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Newspapers in contiguous communities: a case study of the Pawtucket Times.

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

School of Public Relations and Communications

Thesis

Newspapers in Contiguous Communities: A Case
Study of the Pawtucket Times

By

Vincent J. Bartimo

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Approved

by

First Reader..... *David M. White*
Professor of *Journalism*

Second Reader..... *John H. Gleason*
Professor of *Journalism*

INTRODUCTION

What makes the Pawtucket Times so successful when it exists practically in the back yard of the Providence Journal-Bulletin? This is the question which this thesis attempts to answer.

The main portion of this work is concerned with 100 interviews, selected in a random sample from individuals who reside in the Pawtucket Times circulation area and who read the paper.

The random survey was arrived at in methods set down by competent statisticians. The city directory was selected as the means of choosing the random interviews. The Pawtucket directory has some 500 pages. A page in the directory was selected at random. Then a name on the random page was selected by a blindfolded individual. The twenty second name on the page was picked.

Then by a simple process of division, I selected the twenty second name on every fifth page. This gave me 100 interviews, all selected at random. To clarify a Random Survey...it means that everyone in the circulation area had an equal opportunity to be selected.

Other avenues tapped for this thesis included interviews with the publisher, managing editor, city editor, news editor and circulation manager of the Pawtucket Times.

Interviews with the director of the Chamber of Commerce and customer relations superintendent of the Bell Telephone Company of Rhode Island also were obtained.

Perhaps it would only be fair to tell the reader that it is doubtful whether such a thesis could have been written had not the writer been a working member of the editorial staff of the Times.

This does not mean to imply that no other individual could have written such a thesis. However, the problems of any newspaper are, by and large, unique to that particular paper. As a reporter for six years, 27 months of which I have been a member of the editorial staff of the Times, I believe that I have come to appreciate some of its problems and some of the things which make it a successful paper.

There are many intangible and tangible items which affect a newspaper. Only by being part of one can you really appreciate the many problems that are overcome daily in putting one out.

It is fitting therefore that appropriate recognition be given here to the managerial and editorial members of the Pawtucket Times, without whose cooperation and guidance the completion of this thesis would not have been possible.

Despite this cooperation and the fact that I am a working member of the Times organization, no attempt has been made to cloud or distort the facts.

Those interviewed did not know that I was in any way associated with the Times. When queried they were told that I was a student working for a Master's Degree at Boston University doing newspaper research. The answers correlated from these respondents represent a factual picture of their sentiments.

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History of Pawtucket Times

The Pawtucket Times, hereafter referred to as the Times, is a unique enterprise in the respect that it continues to expand and make money while operating practically in the back yard of the Providence Journal-Bulletin, considered one of the best newspapers in the country.

The present circulation of the Times is 39,400. More than 90 per cent of this figure represents home circulation.^{1.}

Why has this paper continued to prosper since its founding on April 30, 1885? Before we can come to any worthwhile conclusions concerning this question it is necessary to go into the history of the paper itself and the area in which it flourishes.^{2.}

On April 30 of this year the paper will be 69 years old. Its policy has been "to maintain the standard of fairness and accuracy which good taste demands. That its policy is acceptable to all is evident in its steady rise in circulation. A rise that has gained it national recognition."

The late George O. Willard published the first edition of The Evening Times on April 30, 1885. Mr. Willard was considered "a rotund gentleman of genial disposition, whose knowledge of publishing was confined to news editing. He had been a newspaper man all his life, formerly an editor of

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1. Interview with George E. Weavill, circulation manager, March 6, 1954.
 2. From 50th Anniversary Edition of Times, April 30, 1935.

a Providence paper."

The credo of the Times was set down in an editorial of the first edition of the paper by Mr. Willard.

He wrote: "The Evening Times will not be an advocate of any leading party or clique but will endeavor to give all sides a fair hearing and publish the political as it does the local news without prejudice.

"The sensational matters, as much as possible will be avoided, and abuse of individuals will not be allowed either in the editorial or local departments..."³.

Stanley T. Black, present general manager, said this is the policy which the paper has adhered to for the past 69 years and "as long as I am general manager we will continue to follow it."

The Times was purchased from Mr. Willard by the late David O. Black, grandfather of the present general manager, on March 20, 1890. He had earlier founded the Providence Telegram but left it to buy the Times.

David O. Black was a pioneer in the movement to insure advertisers sworn circulation. As he insisted upon accuracy in his new columns, he made the same demands upon his circulation department. He refused to adopt the methods then in vogue and he sold his advertising on the basis of guaranteed net paid circulation.

3. From 50th Anniversary Edition of Times, April 30, 1935.

His policy has since been adopted by virtually all the newspapers in the United States which ascribe to the Audit Bureau of Circulation policy, a guarantee of circulation.

The Times outgrew its Main street headquarters, a wooden building, and moved to Exchange street on March 1, 1896, to give its name to Times Square. It was during this time that Mr. Black decided to sell his property to a group of Providence financiers. It marked the second time in his career that he had built a newspaper to a point of influence and then surrendered control. In 1904 the Times was sold. Mr. Black had seen it rise from 3,500 to 15,000 circulation in less than 20 years.

Col. Samuel P. Colt, founder of the United States Rubber Co., Marsden J. Perry, railroad capitalist, both deceased, and the late Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, formed the combination which purchased the Times. Their heirs consider the Times among their most valuable assets. Its good will alone is considered invaluable. A condition of the sale was the retention of Charles O. Black, the son who had absorbed his father's teaching.^{4.}

Under Charles O. Black, the paper continued to thrive. It grew from a 12 page paper to 24 and then to 60 pages. On occasions, when he published a 60 page paper, the largest in New England, he dictated the details to a reporter.

4. From 50th Anniversary Edition of Times, April 30, 1935.

In 1920, he embarked upon an expansion program, adding a new and modern two story building as an annex to the Exchange street structure. He changed the name of the paper from The Evening Times to The Pawtucket Times. His sons, Stanley T. and Milton O. Black were drilled in the publishing business.

Acceding to his requests, the publishers appointed Stanley T. Black as general manager. The third generation of the Blacks was at the head of The Pawtucket Times. He succeeded his father when the world was approaching an economic crisis but the Times weathered the storm.

During his reign as general manager the Times has become a leading influence in city and state political and economic affairs.

The paper has kept abreast of the changing times. The physical plant itself has been improved and remodeled. Its editorial department is equipped with the latest designed furniture and equipment.

The Times is made up of seven essential departments. They are editorial, business, composing, proof, stereotype, press and mailing.

The Times, an afternoon paper, prints three editions daily; a first, second and final.

Historical Data of Pawtucket

Pawtucket, a "City of Diversified Industries," was established in 1812 by a division of the town of Rehoboth, Mass., and the portion of the easterly side of the Blackstone River, added to that on the western side, which was the town of North Providence. In 1828, Pawtucket, Mass., was set off from Seekonk and incorporated as a town. It was made a part of Rhode Island, March 1, 1862.⁵

It was incorporated as a city March 27, 1885, and the first city government was organized on the first Monday in January, 1886. Frederick Clark Sayles was the first mayor.

The first white settler was Joseph Jenks Jr., who in 1655, established a blacksmith's forge at the "Falls." Around this spot grew the settlement that later was to be the center of the world's greatest industries.

Samuel Slater in 1790, built the machinery that established the cotton industry in the United States, engaging in the spinning of cotton yarn in 1792. The building, which still stands, is in the rear of Roosevelt avenue. It is the first cotton mill to be erected in America.

5. Journal-Bulletin Almanac, 68th Edition, compiled and published by the Providence Journal Company.

This building--The Old Slater Mill--is preserved as a memorial to the introduction of cotton textile manufacture in the United States.

Pawtucket was divided into two senatorial districts by Chapter 2466, Public Laws, approved Dec. 16, 1936. The first election was held Nov. 8, 1938. The city has 10 representatives and 29 voting precincts; six wards, three councilmen at large and one from each ward.

Pawtucket has an area of 8.94 square miles. Records of Dec. 31, 1935, show the total length of streets, 165.70 miles of which 142.59 miles are improved. Park and playground areas total 248.26 acres. Water works have a total length of 262.67 miles and the total length of sewers is 129.94 miles.^{6.}

The city has a water system of 2,621,560,000 gallons, which it is estimated, will adequately serve its territory for the next quarter century at least. The system, supplied by the Abbot Run stream, includes a reservoir at Stump Hill in Lincoln, with a capacity of 18,000,000 gallons, and the Diamond Hill reservoir in Cumberland with a 1,456,000,000 capacity. The Arnold's Mills reservoir, the newest unit of the system holds 1,165,560,000 gallons.

Pawtucket, with its water system also supplies the city of Central Falls and part of the towns of Lincoln and North Providence.

6. Journal-Bulletin Almanac, 68th Edition, compiled and published by the Providence Journal Company.

A new PWA filtration plant at Happy Hollow, Cumberland, was placed in operation in October of 1940 as part of the city of Pawtucket's water supply system.

The plant has a capacity of 20,000,000 gallons. Four new artesian wells capable of producing 6,000,000 gallons of water daily were placed into operation in 1950 to augment the water supply in the two reservoirs in Cumberland.

Eight public parks are maintained by the city and Pawtucket is governed by a mayor, nine man City Council and seven man School Committee.

The six wards in the city have a total population of 81,436 persons. Broken down by wards they are Ward 1, 13,129; Ward 2, 17,920; Ward 3, 19,571; Ward 4, 11,761; Ward 5, 7,893; and Ward 6, 11,162.

A new city charter, providing for a strong mayor and unicameral council form of government, and drawn up under provisions of the Home Rule Amendment to the state constitution, was approved by voters of the general election of Nov. 4, 1952.⁷

7. Journal-Bulletin Almanac, 68th Edition, compiled and published by the Providence Journal Company.

Interviews

Stanley T. Black, general manager of the Times, was named to his present post when only 29 years of age. This made him probably the youngest general manager of his day in papers of like size.⁸

He attributes the "team quality of Times personnel" as one of the main reasons for the Times success.

"There is no question in my mind that had not the men in all departments and their supervisors put forth the maximum effort through the years, we would never have become the excellent newspaper we are today," Mr. Black said.

He values the team work that is gained by close relationship with department heads and has made a practice through the years of visiting each of them every morning to keep "abreast of their gripes and ideas for improvements."

Mr. Black points to the continued efforts of management to stay with the changing techniques in the newspaper world.

"Our personnel is encouraged to learn by association. We have sent men to Columbia University to the seminars for managing editors, news editors, city editors and assistant city editors," he stated.

He points out the improvements made through the years in the physical plant itself. The editorial room and cafeteria are

8. Interview with Stanley T. Black, general manager, March 16, 1954.

modern. The Times plant itself has been maintained at a high efficiency point due to the able direction of Chester M. Spooner, assistant to the general manager.

Mr. Black points with justifiable pride to the fact that in all the years he has been general manager of the paper, "No one has ever told me I never could run anything. The owners have never attempted to suppress the news," he added. 9.

He said the paper always reserved the right to speak editorially but "our policy has been, the reporting of the facts."

Mr. Black stated that the circulation of the Times "has never been artificially boosted by circulation gimmicks," such as "The Lucky Buck" and others.

He does not minimize the worth of the opposition paper, the Journal-Bulletin. "They put out a good paper. We're all the more proud of the Times because it continues to prosper in the face of such competent competition," he added.

The ability to keep "everlastingly at it" and the Times goal of "objectivity" in the reporting of the news are the two important factors for the paper's success, according to Mr. Black.

"A lot of people have disagreed with us," Mr. Black added, "but we lean over backwards to be fair."

9. Interview with Stanley T. Black, general manager, March 16, 1954.

The Times has often printed many stories which criticized the paper and the management.

"If someone disagrees with us and wants to be heard, why we print it. We feel the readers have a right to know both sides of a story," Mr. Black stated.

The policy enforced for so many years at the Times is "If there's a story there...then write it."

Mr. Black said the Times is constantly improving. He lists the method in the treatment of news, shorter, snappier stories, and new types of heads a few of the many changes which constantly take place in keeping the Times one of the finest papers in the country.

Sylvester Sprague, managing editor, said the Times primarily tries to inform the readers. This coupled with the fact that we constantly attempt to give the readers as much local and national coverage as possible, he added. ^{10.}

His favorite type of story is one that goes far beyond mere information and serves a dual purpose of informing and entertaining.

Mr. Sprague attributes the steady circulation gain to the fact that the Times considers no item too small to print. "People are more interested in what is happening to their neighbors. Our awareness of the importance of this type of news has been one of the things which has made the paper so

10. Interview with Sylvester Sprague, managing editor, March 24, 1954.

successful," he added.

He considers the column by Charles Leach, "Memory Lane," as satisfying some of the needs of readers over 40 years of age. The 100 interviews done in the random survey point up the popularity of this feature.

Mr. Sprague said a conscientious effort is always made to achieve a good balance between the local and national news.

"The Times has a bigger news hole than most papers our size. Our competition is responsible for this," he said.

In pointing up the paper's attempt to satisfy the needs of its readers, Mr. Sprague said the first three pages are devoted to news. The Times carries no ads on page one and no ads above the fold on pages two and three. This is a strict rule which has been followed for many years.

The first edition of the Times goes into Massachusetts-- Seekonk and the Attleboros, mainly. The second edition goes into the Blackstone Valley and Central Falls, a city which adjoins Pawtucket. The final edition is sold in the city proper.^{11.}

As much as 22 columns of type is pulled from the first edition and replaced with local news for the second and final editions. This 22 columns in the first edition is mainly local news for the areas in which it is sold.

11. Interview with Sylvester Sprague, managing editor, March 24, 1954.

One of the more recent improvements made in the Times in the past few years was the departmentilizing of the Women's Page. This was done in 1950 under the direction of Mr. Sprague. Prior to this time women's news was scattered all over the paper.

The departmentilizing of this page must be considered one of the big steps forward taken by the Times in recent years. In the random survey taken, this page was one of the most popular in the paper by both women and men. A great deal of credit for the high quality of this page must necessarily go to the two women which supervise its daily content. They are Misses Mildred Emery and Lyn Nerney.

Mr. Sprague said that local news naturally takes precedent over national or wire news. The managing editor feels, despite the high quality of his women's page, that there is a need for more women's news. He feels not enough vital stories are pointed towards women.

In referring to the syndicated columns which the Times carries, Mr. Sprague thinks that people read Westbrook Pegler because he's such a controversial figure. "Many read him because of the disagreement factor," he said.

The TV and Hollywood columns fulfills the entertainment need of the readers, Mr. Sprague added. He feels that newspapers will soon be forced to provide a staff man to write TV review columns on a local basis.^{12.}

12. Interview with Sylvester Sprague, managing editor, March 24, 1954.

The Lawrence column, which reviews mainly the Washington scene, is well read in business circles, the managing editor added. He said it interprets an ultra conservative outlook on events.

"In the percentage of pictures, we're high. I don't know of any other paper our size which runs the volume of pictures that we do," he added.

The pictures are run primarily as a good will measure, though they have limited interest, he stated.

The managing editor feels he is giving the readers a good proportion of sports and editorial page news and "on the whole we're giving them a good smattering of news."

He feels that more could be done to give women's news more emphasis. "We are constantly striving to improve and expand our avenues of news. Our goal is to do a better job today than we did yesterday," he added.

James M. Murphy Jr., city editor, considers the Times popular because it is a well balanced paper. He said people can read it and know that they are getting a presentation of the national scene and also a good smattering of the local news.^{13.}

13. Interview with James M. Murphy Jr., city editor, March 26, 1954.

He feels that the features and comics are of sufficient scope to satisfy whatever demands they have along these lines.

"The reader is the most important person to us," Mr. Murphy said. Our readers have been made to feel as a result of requests for stories or pictures of actual events, that this is their paper and it is interested in them. Every effort is made to fulfill their wishes, he added.

Mr. Murphy thinks the paper can well be said to be metropolitan in its national and global news and yet intelligently "small townish" in its local coverage.

When there's a clash as far as a news hole is concerned, local news always takes preference. Over and above complete coverage of spot news, I'd like to see human interest stories in our paper, he stated. Human interest stories he explained are those which play on the emotions.

He gave as an example, John Cameron Swayze's visit to the Times which he said was a feature type story whereas a boy dying of an incurable disease was human interest.

"I like to see a lot of human interest and feature stories because spot news must by circumstance be shared with the opposition," he said.

National and global news, as a result of wire services, must be shared and therefore one of the most fertile area for enterprise and initiative lies in the feature or human interest field, he added.^{14.}

14. Interview with James M. Murphy Jr., city editor, March 26, 1954.

"I feel the readers, by and large, are satisfied with the product they're getting in the Times," he said. "Proof of this is the fact that they continue to buy it in increasing numbers."

He said the Times has never put forth any political figure with a hammer and thong method. We've taken some unpopular stands politically speaking but this has not seemed to hurt the paper circulation wise, he added.

Referring to the men who write the news, Mr. Murphy said that certainly no paper is stronger, more reliable or more accurate in its presentation of news than is the news staff that fashions the daily output.

"I would say that the reportorial staff is versatile and exceptionally capable as a staff. There is an effort made to give an outlet for any colorful or imaginative presentation of any set of circumstances. Many stories which find their way into the Times have been taken out of the realm of the drab, stereotype story and made attractive and more readable by getting away from the five Ws type of presentation that one frequently finds in a paper of this size." 15.

Mr. Murphy believes an ideal newspaper should be characteristic and should be trusted by its readers. This trust reflects itself through a policy of accurate, fair, complete and intelligent news coverage, he added.

"A person should have the feeling that if there is some question of an occurrence that he's heard about he need only go to the evening's edition of the Times.

15. Interview with James M. Murphy Jr., city editor, March 26, 1954.

And if it's happened he'll find it there.

"If it's not there he will validly conclude that the report he heard was false or premature. He should get the feeling that the paper would not ever indulge in purely personal rangling with public figures but will confine its crusading for a better community.

"The paper should not only be calculated to inform but also should strive to entertain."¹⁶.

Walter Wilcock, news editor, thinks the top story in the Times is the human interest one, particularly if it concerns someone in our news area. Such a story would get the best play in the day's paper, he added. ¹⁷.

He said the Times gives the reader a good proportion of local and national news daily. The aim of the paper, according to him, is to present both types of news as clearly and simply as possible so that readers will be able to understand its meaning.

"Six or seven skilled men, who work as copyreaders, handle the daily amount of news which goes into the paper. These men are all experienced reporters who have been in the business a number of years and are qualified by their experience to handle the job.

"Area news has, as in most papers, precedence over wire copy. Prominent play is given to scientific and medical discovery stories. News of aviation is also prominently played up. An attempt is made to educate our readers to the happenings in Washington, D. C. As an example of this read James Marlow, an Associated Press syndicated columnist which we run.

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16. Interview with James M. Murphy Jr., city editor, March 26, 1954.
 17. Interview with Walter Wilcock, news editor, April 2, 1954.

"I consider Marlow a man who can write the Washington happenings in lay language and still give the reader a simple interpretation of the capitol news.¹⁸

Mr. Wilcock states that the Times is a home town paper and trys mainly to give more local news when it is available. "We cater to our home town readers," he added.

He likes the story that is written simply. The ideal story runs about 12 inches of type or two sheets of regular copy paper, he believes.

Stories that run longer than this, he claims, are a challenge to the reader unless they are unusually interesting.

Mr. Wilcock feels that a good newspaper informs, educates and amuses the readers. "If this formula is dished out daily in a well rounded manner then you have a pretty close to a perfect newspaper," he said.¹⁹

"We attempt to live up to these three principles. We're particularly interested in keeping a reader informed on the background of a story and try to keep him abreast of the overall story rather than just the portion that happened that day. We like the reporters to challenge facts in a story, particularly if he thinks it should be challenged.

"We don't look for stories with a sex angle for sex's sake, unless it's a bonafide story. We sometimes are criticized for not running such stories but stand by our policy of sending a paper into the home which does not offend the taste of our readers.²⁰

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18. Interview with Walter Wilcock, news editor, April 2, 1954.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.

In referring to the Kinsey report concerning women, Mr. Wilcock said the paper did not run the story because they felt it was strictly a sex yarn. He said that it was their thinking if persons were interested in the scientific data they could purchase the book itself or read some scientific magazine for it. He said the wire stories themselves definitely played up the sex angles-- to such an extent that we felt it better not to run it. "I doubt whether a factual story could have been presented from the wire reports and still eliminate objectionable sex," he added.

Ben Poulten, state house reporter for the Times who has served the paper in many capacities over the past 23 years and Roy Cate, reporter for 21 years, were my selections from the editorial staff to interview.

Mr. Cate, who covers the industry and business beat, and Mr. Poulten, are capable and experienced men well aware of what makes a newspaper successful. Both men are respected and highly thought of in their respective fields of operation.

Mr. Poulten has seen many changes in the Times. He said stories today are much more condensed than they were years ago.²¹

He points to the increased picture coverage and earlier deadlines for each edition as marked changes. The deadline factor has cut down on the amount of spot news which makes each issue of the paper and he feels the degree of coverage has fallen off somewhat.

21. Interview with Ben Poulten, state house reporter, April 3, 1954.

He feels the paper has been successful because it has continued to give the readers statewide and national coverage along with its local news. This erases the reader's need for a metropolitan paper, he claims.

"The Newspaper Guild program has created incentive among its members to improve their standards. In turn this has improved the quality of the paper.

"The paper, by and large, satisfies the needs of its readers. Our circulation proves this. The paper deserves great credit in not permitting its advertisers to interfere with its editorial policies and the handling of the news.

"More confidence should be expressed in the reporters in the field and their ability to put stories in their proper perspective. There is no substitute for an eye witness account of a story by an experienced reporter."²².

Mr. Poulten makes an astute observation when he points out the disadvantage the paper finds in itself in by not sending reporters on a more free wheeling basis to cover stories that happen outside our news area.²³.

"Despite the fact that they occur outside our immediate area, they may have tremendous interest among our readers," he states.

This was brought out in the random survey. Persons interviewed expressed puzzlement as to why Times reporters were not sent to stories with local interest though they did not occur in the area. The failure of the Times to take advantage of by-lined articles has also hurt the Times as far as its readers are concerned.

²². Interview with Ben Poulten, state house reporter, April 3, 1954.

²³. Ibid.

By-lined articles are read with much more interest, the survey showed because the reader feels a bond of closeness to the story when he knows a reporter from his newspaper covered it.

Mr. Poulten thinks that the fact that the Times has not been provincial has helped its circulation. The success of the paper is in part due to its metropolitan scope even though the city is not metropolitan in itself, he adds.

Roy Cate feels there is a crying need for industry to lend a greater effort towards adjusting itself to changes and living patterns to meet new competition.²⁴

He feels more than even that there is room for the human interest story and local reporting of events.

"The outstanding changes have been legislative and the efforts of the American Newspaper Guild which has rendered obsolete the 90 hour work week. The result has been a better product. The Guild has placed the reporter in a position where he has gained respect in his job.

"The tendency towards interpretive reporting is sometimes good but can be dangerous. I believe, by and large, we should stick to the reporting of the facts. This is the best way to handle a story.

"In my whole career in business and before my time, readers have been treated to a feast of European coverage. There has been a famine in Latin American coverage. Our American friends and cousins appear to be getting less coverage in our daily newspapers."²⁵

Mr. Cate subscribes to Pan American Magazine in an attempt to keep abreast of their news but finds even this publication

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24. Interview with Roy Cate, general assignment reporter. Assigned regularly to stories affecting business and industry, April 3, 1954.
25. Ibid.

lacking in adequate coverage of news events there. "There seems to be little attempt to change this pattern," he added.

He thinks there could be more business and industry coverage in the papers but thinks the reticence of individuals in these fields to talk to reporters mainly responsible. "They shy and dodge away from newsmen and are too suspicious of the press for their own good," he added.

Mr. Cate feels there are more opportunities in the journalism field today than a generation ago.

"As an old timer and a non-journalism student, I think the Journalism schools make a good contribution to the business," he said.²⁶

26. Interview with Roy Cate, general assignment reporter. Assigned regularly to stories affecting business and industry, April 3, 1954.

In discussing circulation of the Times, George E. Weavill, circulation manager, said that during World War II, to early 1946 the newsprint ratio remained practically frozen.²⁷

"We had a frozen circulation as far as civilians were concerned," he said. Circulation then was 32,400 with a waiting list of 900 subscribers.

From 1946 to the present time when the freeze was off, circulation has increased rapidly until it has reached the present 39,400 figure, he stated.

Some of this increase was due to a drop of 1,200 subscriptions to servicemen. When these men returned home they transferred their paper from military to civilian buyer status.

There has been a constant increase in circulation since 1945, with the largest increases noted in 1946 and 1947, Mr. Weavill added.

"We will continue to pick up subscribers. I feel there is no limit to our circulation. We will go beyond 40,000 without doubt. We expect to hit it, with some effort next year, providing there is no general recession in business.

"I think people buy the Times because they're getting a good newspaper for a nickel. I'd like to see the paper in the home before 5:30 p.m. and earlier if possible. There is no denying the fact that we compete with TV and radio. I think the average time our readers get the paper at home is about 5:30 p.m.

"The first edition is ready for transit to Massachusetts readers at 2:15 p.m. The second edition is ready for transit at 2:45 p.m. and the final is ready between 4 and 4:15 p. m."²⁸

27. Interview with George E. Weavill, circulation manager March 6, 1954.

28. Ibid.

Mr. Weavill said the mail circulation of the Times is not considered large but we haven't encouraged it. We're basically interested in home delivery as we're definitely a home paper," he added.²⁹.

Our home delivery is over 90 per cent, Mr. Weavill added.

The random survey bears Mr. Weavill out on two important points. One is that the majority of readers get their paper by 5:30 p.m. and that 94 per cent of those interviewed had their paper home delivered.

The Times has 750 carriers. All the papers are sold through distributors or dealers. Once the paper leaves the Times building it is paid for by these distributors or dealers. This is a situation unique to the Times.

The circulation department has only two full time employees. One is Mr. Weavill and the other is the mailing room foreman. The Times bookkeeper also keeps the circulation department books but on a part time basis. All others who help wrap and bundle the papers, including the truck drivers, are hired part time.

"Most newspapers this size have at least 10 men to operate its circulation department," Mr. Weavill said. This need for personnel is eliminated by the distributor system of handling the papers," he added.

The problem of unpaid accounts is one that rarely faces Mr. Weavill. He said the circulation dips each Summer with a

29. Interview with George E. Weavill, circulation manager, March 6, 1954

high peak in March and April. The dip and rise is a fraction of one per cent variation during these periods with a slightly sharper decrease during the vacation months of July and August.

"We make no attempt to pick up this circulation by sea-shore or vacation spot replacement," the circulation manager added.³⁰

30. Interview with George E. Weavill, circulation manager, March 6, 1954.

Random Survey

We have read the opinions of those who are mainly responsible for the policy making decisions of the paper and are aware of the kind of area in which the Times flourishes.

How do these factors compare with what the readers of the paper think about the Times? To appreciate the sentiments of the readers, 100 interviews were done in a random survey.³¹

Several things became apparent while this survey was being taken. First, due to the enormous good will which the paper has established over the years there were only six, who refused to answer the survey. Each individual interviewed was asked a series of 34 questions. By and large the respondents were amazingly cooperative.

Through the answers of these 100 respondents, plus the interviews of those in managerial capacities at the Times, several reasons as to why the Times is so successful became apparent. These will be discussed later.

The first question of the survey was: Do you read the Times? Obviously 100 per cent of these answers were, "Yes." For the few who answered "No" I counted down five more from the random number 22 in the directory and then called that individual.

On the next question of how many years had the respondent been a reader of the Times, 69 per cent had read the paper for

31. One hundred interviews done in a Random Survey.

more than 20 years. Twelve per cent had read it 15 to 19 years; 10 per cent from 10 to 14 years; three per cent from five to nine years and six per cent from one to four years.

The third question was : "What, if anything do you like about the Times?" A total of 69 per cent said local news.

This answer conforms with the thinking of Mr. Sprague, Mr. Murphy and Mr. Wilcock who give priority to local stories.

Twelve per cent of the readers liked the women's page, four per cent sports, and six per cent the editorial page. Eleven per cent like a variety of things, ranging from comics, political news, obits, weather, ads, Memory Lane, Valley and Central Falls news.

On the question, "What do you dislike about the Times?" 86 per cent said they didn't dislike anything about the paper. In the break down of likes and dislikes of specific pages a much more definitive response was obtained. Of the 16 per cent who dislike certain parts of the Times, they fell in the following categories:

paper biased, Dorothy Dix, not enough Valley news, Westbrook Pegler and editorials.

On the question of what their favorite item was 24 per cent said the Women's page, 18 per cent said sports, 14 per cent like page one, eight per cent, news in general, nine per cent editorials, five per cent comics and 22 per cent miscellaneous.

The miscellaneous included Tom Buckley's Court House column, Ben Poulten's State House column, Pegler, Chuckle, Valley News and editorials.

In regarding these percentages it should be remembered that of the 100 interviewed at random 49 were women and 51 were men.

On the question of whether they liked or disliked the builder's page section which the Times runs every Saturday a whopping 76 per cent liked the page, 17 per cent did not like it and seven per cent had no opinion.

The tremendous popularity of this page was due mainly to the features run concerning home owners, garden enthusiasts and household hints. Not one respondent mentioned he liked the house features which the Times runs. It is questionable as to how many read this section for the house feature itself.

The sports page ranked high in reader interest. A total of 58 per cent said they liked it, 18 per cent didn't like it and 24 per cent had no opinion. Most of these no opinions were among women readers.

The editorial page did not fair too well with the readers. A total of 59 per cent liked it, 25 per cent didn't like it and 16 per cent had no opinion. Compared to surveys done on the editorial pages nationally the page seems to hold its own in readership interest.

On the question of favorite comic strip, 25 per cent voted for Mark Trail, 22 per cent for Gasoline Alley, while

22 per cent had no favorite strip. The others ranged: nine per cent Etta Kett, eight per cent Orphan Annie, three per cent Ella Cinders, three per cent Capp Stubbs, three per cent Dennis the Menace and seven per cent favored two or more.

On question 10, "Do you like or dislike the Women's page?" 60 per cent liked it, 11 per cent disliked it and 29 per cent had no opinion. Of this latter group, all were male respondents.

This response is indicative of the popularity of the page. The fact that the page was not departmentalized until 1950 shows that the Times was far behind the desires of its readers in this department.

On the question of whether they or their friends clipped out the "letter to the Servicemen" item and sent it to servicemen or friends out of town, 71 per cent said they didn't clip it while 29 per cent did.

A large percentage did not even know we ran the column. On the basis of these replies it might be wise to pull the column for two or three weeks to see if any reader reaction were forthcoming.

A total of 54 per cent of the readers read the letters to the editor regularly, 12 per cent occasionally, 26 per cent hardly ever and eight per cent never read them.

This is a popular item with the Times readers but of the 100 interviewed only four per cent said they wrote letters

to the editor, Some gave as their reasons for not writing the fact that they had to sign their names, others said they never could get around to writing them though they often felt like it.

This question on how many wrote letters to the editor was in a sense a test question. It points out the apparent validity of the survey as the Times gets very few letters from its readers.

On the question of were there any changes the reader would like to see made in the Times 86 per cent said "No" while 14 per cent said "Yes." Of those answering "Yes" they asked for better editorials, more letters to the editor, more Valley news, more local sports, wanted Drew Pearson column back, more fashion news, more features, asked that birth announcements and realty transfers always be printed in regular size type, less bias in editorials, more soccer scores and wanted one to five years ago today included in "Looking Backwards" column.

There were many who asked for the return of the Drew Pearson column. The Times ran the column for years but dropped it last year. At the time it was dropped the night-side of the Times received many calls asking that it be reinstated. It never was.

On the question, "Have you placed any classified ads in the Times in the last three years--say since the start of 1950?"

A total of 37 per cent said "Yes" while 63 per cent said "No."

Of those answering "Yes" in the next question, 20 per cent said the results were good, 11 per cent said they were fair while six per cent said poor.

Perhaps one of the most interesting answers in the survey was the one received in the following question which asked, "About how long do you spend reading an issue of the paper?"

Some 17 per cent read the papers less than 30 minutes, 49 per cent read it 31 to 45 minutes, 11 per cent read it 46 to 60 minutes and 23 per cent read it more than an hour.

If this is to be considered a true criterion for readership time of the average reader then one can logically argue that blow by blow coverage of City Council and School Committee meetings are often times superfluous. It would seem that the average reader scans the paper, reading only articles which have primary interest for him.

The survey showed that out of the 100 persons interviewed 94 per cent had the Times delivered to their homes while six per cent bought it at the store.

On the question of "What time is the paper delivered to your home?" Eight per cent get it before 4 p.m., six per cent buy it at the store, 50 per cent get it between 4 and 5 p. m. and 36 per cent get it between 5 and 6 p.m.. Only three per cent of this latter figure get it after 5:45 p.m.

Another question which points out the attitude of the readers towards the Times concerns the one which asked, "Do you think the quality of the writing in the Times is good, fair or poor?"

A total of 86 per cent said it was good, 16 per cent said fair and no one said it was poor. This is a situation which the Times can point to with pride. It points up again how well respected the men of the editorial staff are.

The next group of questions, dealing with politics, gave me the most difficulty. Respondents had to be assured their names would not be used before answering.

On the question, "Do you approve or disapprove of the Times views on city politics?" 79 per cent approved, 10 per cent disapproved and 11 per cent gave no opinion.

On the next question dealing with whether they thought the Times gave fair treatment in its news columns to both Stevenson and Eisenhower in the last presidential campaign, 79 per cent said it gave fair treatment, nine per cent said it didn't and 12 per cent gave no opinion.

The answers varied slightly on the following question, which wanted to know whether the Times gave fair treatment to Reynolds and McCarthy in the recent mayoralty election. A total of 74 per cent said it was fair, 13 per cent said it was unfair while 13 per cent gave no opinion.

The 24th question was: "Do you think the Times favors

any particular group or organizations?" Some 77 per cent said it didn't favor any, six per cent said it favored the Republican Party, 10 per cent said it favored the Citizens League of Pawtucket and seven per cent refused to answer.

Fifty six per cent of those interviewed read the Journal or Bulletin while 44 per cent read neither opposition paper. The majority of those who read the opposition read the Sunday Journal, a day when the Times does not print. Of the amount that read the Journal-Bulletin, 22 per cent have it delivered while 34 per cent purchase it at the store. Of those who buy it at a store or newsstand the majority read it on the way to work or at work.

By and large these papers are discarded before reaching home. The Times is without question the only paper for the majority of readers in Pawtucket.

On the question "Have you ever been mentioned in any Times story?" the breakage was evenly divided. Fifty per cent were mentioned while 50 per cent were not mentioned.

The next question they were asked, "If mentioned, was the story accurately reported." A total of 48 of the 50 per cent written up said the stories were correct in every respect. This points up again the overall competence of the editorial staff in the eyes of Times readers.

Question 30 was: "Including yourself, how many in your family read the Times?" Nine per cent of the families have one reader, 46 per cent two readers, 36 per cent three readers,

15 per cent four readers, seven per cent five readers, two per cent six readers and one per cent eight readers.

The age group breakdown of the readers was as follows: 18 per cent fell in the age category, 18 to 29, 25 per cent in 30 to 39, 29 per cent in 40 to 49, 16 per cent in 50 to 59, eight per cent in 60 to 69 and four per cent in 70 and over.

The education groups of those interviewed were: three per cent had no schooling at all, 14 per cent attended grade school (grades one to eight), 29 per cent had high school education, incomplete, 34 per cent completed high school, nine per cent had college education incomplete, nine per cent completed college and two per cent had more than four years of college.

The socio-economic status of the respondents had to be guessed at-- to ask their yearly income I felt would antagonize the respondent needlessly. I arrived at an approximate yearly income by taking into consideration their occupation. This was the last question I asked them in the survey. The respondents were asked to be specific in their occupations. An answer such as factory worker was not enough. They were asked, "What do you do in a factory?" The breakdown of this socio-economic is as follows: Two per cent earned \$5,000 and over a year, 29 per cent earned \$4,000 to \$5,000, 63 per cent earned \$2,000 to \$4,000 and six per cent earned under \$2,000.

The Business Chamber, The Times and the
Bell Telephone Company

The Business Chamber with the Pawtucket Times has long struggled against any attempt to erase the identity of Pawtucket as a city. This fight has been seen in many forms. The first of which was with the Bell Telephone Company back in 1933 when it tried to include the Pawtucket telephone listings in the same phone directory under the heading of Providence.^{32.}

It was the aim of the Telephone Company to streamline the telephone directory. They intended doing this by eliminating the separate section, including the yellow pages, now in the front of the phone book, under the heading Pawtucket.

The present book not only has this separate section of Pawtucket but these same listings are again repeated under the Providence section. The telephone company has argued that this repetition of listings is a waste of money.

The Business Chamber and the Pawtucket Times disagree. They maintain that to include the Pawtucket listings under the Providence heading not only will lose business for merchants in the city but more important will tend to erase the identity of the city.

Many members of the Business Chamber contend that many

32. From memoranda in Business Chamber files, September, 1941.

businesses and individuals in Providence would like to see nothing better than have Pawtucket become a suburb of Providence.³³

The phone company has tried not only once to change this listing but has tried three times over the years...In 1933, in 1939 and 1941. The combined efforts of the Times and the Chamber have defeated all three attempts.

George A. Cumming reported in 1933 as chairman of the Telephone Controversy Committee and stated that a poll had been taken showing an overwhelming majority in opposition to the proposed telephone plan, namely, more than 23,000 opposed as compared to approximately 250 in favor.³⁴

He stated that the next step would be to apply for a hearing, the same to take place within the next three months. He also stated that a meeting of the Property Owners' Bureau would be called together and a meeting of the Retail Merchants' Division would be held in order to secure the necessary finances.

These things were done and with the cooperation of the Times, which published protest ballots for readers to fill out and send in either to the Times or the Business Chamber.

The ballots read: "Maintain Pawtucket's Identity!
This is a protest!"

33. From memoranda in Business Chamber files, September, 1941.

34. George A. Cumming letter, January 16, 1933.

Against Consolidated Phone Directory. I, the undersigned resident of the Blackstone Valley, wish to record my vigorous opposition to the New England Telephone Company's proposal to consolidate the Pawtucket section of our local telephone directory with a greater Providence Directory."³⁵.

The individual was then asked to sign his name and address to the ballot and send it to the Business Chamber or mail it to the Times office.

This same procedure was duplicated by the Times in 1939 and in 1941 when the phone company again moved to consolidate the directory.

In the latest fight on the issue Congressman Aime J. Forand signed a protest ballot. With it he included a letter dated June 12, 1941.

The letter, addressed to Walter H. Pilcher, who is still executive secretary of the Business Chamber, states:

"Enclosed is my protest ballot in support of the fight the Pawtucket Business Chamber and the City of Pawtucket is waging against the proposed elimination of the Pawtucket section from the telephone directory.

"I am one of those who believes that Pawtucket not only has stood on its own feet for a great many years but has shown to the world the way of progress in many lines and is entitled to retain its identity not only through a separate list in the telephone directory but in every other way.

"Good luck to you and may you again be successful in curbing the attempts of the Telephone Company to erase Pawtucket's identity from its directory."³⁶.

35. From copies of ballots in Business Chamber files, June 4, 1941.
36. Letter from Congressman Aime J. Forand, June 12, 1941, in Business Chamber files.

The position of the Business Chamber in its battle against the telephone company was perhaps best summed up in its arguement in the latest hearings before the States Public Utilities Administration.

In stating its case the Chamber said in part:

"...We in Pawtucket have had cause to appear before the Utilities Administration to combat discriminations and the disturbances of long established and well developed relationships between communities, proposed by the Telephone Company.

"This happened in 1933, again in 1939 and again in 1941. We are here again today Mr. Administrator because fears born and developed beginning in 1933 have flowered to full bloom in the present proposals of the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company.

"In 1933, the Telephone Company proposed a telephone directory that would embrace the following exchanges; Bayview or Warwick Neck, Bristol, Centerdale, Coventry, Greenwich, Greenwood, Pawtucket, Providence, Scituate Valley and Warren. In every sense this was to be a Metropolitan Providence Telephone Directory.

"The city of Pawtucket and various Pawtucket civic organizations protested this proposal by the telephone company and a hearing was requested of and granted by the Utilities Commission.

"Pawtucket's position in this matter principally was (1) that Pawtucket was the center of a trading area separate and distinct from Providence and that the proposed directory would not only tend to draw Pawtucket economically into the Providence area, but would greatly weaken Pawtucket's strength as a separate trading area, because important communities in the Pawtucket trading area are eliminated altogether from the proposed directory. Second, that the proposed directory was the first of two steps to inflict the much higher Providence telephone rates on all subscribers in Pawtucket and the Blackstone Valley." 37.

The Telephone Company argued that the proposed directory was offered in order to give subscribers a convenient alphabetical listing of all telephones in the Providence area and for no other purpose. The company denied any intention of raising Pawtucket's telephone rates.

After many informal hearings the Utilities Commission, through its chairman, Mr. Bliss, rendered its decision, Mr. Bliss admonished the Telephone Company to do its part towards maintaining both Providence and Pawtucket as prosperous and competitive trading areas, the company to prosper as each prospered. He ordered that the proposed new directory when issued contain separate Pawtucket Business Directory and subscriber listings of all exchanges in the Pawtucket trading area.

By this decision, the State of Rhode Island maintained its adherence to the historic principal in telephone rate cases that rates of and between various communities must not only be equitable, but that there must be no discrimination or disturbance of long established relationships between communities.

The Business Chamber representatives argued:

"Pawtucket, against its will and better judgement, should never be forced to become a Providence district.

"We operate our own Gas and Electric Companies and our water supply. We have our own transportation system. 38.

We are an industrial center of important size. We are the Trade Center for a population of 160,000 persons which includes Pawtucket, Central Falls, the Blackstone Valley, Attleboro, North Attleboro, Plainville and Wrentham.

"Our own newspaper, the Pawtucket Times, blankets the entire trade area. Pawtucket, as a city and trading area, is separate and distinct from Providence. We insist that the Telephone Company treat us as such and offer us the same consideration that it apparently is intent on bestowing upon Providence."³⁹

When asked to comment on whether the Telephone Company has had ended all attempts to consolidate the Pawtucket telephone directory, Lorenz Dahl Jr., customer relations superintendent for Rhode Island, said he was in no position to answer the question.

The previous disputes concerning this question took place before Mr. Dahl assumed his present position.

He did however say that the present Pawtucket directory is the only one of its kind in the country. The only one which duplicates listings. "I wish to make it clear," Mr. Dahl said, "that these duplications of listings cost that much more for the telephone directory. This extra payment falls on the telephone users," he added.⁴⁰

39. From Business Chamber files, September, 1941.

40. Interview with Lorenz Dahl Jr., customer relations superintendent for Rhode Island, April 5, 1954.

Conclusions

From the material presented here several reasons for the success of the Times becomes apparent.

One must remember that the Times was begun April 30, 1885. In its early years it was one of the largest papers in New England. Despite the springing up of other papers in the area the Times has enjoyed a monopoly status in Pawtucket.

True the Journal-Bulletin solicits ads and maintains a 10 man editorial office in the city but they have never seriously been able to make any inroads on the Times circulation.

The Times management through the years has been far-sighted enough to realize that in order for an enterprise to prosper it must keep up with the changing times.

Unlike many New England textile mill owners, the Times management has not leaned back. It has kept abreast of new kinds of equipment in the newspaper field and has replaced its old and outdated machinery with modern ones.

One only need walk through the Times plant to appreciate how modern and up to date the building has been kept. For its type business, it has been said to be worth in excess of \$7,000,000, the Times is comparable to any paper its size in the country.

A good example of how the Times operates is the cafeteria which was built to accommodate the employes. Situated on the fifth floor of the plant, it is equipped with electrical ovens, refrigerators and stainless steel fixtures. Bright clean individual tables and tiled floors complete the room.

How does this go to make the Times successful one might ask? In more ways than one. Mr. Black himself said that the success of the Times has been mainly due to the men who have worked as a team over the years to make it the excellent paper it is today.^{41.}

The reason for the success of a newspaper like the Times can not be pinpointed to any one specific thing. Rather, it is a sum total of many things.

The ability of the Times to keep the physical plant outfitted with the most modern equipment and machinery in all departments has enabled the paper to keep pace with improved methods. The net result has been a paper that not only is easy to read but more important, a paper people want to read.

In its relationships with labor in the plant, management in the past has shown an understanding appreciation of its problems.

The members of both mechanical and editorial departments are unionized. The editorial department, represented by the

41. Interview with Stanley T. Black, general manager, March 6, 1954.

American Newspaper Guild, is as able, top to bottom, as any staff its size in the country.

This good relationship maintained by management with its unions has done much to get maximum output from its workers. Both management and workers appreciate that only through their cooperative efforts can they both prosper.

The Times has consistently made money for its investors over the years. It sold a total of 11,707,035 lines of advertising for 1953, an impressive figure in any newsman's book. 42.

Readers of the Times have grown up with the paper and it has become a reading habit. Many of those interviewed said they would be lost without it.

Despite the fact that it has become a habit, if it did not consistently give the readers what they wanted the paper would not have prospered over the years unless it maintained its top quality.

One of the best indications of the attitude of the readers towards the Times can be realized by checking question twenty of the survey. When asked, "Do you think the quality of the writing in the Times is good, fair or poor?" a total of 86 per cent said they thought it was good, 16 per cent said it was fair but no one said it was poor.

Editors constantly strive to put out an error proof paper. No one will question that this goal is seldom if ever realized, whether it's the Pawtucket Times, The Journal-Bulletin or the New York Times. However, the Times keeps "everlastingly at it" and by this rule of thumb has produced an excellent product.

Another reason for the success of the Times is the fact that it gives its reader a good proportion of national, international and state news along with its local coverage.

Mr. Murphy perhaps best summed this up when he said "the paper can will be said to be metropolitan in its national and global news and yet intelligently small townish in its local coverage." ^{43.}

Another reason for the paper's success is the confidence expressed in it by the advertisers. This confidence came as a result of an established policy of showing guaranteed circulation figures long before this was the accepted thing.

The Times is a member of the Audit Bureau Circulation but was an advocate of honest reporting of circulation figures years before this agency came into existence.

Advertisers know too that ads placed in the Times will be read in the home. This was pointed out in the survey when 94 per cent of the respondents said the Times is home delivered.

43. Interview with James. M. Murphy Jr., city editor, March 26, 1954.

The circulation of 39,400 plus the high percentage of home deliveries make it mandatory for Pawtucket businessmen to advertise in the Times. Merchants in the city realize they cannot compete for Providence shoppers and little if any attempt is made along these lines.

They do however depend upon business from readers in the Times circulation area. Many stores spend as high as 85 per cent of all money allocated for advertising in the Times ad pages. This is done, not so much as a sense of loyalty, but because businessmen realize it's the best of all advertising media available to them.

The men of the Times advertising department, through their capable operations, have done much to keep the good will of its customers. The Times also maintains an office in Providence which solicits ads from merchants in and around that city.

Another important factor in the Times success is that residents of this city feel they are an area within themselves, completely independent of Providence.

This autonomous thinking by the residents has been aided by the Business Chamber and the Times. They both realize that as long as Pawtucket considers itself an identity within itself there will never be need to worry that the city will become a suburb of Providence.

This fear that many persons seem to have about Pawtucket becoming an adjunct of Providence appears to be well founded.

Unquestionably Providence merchants would like to absorb the lucrative retail business enjoyed by Pawtucket businessmen. Many officials and merchants in the city argue this is the reason Providence is wholeheartedly in favor of the proposed Freeway.

The Freeway, which is a super highway that will connect the state with Connecticut and Massachusetts in a modern highway system, has long been a source of argument.

The Pawtucket businessmen fear that it will displace hundreds of families which will have no room to settle elsewhere in the city and also will take a lot of inter-city traffic into Providence. Considering that downtown Pawtucket is a mere four miles to Providence much can be said for the validity of such an argument.

The last and perhaps biggest reason for the success of the Times is the fact that Pawtucket will never be satisfied with anything less than its own newspaper.

Regardless of the coverage given by the Journal-Bulletin, radio or TV stations, Pawtucket readers have too long been used to reading a paper which gives them all the news of their city and news of state, national and international scope.

The Journal-Bulletin today devotes one page or eight columns of space to Pawtucket and it takes 10 reporters to fill it.

Pawtucket readers may glance at a headline of this page in the Journal or Bulletin but they wait for the Times to read all about it. Through years of habit and knowledge, the readers have faith that they will get the right story, the best story, the most accurate story from the Times. There may be those who disagree with this. But let those who doubt these facts take part in a survey such as I recently completed and they will come to appreciate the high regard in which the Times is held by its readers. As long as the Times management continues the policy as set down by its founder, the late Mr. Willard, "...to give all sides a fair hearing and publish the political as it does the local news without prejudice..."⁴⁴ then it need never worry.

The Times can look back on 69 years of tremendous achievement. With the support of its readers and advertisers which continue unabated...it can look forward to future horizons with confidence. This paper was one born of faith in man's ability to reason. As long as this holds true, the Times need never fear for its future.

THE END

44. From 50th Anniversary Edition of Times, April 30, 1935.

1. Do you read the Times?
100% - Yes
2. For how many years have you been a reader of the Times?
6% - 1 to 4 yrs.
3% - 5 to 9 yrs.
10% - 10 to 14 yrs.
12% - 15 to 19 yrs.
69% - 20 yrs. and over.
3. What if anything, do you like about the Times?
12% - Women
4% - Sports
6% - Editorials
67% - Local news
11% - Miscellaneous
(Comics, Politics, Obits,
Weather, Ads, "Memory Lane"
Valley News, Central Falls.)
4. What if anything do you dislike about the Times?
16% - Don't like
(Biased
Dix
Too much crime news
Not enough local news
Pegler
Editorials)
86% Like
5. What is your favorite item in the Times?
18% - Sports
14% - Page one
24% - Women's Page
8% - News in general
9% - Editorials
5% - Comics
22% - Miscellaneous
(Buckley's Column, Poulten's
Column, Pegler, Chuckle,
Valley News, etc.)

6. Do you like or dislike the builder's page section?
76% - Like it. 17% - Don't like it. 7% - No opinion.
7. Do you like or dislike the sport's page?
58% - Like it. 18% - Don't like it. 24% - No opinion.
8. Do you like or dislike the editorial page?
59% - Like it. 25% - Don't like it. 16% - No opinion.
9. What is your favorite comic strip in the paper?
25% - Mark Trail 3% - Ella Cinders
22% - All comics 7% - Miscellaneous
20% - SkeeziX 3% - Capp Stubs
9% - Etta Kett 3% - Dennis The Menace
8% - Orphan Annie
10. Do you like or dislike the women's page in the Times.
60% - Like it. 11% - Dislike it. 29% - No opinion.
11. Do you or your friends clip out the "Letter to the Servicemen" and send to servicemen or your friends out of town?
29% - Clip it out. 71% - Don't.
12. How often do you read the letters to the editor on the editorial page?
54% - Read them regularly. 26% - Hardly ever read them.
12% - Read them occasionally. 8% - Never read them.
13. Have you ever written a letter to the editor?
4% - Do. 96% - Don't. (This was a test question to test the credibility of survey)

14. Are there any particular changes you'd like to see made in the Times?

- 86% - Wanted no changes. 14% - Wanted changes.
- a. Better Editorials
 - b. More letters to the Editor
 - c. Valley news
 - d. Local sports
 - e. Want Pearson back
 - f. soccer scores
 - g. More fashion news
 - h. More features
 - i. Want "1 to 5 yrs. ago today"
 - j. Patterns on women's page
 - k. Want births and deaths in regular type
 - l. Less bias in editorials

15. Have you placed any classified ads in the Times in the last three years --say, since the start of 1950?

37% - Yes. 63% - No.

16. How would you rate the results you received when the ad was placed?

20% - Good. 11% - Fair. 6% - Poor.

(63% - Didn't place ads so no response.)

17. About how long do you spend reading an issue of the paper?

17% - Read the paper in less than 30 minutes.

49% - Read the paper in 31 to 45 minutes.

11% - Read the paper in 46 to 60 minutes.

23% - Read the paper more than 1 hour.

18. Is the Times delivered to your home?

94% - Delivered. 6% - Buy it at store.

19. If so, what time is it delivered?

8% - Get it before 4:00 p.m.

50% - Get it between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m.

6% - Buy it at the store.

36% - Get it after 5:00 p.m.

(only 3 get it after 5:45 p.m.)

- 20.. Do you think the quality of the writing in the Times is good, fair or poor?
86% - Good. 16% - Fair. (No one thought it poor.)
21. Do you approve or disapprove of the Times' view on city politics?
79% - Approved. 10% - Disapproved. 11% - No opinion.
22. During the 1952 presidential campaign, do you think the Times gave fair treatment in its news columns to Stevenson and Eisenhower?
79% - Were fair. 9% - Didn't think so. 12% - No opinion.
23. Do you think it gave fair treatment to Reynolds and McCarthy in the city's recent election in its news columns?
74% - Fair. 13% - Unfair. 13% - No opinion.
24. Do you think the Times favors any particular group or organization?
77% - Didn't think so. 17% - Say yes. 6% - No opinion.
25. If "yes", what group?
77% - Said no. 6% - Say Republicans. 10% - Say C.L.P.
7% - Refused to say.
26. Do you or any member of your family read the Journal or Bulletin?
56% - Do. 44% - Don't.
27. If you do, is it bought at the news stand or delivered to your home?
22% - Delivered. 34% - Buy at Store. 44% - None.
(Majority of readers buy Sunday Journal only)
28. Have you ever been mentioned in any Times story?
50% - Yes. 50% - No.
29. If so, was it accurately reported.
48% - Accurate. 2% - Not accurate. 50% - Not mentioned.

30. Including yourself, how many in your family read the Times?
- 9% of families have one reader.
 - 46% of families have two readers.
 - 30% of families have three readers.
 - 15% of families have four readers.
 - 7% of families have five readers.
 - 2% of families have six readers.
 - 1% of families have eight readers.
31. Sex:
- 49% Interviewed were women.
 - 51% Interviewed were men.
32. In which of the following age groups do you fall?
- 18% - Fall 18 to 29 years of age.
 - 25% - Fall 30 to 39 years of age.
 - 29% - Fall 40 to 49 years of age.
 - 16% - Fall 50 to 59 years of age.
 - 8% - Fall 60 to 69 years of age.
 - 4% - Fall 70 and over.
33. In which education group do you fall?
- 3% - No school.
 - 14% - Grade(1 to 8) school.
 - 29% - High School, incomplete.
 - 34% - High school, complete.
 - 9% - College, incomplete.
 - 9% - College, complete.
 - 2% - More than four years of college.

34. Socio-economic status.

- 2% - A. \$5,000 and over.
 - 29% - B. \$4,000 to \$5,000.
 - 63% - C. \$2,000 to \$4,000.
 - 6% - D. Under \$2,000.
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