A History of the Sentinel Star

1977

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University of Central Florida
A HISTORY OF THE SENTINEL STAR

BY

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B.A. Florida Technological University, 1975

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts: Communication in the Graduate Studies Program of the College of Social Sciences of Florida Technological University

Orlando, Florida
1977
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this historical study is to examine and describe the birth and growth of the Sentinel Star from early Orlando newspapers of 1875 through the modern newspaper of 1977.

It is not possible to fully understand the newspaper as it exists today without an awareness of the events which have shaped its development. This study, dealing with events and individuals, is designed to make available material needed for that evaluation.

Four distinct phases of development shaped the Sentinel Star, beginning with the first Orlando newspapers and progressing through ownership by Martin Andersen, management by William Conomos, and extensive changes under James Squires.

Each of these phases will be dealt with individually.
CHAPTER I

EARLY ORLANDO NEWSPAPERS

Although publication of the first Florida newspaper began July 14, 1821, with the start of the Florida Gazette at St. Augustine, only scattered publications were attempted at Orlando prior to 1875.

The News, one of the earliest Orlando efforts, was among the first publications, but little is known about it. No known copies of this newspaper exist today.²

Regular publication of a newspaper in Orlando began with Volume 1, No. 1 of the Orange County Reporter in June of 1875.³ This paper was organized when the then 200 citizens of the small city decided they needed and could support such a publication.⁴

William M. and Rufus A. Russell, along with Charles Munger, made up the majority of the Reporter staff, filling such diversified jobs as editor, pressman, compositor and newsboy. Their publication, by modern standards, was very strange in appearance, measuring just nine by 12 inches folded. It contained
a great many advertisements and very little news. Since attorneys of the day had no laws preventing them from advertising their services, they took advantage of this by filling the paper with bids for customers. The front page of the *Reporter*’s first issue contained an advertisement for "E.K. Foster, Attorney at Law," and several other barristers. News content, such as it was, included a dramatic fictional story entitled "The Stain of Parentage," and several poems, among them one extolling the virtues of a "Country Life." There were no engravings or other artwork in this first issue.

**Reporter Presses**

Barnhardt and Spindler in Chicago and American Type Foundries in Atlanta and Philadelphia provided equipment for the *Reporter*. The heavy machinery was brought by boat to Mellinville, now known as Sanford, and then transported to Orlando by ox cart.

The original, hand-powered Washington press was accompanied by four common fonts of type in bold face and italic styles—Long Primer, Gothic, Cheltenham Wide Old Style and Engraver’s Roman.

Since all the production was done by hand, it took nearly one hour to produce the 200 papers then in
circulation. The press had two wooden rollers with an inking roller between them. Ink was daubed on the middle roller from a keg, with this roller then passed twice over the type before an impression was made.

Making this roller was a problem in itself. Formed of glue and molasses, it was handmade when replacement became necessary. The sticky mixture was put into a tin can and melted on a stove. Poured into a greased cast iron mold, the mixture formed a roller—which had to be made all over again if a flaw appeared when the mold was opened.9

Since there were relatively few subscribers when the Reporter was established, the paper took an unusual approach to production, taking orders a week ahead and printing according to the demand.10

Harrington and Gore

Profit was slow in coming for the Russells, and they sold the paper to Munger in 1878. Munger retired a year later, in turn selling his interest in the venture to S.B. Harrington.11 Harrington had previously published a weekly sheet at Clay Springs, now known as Wekiva Springs.12

Harrington, as a "pioneer promoter of the new county,"13 sold the paper to Mahlon Gore, an experienced
newspaperman, in 1880. 14

Gore, taking the advice of his doctor to come to Florida for his health following a nervous breakdown, found just getting to Orlando was a problem. After leaving Sioux City, Iowa, he finally arrived at Sanford by boat, and was then forced to follow, on foot, an Indian trail to Orlando. According to his nephew, E.H. Gore, who also worked for the paper some years later, Mahlon walked for two days. At that point, he came upon a cowboy and asked for directions to Orlando. "You damn fool," the cowboy is reported to have said, "you're in Orlando now." 15

Gore arrived to find a city which boasted three stores, a saloon and a livery stable. Shortly after buying the Reporter, he moved it from its old site at the southeast corner of Central Avenue and Main Street to a two-story building later to become the location of the Angebilt Hotel. 16

Fire Destroys The Reporter

Temporary destruction of the Reporter came sometime between 4 and 5 a.m. on January 12, 1884, as fire swept Orlando, consuming the building occupied by the Reporter and several other businesses. 17

Everything was lost in the flames except the
press, housed in another building, and, as Gore put it, "a half-worn out lead pencil." Publication of the paper continued in the form of a handbill size "fire issue," printed on a job press. The Reporter returned to its full nine-column, 22 by 27 inch size some 32 days later. Help in getting the paper back on its feet came from several sources, including D.J. Harris, editor of the Sanford Journal.  

Rebuilding funds were contributed by area citizens, who also erected a new building on the same site. Gore went to New York for new equipment, and when it was installed the Reporter again began publishing four pages once a week.  

One of the biggest problems faced by the Reporter in rebuilding was reconstruction of the subscription list, vitally important to the newspaper's finances. For several issues following the fire, Gore carried a notice urging subscribers to contact the paper with their names and addresses. Gore noted:

It is not possible to remember a quarter of the names and addresses. The only course left is to wait for letters of inquiry from friends who fail to receive their papers. Proper credits will be given and allowances made for lost time that none may have just cause for dissatisfaction. 

Reporter Content

As in its first editions, advertising continued
to dominate the front page of the Reporter through the middle and late 1880s. A typical edition contained six columns of advertising and three columns of stories on the front page, with not one single item of local news. Such local news as was available was reserved for the inside pages. 21

A typical front page story—journalism with a flair for the dramatic—was carried February 28, 1884, datelined Chicago. It related the capture of a villain named Texas Dan Wallace under the headline "Caught in the Crowd." Reporting style was less news than feature. According to a witness quoted in the story:

I have seen him sit on his horse and kill blackbirds on the wing with his revolver. He can pick his hat off the ground while riding his horse on a dead run and is a great hand with a lasso. 22

Advertising in 1884 consisted mostly of land sales schemes, many from nearby towns seeking to lure residents away from Orlando. The paper, at this time, sold for $2 a year.

Such news as the paper did carry was mostly gossip, including some about other newspapers:

The Alachua Advocate has a new six-column hand press for sale. A cylinder press will take the place of the old one. 23

It was never made clear whether the press offered was really old—or new.
Gore also reported enlargement of the Bartow Informant to an eight-column sheet.

Not only did the Reporter deal with happenings on other papers, but it quoted liberally from them. A report from the Putnam County Journal warned citizens that:

...Frank James, the thief, highwayman and murderer, is on his way to Florida. If he gets fooling around Palatka our vigilants will likely give him a necktie festival.  

Exploits of citizens and the law also came in for attention. The paper reported:

A citizen of Marianna, while trying to take the town recently during a drunken spree resisted the marshal, who was compelled to fill him with bird shot before he could make the arrest. The citizen will recover.

None of the 1884 papers used headlines as known today. Only the advertising regularly employed large type. This held true for the regular newspaper, as well as tabloid inserts published by Gore in several issues. In five column format, 18 by 22 inches, these insert sheets carried additional state news and advertising. They were undated but bore the Reporter masthead.

So-called "gimmick" ads--upside down, etc.--found in modern newspapers had their counterpart in the Reporter. In one instance an enterprising businessman
who may have been having trouble with his bills purchased an entire page and, in small type in the center, ran the following:

Mr. W. G. White presents his compliments and requests all who are indebted to him to call at his place of business and settle their accounts.26

There is no indication of whether his plea was successful.

Gore was not above bragging about his paper. In an editorial column published in April, 1884, Gore commented:

The Reporter claims to have the best arranged and equipped office of any country paper in Florida. If any of the guild feel like trying titles with it for this honor the Reporter would like to see what they do it on.27

Power For The Press

Power for the press was one of the Reporter's biggest problems. Manpower was the answer, as the press was equipped with a large flywheel and crank handle, which required hours of turning by the young apprentice to publish each edition. A single sheet was turned out by each revolution of the cylinder. Several Negroes were employed to turn the crank when the apprentice was busy with other chores.28

Progress Of The City

Progress of the paper was linked with progress
of the city. By 1888, Orlando had established a Board of Trade which was engaged in trying to develop the city in Florida's high pine lands. Heavily emphasized was the fact that Orlando had never had a case of yellow fever, a scourge in other parts of the country. In 1888, the population was up to 6,000, with three railroads, two national banks, a savings and loan, foundry and ice factory. 

Under Gore's able management, the paper took a large role in the development of Orlando and Orange County, serving both as a bearer of information to local citizens and as an immigration agency for those outside the city. Gore himself took an active part in politics. As a member of the town council he introduced an ordinance which resulted in the planting of Orlando's oak shade trees. He also served three terms as mayor.

In 1890, failing health and financial problems induced Gore to seek outside help. A holding company was established, with Andrew Johnson as attorney and M. C. Redell and W. R. O'Neal as participants. Gore continued to operate the paper as editor. Gore interested Captain S. R. Hudson of Kansas City, Mo., in the paper, and Hudson purchased it in 1890.

Joining Hudson in the purchase was Joseph Rice
of Richmond, Virginia. The publication continued as a weekly, with equipment purchased after the fire of 1884 still in use. However, the apprentice finally got some rest with the addition of a steam engine to turn the press.32

Typographical gremlins were as much of a problem to Hudson's paper as they are to more modern publications. An example of the problem came in a letter to the editor written in July, 1890:

Editor Reporter: Your intelligent compositor makes me tired. In printing my letter last week concerning the walk along the east side of Dr. Davis' grove, I asked you to call attention of the City Fathers to the matter and 'receive the thanks' not "relieve the shanks" of a tax payer's wife. Evidently the printer has walked through that stretch of sand and knows how it is himself. (signed) Tax Payer's Wife.33

The Orlando Daily Record

The Reporter wasn't the only publication serving Orlando during the late 1880s and early 1900s.

Another of some importance was the Orlando Daily Record, started in 1887 by Dolph Edwards and R. S. Walker.34

An afternoon daily, the Record retailed for fifty cents a month and appeared at 4 p.m. It advertised the latest telegraph news and used a seven-column format.
Unlike some of the earlier papers, the Record's front page did contain some timely, up-to-date news. For example, the front page of the January 20, 1888 editions carried a number of stories tagged "By Telegraph To The Record" including a Lima, Ohio, dateline headlined "Five Lives Lost In A Fire," and a Jacksonville, Florida, story headlined "Still Freezing" detailing the plight of Jacksonville city tax collectors who were without fuel to heat their office. Most of the telegraphic news was in single paragraph stories inserted into the upper left hand corner of the front page. This particular issue had a typographical problem, with the page datelines throughout referring to the city as "Ollando."35

Edwards and Walker sold the Record to James Irving Crabbe, an Englishman, on February 20, 1891. Crabbe, who had a flair for promotion, billed the paper as "The Phenomenal Daily" in the "Phenomenal City" and made a point of nothing throughout that it was the only daily paper published at that time in South Florida. He frequently referred to the rival Reporter as "The Ripsnorter."36

Advertising In The Record

The Record advertised its own advertising,
billing itself as offering "effective advertising at cheapest rates, one cent a word for each insertion." Ads had to be paid for in advance, and none was taken for less than 15 cents.37

Some of the Record's advertising was, by modern standards, misleading.

Take the ads for medical products, for example:

Syphilis, scrofulus, blood poison and rheumatism are cured by P.P.P. (Prickley Ash, Poke Root and Potassium.) If you feel weak or badly take P.P.P. and you will regain your flesh and strength.

Or, on the subject of pills:

It is surprising that people will use a common, ordinary pill when they can secure a valuable English one for the same money. Dr. Ackers English Pills are a POSITIVE cure for sick headache and all liver troubles. They are small, sweet, easily taken and do not gripe...J. H. Smith, druggist.38

In addition to medical potions, the Record also carried advertising for hotels, including some as far away as Sunapee, New Hampshire, and listings of hotel arrivals by name. Advertising and news were indiscriminately run together in the same columns, separated only by a hairline rule.39

News in the Record was frequently accompanied by engravings. One such news item announced the construction of the Orange County Courthouse in Orlando, described as a "Monument to the Enterprise of the People." This building cost $50,000, with construction
beginning in the summer of 1891. Described as "modern American" in style--leaning to Romanesque, the courthouse was outlined in detail by the paper, including drawings. The construction of the building occupied the Orange County press for several days following the announcement.

How had Orlando developed during this period?

Former Reporter owner Mahlon Gore summed it up this way:

Orlando of 1891 is a busy and bustling young city with three lines of railroad, telegraphs, street trolleys, gas lights, a splendid system of water works, fine hotels, imposing brick edifices, splendidly paved sidewalks and streets, flourishing manufacturing enterprises...and suburban residences which would do credit to a city of 50,000 population.

The South Florida Sentinel

Newspapers were booming in Orlando in 1885, prompting Latimer Clark Vaughn to establish the South Florida Sentinel. Vaughn had previously published papers in Henderson, North Carolina and Marianna, Florida.

Vaughn is credited with installation of the first Campbell press in Orlando, a complicated and noisy monster that turned out a large newspaper.

Vaughn sold the paper to A.T. LaSalle and Frank Stoneman in 1894, and publication was stopped in
Josiah Ferris resumed publication of the South Florida Sentinel in April 1907, establishing the Orlando Morning Sentinel in 1913. Ferris had earlier been an editor of the Orlando Daily Reporter, started by Hudson in 1905.44

Like its counterpart, the Reporter, the South Florida Sentinel was nearly put out of business by fire before it had a chance to grow.

The paper was located near a large livery stable, near the old courthouse in what is now downtown Orlando. One night, the stable burned to the ground. A woman reportedly pulled the carpet from her floor and placed it on the roof of the Sentinel building, wetting it down with buckets to keep the building from burning. It didn't burn, escaping the fate which struck the Reporter in 1884.45

In addition to putting out the paper, job printing was also a staple of the company. Local news in the early years was mostly nonexistent on the front page, which was instead filled with articles and feature material cribbed from other papers. Datelines on one issue include credit to the St. Louis Post Dispatch and Globe Democrat, Pittsburgh Dispatch, and Sioux City Times.46

As owner, Ferris was very progressive, install-
ing telegraph service in 1912 and joining the International News Service in 1913. He also installed in 1912 the first perfecting press in Orange County, a Miehle, flat-bed unit capable of printing four pages at one time in a six-column format. Columns were 13.5 picas wide, almost identical to the six column, 13 pica format of the modern Sentinel Star. 47

The Orlando Star

Another newspaper had appeared on the Orlando scene in 1896. This was the Orlando Star, started by a stock company which included T.P. Warlow, W. H. Jewell and Frank Barnes as majority stockholders. 48

Several other owners came and went on the Star, with the paper eventually winding up in the sole ownership of Walter D. Yowell, who converted the tri-weekly into the Orlando Daily Star. 49

Circulation of newspapers increased in the early 1900s. E.H. Gore, looking over some relics of the past in 1945, discovered two circulation cards from the Star. According to Gore:

One dated 1903 showed that year we delivered nearly 300 newspapers each day in Orlando. Circulation cards of 1905 showed an increase of over 300 papers per day. The city at that time consisted of about 2,500 inhabitants. 50

In 1910, Ferris acquired Hudson's share of the
Reporter, and also bought an interest in the Orlando Daily Star. 51

Printing techniques were still quite crude in the 1900s, despite some attempts to modernize equipment. Archie R. Field, who spent seven years with the Star from 1905 to 1912, spent the majority of his time cutting and folding the papers by hand after they were printed. 52

Ferris ranks as the most successful of early Orange County newspapermen. His Morning Sentinel, started in 1913 and published every day but Monday, is the direct predecessor of the present Sentinel Star.

Sales And Mergers

Ferris sold the Morning Sentinel to Walter Essington and William Glenn of Indiana in 1914. 53

Publication of the Reporter, renamed the Reporter Star, continued throughout this period, with R. Bazille Brossier and his brother J. Clement Brossier purchasing the publication in November, 1914, in partnership with Joseph H. Reese. Reese stepped out of the picture in 1916, leaving the Brossier brothers in full control of what was then known as the Reporter Star Publishing Company. 54

Meanwhile, under Glenn and Essington, the
South Florida Sentinel continued to publish morning and weekly editions.

Modernization of the Reporter Star was under way in the early 1920s with the Brossiers adding a new press to replace the ancient Babcock, installing the first Associated Press wires, and using a battery of 10 Linotypes. Stereotype equipment was also brought into use at this time.55

Under the Brossiers, the paper added a Sunday edition in 1925. They finally ended ownership in 1931, selling the Reporter Star to General Newspapers, Inc., of which Charles A. Marsh was president. Marsh purchased the Orlando Morning Sentinel in that same year, creating the combination which evolved into the Sentinel Star of today. Marsh's organization was known as Orlando Daily Newspapers, Inc.56

Other Newspapers

A few smaller, less significant papers were also published in the early history of the Orlando area and in the communities surrounding the city.

Included are Winter Park's Lochmede, which published its first edition July 1, 1887, and continued through June 28, 1889. The editor was not identified in the paper, but J.B. Heick Jr. of Longwood is named
as the printer. Lochmede appeared in magazine format, with three columns. Main attention in content was paid to Winter Park and Rollins College. Charles J. Ladd was listed as being in charge of the Winter Park office. 57

Fragmentary copies of the Orlando Citizen are available. The paper, a small five-column tabloid, was business-oriented, with one edition announcing installation of air conditioning in the Beacham Theater and listing a program of wrestling matches. It appeared in the mid-1930s.

In that same time period the Orlando Shopping News guaranteed advertisers 10,000 circulation. This weekly publication was edited by Frank L. Ferguson. 59

Other publications included the Orange County Chief in 1933. This was a tabloid in seven columns, with a circulation advertised as 12,000. Publishers were J.C. Robinson and Frank Hastings. The Chief also published an edition for Apopka. 60

Papers outside the Orlando area included the Saint Cloud Tribune Weekly, published by the Seminole Land and Investment Company in 1910-1911 and devoted to political interests and land sales advertising. Earlier, the Apopka Citizen was publishing in 1886 with George Bryson the managing editor, in association with
E.B. Barker. This was a Tuesday night weekly, published at Apopka City. In form, it was a four-column tabloid, carrying a large number of Orlando advertisements and many local news stories. 61
Footnotes


8. Ibid.


13. Ibid., p. 45.


Gore, From Florida Sand, p. 9.


Orange County Reporter, 13 January 1884, p. 1.


Orange County Reporter, 28 February 1884, p. 1.

Ibid.  

Ibid.  

Ibid.  

Orange County Reporter, 4 August 1884, p. 3.

Orange County Reporter, 24 April 1884, p. 3.


0'Neal, Memoirs, p. 14.


0'Neal, Memoirs, p. 14.


Orange County Reporter, 24 July 1890, p. 2.


36 Fries, Orlando Long Ago, p. 52.

37 Orlando Daily Record, 4 March 1891, p. 2.

38 Orlando Daily Record, 5 March 1891, p. 1.

39 Ibid. 40 Ibid.


42 Gore, From Florida Sand, P. 20.


44 Gore, From Florida Sand, p. 22.

45 O'Neal, Memoirs, p. 44.

46 South Florida Sentinel, 1 January 1892, p. 1.

47 Blackman, History Of Orange County, p. 62.

48 Gore, From Florida Sand, p. 21.


57 Blackman, History of Orange County, p. 67.

58 Orlando Citizen, 12 July 1935, p. 2.


60 Orange County Chief, 9 November 1933, p. 4.

61 Apopka Citizen, 16 March 1886, p. 2.
CHAPTER II

THE ANDERSEN YEARS

Management problems plagued the Morning Sentinel and Reporter Star combination, prompting Charles Marsh to call for the services of Martin Andersen as a troubleshooter.¹

Andersen began his newspaper career in his hometown of Greenwood, Mississippi, as a printer's devil on the Greenwood Commonwealth. Although he never graduated, he also printed, edited and financed the first high school paper in that state.²

Attracted to printing and newspaper work, Andersen decided to become a bookkeeper, enrolling at Bowling Green Business University in Bowling Green, Kentucky. All he learned was how to type.³ As Andersen put it:

I was kicked out of school through no fault of my own. My roommate brought in a number of bottles of whiskey, and arrived at the railroad station in Bowling Green with the bottles in his suitcase. He dropped the suitcase and the booze rolled out at the feet of the president of the university. I never could convince him I didn't have anything to do with it.⁴
Looking for a job, Andersen placed several advertisements in newspapers, but received only one reply, from Charles S. Emerson, publisher of the Fort Pierce, Florida, News. He started there as an apprentice.\(^5\)

Before his arrival in Orlando, Andersen served as managing editor of an Austin, Texas paper owned by Marsh. Despite the stock market crash, Marsh had enough cash left to make a down payment of $37,500 for the Orlando Morning Sentinel and Reporter Star, a transaction which eventually cost him $400,000.\(^6\)

Marsh had sent Andersen on a European trip, and when the depression hit he was left stranded in Cannes, France. Marsh came up with the cash to get Andersen back to the United States and sent him to Orlando.

Andersen Arrives In Orlando

Taking the Atlantic Coast Line sleeper from New York, Andersen arrived in Orlando in March of 1931, staying at the Orange Court Hotel.\(^7\)

Two days before Andersen's arrival, the Brossier brothers decided they had made a bad deal. On a Sunday night, they slipped into the Morning Sentinel building on South Orange Avenue where the typesetting equipment was kept, removed their Linotypes and
resumed publishing the Reporter Star. 8

The argument stemmed from $3,000 the Brossiers claimed they were owed in the sale deal. According to Andersen:

Marsh got here the day after I did. He had heard about the trouble with the papers, and I told him the Brossiers were mad about $3,000. Marsh asked why I didn't pay it, but I told him I had no authority. He told William Allen to get ahold of the Brossiers. We went to their house that night and settled the deal. 9

As part of the deal the Brossiers wanted jobs. Marsh agreed, and they were put on the payroll at $50 a week, a big salary in 1931. 10

At the time the merger was completed and the papers reunited, there were five daily papers serving the small city. In addition to the Reporter Star, the Morning Sentinel had begun printing an evening paper, Tyn Cobb started the Orlando Times, and Josiah Ferris Jr. began the Orlando News. Cobb and Ferris quit publishing and left only the Morning Sentinel and Evening Reporter Star in business. 11

Too Many Managers

After solving the merger problem, Andersen stayed in Orlando and went to work in the editorial department, which, as he put it, "was in disarray." 12

The papers had four managers in addition to
Andersen: R.B. Brossier; Mose Stein, from Brownsville, Texas; William Allen from Laredo, Texas, and Bill Murray, who was doing most of the work. Trying to save money, Murray cancelled most of the feature columns in the papers, including the popular syndicated writings of Will Rogers, which had been appearing on the front page of the *Morning Sentinel*. Andersen estimated the savings at about $27 a week, and sensing that the public was dissatisfied, immediately restored the columns to the papers.\(^{13}\)

One by one the managers left, until only Andersen remained, having been appointed city editor by Marsh.

According to Andersen:

We had made $13,000 one month and had the subscribers happy. Marsh came to visit, and we went for a walk. I told him I wanted part of the action to stay. I had him over a barrel, as there was no one else. I told him I wanted 10 per cent of the paper, and he said he would give it to me if I stayed three years.\(^{14}\)

**Sentinel Star Scrip**

Despite the good month of profits, the papers often fell short of making the payroll during the later years of the depression. At one point, money was so scarce Andersen printed "Sentinel Star Scrip" and used it to pay part of the employees' salary. Newspaper
workers got their pay in 20 per cent cash, 80 per cent scrip.

The scrip was accepted by local merchants, who used it to pay for advertising. It was also circulated around town and was widely accepted.

The pay measure worked, and the Internal Revenue Service didn't find out about it until some years later when the scrip had all gone out of circulation. 15

When Andersen gained full managing control of the papers, circulation was about 10,000 and he was earning $40 a week plus expenses. Financially, the papers were far from profitable.

As Andersen relates:

The property seemed to owe everybody, locally and around the country, but one by one we managed to straighten out the debts and dodge the sheriff's padlock. Everybody was in trouble together and nobody wanted anybody else's business. 16

At this time, the papers were located in the Fraternal Lodge Building off South Orange Avenue in a 62 by 100 foot space. 17

Andersen Buys The Newspapers

Adding to his assets, Andersen discovered that the Macon, Georgia, Telegraph was for sale. He told Marsh, and the Orlando papers put up money to make the
deal. For his trouble, Andersen got one-third of the Macon stock.\textsuperscript{18}

In 1936 Andersen developed an interest in buying the Orlando newspapers, and negotiated a deal with Marsh to purchase them from their owner, General Newspapers.\textsuperscript{19}

Andersen gave his one-third interest in the Macon paper to Marsh in the deal, along with a million dollars worth of long-term notes. In this arrangement, Andersen received title to the newspapers, and Marsh was to receive any profit the papers made. The boom triggered by World War II worked to Andersen's advantage, and he paid for the papers by 1950.\textsuperscript{20}

\textbf{Bureaus Build Circulation}

Circulation of the newspapers continued to build throughout this period and reached 35,000 in 1946.\textsuperscript{21}

One big factor in boosting circulation of the morning and evening papers was the bureau system, started in 1935 when Andersen dispatched Ormund Powers to Leesburg. Andersen believed the regional news would also help his advertisers:

We had regional correspondents, but no offices at the start. I was pretty close to the advertisers, and often made trade trips to develop business for advertising. We were constantly trying to get
circulation in outlying areas. We would start the news on the front page and jump it inside, then take it out for the city edition.22

Getting stories back to the city wasn't always an easy task for bureau reporters. Powers, when he first began regional reporting, sent his stories to Orlando with the afternoon paper carrier, who picked them up in Tavares. Later, they were sent in by bus.23

According to Powers:

We didn't have an office or circulation in Lake County. We may have had 400 subscribers. Main object of the bureau was to get shoppers to come to Orlando. Those efforts were successful.24

The biggest problem faced by Orlando's growing papers was resistance in the surrounding counties as a result of long-time domination of the area by the Tampa Tribune and Florida Times-Union.

According to Powers:

Nearly everyone had subscriptions to the Tampa or Jacksonville papers. We had problems making friends and had to work like the devil. We had some good breaks because of stories that developed in that area. Coverage of big events plus attention to little ones helped us get established. We did things the other papers were not doing.25

One of the cases which gave the Sentinel and Star a county boost was a Groveland rape involving five blacks in 1949. The five were accused of raping a 19-year-old white girl. The case dragged on for several years, including two trials, one in Leesburg and the
other at Ocala. One of the accused was shot by a posse and another was killed by Lake County Sheriff Willis McCall, who said the subject was trying to escape. McCall was later taken before a grand jury and attempts were made to remove him from office.26

Powers ran the Lake County bureau for 22 years before moving to the main office in Orlando as managing editor, editorial page editor and political editor.

Bureau coverage under Andersen’s guidance continued throughout his span of control at the papers, despite, as he put it, “the tremendous expense involved.”27

In January, 1955, the Orlando Sentinel and the Evening Star expanded their coverage by creating a full time news bureau in Tallahassee, initially staffed by Jim Hardee, a city hall reporter for the newspapers.28

That same year, in October, the papers began a daily “pink” supplement for 8,696 readers in Lake, Marion, Citrus and Sumter counties, getting its name from the pink paper on which it was printed. Andersen, in an editorial announcing publication of the news supplement, noted:

Our aim is not to get rich selling ads. However, advertising from the business houses of these counties, including Ocala, will be carried.29
Andersen suggested in his editorial that advertisers continue to use their own local papers—and the Sentinel and Star as well. More regional editions were announced in 1957, with sections five days a week for Brevard, Seminole-Volusia, Lake, Marion, Sumter and Citrus counties.

Brevard's bureau, which began in 1954, also served Cocoa and Titusville with a staff of 14. Prior to the expansion, two pages of Brevard news had been included daily as part of the regular paper.

By 1957 there were 23 reporters and editors working out of the Seminole-Volusia bureau, which began the previous year. Lake County, which got its first regional edition in 1949, had 19 persons on the staff.

William R. Conomos, then executive editor, told the Advertising Club of Orlando in 1963 that regional editions:

...help to pull the whole Central Florida area together. We are becoming one economic entity in this Central Florida region and I think the Sentinel and its pinks have contributed greatly to that unity.

The Osceola Sun

Taking the concept of service to county areas a step further, the Sentinel and Star announced in
August, 1969, the creation of a new daily newspaper to serve Osceola County.

Based in Kissimmee, the paper was named the Osceola Sun, with publication starting November 3. A fully offset publication featuring color, the Sun is published Monday through Friday from offices at 700 W. Vine St. in Kissimmee, site of a new $300,000 plant. 

Martin Greco was named publisher of the new paper, with Ken Guthrie, editor, supervising a staff of 20.

Problems With Unions

There are no unions at the modern-day Sentinel Star.

A printers' union existed in 1948, but lost a confrontation with Andersen.

At the time, Florida newspapers were introducing perforated paper tape as a faster way of setting type. The printers objected, fearful the new system would put them out of work.

Andersen was told by the union he had to throw the paper tape system out. Andersen replied that the papers could get more type set using the tape, and it had to stay. According to Andersen:

Forty-four printers left us at 5 p.m. one
afternoon. We had rumblings of the trouble and had scoured up five printers and with these and the help of our white-collar workers in the advertising and editorial departments we published twice daily as we have continued to do without unions.  

Andersen said he had gone to the printers, all of whom he knew personally, and asked them not to strike. He told them there would be no firings because of the tape, but that he needed it to put in more regional material to compete with the *Times-Union* and *Miami Herald*. The printers replied that they had no choice, that the union had told them to strike.

The night of the strike Andersen himself put on an apron and helped make up pages. Other executives did the same. Type was set in job shops all over the Orlando area and as far away as Clermont. This situation lasted for a week or 10 days, and by that time non-union printers and compositors had been recruited.

The strike lingered for several years and was never really settled, but simply allowed to die. There were a few incidents of violence, including at least one fight between striking workers and non-strikers. There were also some problems with vandalism by the strikers, including sugar in the gas tanks of cars parked at the building.

In the early 1960s a number of pressmen unionized. However, Andersen's foremen continued to run
the pressroom and the union folded after about one year. That was the end of unionization at the newspapers.  

Sentinel Star Express

In the late 1940s, the Sentinel began branching out into other areas than newspapers. It founded the Sentinel Star Express Company July 12, 1947.  

Initially started as a means of delivering newspapers and later used as a parcel system, "Jack Rabbit," as it was nicknamed, began operations with a fleet of "seven fairly new panel trucks."  

According to Andersen:

The original concept of Jack Rabbit Express was to use it as an adjunct to advertising. The purpose of the express line was to deliver 'a pair of red shoes, advertised in the Morning Sentinel, to a woman reader in Lake County for a party that night.'

As it turned out, I don't know whether Jack Rabbit's business ever amounted to much from people buying red shoes, but I do know that it created quite a startling revenue in a few years by delivering parts to broken down tractors, pumps, automobiles, and then it took on wholesale beauty lines such as Avon and many other specialties.

Sentinel Star Express expanded its fleet from the initial seven trucks to 30 in 1957, moving in that year to its current site at 64 E. Concord St., opposite the main Sentinel Star building.

In April, 1966, the Florida Public Service
Commission approved an expansion of the express service, with additional routes to Tampa, Gainesville, Vero Beach and Bartow. This, combined with existing service to Brevard County and Daytona Beach, gave Jack Rabbit coast-to-coast parcel delivery capabilities.\(^47\)

**Expansion Of Facilities**

Growing pains were beginning to affect the Sentinel and Evening Star, as the newspapers continued to occupy 7,000 square feet in the Fraternal Building on South Orange Avenue, plus a 25 by 22 foot room in the Ohse Building at Boone Street and Slouch Alley.\(^48\)

The newspapers published from a number of locations, acquiring space in the McElroy Building and the first floor of the Ohse Building in 1940. This boosted the paper's floor space to 11,000 square feet.\(^49\)

Additional expansion came in 1949, as editorial offices moved into quarters just south of the Fraternal Building. The move allowed other areas to expand, including the advertising department, circulation and sports.\(^50\)

First construction by the paper came in 1946, when a warehouse was erected by Andersen on property belonging to his daughters, Marcia and Doris. This
construction provided 10,000 square feet of storage space plus an additional 4,000-square-foot press room. 51

Andersen had acquired the property in 1940, buying it from Charles Mayer, a former Cincinnati resident who had moved to the area. The land was across from the Orange Court Hotel on North Orange Avenue and was a city block deep, to Magnolia Avenue.

Andersen agreed to pay $15,000 for the land but ran into trouble making payments during the war years. Rather than take the land back, Mayer allowed Andersen to pay just the interest for the duration of the war and he later resumed payments on the principal. Andersen also bought the Fort Gatlin Hotel on adjoining property and tore it down, along with 15 or 20 other buildings in the area. 52

At the time, the Sentinel and Star had 12 Linotypes in the Slouch Alley location. With the presses moved to the new Orange Avenue site, a courier had to run the mats used in casting stereotype plates from Slouch Alley to the pressroom on a motorbike, a procedure which lasted until 1951. 53

All type processes were still in hot metal, including advertising. There was no proof press for the ads, and makeup men working in "ad alley" were
forced to use a hammer and wooden block to proof ads after they were inked. There was a single Ludlow machine with one font of Cheltenham type used for advertising makeup, and very little else.54

By this time, the Sentinel and Evening Star had acquired a single 32-page Goss Tubular "stovepipe" press, so named because of the small size of its cylinders. This press was capable of producing about 20,000 newspapers an hour and had to be stopped to change rolls of paper by hand. Two new presses, both similar in design, were bought in 1947 and placed on the site of what is now Florida Engraving on the bottom floor of the modern Sentinel Star plant. One of the new presses had 20-page capability and the other could run 16 pages. The change provided a limited capability for color reproduction.55

A New Building

In 1950, Orlando Daily Newspapers, Inc., parent company of the Sentinel and Star, announced that it would build a $300,000 plant at 633 N. Orange Ave., to be completed in the spring of 1951.56

The company retained Lakeland architect Donovan Dean to design the building, along with his Orlando office manager, Arthur W. White. Contractor for the
construction project was John F. Templin. 57

The first newspaper published in the new building came on August 12, 1951. On a Saturday, a final edition was published at the old building and then all the equipment was moved overnight and an edition published again the following day. 58

The new building was shown to the public for the first time August 26. On that date, more than 10,000 persons attended an open house. 59

Financing for the new building came from the Massachusetts Mutual Insurance Company, a loan which Andersen negotiated in the name of his daughters. They owned the facility, with the Sentinel and Star paying them rent. 60

The papers continued their growth during the 1950s. By 1952 the paper's staff had increased to 280 persons for combined morning and evening editions. 61

The First Modern Presses

The first modern presses were installed at the North Orange Avenue plant in 1953, replacing the old "stovepipe" units, which were sold. These presses, 12 units built by Hoe, had been purchased second-hand from the Philadelphia Record. The "new" presses could be set up with five webs (feeding from five rolls of paper
at one time) and were capable of running an 80-page paper. 62

New presses, also from Hoe, were later installed in the Sentinel's pressroom. The paper's "A" press was put in place in 1958, and its "B" press was added in 1962. These two presses were followed almost immediately by the "D" press, a 10-unit Hoe. These three replaced the original Record press. Printing capacity jumped to 132 pages at one time. 63

The most recent press, added in 1967, is the "E" unit, also from Hoe, which boosted the plant total to 30 units capable of running a 96 page paper with 24 pages of color. Normally operated at about 50,000 papers an hour, these presses are capable of up to 70,000 papers per hour. 64

Experiments with the photo-offset, or "cold type" printing process started in July of 1956 for advertising makeup. It proved too expensive, however, and was phased out in January of 1957. The process was rather crude by modern standards, with a Linofilm machine, much like a Linotype but with letters on film rather than molds for hot lead used to compose the ads. Cold type production resumed in 1964 for advertising only, but the "ad alley" for makeup of hot type ads wasn't phased out until 1970. 65
Conomos On Scene

William G. Conomos, who played an important role in development of the papers, came to work for the Sentinel in 1953.

Conomos, a native of Blairsville, Pennsylvania, arrived in Orlando at the age of 16. He attended Orlando Senior High School, Orlando Junior College and Rollins College.66

Conomos first came to Andersen's attention while working on the high school newspaper in Orlando, an interest he shared with Andersen's daughter, Marcia. He spent a year as news editor and city editor of the St. Petersburg Times before coming to work for the Sentinel.68

Conomos was hired by Henry Balch, then managing editor of the papers, and was soon promoted. According to Andersen:

I became attracted to Conomos because he understood the theory of offset presses. When we began Florida Magazine, we sent Conomos to Europe to inspect the Aller presses. We bought one when he came home.69

Aller, Ltd., in Copenhagen, Denmark, is one of Europe's largest magazine printers and a designer of offset presses. Aller, along with R. Hoe & Co. of New York, designed offset presses still in use at the
Moving up through the editorial ranks, Conomos was promoted to executive editor July 11, 1956. Just before the promotion became effective, Andersen wrote him a lengthy memo describing his philosophy of management. The memo read:

I am an old man, 59, going on 60. I would like for you to be saved some of the mistakes I have made. Who am I to tell you how to live? Who am I but one who has made so many mistakes they still pain me in the pit of the stomach, and sometimes make me want to disgorge the poison in my belly, in my brain, in my whole system. But, if I can ease the way a little for you, straighten out the path, this note will be worth the effort. So, I say to you who are 24, and I at 59, be humble, be kind, be considerate. In your new job you have authority. One who has authority need not show it, or tell people about it. Mostly, those in authority seldom have to use it.

Study the town. Try to find out what people are thinking about, worried about, print the answer, or at least a discussion of these things. Letters from the people are important. Very popular. They must, of course, be carefully handled. But, if properly used, they are a weapon to keep us close to the reader.

Never write anything, never give an important order, when drinking. 50,000 readers are entitled to sober, sane thinking.

Try to be friendly with all other department heads. They can help you. They can hurt you. The newspaper, as you have seen from your brief experience downstairs, is made up of many valuable people. They do not think, erroneously, as some people do, that the editor is it. There are others. Treat these people as your equals, as your friends and they will respect you and treat you accordingly.
Take things easy. Be everybody's friend—especially when you don't do it at your own or the newspapers' expense.  
Print a clean newspaper.  
People don't like sex stories.  
Cull out the sordid stuff, the details of dirty stories, and run the item inside.  
Print a newspaper your child, a little girl, age 14 could read without asking her mother questions about what the story meant.  
Call on me at any time...never take a chance on policy which would make me squirm out of after I get home...when in doubt on libel, always call our lawyers, Acherman, Dial and Ackerman.  
But when in doubt, don't print it.  
And, above all, do not beat people over the head with the newspaper.  
Be a friend of everybody...with the paper...don't push people around.  
You didn't ask for this, but here it is, anyway.  
Maybe if you read it once a week for awhile or once a month later on, it will keep you on an even keel.  
Sincerely, Martin Andersen.  

More Expansion

With the paper continuing to grow, additional space was needed, and in 1957 the second floor of the existing building was enlarged to accommodate a new lunch room for staff members, new offices, and a new color production department.  

Road Construction

Andersen and his newspapers played an active role in pushing for construction of better Central Florida roads. He claims that "building roads wasn't my idea," crediting business leaders of the town as
wanting the roads. As he put it:

We had some winter hotels and wanted to be a tourist center. Various associations were formed for roadbuilding. One plan was for a cross state road, starting at Brooksville and ending at Cocoa. The thought was to head off tourists coming from Atlanta and channel them into Orlando.75

The plan to intercept tourists finally died, but Andersen was successful in getting a number of roads connected to form State Road 50 from the Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean.76

Andersen also fought, successfully, for the construction of the Bithlo cutoff (S.R. 520) which branches off State Road 50 at Bithlo and runs directly to Cape Canaveral. The cutoff was constructed as the result of a political deal. State Senator Charles Johns was running for the Florida governorship in 1953 and came to the newspaper to see Andersen. He asked Andersen what he wanted and was told "the Bithlo cutoff."77

Johns said if he was elected he would build the road, and Andersen supported him, despite criticism. Johns lost the election to Leroy Collins, but the road went through.78

According to Andersen, DeLand's Francis Whitehead was appointed to the State Road Board and the first action of the board was to approve the
Bithlo cutoff.

Road board appointments were the key to successful bids for construction, according to Andersen:

At one time we had three members in a row on the road board. We were lucky, and had four or five governors elected that the newspaper had supported. If your governor got elected, you could get a man on the road board. When we didn't have a man on the board, we had friends there.79

Andersen's adventures in road building were also beneficial to the newspaper. According to Ormund Powers, "Andersen loved good highways because they brought people in. And people bought from the advertisers."80

Andersen's support of road building convinced officials to use an inland route for the Florida Turnpike, then known as the Sunshine State Parkway, which passes about seven miles southwest of Orlando. His urging also resulted in a downtown route for Interstate 4, despite opposition to a road that would cross residential districts.81

Andersen didn't limit his attention to the need for better roads in the Orlando area. In 1966 he urged Orange and Brevard counties to cooperate in road building projects, terming the Sentinel and Star prime supporters of Brevard progress.82
Willard Peebles was appointed to the State Road Board as a member of the Orange-Brevard district in 1964. Peebles asked Andersen what he felt were the most vital road needs in Orange County. Andersen replied:

If you want to discuss road needs, let's talk about the critical need for roads and bridges in our neighbor county Brevard. Over there, road needs are not critical. They compound a tragedy.

Peebles pulled Brevard out of what Andersen termed "the dead and dormant file" and established the county as a priority for road building.

Another drive by Andersen and the Sentinel Star resulted in a $2.2 million federal contribution toward new bridges over the Indian and Banana rivers in Brevard County in 1965. The state in that year adopted a resolution commending Andersen and the papers for leading that campaign.

The Newspapers Win Awards

One of the most important years in development of the Sentinel Star was 1958.

The paper received its first award in Ayer Cup competition, sponsored by N.W. Ayer & Son. For excellence in typography, makeup and printing the papers ranked third among 156 publications with circulation over 50,000 in the United States.
This was an award the Sentinel was to receive again. In 1961 the paper was second in the same category, and it received an honorable mention in 1962. Another honorable mention was received again in 1965, with the Sentinel third among some 700 competing papers.

**Improvements And Growth**

In the late 1950s large sums of money were being spent on improvements to the newspapers. An itemized list of expenses for the two papers during 1957 and 1958 shows a total of $2,004,299 spent in just those two years. The majority of this money went into presses, with one press adding $419,528 to the bill and another costing $511,240. The rest of the money went into plant improvement and purchase of more land.

Circulation growth helped provide the money for these large expenditures. The paper was growing faster than the town, with combined circulation reaching the 100,000 mark in October 1958. That was 15,000 more than the 85,000 population of Orlando at that time.

More land was added to the Sentinel Star inventory in December, 1958, when the trusts of Marcia and Doris Andersen acquired from Jack D. Holloway a
tract facing Orange Avenue and bordered by Concord Street. This land cost $195,000. The trust also bought a parcel of land owned by Judge W.L. Tilden, on Magnolia Avenue, for $115,000.91

At the end of 1958, Andersen announced plans for a two-story, $1 million addition to the existing plant. It was built two years later, when existing property leases expired. The land was then leased to the papers by the Andersen trusts.92

In determining needs for the new building, Andersen was careful to survey employee needs. In January of 1959, departments were each given a floor plan of the proposed building and asked to examine it and report their requirements. Their ideas were later incorporated into construction plans.93

As planned in 1958, the annex was completed in May of 1960. Designed by Austin Co., and built by Orlando general contractor W.A. McCree, Inc., it added 48,000 square feet of floor space to the existing building.94

Dedication of the addition boosted the Sentinel Star's available working space to 180,000 square feet and boosted total expenses on capital improvements since the end of 1956 to $4.5 million.95

Sunday, May 15, was dedication day for the
papers, with an open house drawing more than 25,000 Central Florida residents to the facility at 633 N. Orange Avenue. In addition to the remodeled and expanded building, the Sentinel Star also gave the public a look at a number of syndicated cartoonists in action, including Frank King, author of Gasoline Alley, Roy Crane of Buz Sawyer fame and Mel Graff, creator of Captain Easy. 96

A pictorial layout in Florida Magazine of May 22, 1960 described the new building in detail and provided a list of key employees. Andersen ranked at the top as editor and publisher, followed by general manager Conomos, executive editor Bob Howard and comptroller Charles Brumback. 97

Missing from the staff was Louis M. Andersen, Martin's brother, who had left the papers in 1959 to return to his hometown of Greenwood, Miss. Louis had come to Orlando in 1937 as sports editor but left during World War II to serve with the Army Air Corps. Returning after the war, Louis held several positions, including that of managing editor of the Sentinel and Star. He died in 1967. 98

The papers' combined circulation at the start of 1960 was 102,779. During the previous 12 months presses at the newspaper had gobbled up 13.041 tons of
newsprint. At that time, there were 614 people on the payroll as regular staff members, along with 580 carriers and 112 correspondents.

Conomos was promoted to vice president of Orlando Daily Newspapers in 1962. He retained his title as general manager.

By 1964, the newspapers were ranked among some of the nation's best in news volume. Ratings released that year showed that, for the previous 12 months, the Sentinel was second in the United States for news volume, just behind the New York Times. The Times had 37,898,722 reported lines of news, while the Sentinel had 32,222,971 lines. That put the Sentinel just ahead of the Miami Herald.

Previous use of the "cold type" process had been less than successful, but in 1964 the Sentinel and Star added a $300,000 Hoe-Aller offset press while at the same time expanding its facilities for offset production. Automation increased typesetting capability, with the first computer arriving at the paper, a National Cash Register model 315. It controlled typesetting and also handled payroll and billing.
Andersen's Politics

Throughout the years of Andersen's control of the newspapers, his political leanings remained consistent and were reflected in the positions both papers took on issues. Overall, Andersen was conservative and independent, despite being a Democrat. He didn't support many Democrats, however, with Lyndon B. Johnson the only member of that party he ever supported for the U.S. presidency.¹⁰⁴

Dwight D. Eisenhower received the support of the papers in 1956, Richard Nixon was backed in 1960 and Johnson drew support in 1964. Locally, the newspaper under Andersen supported primarily Democratic candidates, mainly because there was little Republican Party activity in Florida during the Andersen years.¹⁰⁵

Andersen Personally Involved

Andersen was a strong, independent publisher. He believed that if some action benefited Central Florida, it also benefited Orange County, Orlando, and his newspapers.¹⁰⁶

He was personally involved in every phase of the operations, and as one of his workers put it, "was a tremendous, dominating personality. He knew what he wanted, and by God, you'd better do it."¹⁰⁷
Salaries during Andersen's control of the papers were low, especially for women—a situation not unique to the Sentinel and Star at that time—but he was able to inspire work.  

Emily Bavar, who played a key role in the discovery of Disney World plans by the paper, served as editor of Florida Magazine at one point. According to Bavar:

I was working very late one night when Andersen walked past and stopped. I looked up and told him I was totally confused. He replied that only totally confused editors were any good.

Charles W. Hostetler served as special assistant to Andersen. He started with the papers in May, 1957, after a career with the Toledo, Ohio, Blade. According to Hostetler, Andersen could be very generous:

He had me do a special project for him. After it was finished he sent me a thank you note. I thought I would tease my wife, so I clipped a $10 bill to the note and took it home. The next day came a second note from Andersen. It read: "Dear Chuck. The attached item should have accompanied yesterday's note," and with it was a check for $1,000.

Andersen's newspaper displayed few if any of the "sacred cows" common to many individually owned newspapers. He personally feared flying and hated birthdays. He didn't want birthdays observed and remained depressed for days before and after a
The Disney World Story

One of the Sentinel's biggest journalistic coups came in 1965 with the discovery that Walt Disney was ready to build a park in Orange and Osceola counties similar to the original Disneyland in California.

Rumors of a "mystery industry" in the area began as early as 1964, with many reports of big land sales and options to buy coming from Osceola County. No one was able to determine who was purchasing the land or for what purpose.

Accounts of the large land sales began appearing with greater and greater frequency in the papers, with the first account, on May 4, 1965, reporting the sale of $1.5 million worth of land--8,380 acres.

A second article appeared on May 20, listing other land sales totaling $285,000 in the same area of Orange and Osceola counties.

Rumors continued, many being printed in the paper. These speculated that aircraft companies, defense contractors, and possibly Walt Disney were going to use the land.

Bavar traveled to Disneyland at Anaheim, Calif.
in mid-October, 1965. Her initial story, which predicted that Disney was in fact the "mystery industry" was underplayed in the Sentinel. However, a second story, which ran October 21, got front page attention. In that story, Bavar reported on a talk with Walt Disney, who never admitted to having bought the property. However, according to Bavar, Disney did not deny buying it and seemed to know more than expected about the area. In her story, Bavar accepted as a fact that indeed Disney had bought the land and that a kind of "second Disneyland" would be built on the site.\textsuperscript{116}

As a result of the Bavar story, Disney officials decided to take immediate action, selecting Florida Governor Haydon Burns to make the announcement which came at a meeting of the Florida League of Municipalities at a convention in Miami Monday, October 25.\textsuperscript{117}

The Disney story developed at the very end of Andersen's sole ownership of the papers, coming just three months after sale of the Sentinel and Evening Star to Tribune Company of Chicago, a sale which marked a new era in development of the newspapers.
Footnotes


2 Martin Andersen, "Orlando Sentinel Had Tough Sledding To Reach The Top," Florida Magazine, 5 September 1965, p. 5.

3 Interview with Martin Andersen, Orlando Sentinel Star former owner, Orlando, Florida, 10 May 1977.

4 Ibid. 5 Ibid.

6 Lodmell, "Publisher's Imprint," p. 6.

7 Andersen, "Tough Sledding," p. 5.

8 Lodmell, "Publisher's Imprint," p. 7.

9 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.

10 Ibid. 11 Ibid. 12 Ibid. 13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.


16 Andersen, "Tough Sledding," p. 5.

17 Ibid. 18 Ibid, p. 6.


20 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.

22 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.

23 Interview with Ormund Powers, Orlando Sentinel Star, Orlando, Florida, 28 April 1977.

24 Ibid. 25 Ibid. 26 Ibid.

27 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.


30 Ibid.


32 Ibid.


35 Ibid.

36 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.


38 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977


41 Interview with Thomas Cotton, Sentinel Star, Orlando, Florida, 14 April 1977.

42 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.


44 Ibid.


49 Ibid.


53 Cotton, interview 14 April 1977.

54 Ibid.


58 Cotton, interview 14 April 1977.


60 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.


62 Mikell, interview 5 May 1977.

63 Ibid. 64 Ibid.

65 Interview with Leona Cotton, Sentinel Star, 14 April 1977.


67 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.


69 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.


74. Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.

75. Ibid.

76. Lodmell, "Publisher's Imprint," p. 9.

77. Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.

78. Interview with Emily Bavar, Orlando Sentinel, Orlando, Florida, 23 April 1977.


83. Ibid. 84. Ibid.


100Andersen, "Tough Sledding," p. 7.


103"Sentinel Continues To Expand--$942,000 Worth," *Orlando Sentinel,* 22 November 1964, sec. 1, p. Al.

104Powers, interview 10 May 1977.


107Bavar, interview 23 April 1977.

108Ibid. 109Ibid.


111Bavar, interview 23 April 1977.


113"Huge Tract Completed: $1.5 Million Paid In Big Land Deal," *Orlando Sentinel,* 4 May 1965, sec. 1, p. Al.

115 Zehnder, Disney World, p. 18.


117 Zehnder, Disney World, p. 28.
CHAPTER III

TRIBUNE OWNERSHIP

Martin Andersen's decision to sell the Orlando Sentinel and Evening Star in 1965 was prompted partly by age and partly be a desire to assure the financial security of his family.

In actuality, a move to sell the papers to the Tribune Company of Chicago had been made about 10 years earlier, when Andersen wrote a letter to the company asking if it would be interested in the papers. He never received an answer, and the letter was tucked away in Tribune Company files, to be found in a search after the 1965 deal.¹

According to Andersen, 68 at the time of the sale:

I sold the paper because sitting at my desk I dozed off three afternoons in a row. I figured if I'm that old, I'm going to quit. I had taken care of my daughters with the building. Stock in the Sentinel they got when my first wife died which was bought for $10,000 brought $10.5 million.²

The Tribune Company was just one of a parade
of organizations attempting to add the Sentinel Star to their chain. At one time or another during the 1960s would-be purchasers included John Cowles of the Minneapolis Tribune, Sam J. Newhouse, Lindsay Hopkins of Miami, Marshall Field of the Chicago Sun Times, the Gannett chain of newspapers out of Rochester, N.Y., the Los Angeles Times, the Ridder Group, and Westinghouse.³

Several reasons have been listed for Andersen's selection of the Tribune Company over the others. He admits he liked its conservative philosophy, being conservative himself. However, one of Andersen's main reasons was financial:

The purchase price was $23 million, plus $5 million more in quick assets. I could have sold to any of them, I figured the others would pay me off in stock, and if the other companies went broke, I could go broke with them. The Tribune Company deal was in notes rather than stock. The Tribune had not expanded as much as the other companies. Notes don't change in value like stock, and pay off 100 per cent on the dollar.⁴

Conomos, citing reasons for the sale, listed Andersen's desire to see ownership of the newspapers in strong hands so they could best serve the reading and advertising public of Central Florida.⁵

Principals in the sale included J. Howard Wood, president of the Tribune Company; F. M. "Jack" Flynn, president of News Syndicate Co., publishers of the
New York News; and Frederick A. Nichols, Tribune Company treasurer. The purchase included the Sentinel and Evening Star, Florida Engraving Company, Sentinel Star Jackrabbit Express and the Sentinel Star Express Co. It did not include Orlando real estate, which consisted of the publication building on North Orange Avenue and parking lots.

The Tribune Company also received the Brevard bureau building as part of the sale. Andersen said he would not have made the deal if Tribune had demanded the Orlando buildings as part of the purchase.

The sale was made public on July 15, 1965 in a joint announcement by Wood and Andersen. The announcement pointed out that Andersen was to remain as editor and publisher of the papers and that the decision to sell was "greatly influenced by his desire to assure continuance of the newspapers and to protect the security of loyal people who had helped build the Sentinel and Star."

Andersen made sure employees did not become frightened by the deal. In a statement of sale appearing in the Sentinel on July 15, he said:

Sale of the newspapers means continuation of security programs I have established for you. Acceptance of Sentinel Star scrip is a high point in the newspaper's history. It early established a binding faith in the paper by merchants and
employees alike.9

Readers were also assured that there would be no major changes in the paper during Tribune ownership. In an Andersen editorial July 16, he wrote:

Insofar as our editorial policy is concerned, it remains the same. We have no idea of changing overnight from a Democrat to a Republican, but we will continue to give both the Democrats and Republicans a fair shake and we will print both sides of the story...10

Wood also added that acquisition of the Orlando newspapers would not result in any changes in management, staff or editorial policies.11

The sale added the Sentinel Star to a growing list of Florida newspapers under Tribune Company ownership, including the Fort Lauderdale News and Pompano Beach Sun Sentinel.12

Andersen's powers after the sale remained exactly as before, since he retained the "right to hire and fire."13

There was, in fact, no noticeable effect of the Tribune Company on the papers after the sale. As one staff member put it, "they pretty well left the paper alone."14

Honors For Andersen

As Andersen headed toward retirement, he
received numerous honors from the community he had helped build. Although he had never completed high school, he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree from Rollins College on February 22, 1965.\textsuperscript{15}

In July 1966, the Rotary Club of Orlando credited Andersen with supporting beautification of the city and for pushing construction of the Florida Turnpike. They also noted his being recognized as one of Florida's six most influential men and pointed out that he had won the 1963 Sales and Marketing Executives Salesman of the Year award.\textsuperscript{16}

Ten days before he announced his retirement, Andersen received the John Young award for community service, one of Orlando's highest honors. At the time of this award he received a telegram from then President Lyndon B. Johnson, lauding Andersen's accomplishments. The telegram read:

\begin{quote}
The esteem expressed for you by the citizens of Orlando reflects the value I have always placed on our friendship. I am certain they share my knowledge that your concern for your community and its people is but one aspect of your dedication to the welfare and progress of all our citizens.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

\textbf{Andersen Retires}

Andersen stepped down as editor and publisher on December 17, 1966, after some 55 years in newspaper
He made the decision one morning when, arriving at 11 a.m., Nichols, who had been named chairman of the board of the Sentinel Star Company, commented on the lateness of the hour for getting to work. According to Andersen, he followed Nichols out of the office and told him he would quit provided Conomos was named editor, publisher and general manager and put in the masthead. 18

According to Andersen, the Tribune Company had picked Charles Brumback to be publisher rather than Conomos. Andersen's action assured Conomos of the job. "I liked him and wanted him to succeed," Andersen said. 19

In his retirement statement, Andersen said:

I am quitting the day-to-day, night-to-night routine on the Sentinel and Star after 35 years. Retained as advisor and consultant to Tribune Company, owners of Sentinel Star Company, I will give them my loyal support, energy, ideas and activity when, and as often as called upon. 20

Andersen, in his retirement statement, noted that the new owners of the paper had ordered $3 million worth of new presses, showing their confidence in the papers' success. 21

Fuller Warren, then Florida governor, paid tribute to Andersen:
While making millions for himself, Martin Andersen has rendered service worth billions of dollars to Central Florida. Beyond all doubt he is Central Florida's largest benefactor. It seems accurate to say that no other Florida newspaperman ever achieved so much for so many.22

**Conomos Appointed Publisher**

Nichols announced the appointment of Conomos as editor and publisher the day after Andersen's retirement, pointing out that Conomos was "outstandingly well qualified" for the post and adding that "we look forward to working with him (Andersen) in his new capacity as consultant."23

Despite Andersen's retention on the staff as a consultant—at the rate of $85,000 a year for five years—he was never consulted.24

He had no role after retirement and was shunned by the new publisher, despite the fact that he was being paid. Overnight, Andersen just disappeared. And, although there were no immediate policy changes under Conomos, it was not long before two top executives were dumped: Wilson McGee, the managing editor, and Harold Hamilton, circulation director.25

Andersen confirmed that he was never used as a consultant by Conomos:

> Nobody ever asked me the time of day after I retired. I was a bit of a joke with Conomos. They
made a lot of mistakes down there. I expected that when I sold the paper. It was rough for a while not having any say. I never could understand what I had done to Conomos. Maybe it was a weakness of his personality not to ask my advice. I made that damn fool editor and publisher. That's what I did for him.26

According to Andersen, Conomos told Nichols to "get the hell out of his office" the first week he was publisher.27

Circulation Growth Continues

At the time Conomos took over, circulation of the paper was continuing its rapid growth. As of November, 1965, there were 146,736 papers circulated. By November of 1966 that figure had nearly reached 150,000.28 By 1969, circulation of the Sunday Sentinel Star had hit 174,595 and daily combined circulation was up to 167,552.29

It took just three more years to top the 200,000 circulation mark, reached February 20, 1972, with the combined circulation that date reaching 201,212. Sunday's circulation hit the 200,000 mark in February of that same year.30

Conomos Advances

With Andersen on the sidelines, Conomos continued to advance in the management ranks. He was named president of the Sentinel Star Company and
Sentinel Star Express Company by the Tribune Company Board of Directors in 1968, jobs he held until his ultimate downfall some years later.31

Sentinel Star Express Company Expansion

By 1966 the Florida Public Service Commission had approved expansion of service by the Sentinel Star Express Company, and deliveries were being made to such cities as Miami, Tampa and Fort Lauderdale. This gave the company a coast-to-coast capability.32

Tampa area service for the Express company increased February 15, 1967, with offices established at 1706 Carmen St. Four trucks were assigned to operate out of this office under the direction of operations manager Gene Busche. Also serviced were St. Petersburg and Clearwater.33

It wasn't long before the Express company outgrew its Tampa location, and in July of 1967 it purchased a city block in downtown Tampa for $65,000 to expand company facilities.34

Transportation facilities were expanded again in 1968 when the Express company bought out Krogel Air Freight Service, adding pickup and delivery of air freight to its long list of Central Florida area services.35
Computers Part Of Operation

Computers played a steadily increasing role under Conomos. From the initial NCR 315 installed in 1964, another unit had been added in 1966, allowing the first one to handle direct production of news material, which took about 17 hours a day. The second unit handled all business functions and advertising. This brought the Sentinel Star investment in NCR computers to nearly $500,000.36

Still more computers were added, with an IBM 370 taking care of business and payroll functions, leaving both NCR units free to control typesetting. A pair of Varian model 73s were installed in 1973 to handle all typesetting for classified ads, and an IBM System 7 was added to control plant functions such as air conditioning, turning off the system to conserve power at selected intervals.37

Color Presses Added

Increasing demands on the Sentinel's color production facilities required additional expansion in 1968. This time a new building on East Colonial Drive between Orange Avenue and Magnolia was constructed. Slightly more than five stories high, this building
housed a new Hoe color offset press, the Lithomatic 60 Web Offset. This installation was made to improve production of Florida Magazine and other color newspaper supplements.38

Washington News Bureau Opens

As part of its expanding services to readers, the Sentinel Star placed its first full-time news bureau staff member in Washington, D.C. in October, 1968. Jack McDavitt was assigned to that bureau.39

Awards Continue

The papers were honored in 1969 by the National Wildlife Federation, being named Conservation Communicator of the Year for that year. Other honors in 1969 came from the Florida Press Association and Florida Society of Newspaper Editors.40

In 1970, eight editorial awards from the Florida Press Club went to women staff members, including women's editor Dorothy Chapman, for makeup, headwriting and special sections.41

Growth Still Rapid

During the six months which ended September 30, 1971, the Sentinel was ranked by Audit Bureau of Circulation's "Fastfax" service as being one of the
fastest growing newspapers in the United States. These figures showed a five and one-half percent circulation gain over the previous six month period, a gain which, as previously mentioned, put the papers over the 200,000 mark in 1972.\textsuperscript{42}

\textbf{Construction Provides More Room}

More room for the newspapers was needed, and that space was found in 1971, with old houses at 634 and 644 Magnolia Avenue on property adjoining the newspaper's main plant being completely restored and put into service. These old homes now house the \textit{Sentinel Star} personnel department and The Studio photo operation.\textsuperscript{43}

Realizing the need for still more space, in February of 1972 the \textit{Sentinel Star} announced plans to build a newspaper production plant in Seminole County. This plant was slated for a 16-acre site in Altamonte Springs near the intersection of highways 436 and 434 just west of Interstate 4.\textsuperscript{44}

The initial investment included $4.5 million for the land, a building of 45,000 square feet, and an eight-unit press similar to those installed in the downtown plant. That boosted available press units to 38 for letterpress while retaining 18 for offset.\textsuperscript{45}
In addition to the presses, the new plant was to house editorial offices for the bureau serving Seminole County and adjacent areas. The land was bought from Thomas Dyer & Associates of Orlando and Miami, with Watson & Co. of Orlando the architects. Commenting on the new facility, Conomos said:

Although we will always maintain our primary operations in the City of Orlando--and probably downtown Orlando at that--this new plant will enable us to improve our service to the growing Seminole County and adjacent areas. 46

The first press run at the new plant site began September 15, 1973, with Florida Gov. Rubin Askew starting the press in a plant which had grown at completion to 61,000 square feet. This facility increased the papers' publishing capacity by 20 per cent. Activity at the plant began with a staff of 50 plus the bureau members. The press installed was a Wood-Hoe Colormatic, capable of printing up to 96 pages with 16 pages of color at up to 70,000 papers an hour. 47

Most recent change at the new Seminole facility has been conversion of the press to print by the DiLitho process.

This process of direct lithography enables offset type plates to be used on presses originally designed for letterpress printing from stereotype
plates. The change greatly improved reproduction and reduced the weight of press plates from 42 pounds to four or five ounces. The conversion was made by adding an aluminum shim .430 thousands of an inch thick to each of the press cylinders, and then introducing a solution containing water into the ink rollers.48

Jack Rabbit Expands To South Florida

Jack Rabbit Express, which officially took that name in 1970 as a replacement for the Sentinel Star Express Company title, expanded into South Florida in 1973. In May of that year it bought the Pony Express Company of South Florida, allowing more South Florida routes to be serviced by Jack Rabbit.49

No More Evening Star

One of the biggest changes in the paper's history came on January 22, 1973.

On that date, the Evening Star stopped publication and was combined with the Sentinel into what now exists as a 24-hour newspaper, the Sentinel Star. Several factors were involved in the papers' combination.

First, there was a trend toward consolidation and economy within the newspaper industry. The change to 24-hour operation came during 1972, a time of
economic stress when a need to cut back editorial costs became apparent.  

There was also pressure by the federal government on companies which owned independent newspapers. Sentinel Star officials were certain that the paper had been selected as a Justice Department target case for breaking up joint newspaper operations. According to present editor James Squires, "It was a well known fact within the industry that we were the target."  

In addition to dropping the evening paper, several other changes were made in format. The word Orlando was dropped from the masthead on page one under the assumption that this was a Central Florida newspaper and would be more readily accepted outside the city without the city identification.  

Readers were told of the change in a short article by Conomos in the morning Sentinel Star of January 22. He told the readers the new version of the Sentinel Star was bigger and better, with expanded news and feature coverage. He pointed out that there would be no change in home delivery and that the all day daily paper "is the biggest dime's worth in Florida."  

Readers, in fact, did get a bargain, as many of the Evening Star features, including two full pages
of comics, were retained in the Sentinel Star, thus offering readers considerably more than before.

Changes In Leadership

A major change in executive leadership at the paper also came in 1972, with the abrupt departure of executive editor Norman Wolfe. Wolfe, hired by Conomos in 1958, had been in charge of the news operations. However, Wolfe alienated a number of people, and Conomos wanted him to step out of the picture in terms of the news operation.54

April 18, Wolfe's resignation was announced, along with the appointment of Joseph McGovern to the executive editor post. McGovern had been managing editor of the paper.55

Conomos added to his power on March 18, 1975, with the resignation of general manager Harry Timmons. Rather than replacing Timmons, Conomos chose to take over his responsibilities. According to Conomos:

Harry Timmons had resigned his positions with the Sentinel Star and affiliated companies. I do not intend to appoint a general manager, at least over the near future. All divisions and subsidiaries will report to me.56

Paper Size Changes

If it had not been announced, readers might not have been aware of it, but the paper underwent a size
change in April 1975.

The change reduced the width of pages about three-quarters of an inch, narrowing the margins and making slight changes in the width of columns without greatly affecting the amount of news space in the paper. 57

**Sports Stadium Controversy**

In December 1975 the newspaper became involved in a dispute with the Orlando Sports Stadium which resulted in a complete ban on news of events taking place at the Stadium.

Triggering the decision were more than four years of legal battles on a $11 million libel suit filed by the stadium owners, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Ashlock, over coverage of several rock music concerts in 1971. The suits charged "distorted and biased news reporting." 58

Conomos said "constant and continued litigation such as this" had a "chilling effect upon the press's right to publish without prior restraint." 59

Readers of the paper were not told why the blackout had been imposed on the reporting of Sports Stadium news. Such news merely ceased to exist. 60

Staff members of the newspapers were told that
the ban had been imposed on "advice of counsel."
However, some members of the staff feel the blackout
was imposed as a result of a personal vendetta on the
part of Conomos, which then led some executives to
create the advice of counsel story as an alibi. 61

Conomos Resigns

The axe fell on Conomos May 21, 1976, marking
an end to one-man domination of the Sentinel Star.

On that date, employees of the newspaper were
informed that Conomos had resigned his offices in the
company, including that of president and chief execut­
ive officer of the Sentinel Star Company. The resig­
nation was accepted by Stanton R. Cook, president and
chief executive officer of Tribune Company. Cook
announced that two senior officers of Sentinel Star
Company would assume Conomos' duties. They were
Charles T. Brumback, then vice president and business
manager, and Joseph McGovern, executive editor. 62

Conomos had left for Chicago for a meeting at
the Tribune on the morning of May 21.

Instead of returning to the paper, Conomos
went directly to his house at New Smyrna Beach, and
Cook arrived at the paper, announcing the resignation
in a late afternoon meeting. 63
Charles Hostetler, assistant to the publisher, is certain that "Conomos had no indication when he departed Thursday afternoon that he wouldn't be with the paper when he returned to town." 64

A number of factors were involved in Conomos' departure.

There were differences in political posture between the Sentinel Star and parent Tribune Company.

An example of this political split came in a story carried by the Sentinel Star May 9, 1974. At the time, the Chicago Tribune was urging the quick departure of President Nixon, through either resignation or impeachment, asking quick action by the House on a bill of impeachment.

Conomos, in an insert to an Associated Press story detailing the Tribune's position, said:

I think the easy way out for the country at this point is for Mr. Nixon to resign, but I also think it would damage the Presidency for years to come and in that respect would damage the ability of the United States to be the world leader. We cannot have the institution of the Presidency subject to the whim of public opinion and newspaper editorial writers. "...we are not prepared to join the lynch parade now composed of the well intentioned humanitarians as well as the blood-thirsty revolutionaries." 65

In addition to differences in political position, there were also differences in management procedures. The Tribune Company had a system of doing
things which it wanted followed, but Conomos refused to use the system, instead doing things his own way in Orlando. 66

Martin Andersen, out of the limelight but aware of the resignation, offered a simple explanation for the departure of Conomos:

Conomos made the mistake of telling Cook what policy should be. Cook wanted Brumback in charge of finance, and Conomos to handle editorial policy. Conomos refused. 67

*Editor and Publisher*, examining the Conomos resignation, asked Conomos point-blank why he had quit, and was told there was no reason.

William Clark, secretary with the Tribune Company, said Conomos "resigned his positions because of some policy differences with the parent company." 68

Brumback gave as his reason a "difference of management styles between two chief executives in Chicago and Conomos." 69

Conomos refused to reveal his reasons for stepping down, but in a short interview with *Florida Trend* magazine he replied to the question of whether his resignation signaled the decline of the editor-publisher as an institution by saying, "I think that's about right." 70

Conomos was characterized by some of his
staff members as "brilliant and able...a man who could be amazingly generous and understanding." However, he is also characterized as reluctant to delegate authority and as having some trouble getting along with people.\textsuperscript{71}

Or, as Hostetler put it, "When Conomos became unreasonable, he was damned unreasonable."\textsuperscript{72}

Immediately after Conomos' departure, an editorial board was organized to generate policy for the newspaper. McGovern headed the board, insisting that, "Fundamentally, we are going to stay with a conservative editorial posture."\textsuperscript{73}

The editorial board in its initial form remained in operation until the appointment of James Squires as editor January 1, 1977.
Footnotes

1 Interview with Charles W. Hostetler, Orlando Sentinel, Orlando, Florida, 22 April 1977.

2 Interview with Martin Andersen, Orlando Sentinel Star former owner, Orlando, Florida, 10 May 1977.


4 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.


7 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.


11 Ibid.


18Andersen, interview 19 May 1977.

19Ibid.


21Ibid.

22"Sentinel Readers Send Flowers For Living,"


24Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.


26Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.

27Ibid.


37Interview with Carol Markel, Orlando Sentinel Star, Orlando, Florida, 12 May 1977.


45. Ibid. 46. Ibid.


50. Interview with James Squires, Sentinel Star editor, Orlando, Florida, 10 May 1977.

51. Ibid.

52. Hostetler, interview 22 April 1977.


59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.

61 Hostetler, interview 22 April 1977.


63 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.

64 Ibid.


66 Hostetler, interview 22 April 1977.

67 Andersen, interview 10 May 1977.

68 "Conomos Resigns As Publisher Of Orlando Papers," *Editor & Publisher,* 29 May 1976, p. 10.

69 Ibid.


72 Hostetler, interview 28 April 1977.

The Sentinel Star entered a fourth major phase in its growth on January 1, 1977, with appointment of James D. Squires as editor.

Selection of Squires for the position was announced December 9, 1976, by Charles T. Brumback, general manager and acting chief executive officer of the paper. ¹

Squires had been serving as chief of the Chicago Tribune's Washington bureau. At age 33, he had previously been a reporter and Washington correspondent for the Nashville Tennessean. A graduate of George Peabody College, he received a Nieman Fellowship from Harvard in 1970, and joined the Tribune's Washington bureau in 1972. ²

Closely following behind the selection of Squires was advancement of Brumback to the post of president and chief executive officer of the Sentinel Star Company. Brumback had been holding the posts in
an acting capacity since May of 1976. Brumback's promotion was announced by Tribune Company president Stanton R. Cook.3

Other key management changes had been taking place, among them the resignation of Robert McComas as advertising director in November of 1976. McComas was replaced in December by Robert B. Holzkamp, former manager of the Chicago Tribune's marketing service division.5

In March of 1977, long-time managing editor Stan Roberts resigned. Squires promoted Robert Bonnell into the managing editor post.6

Changes Begin

Squires immediately began making physical changes in the newspaper. He explained that the newspaper did not have the structure, operating procedures and techniques needed by a modern metropolitan daily. There was no style book, no consistancy in layout and makeup, and no well established procedure for news display. Squires also pointed out that the existing desk structure was not adequate to properly select and display news.7

According to Squires:

Fundamental principles of journalism had not
been applied in a while. Newspapers have had to undergo important changes in the last 10-15 years because of technological advances. The paper was preparing to change to a cold type operation but had done none of the preparation.

Changes in the paper were designed to make transition to a fully cold type operation easier. Headlines changed to lower case, sometimes referred to as downstyle. Page makeup style became modular, spacing between headlines and type increased, and many other changes were made to gain, as Squires put it, the "precision" found in cold type, where page makeup is much more critical.

Content and display of the news also changed. A briefing page was added in the first section, containing capsule summaries, and new columns, including one for consumers, began to appear.

There was also a complete reorganization of the paper's structure. According to Squires:

Layout of the paper was not conducive to size growth. Orlando is a recreation and entertainment center, but space in that section was limited, and advertising display was not appearing with compatible editorial material.

Classified advertising and other sections were reorganized. "People" became the second section, followed by a combined sports and business section, a move which gave the two sections more space.
Something new began March 9, with the appearance of the tabloid *Little Sentinel*, a newspaper designed to provide regional news and low cost advertising to specific areas served by the big paper. The *Little Sentinel* was Squires' idea. According to Squires:

> When I first learned I was to take over the paper, I asked for all the budgets. It became obvious that preparation of regional products was taking one-third of the newspaper's resources. But quality of regional products was poor and not providing service a regional publication should do. Regional sections were also losing money.\textsuperscript{12}

Prior to his arrival at the paper, Squires began to study the regional publications of other newspapers to see which ones were most successful. The *Little Sentinel* is a result of that study.\textsuperscript{13}

Another major reason for quickly beginning the *Little Sentinel* was competition. According to Squires, the *Sentinel Star* was "under attack" in terms of advertising revenue. Smaller advertisers could not afford the *Sentinel Star* and *The Newspaper* was about to begin publishing in competition. Squires said *The Newspaper* was aimed at "our vulnerability in that the *Sentinel* was narrowly edited for a particular audience, the old, more conservative reader."\textsuperscript{14}

*The Newspaper*, a free weekly tabloid, began
publishing March 16. The president of the publication is Robert McComas, former Sentinel Star advertising director. The editor, Brad Silliman, is a stepson of Conomos, although according to McComas, Conomos has no connection with The Newspaper. Initial circulation of The Newspaper was 102,000.\textsuperscript{15}

Squires started the Little Sentinel to counter the threat. The first issue, beating The Newspaper to press, was published March 9, 1977 as an experiment. More than 60,000 homes in North Orange and Seminole counties received the tabloid.\textsuperscript{16}

Currently, the Sentinel Star is publishing Little Sentinel editions for Winter Park-North Orange, Seminole County, Mid-Town and Volusia County. By September 14, 1977, there will be 12 separate Little Sentinels serving the Sentinel Star's circulation area.\textsuperscript{17}

**Political Changes**

Squires has also made significant changes in the newspapers' political stance. As he put it, "An honest editor will demand that his newspaper will reflect his own philosophy." He pointed out that his idea of political philosophy differs greatly from that of his predecessors because of differences in time and
situation. According to Squires:

Under Conomos, the newspaper had a loud voice, dictated, and kicked up dust. My idea is that the paper is now dealing with a readership which can make its own decisions. Our job is to keep the public informed to help it make up its own mind.

The change in political attitude gives the paper better balance, with both right and left-wing attitudes allowed expression in the editorial pages.

Commenting on politics, Squires said:

Over the course of a week, we give readers the broadest possible range of political position we possibly can. The paper will remain conservative, since we serve a relatively conservative area. It is unlikely we would champion radical causes. But we're not as conservative as the previous editor, and we are not dedicated to the principles of conservatism. We will keep an open mind on the issues.

Squires says positions taken by the paper are not dictated by him or by Chicago. Rather, they are formulated by an editorial board which includes Squires, executive editor Joseph McGovern, Emily Bavar, Emmett Peter, Bill Summers and Charles Reese. That board meets daily.

Sports Stadium Controversy Resolved

Squires immediately faced the Orlando Sports Stadium issue. At the time he became editor, the stadium was still receiving no news coverage. Squires immediately ended the ban, and news from the Sports
Stadium returned to the pages of the Sentinel Star.

According to Squires:

The previous editor made a decision not in the best interest of the paper not to report on the Sports Stadium since the ownership persisted in suing the paper for libel. This was an editorial judgement. Immediately after my appointment the stadium held an event of importance I thought the readers were entitled to hear about. My judgement was that we had an obligation to cover news, and we covered it.21

Growth Predicted

For the future, Squires believes Sentinel Star circulation will grow as fast as any paper in the country:

As the city becomes more important, the paper will become more important. Because of its central location and different kinds of community life the paper must be broad and flexible. Because of the central location, we should be the Florida newspaper. We should become best in the state.22

Employment Stable

Employment has been stable at the Sentinel Star during the 1970s. In December, 1970, there were 1,254 persons employed by the newspaper and its affiliated companies. That employment hit a peak in 1973 with 1,328 employees, and at the end of 1976 the number was 1,299.23

A majority of the Sentinel Star's employees
work at 633 N. Orange Avenue. The Sentinel Star has a lease on that production site through 1985. A decision must soon be made about the newspaper's location after that date.²⁴

Purchase negotiations between Tribune Company and Martin Andersen's daughters, owners of the land and building, are currently being held.²⁵

A Large Bureau Network

Statewide, the newspaper maintains a network of 18 bureaus, with one additional bureau in Washington, D.C. State bureaus are located at Sebring, Lakeland, Winter Haven, Pine Hills, Apopka, Clermont, Tavares, Ocala, Tallahassee, Altamonte Springs, Sanford, Daytona Beach, New Smyrna Beach, DeLand, Winter Park, Titusville, Cocoa and Melbourne.²⁶

Electronic Newsroom

One of the biggest changes at the Sentinel Star will be installation of an electronic newsroom system and full conversion to cold type composition. First elements of the electronic system were scheduled to arrive at the paper in December of 1977, with installation in January of 1978.²⁷ However, delays in completion of a contract with the selected
A decision to change the newspaper's method of handling and setting type was made in 1974. An electronic newsroom committee was formed at that time. That committee began a program designed to lead to installation of the most advanced electronic publishing system available.28

The committee concluded that the newspaper must convert to 100 per cent cold type composition before or at the time of installation of the electronic equipment, and that proven, expandable systems were needed.29

Several manufacturers of electronic newsroom systems were surveyed, including Dymo Graphics Systems, Inc.; Harris Corp.; Hendrix Electronics, Inc.; System Development Corp., and Tal-Star Computer Systems, Inc. System Development Corp. was selected to provide the system.30

A number of newspapers are currently using the TEXT II system from SDC, including the Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily News, Toronto, Canada, Globe and Mail, and two Florida papers, the Gainesville Sun and Lakeland Ledger.31
The system will allow editors to transpose words, sentences, paragraphs, and even blocks of information within a news story. Split screen features allow more than one story to be displayed at the same time. Stories can be strung together into one. Direct output from the terminals to phototypesetters provides a fast, easy means of getting type set.

Currently, the newspaper is using four Harris TXT photomechanical typesetters capable of setting type at a maximum of 120 lines a minute. The purchase of additional TXT units was considered and rejected for reasons which included slow speed, limited availability of type faces per machine and slow recovery from downtime.

Several electronic phototypesetters were examined and evaluated. The decision went to the Harris 7400, which is capable of setting type at 1,000 lines per minute. Two units will be purchased for the newspaper. An additional factor in selection of the Harris 7400 is the close location of Harris research and manufacturing facilities in Melbourne, Florida.

Although firm dates for the conversion have not yet been established, the changeover should be complete during 1978.
The electronic newsroom conversion will mean several things to Sentinel Star readers. Reproduction of pages will be clearer with a switch to the cold type format. Pages will be more eye appealing, due to flexibility editors will have in page layout under the new system.

The conversion will move the Sentinel Star into another stage of progress and development.
Footnotes


2 Ibid.


7 Interview with James Squires, Sentinel Star editor, Orlando, Florida, 10 May 1977.

8 Ibid. 9 Ibid. 10 Ibid.

11 Ibid. 12 Ibid. 13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.


16 Squires, interview 10 May 1977.

17 Ibid. 18 Ibid. 19 Ibid.

20 Ibid. 21 Ibid. 22 Ibid.

23 Interview with Dan Hall, Sentinel Star, Orlando, Florida, 12 May 1977.

25 Interview with Martin Andersen, *Sentinel Star* former owner, Orlando, Florida, 10 May 1977.


29 Ibid., p. 16.  30 Ibid.


33 Ibid., pp. 26-27.  34 Ibid., p. 32.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Orlando has been served by newspapers for more than 100 years. In that time, the majority of these papers have been privately owned and individually run.

Consolidation of the Reporter Star and Orlando Morning Sentinel into one organization under Charles Marsh produced a combination which markedly shaped development of the Orlando community.

Martin Andersen, who came to own both papers, arrived in Orlando in 1931 as a troubleshooter for Marsh. He remained to become one of Orlando's most powerful individuals, controlling the papers as editor and publisher until his retirement in 1966.

Andersen used his papers to amass a personal fortune, but also served the interests of the community.

Purchase of the Orlando Sentinel and Evening Star by the Tribune Company of Chicago had no immediate
effect on the Orlando papers. Instead of taking strong corporate control, Tribune Company elected to give the editor and publisher posts to William Conomos, handpicked by Andersen.

Selection of Conomos to be editor and publisher kept the papers under control of a single, strong individual.

A tradition of morning and evening newspapers in the Orlando community ended in 1973 when the papers were combined into a single, 24-hour newspaper to avoid the possibility of Justice Department anti-trust action.

Throughout development of the papers, Andersen, and later Conomos, kept pace with developments in the newspaper industry, adding new presses, computers and updated equipment as it became available.

With resignation of Conomos in 1976 and subsequent appointment of James Squires as editor, the papers underwent an extensive facelifting designed to prepare them for a change to cold type makeup in 1978.

Headlines are now written "downstyle" with more white space around them and in general the appearance of the Sentinel Star has changed.

The newspaper is headed for total modernization
in the near future. The first step along this path is installation of the electronic newsroom and new high speed typesetting equipment. Possibilities for the future include development of electronic page layout, centralized library activities using electronic terminals, and new and faster methods of printing.

As growth of the Orlando community continues, the paper should grow with it, eventually providing blanket coverage of the entire central part of Florida through the Sentinel Star and its regional editions.

This history of the Sentinel Star provides data leading to several conclusions.

The Sentinel's intensive support of road building projects played a key role in development of the Orlando area as one of the South's major centers for tourism and in growth of the city itself.

The paper provided a needed forum for discussion and calls to action on road projects, many of which were completed. Availability of these roads resulted in the location of Walt Disney World in the Orlando area, with its subsequent effect on area growth, and additional location of other attractions within easy access of the central city.

Had the Sentinel Star not intensively supported
and urged road building programs, growth of the city would have been limited by the ability of existing highways to carry traffic.

Unification of the Orange County-Central Florida area has resulted from the Sentinel Star's concept of a regional newspaper. Isolation of small towns from city life has been virtually eliminated by availability of the newspaper. Expansion and development of the paper's bureaus has kept regional news available and given rural residents a sense of unity with the paper and people of the big city.

Technology has also had a direct role in growth of the newspaper and the city. As modern newspaper presses became available, they were installed at the paper, providing a means of increasing production and allowing publication of more current news. At the same time population increases in the city and area around it were served by the paper, the population growth was reinforced and encouraged by increased availability of information about the city and its residents. This information in quantity was available only through the newspaper.
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