newspaperman, he was part-owner

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<sup>8</sup>Pittsburg Headlight, August 18, 1958.

<sup>9</sup>Statement by Mrs. Frank Motz, personal interviews, April 2, 3, 5, 1962.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. [From family records.]

<sup>11</sup>A. T. Andreas (ed.), History of the State of Kansas (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, 1883), p. 1293; the Republican [Hays], February 8, 1908; [Simon Motz], Historical and Biographical Sketches, (Old Settlers' Association of Ellis County [n.p., n.d.]), Vol. I, p. 10. [Although no author is listed for this publication, Frank stated in a hand-written note in Mrs. Motz's

of the Ellis County Star and, in 1887, the Hays City Sentinel. He was forty-four years of age when he married Bertha Hall, who was twenty-two years old, the daughter of A. S. Hall, proprietor of a large general store, A. S. Hall and Son. The son was Frank, for whom Frank Motz was named.<sup>12</sup>

Although Simon Motz and Hall were both men of considerable wealth in the latter part of the nineteenth century, financial reverses reduced their fortunes drastically, and by the time young Frank was in high school, it was necessary for him to work part-time to help the family budget.<sup>13</sup> He attended public schools in Hays and graduated from the Western Branch of the State Normal School, now Fort Hays Kansas State College,<sup>14</sup> in 1908, after being expelled from the city high school. He was among a group of boys who managed to wire the school bell so that it rang continuously for several hours, defying the authorities' efforts to silence it. Motz was

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copy that his father wrote the booklet as the first in a series of historical sketches. This is the only volume that he completed. Simon Motz also omitted his name from the list of original settlers of Ellis County printed on page two of the booklet.]

<sup>12</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>L. D. Wooster, Fort Hays Kansas State College: An Historical Story (Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1961), pp. 67-68.

given permission to re-enroll after a time, but by then he had already transferred to the normal school. There he came under the influence of Miss Anna Keller, a teacher whom he later credited with having given him the inspiration to write.<sup>15</sup>

As a boy he worked as a printer's devil for several newspapers, principally George Griffith's Republican, after school, on Saturdays, and during the summers. One year while in high school he published a small newspaper at Yocomento, a village seven miles west of Hays. He was editor, publisher, reporter, printer, and pressman for the paper, called the Yocomento Star and financed by the Yost Cement Company which had a plant near the community.<sup>16</sup>

Without financial backing from home, Motz entered the University of Kansas in the fall of 1908. By enrolling in more than the usual number of courses each semester, earning money as a correspondent for the Topeka Capital, Kansas City Star, and other newspapers, working a summer on the Capital and going to classes one summer, he was able to graduate in three years.<sup>17</sup>

Taking a job as a reporter on the Kansas City Star,

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<sup>15</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.      <sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.; Official Transcript, Office of the Registrar, University of Kansas, Lawrence.

Motz began a long career in full-time journalism. He stayed with the Star about a year, then moved into the magazine field as editor of Tavern Talk, a hotel trade publication, in Kansas City.<sup>18</sup> Fred W. Brinkerhoff hired Motz as a reporter for the Pittsburg Headlight in 1913, and he worked there approximately one year before moving to Parsons as editor of the Sun.<sup>19</sup> Buying an interest in the paper in 1916, he became manager as well as editor. In 1918 he sold his part of the business to Clyde Reed Sr., principal owner of the Sun.<sup>20</sup> Returning to Kansas City, he again took over the helm of Tavern Talk for two years. Newspaper work was "in his blood," however, and he could not stay out of it for long. In 1920 he became advertising manager of the Lyons Daily News.<sup>21</sup> Two years later he moved to Hays and bought an interest in the Ellis County News from John Bird.<sup>22</sup> He was back home, and back in the work he had known and loved almost all his life, but he was not satisfied. He longed for the hustle and hurry of a daily newspaper, and in 1929 he realized his dream.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.

<sup>19</sup>Statement by Fred W. Brinkerhoff in letter dated April 13, 1962.

<sup>20</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.      <sup>21</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.

<sup>22</sup>Hays Daily News, November 11, 1929.

<sup>23</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.

During the formative years, Motz was fortunate in meeting and knowing many of the famous and respected names in Midwestern journalism: William Rockhill Nelson and Roy Roberts of the Kansas City Star; C. W. Harger, journalism instructor at the University of Kansas and later editor of the Abilene Reflector, who has been mentioned previously in this study; Fred W. Brinkerhoff, editor of the Pittsburg Headlight (and, later, the Sun), whom Motz credited for some of his success; Clyde Reed of the Parsons Sun; Rolla Clymer of the El Dorado Times, and, of course, Ed Howe of the Atchison Globe and William Allen White of the Emporia Gazette.<sup>24</sup>

During this period Motz acquired another asset besides experience--his wife Leota. Born March 13, 1890, in Youngstown, Ohio, Leota McFarlin came to Kansas with her family at the age of six months, settling in Sabetha. A few years later, her father, who was in the feed and grain business, moved his family to Jantzen, Nebraska, where he owned an elevator, and it was there that Leota attended the first two years of grade school. The only notable feature of this beginning was that the McFarlins were the only English-speaking family in the community, and Leota went to a school in which only German was spoken. When the family moved to Kansas City,

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

Missouri, when she was seven, she could speak German better than English. After graduating from high school in Kansas City, Leota enrolled at the University of Kansas. She did not meet Frank Motz there, though, because, as she says, "He was working his way through and I was dancing my way through."<sup>25</sup>

After graduation she taught English in high schools at Ness City and Columbus, Kansas, and it was while she was teaching in Columbus, in 1915, that she met Frank Motz. Her grandmother lived in nearby Parsons, and Leota often visited her on weekends and during vacations. It was on one of these trips that she met the editor of the Parsons Sun. They began dating in December, 1915, and were married June 1, 1916.<sup>26</sup>

During their forty-two years of married life, Frank and Leota Motz were a closely-knit couple, sharing much in common and appreciating--even enjoying--their differences. They had no children, so their work became their life, and their kindred affection for animals, books, and good food their pleasure. Testifying to the close bond of their partnership is the natural use of the pronoun "we" in Mrs. Motz's recollections of their life and work from the Parsons days. Seldom, if ever, does she refer to "his" paper or "his" efforts, or "my" ideas or "my" incentive. It is obvious that Frank and Leota

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.



Motz were companions and partners in the newspaper business as well as in marriage.

Some idea of the complexity of Frank Motz has already been noted in the tributes paid to him by fellow editors at the time of his death. A closer examination of Motz the editor, however, serves to simplify some of the complications that appear on first appraisal.

Perhaps his wife, the person who knew him best, provides some of the clearest insights into Motz as an editor, even though her evaluations are obviously influenced by her love and respect for him. As a newspaper woman, she probably saw her husband from a more impartial point of view than many wives would.

Brinkerhoff has noted, ". . . he reported that conclusion just as he had formed it.", and Mrs. Motz said of this trait:

Frank wanted to get at the truth of everything. He never minded expressing his opinion on anything, and did. He had a wonderful ability--and I've never known anyone else who had it--of making people so mad that they just hated him; then a few days later they would be the best of friends again. He had that something or other that made it possible for him to say anything he wanted to and still be able to smooth it out if necessary.<sup>27</sup>

Ben Hibbs said:

I always had a lot of respect for Frank Motz. He was a good newspaperman and he had the courage to fight for

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

the things he believed in. I didn't always agree with him. Indeed, we often had some rousing good arguments about everything under the sun. But he was quite a guy. We need more newspapermen like him today.<sup>28</sup>

Another editor said of Motz:

He was for honesty in men, government, and ideals. His independence reflected his unique ability to examine for himself and to take a stand that fitted his convictions. Sharply needled barbs and a good word for a job well done were his trademark.<sup>29</sup>

Another Western Kansas contemporary put it this way:

Mr. Motz was particularly noted for his willingness to take a firm political stand in any given election campaign, often jousting in hearty disagreement with other members of the press. In effect he would challenge: You have your candidate; I have mine. Let them hold our coats and we'll knock heads.<sup>30</sup>

But Motz did not disagree just for the sake of argument.

Brinkerhoff pointed out: "Among newspapermen Mr. Motz was known as a great dissenter but he did not take the opposite view on men and measures simply for the satisfaction of disagreement."<sup>31</sup> Regarding this side of her husband's work as an editor, Mrs. Motz said: "I think everybody thought Frank was hardboiled because he wanted to get down to the facts about everything. But he wasn't--he was one of the kindest persons I've ever known."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Statement by Ben Hibbs in letter dated April 13, 1962.

<sup>29</sup>Russell Daily News, August 18, 1958.

<sup>30</sup>Norton Daily Telegram, August 16, 1958.

<sup>31</sup>Pittsburg Headlight, August 18, 1958.

<sup>32</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.

In 1961, Motz was elected to the Kansas Newspaper Hall of Fame, and Brinkerhoff wrote that

. . . he was an outstanding editor and had been for many years. . . . In the 29 years that followed [the founding of the daily] he not only got out a highly attractive and bright newspaper but he produced an editorial page that became one of the most effective in Kansas.<sup>33</sup>

Mrs. Motz said:

An an editor, he felt that he had an obligation to the public to report the news, and he did it. He would never suppress news, even news about a personal friend.

Also, he believed it his duty to do everything possible for the good of Hays, and the city was first in his thinking. He gave a great deal of thought to things that were good or not good for Hays, then defended his position. He was not a crusader and he didn't "wave the flag" for causes unless they were really worthwhile. Usually these causes were for the good of the city. He was a real civic booster.<sup>34</sup>

Motz's political independence was well-known over Kansas, and it brought him a good deal of criticism from fellow editors. He and William Allen White, a good friend and respected colleague, engaged in many quarrels over Motz's refusal at times to support various Republican candidates. Since he was a confirmed Republican in his political beliefs, White thought Motz should back the entire GOP ticket. Motz however, often believed in the man rather than the party, and in state and local elections would express his stand in favor

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<sup>33</sup>Pittsburg Headlight, October 31, 1961.

<sup>34</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.

of a Democrat if he believed he was a better candidate than the Republican. In national politics, however, he seldom veered from the Republican Party because he believed thoroughly in its principles.<sup>35</sup>

A conscientious and resourceful businessman, Motz thought that a newspaper should make money or stop publishing. Although not concerned with amassing a large personal fortune, it was part of his creed that the Hays Daily News should make a profit. When it began to show signs of slipping, he immediately instigated plans to attract attention to the paper, increase circulation, and bring in additional advertising revenue. When circumstances required, he reduced expenses to keep the financial books in balance.<sup>36</sup> During the depression years, for example, the News often printed only four or six pages, rather than the usual eight, as a means of bringing costs of labor, paper, and ink in line with income. Also, in the early years of the daily, when circulation contests were not so commonplace as they are today, he devised many such ideas to increase subscriptions.<sup>37</sup>

If Frank Motz thought of himself as a successful editor, he kept the fact well hidden, even from his wife. She recalls that he never spoke of himself as being successful; rather he

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.; editorial in Hays Daily News, July 23, 1934.

<sup>36</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.    <sup>37</sup>Ibid.

was concerned that the paper should achieve a reputation as a fair, just, and impartial journal that served its readers well. He was pleased with the paper; it had meant everything to him and he had given it everything he had. He received great gratification from the knowledge that the News had succeeded financially and journalistically in the face of discouragement and after many years of hard work, long hours, and small returns.<sup>38</sup>

Motz the man was not the same person as Motz the editor, in many respects. Norton editor Carter noted that his feeling of sympathy for others was not generally known, and Mrs. Motz stated that he was one of the kindest people she has ever met. He had a keen sense of humor, and at times his wit was sharp as a thistle, but he "wouldn't have hurt anyone's feelings for anything in the world," she said. "He was the most fun of any person I ever knew because his wit shot off in directions that you wouldn't expect at all."<sup>39</sup>

Robert S. Markwell, office supply and book store owner and a good friend of Motz for 30 years, described him as "sympathetic toward the needs of others and inclined to take the part of the underdog. He was sociable and friendly with

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

a good sense of humor. Frank was dependable and honorable in all things."<sup>40</sup>

V. A. Weigel, who met Frank in 1907 when both were students at the Normal School, said: "Frank was an ornery son-of-a-gun, and he and I used to have some real battles--with words, of course--but we always respected each other, and we were always the best of friends. I liked him."<sup>41</sup>

Another phase of Motz's personality that few persons realized existed was a basic shyness that made him something of an introvert.<sup>42</sup> There were days when he had to force himself to commune with people, and no one was more unhappy in a large social gathering than he. He was a stimulating conversationalist in small groups, though, because of his wide-ranging store of knowledge and his willingness to take a stand on almost any issue and defend it.<sup>43</sup> Besides newspaper work and its attendant subjects of politics, agriculture, taxes, sports, and weather, his three favorite subjects of study and conversation were history, religion, and archaeology. He was fascinated by these particular fields because he "never tired of trying to get to the bottom of things," and he

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<sup>40</sup>Statement by Robert S. Markwell in reply to questionnaire, April 23, 1962.

<sup>41</sup>Statement by V. A. Weigel, personal interview, April 18, 1962.

<sup>42</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.      <sup>43</sup>Ibid.

believed that study would help him determine what was truth and what was not.<sup>44</sup> Motz's other interests included tennis, which he played frequently until he reached the age of about fifty; bridge, which he played well, but only with men, and chess, which he played infrequently after beginning the daily paper because he had little time left to concentrate on the game.<sup>45</sup>

Honestly inherited from his mother and grandfather was Frank Motz's temper, to which some people in Hays would be quick to testify. His wife remarked that although he had a fiery temper, he could control it amazingly well, and seldom allowed it to flare up at home--"never with me," she added.<sup>46</sup>

Variety was the key to Motz's likes and dislikes. Among his circle of close friends, for example, were Dr. C. H. Jameson, a physician; Markwell; Ross Beach, utility company owner and local entrepreneur; Curtis Wann, highway commissioner and land owner; Dr. L. D. Wooster, scientist, dean, and president of the college; V. A. Weigel, boyhood friend, teacher, and Democrat; Father Terrence, former president of St. Joseph's Military Academy, and others.<sup>47</sup>

In literature, he preferred the Bible; books on religions, history, and archaeology; Jack London; Mark Twain; Joseph Conrad; Paul Wellman, a personal friend whom he had

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.    <sup>45</sup>Ibid.    <sup>46</sup>Ibid.    <sup>47</sup>Ibid.

met while both were reporters for the Kansas City Star; James Fenimore Cooper, and Shakespeare.<sup>48</sup>

He liked good food and he liked to have his friends dine with him. A fan of good movies and well-acted and produced stage plays, he abhorred bad ones; until the last few years of his life he could not tolerate television programs, and then when he was ill he began to watch more shows and to grow fond of some of them.

He had the tenderest feelings about all kinds of animals but didn't give a hoot about flowers. He wouldn't have given a dime's worth of his time to the cultivation of a rose, but give him a tomato plant and he lavished attention on it.<sup>49</sup>

He loved nature and enjoyed nothing so much as a long walk in the country. Mainly, though, he liked to work, and his drive and determination to produce the best possible newspaper probably contributed to his ill health in the last fifteen to twenty years of his life.<sup>50</sup>

It was nothing for him to work till ten or eleven at night, and all day Sunday, and it was only in the last years of his life that he was willing to take a vacation that amounted to anything. Before, he would take a week grudgingly, then work hard when he returned to make up for the time he'd lost.

The only times that he regarded as vacations were little trips he and Dwight Wooster took to tennis tournaments, which might last as much as a week. The longest vacation we took before he became ill was a three-week trip down the Mississippi from Cincinnati to New Orleans and back, and he cut that short several days because he couldn't buy a paper on the steamship.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.



One of the least-known aspects of Motz the man was his religion, which was, in Mrs. Motz's words, "a little bit different." He never went to church, but he also never went to bed without reading the Bible and saying his prayers. His relationship with God was very intimate, Mrs. Motz said, and he had a profound belief in the relationship of the human family to God. "His was a very sincere belief and something I don't believe very many people knew about. It was his own, and he was not one to flaunt a religious belief," she explained.<sup>52</sup>

In 1951, Frank Motz suffered a paralytic stroke that began a long series of illnesses. Although he conquered the effects of the stroke for a time, he grew lame and began to suffer extreme pain. This pain remained with him until his death.

Despite the suffering he was enduring, Frank never gave up. The doctor made him stop working full days, cutting him down to half-days. And when his doctor told him he had to do some things and not do others, he didn't bat an eye, he just went on and did whatever he had planned to do and followed the doctor's orders. He had more courage than anyone I ever saw.<sup>53</sup>

During the last few years of Motz's life, he and his wife followed the practice of spending August at Wright's Lodge near Nathrop, Colorado. It was there on Friday, August 15, 1958, that he was stricken by a heart attack which caused

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid.      <sup>53</sup>Ibid.

his death a few hours later in a Salida, Colorado, hospital.<sup>54</sup>

Frank thought it was a wonderful privilege to be living and enjoying things God had placed on earth just for the taking. He always said every day was a wonderful day, and he was seldom downhearted. He had no idea on the day he died that the end was coming; he was living that day just as hard as he did any other day.<sup>55</sup>

"Thirty," the newspaperman's term for "the end,"<sup>56</sup> was written for Frank Motz.

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<sup>54</sup>Hays Daily News, August 17, 1958.

<sup>55</sup>Mrs. Motz, loc. cit.

<sup>56</sup>John Hohenberg, The Professional Journalist (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 406; p. 414.



Frank Motz

## CHAPTER V

### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW DAILY

During the twenty-nine years between the founding of the paper and the death of Frank Motz, the Hays Daily News followed a course that might be termed "change and constancy." Many practices and techniques incorporated in the paper on November 11, 1929, have given way to new methods and ideas. On the other hand, some of the originally-adopted precepts and ideals, and even practices, are still part of the newspaper today. In surveying the course of a daily paper, one is struck by the sense of pressures exerted on the management of a small-town journal from many sources: pressures of time, money, lack of personnel; the pressure of maintaining the freedom of the press and showing a profit on the ledger; the pressures of human emotions and cold facts; the pressure to change, and the pressure to maintain the status quo.

Specifically, the News has altered in size, appearance, news treatment, personnel, equipment, days of issue, circulation, advertising, and ownership. It has remained constant in purpose, plant location, zeal for news, and name.

No attempt will be made to detail every change made in the paper since 1929. Such a task would be too large for the scope of this report. Rather, the purpose of this survey will be to illustrate the directions and trends taken by the News

in its growth and development with the city of Hays.<sup>1</sup>

The appearance of the News changed little in the first few years. Minor alterations in standing headlines, or those used regularly, were noticed, and there was a good deal of experimenting with various styles of make-up for special situations. Basically, however, the design of the paper stayed relatively stable until August 8, 1943, when Motz adopted the headline style that is used, with variations, today. There were, of course, important developments between 1929 and 1943, but none so radically altered the "face" of the paper as did the move from the conservative, "old-fashioned" type style and layout to the still-popular modern make-up.

Establishing a practice that has been followed throughout the daily's existence was the first use of a page-wide ribbon or banner headline on June 7, 1930, when Fort Hays State Teachers College was granted the right to confer the bachelor of arts degree. This was a big story and it was given big "play" in the paper, in line with Motz's belief, which he once stated to the writer, that make-up should be keyed to the news. Perhaps this has been the outstanding

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<sup>1</sup>Observations made throughout this chapter are the result of a detailed survey of issues of the News since November 11, 1929.

characteristic of the Hays News throughout its history; On "quiet" days, the make-up was conservative in keeping with the news, but when major events occurred, large bold headlines, big pictures and expanded body type gave visual impact to the news reports. On December 8, 1941, for example, the News fairly shouted, "DECLARE WAR!," in 180-point black type, and on August 15, 1945, one word, "PEACE!," was spread across the page in four-inch letters.

Before the major revision in 1943, the News varied its type style over the years with Cheltenham, Stymie, and Bodoni faces for multi-column headlines, and with a bold gothic face for one-column headings, to give variety, freshness, and virility to its appearance.

On August 8, 1943, the Hays News was delivered to its readers in a new style. As Frank Motz said: "The News today appears before its readers in new Sunday clothes. Only from now on it will wear the same suit on other days of the week as well." He explained that the new headline faces and style were designed to improve the appearance of the paper, to reduce the amount of time needed to set the headlines, and to make the paper more readable. The new look was achieved by replacing the old, all-capital, stepped headlines and inverted pyramid decks with a type called Tempo in "up and down" style and set flush left, or even with the left side of the column. Decks were indented and set flush left in the

same face. Headlines for items used at or near the top of the pages were set one-column in thirty and thirty-six-point condensed bold-face similar to Erbar, and those for stories of lesser consequence lower on the pages in twenty-four, eighteen, and fourteen-point Tempo, both roman and italic. Tempo was used also for two-column headings at the bottom of page one and for top-of-page heads on inside pages. Headlines of forty-eight point or larger were set in Kabel, a modern gothic face, and in Cheltenham bold. With the exception of the Kabel and Cheltenham faces, this type schedule is still followed. Large sizes of Tempo have replaced these two.

Motz's reference to better readability apparently was based on the belief of type designers that upper and lower case gothic faces are easier to read than the old condensed, all-capital styles. His statement on saving time is explained by the fact that all the new headlines, except forty-eight-point and larger, could be set on Linotype machines, speeding composition considerably over the hand-setting method.

Although the News followed the general pattern of balanced make-up in its early years, Motz did not allow his paper to fall into a routine, insisting that pages be varied from day to day. A few years after its founding, the paper began to follow a pattern of contrast or contrast and balance, wherein areas of the make-up either contrast drastically with

The Hays Daily News Today





other areas or contrast with some and balance with others.

In keeping with the emphasis on attractive display is the paper's use of illustrations, primarily pictures, to make its pages more inviting to readers. From November 20, 1929, until October 5, 1952, it depended primarily on the Associated Press's photo-mat service for pictures of state, national, and international news events. These pictures were extensively used, and, due to their timeliness, they added emphasis and interest to many major news stories. In October, 1952, the News installed a Fairchild Scan-a-Graver, an electronic photo-engraving machine which permitted the paper to print pictures of local events and persons the day they were taken. Motz once told the writer that the News was one of the first small-city daily papers in Kansas to lease a Scan-a-Graver. Today, this type of picture reproduction is used almost exclusively by the paper. Previously, photo-engravings were made in Salina, Topeka, or Kansas City, and the time and expense involved prohibited frequent use.

When the News was founded in 1929, it enjoyed a monopoly on news dissemination in the area. Daily papers from Salina, Topeka, and Kansas City arrived nearly a day after they were published, and radio was hardly considered competition for newspapers. This need for immediate news distribution, in fact, was one of the chief reasons Motz gave for starting the daily. Associated Press news from Kansas,

the nation, and the world was needed to fill the void, and the Hays News answered the need. This meant that news of the community and the area was relegated to a secondary position for a time. But as an experienced newsman, Motz knew it was necessary to strike a balance between "home" and "wire" news, and such a balance was gradually effected and maintained. During periods of national or international stress or when News reporters were not as active as they perhaps should have been, wire news has been given more and bigger coverage. Fundamentally, though, the paper has tried over the years to present all the news it could gather from both sources.

Reflecting the editor's high regard for the world of athletics has been the News' sports page. From the first issue, the paper has always devoted at least three or four columns of one page to as much news about as many sports as it could collect. In the early years, football scores and stories were carried on the front page every Saturday during the season, and baseball has been thoroughly reported on sports and front pages. The World Series, of course, has always received prominent play on page one.

From the beginning, social and "personal" news stories have been a major part of the daily's regular coverage. A separate heading for each was provided early in the paper's history, and similar headings have continued since. As the population of the area has increased, so has the breadth of

coverage, and both these columns are now much longer than their originals. Reports of engagements and weddings also have grown, especially since the addition of the photo-engraving machine which provided an inexpensive means of printing photographs of brides and brides-to-be.

Another area of particular importance in the News' coverage has consistently been the schools of Hays. Reports of board meetings, building developments, honor rolls, classroom projects, and student activities have received broad coverage in the daily. On November 13, 1929, the News inaugurated a weekly feature called "News of the Week / at the / Hays High School" which continued until September 30, 1941, when the high school began its own newspaper. Included in the daily's school coverage was reporting of newsworthy events at the college and the military academy.

Certainly one of the paper's most singular characteristics is its concentration on and fascination with feature stories on the history of the community, the county, and Northwest Kansas. Articles from old newspaper files have been printed and reprinted with illustrations of places and people that made the history of the county and town of particular interest. Along with the reprinted articles, the News has used historical sketches contributed by various persons in the community and county, including several historians from the college. Another consistent source of material has been

Mrs. Josephine Middlekauff, who came to Hays City in 1867. This keen interest on the part of both the Motzes led them to become leaders in various movements to help preserve historical remnants in the community.

Reporting the news of a region comprising many small communities is a sizable task, and to help it do the job the daily has employed correspondents in most of these towns to send items of local interest to the paper, usually on a weekly basis. The main concentration of this effort has generally been in Ellis, Rooks, Trego, Rush, and Russell counties, with primary emphasis on Ellis County. While there are those who scoff at the use of this "country correspondence," there is no doubt that it has great appeal to residents of rural areas.

The Hays News has striven throughout its history to provide readers with a complete, balanced news presentation. As Editor Motz wrote after one year of publishing a daily newspaper:

. . . the best news service obtainable is being provided subscribers. The full day service of the Associated Press comes in from 7 o'clock every morning until 4 o'clock every afternoon on the telegraph printers so that every reader is provided today's news today. No other town the size of Hays has a daily newspaper that provides such complete Associated Press news dispatch coverage, yet at the same time no effort is spared to give home readers all important Hays news of the day, and at Ellis and WaKeeney correspondents contribute news letters of interest to every reader in those cities.

It was this same principle of "telling the news" that

prompted Motz to change from Saturday to Sunday publication on February 28, 1943. He explained the change on February 20 in the last Saturday edition published by the News:

The time element for a Sunday edition is a decided advantage. Sunday papers which now come to Hays and the territory served by the News go to press at an early hour Saturday night. The news will not go to press until after 2 o'clock Sunday morning, when the Associated Press teletypes sign off. When there are late news breaks, the News will have them.

And he restated his concern for providing "fresh" news in an editorial for the first Sunday paper:

. . . The News isn't trying to cut any big-city capers with its Sabbath edition. In this momentous period of the nation's history a reading public wants its news fresh. The news will meet this requirement with an advantage of several hours over any other Sunday paper distributed in this territory. . . . the News does give assurance it will carry on the best it can, and that's enough for a late Saturday night. And so-- "thirty."

Motz basically was a newsman, and consequently he was more concerned with the news and editorial functions of his paper than any others. Yet, it has been noted that he wanted his paper to profit financially and he therefore gave close attention to advertising and circulation revenues. As shown in Chapter III, the paper began its existence with a sixty-four-page edition that was bursting with advertisements, and, although this feat was not to be matched for many years, it proved to be an impetus to the advertising program that was thwarted only by depression and drought.

Since its earliest days, the News has devoted much time

and type to making its ads attractive to customers and worthwhile to businessmen. A variety of headline type faces and sizes has provided possibilities for pleasing layouts, and mats from advertising services have lent attractiveness and eye appeal to the type. Local advertising, like national, has changed considerably since 1929, and a survey of the News shows a distinct effort was made to keep up with new ideas and trends in advertising as they were mirrored in the paper's national ads. With the exception of a few small patent-medicine promotions, the News carried no national advertising until late December, 1929, when cigarette companies began buying space, and in January an ad appeared bearing the famous slogan "Reach for a Lucky Instead of a Sweet." From that time, the amount of national advertising in the paper has varied widely from year to year, depending on the economic status of the major space users, such as cigarette companies, automobile manufacturers, breweries, and distilleries since 1957 when the News began accepting liquor ads.

The bulk of the daily's advertising revenue, however, has come from local advertising purchased by Hays businessmen, and the volume of this advertising held up well, in spite of the depression, until the summer of 1932 when the price of wheat dropped to twenty-five cents a bushel. As Motz wrote on November 11, 1936:

. . . Then followed a number of lean years, years of dust storms and complete devastation. The end of the rope was about reached when wheat allotment money began to come in, and just before that, relief money to lessen, in some measure, at least, the acute economic distress of the great wheat areas of the West producing regions.

During these lean years, the paper economized by reducing the number of pages to six and even four, and the six-page issue soon became the rule rather than the exception, for when advertising volume declines, so must the number of pages, because each page must, in a sense, pay its own way. But local merchants provided the advertising revenue to keep the paper from going under, and Motz took many occasions to express his gratitude to them, especially in "birthday" issues of the daily. His comments on November 11, 1939, are indicative:

. . . If it hadn't been for the loyalty of the businessmen of Hays who supported this newspaper generously in that critical time, the Hays Daily News would have suffered the fate prophesied for it in the beginning, . . .

Although comparisons of advertising volume on anything but an annual basis can be misleading, it is interesting to note that the News carried only 206 column inches of display and nine inches of classified advertising on July 26, 1934, but on July 30, 1938, a total of 426 inches of display and seventeen inches of classified were sold. A more accurate insight into the paper's advertising history is revealed in annual totals of ad volume: In 1938, 32,184 inches were sold,



and 229,254 were recorded in 1961.<sup>2</sup>

Concurrent with the growth in advertising, circulation of the paper has climbed steadily in the last thirty-three years until today there are approximately 7,500 subscribers to the News.<sup>3</sup> As has been recorded, the daily began publication with more than 500 volunteer subscribers. The next day that figure rose nearly one hundred, and by 1930 Motz noted that 1,850 papers were being printed and 1,700 were paid subscriptions. Showing the circulation growth over the years are totals of 2,050 subscriptions in 1938; 4,100 in 1949; 6,150 in 1956, and 7,500 in 1961.<sup>4</sup>

One of the most interesting and difficult developments to trace in the life of a daily newspaper is that of its miscellaneous features, such as columns, comic strips, cartoons and the like. The reader can see in the paper's seemingly-endless changes the constant effort by the publisher to improve and improve yet again. The only feature of this nature that was published in the first weeks of the Hays News and which exists today in its pages is "What Other Editors Say," a column of one or more editorials reprinted from papers in the exchange list. One of the oldest items in the News was the

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<sup>2</sup>General Ledger, Hays Daily News. Office of the News Publishing Company, Hays, Kansas.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid.

daily weather outlook by the omniscient prophet, Lets B. Forit, a fictitious character who was the product of Motz's imagination. "Hays' Main Street weather oracle," as the editor called him, appeared first on June 11, 1934, and was to be found on the front page, usually in the lower left corner, until late in 1961. Another popular item in the News today, "Off and On Main Street," by Leota Motz, began December 30, 1938, as "Here and There and Roundabout." The title was changed to its present wording on January 19, 1939, and has continued in much the same format. One or two paragraphs of general comment on topics ranging from books to old-timers are followed by the birth report from the two local hospitals, and one or more recipes or household hints.

Comic strips have appeared regularly in the paper since the third issue on November 13, 1929, although a number of changes have been made. It must be pointed out that once a group of strips was found that seemed to please most readers, the News retained the favorites for many years. The first comic strip to be printed in the daily was "Back Yard Kronies," a crudely-drawn and lettered series that left much to be desired as humor. "Kronies" gave way to "Maizie the Model" and "Billy's Uncle" on December 24, 1929, and on May 25, 1931, "The Bungle Family," a strip that could hardly be called comical, replaced "Maizie." A series entitled "Tubby" took the place of "Billy's Uncle" on January 18, 1932. The popular

"Dixie Dugan" moved in as a third strip on November 28, 1932, and has been in the News almost without interruption since. "Tubby" began appearing sporadically late in 1932, and on March 23, 1933, it was succeeded by "In Our Office," another poorly-executed strip which featured a smart-aleck office boy. "The Geevum Girls," only a minor improvement, replaced it, only to be discarded in a short time, and the paper continued with "The Bungle Family" and "Dixie Dugan."

In 1933, Motz, apparently doubting the popularity of these two features, did not sign contracts to renew them. He soon learned that his readers had different ideas, and on June 5, 1933, he stated in an ad:

#### OLD FRIENDS ARE HERE AGAIN

Give them a rousing reception, News readers--you've been wanting to know where they'd gone, you've been missing them, so you told us, so we sent out an S.O.S. for them and they arrived today . . . Dixie Dugan and the Bungle Family.

But readers' preferences changed, and on June 21, 1941, the News replaced the Bungles with "Blondie," which lasted in the weekday issues only a short time. On June 23, 1941, "Li'l Abner" was added and "Blondie" appeared for a few weeks only on Saturday. "Joe Palooka" and "Nancy" brought the total of comic strips in regular use to four on July 7, 1941, and these four have continued since that day. Color comics were added when the News changed from the Saturday to Sunday edition.

Other features that have been published in the News for

varying periods include: "Strange As It Seems"; "New York Day by Day" by O. O. McIntyre; "Contract Bridge, How to Play and How to Win" by Mrs. Josephine Culbertson; "Talks to Parents" by Alice Judson Peale; "Sports Slants" by Donald Doane; "Rustlings" by Judge J. C. Ruppenthal; "You Tell 'Em" by Claude (Judge) Older; "Little Stories of the Street by a News Reporter"; "Saturday Night Gossip of the Old Home Town"; "Just in Sport" by Doane, and "Mrs. Barry's Paragraphs" by Mrs. Agnes Barry of Codell, Kansas. In more recent years, features have included: columns by Ernie Pyle, Hal Boyle, and other Associated Press writers; Amy Vanderbilt; Inez Robb; John Wheeler, Haydn Pearson, Dan Halligan, and the indomitable "Dennis the Menace."

As advertising volume resulted in the need for additional pages, and as circulation increases meant more copies of each issue were printed, faster presses and more up-to-date equipment became necessities. In 1938 the News purchased a new press, a high-speed flatbed that printed from rolled paper. This was replaced in 1955 by a tubular press capable of printing and folding sixteen pages at once, and which could handle the News' press "run" in less than a half-hour. This press gave the paper the opportunity to use color in its pages, and the first example appeared on September 2, 1955, when turquoise lingerie was presented in its actual hue. Two days later, Motz wrote an editorial on the first use of color,

mentioning that "the tubular press is running smoothly."

Since this type of press requires stereotyping, or the casting of metal plates for the press rollers, the News installed a mat roller for making impressions of type and illustrations in paper composition mats, and a melter and caster for melting lead and casting metal cylinders from the impressed mat. These were added at the same time as the press.

Also purchased in 1955 were a Ludlow headline-casting machine and an Elnor strip-caster. The Ludlow device permits the setting of large or small, one-to-eight-column headlines in lead "slugs" from matrices, thus giving the paper "fresh" type for every headline and saving much time over hand composition. The Elnor machine casts molten lead into various sizes of strip metal, such as leads, slugs, and cases, necessary to the composition of pages in their metal form.

In 1943 Motz purchased the fifth and last Linotype machine for the composing room. War regulations complicated the transaction, and he was forced to postpone changing the paper's make-up about six months, according to an editorial on August 6, 1943.

As the News has grown and developed, it has added services, features, and equipment designed to improve the contents and appearance of its columns. All have meant increased costs. Adding to these improvements have been

rising expenditures for labor and materials. To meet these mounting costs, the paper has been forced to raise its subscription and advertising charges. In 1929, a year's subscription could be bought at the special November "birthday" rate of three dollars. The cost was four dollars in 1931; five dollars in 1939; \$7.50 in 1943; nine dollars in 1949; twelve dollars in 1954; \$18.20 in 1961.<sup>5</sup>

Although Frank Motz was editor and publisher of the News from its inception until his death in 1958, he was not the sole owner. In 1932 a statement of ownership showed the News Publishing Company as the owner, with the following comprising the company: R. J. Laubengayer, Salina; Roy F. Bailey, Salina; John S. Bird, Hays; Frank Motz and Leota Motz, Hays. Motz had convinced Bird that he should retain a financial interest in the paper, an interest that the Motzes purchased after Bird's death in 1935. Laubengayer and Bailey received their share of the News in an interesting way: In 1925, Bird and Motz bought the Goodland News and the Goodland Republic and merged the two papers. Lacking capital, they turned to Laubengayer, Salina banker, and Bailey, part-owner and editor of the Salina Journal, who agreed to provide the money needed for purchasing the Goodland papers in return for

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<sup>5</sup>Sales Ledger, Hays Daily News. Office of the News Publishing Company, Hays, Kansas.

stock in the Ellis County News. Motz "commuted" to Goodland to manage the News-Republic for about a year, then hired Ben Hibbs to take the job. Hibbs left to join the Arkansas City Traveler in less than a year, and Motz and Bird sold the Goodland paper. The Motzes bought most of Bailey's stock in the Hays paper, and Laubengayer also purchased some. Although Laubengayer's share of the paper would have permitted him a voice in its management, Mrs. Motz said that he never interfered, and that he told the Motzes: "Whatever you say is all right." When Laubengayer died in 1959, he left his News stock to his wife and daughters. The controlling interest in the company now belongs to Mrs. Motz.

During his life as editor of the Hays Daily News, Motz pursued an aggressively independent editorial policy and a free, non-partisan news policy. He put himself on record in this regard early in the life of his paper:

There are readers of this, and doubtless most every other newspaper, who never will learn to distinguish between editorials and news stories. A newspaperman can explain, carefully, patiently, painstakingly, a thousand times that a news story is a recitation of facts and an editorial is expression of personal opinion on the part of the editor of the paper, and to those who lack in proper discrimination and understanding he never will make clear his meaning, so what's the use!<sup>6</sup>

And on January 31, 1931, he pointed out that the News attempted always to print the news without coloring it and to be impar-

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<sup>6</sup>Hays Daily News, January 16, 1930.

and fair to all persons. In the same editorial he stressed that the News is "independent in its politics. It will lend its support to the candidate whom it believes best fitted for the job he seeks, whatever his political affiliation may be." He reiterated his stand on February 11, 1936, when he promised readers that the paper would do its best to keep its news columns free from prejudice and to keep its opinions strictly in editorial columns.

A study of his editorials proves that Motz hewed to his own line. His editorials left no doubts about his personal opinions on a myriad of topics, and no institution, individual, or other aspect of society was immune to his inspection. News columns, on the other hand, were devoid of slant or bias, and, as he stated on November 25, 1931, "The news columns of this paper are not for sale at any price." Motz unequivocally stated the position that he maintained throughout his life:

. . . That policy [referring to the "not for sale" comment] is the only one which will guarantee readers and advertisers alike a square deal at all times. Without public confidence a newspaper isn't much to readers or advertisers; and one sure means of building and maintaining confidence is by providing readers news free even from the suspicion of being subsidized.



## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY

The preceding chapters of this study comprise an attempt to collate many pieces of diverse information into a cohesive unit that will define and describe the Hays Daily News. Working under the firm belief that ancestry is important to a newspaper as well as to an individual, the writer has tried to provide the background for the founding of the News by tracing the journalistic genealogy of Hays City and Hays. This effort proved to be the most difficult and trying phase of the research because of either the lack, inaccessibility, or deterioration of resource materials. Next, the planning, work, and expense involved in publishing the first issue, and the appearance and content of it and subsequent early numbers were presented. Linked closely to the new paper was its founder, Frank Motz, and Chapter Four was intended to establish the history, experience, and personality of the editor and the man. A chronological detailing of the development of the daily followed, showing the editor's progressive and energetic leadership which, in some instances, placed the News on paths previously untrod by small-city daily newspapers in Kansas.

The primary goal of this report has been to make a contribution to the history of Kansas journalism, which the

writer and others believe is important to the structure of American journalism, and, therefore, to the society of this country. A secondary aim has been to establish the News as a trail-blazer and an innovator in Kansas journalism, and to depict how a unique individual can mold a unique institution.

That the Hays Daily News was and is the product of Frank Motz's dreams, plans, work, and money seems obvious. His stamp was evident in the newspaper for twenty-nine years, and, to some extent, it remains there. During his editorship, the paper stood out as the intelligent, vociferous champion of unpopular causes and underdogs. It was known for its bright make-up, attractive typography, and expert printing, its ample news coverage, interesting feature articles, and pictures of local children. Principally, though, it was known for its inimitable editor, operator of the "saltiest editorial typewriter in Kansas."<sup>1</sup>

One point regarding historical data needs to be stressed. There is a great wealth of information on Hays and Ellis County available in the newspapers of the community, and it is hoped that in the near future a competent scholar will compile this fascinating information into a history of Hays or Ellis County.

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<sup>1</sup>Norton Daily Telegram, August 16, 1958.

Also, enough material for several interesting and amusing articles and books on early editors, politics, peace officers, and judges in this community is waiting to be collected and written into proper form.

Thirty.

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