1890 As Viewed by the Whitley County Editors

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

By

Cassandra J. Stockamp

Thesis Director

Dr. Morten Rosenberg

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana
August, 1983
Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ........................................ 1
Preface ..................................................... 1
Chapter 1 ......1890: A Background............... 1
Chapter 2 .........The Editorials ................... 18
Chapter 3 ..........Conclusion ................. 36
Bibliography ............................................. 41
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank two people who had an influence on the completion of this thesis. To Dr. Rosenber I owe many 'humbling' thanks for "encouraging" the completion of this drawn-out epistle. To Eric Olson - just many thanks...
GILD (gild) vt. gild'ed or gilt, gild'ing (OE. gyldan = base of gold, gold) 1. a) to overlay with a thin layer of gold  b) to coat with a gold color  2. to make appear bright and attractive  3. to make (something) seem more attractive or valuable than it is.

Webster defined gilded as something merely overlayed with gold; Mark Twain considered the 1890's to be an era of contrast in his book entitled The Gilded Age. Bryant Morey French dubbed Samuel Clemen's book as The Book That Named An Era. The Gilded Age seemed to be Twain's panorama of the postbellum years in all its pomp and degradation. That era provided the capitalist with unexplored frontiers to be used as profit makers. It was a time of growth and prosperity, invention and advancement, concern and anxiety. The west was open to the courageous settlers and new states joined the union.

Between 1860 and 1900 the United States grew from a second rate power to the world leader in terms of industrial strength. From 1877 to 1893 the national output of copper increased seven times, crude oil four times and manufacturing as an entity - two and one half times. By 1893 the electric power industry was a twenty-three million-dollar business which before 1877 failed to even exist. The world was expanding its production frontier, and the United States was the obvious leader of the field. Rapid expansion, however, opened unexplored ethical practices and the transition from rural to urban living had not found the standard of living to evolve at such a pace. An extreme and often frightening contrast emerged with the rich becoming richer and the
poor losing ground. Such was the over-view of the nation.¹

The people within the industries, states and individual communities often evoked dissimilar images, yet an individual undoubtedly was but a part of each. The same held true for the individual counties within a state. A glamorous image may have been evoked concerning the advancement of the state, yet on an individual basis, a single county may have appeared to be quite uneventful. The aggregate activities within each state and county developed into what is commonly known as the gilded age.

Indiana played a vital role during the Gilded Age; within Indiana there was Whitley County, a part of the aggregate, and, therefore, a contributor to the whole.

On the surface the historical aspects of Whitley County appear to be drab and mundane until a perspective of individuality is taken. The residents of the county obviously considered this seemingly insignificant county their home and in an obscure way played an important part in the development of their community and country.

The antebellum era of Whitley County found combinations of wide open country, wooded areas and luscious, rich low grounds enticing the farmer to its domain. The land was fertile and was full of high hopes and anticipation of prosperity through the toil of any man willing to conquer the elements. The West was open for settlement; these were sparse in population as measured by current standards. Whitley County was organized in February 17, 1836, though it did not become official until April first of the same year. Whitley County received its name from Colonel William Whitley, an early pioneer and patriot who won distinction as an Indian fighter. He was a Kentuckian whom Kentucky also memorialized by a county (Whitley) and county seat (Williamsburg). He was the first settler to build a brick home west of the Allegheny Mountains and lived from 1749 to 1813. In October, 1839 a town was designated the county seat of Whitley County though, curiously, it was not named until November 25, 1839. The town, then known as Columbia, is today called Columbia City.²

The productive land of the midwest proved to be the key factor in drawing settlers. Though Whitley County in 1850 had not yet reached an average of 18 people to the square mile, by 1860 it achieved this ratio. With the population growing at a steady pace an obvious need for a medium of mass communication became apparent. Whitley County housed its first newspaper in 1853, appropriately titled The Pioneer.

The mortality rate among the pioneer journals was high due to many unforeseen hardships in both production and labor. The newspapers of the nineteenth century were not as sophisticated as their present counterparts. Still, they played vital roles in providing information of local, as well as national and international interest. Though the news was consistently late, the necessity for promptness had not been nurtured or expected by a public generally unconcerned or affected by events elsewhere.

The publication of newspapers was hindered by such difficulties as shortages in newsprint and problems dealing with labor. Newsprint shortages developed from the lack of reliable transportation among other factors. Satisfactory facilities or inventories of newsprint were rarely maintained. The labor troubles were the result of a shortage of apprentices and journeymen, partially because of chronic cash flow problems affecting the operations of newspapers. "The establishment of a newspaper in a town as well as its success thereafter depended upon the revenue that might be derived from two sources: job printing and circulation

to subscribers."\(^4\) These two facets of newspaper economics emanate from the population within the community and the reception they give to it.

The ever present hardships involved with the operations of a newspaper may be exemplified by the history of the Whitley County newspapers. The volatility in ownership and the resulting changes in style, editors, and publishers made it difficult to obtain a large circulation let alone to assume an appropriate role in the community. A brief chronology of the major newspapers in Whitley County follows on the following page.

The responsibilities of the early newspaper were in the formative stages and the manner in which these responsibilities were carried out was often quite unstructured and tactless. The "penny press" or the newspapers for the masses, commenced in the 1830's, being an offshoot of the Industrial Revolution. "The founders of the first penny papers saw their offspring primarily as instruments of entertainment.... They brought few sweeping social reforms. They failed to dent the evils of an industrial system that drew vast wealth for the few from the labors of the impoverished many, though the impoverished kept the circulation booming.... They sold well and that was sufficient."\(^5\)

The duties of the newspaper did evolve and refine itself over a period of time. An era of yellow journalism and muckrakers ensued pursuing another extreme in the realm of journalism. During this interval the first amendment was taken quite literally.


THE HISTORY OF THE WHITLEY COUNTY PAPERS

History of The Post

July 13, 1853 - The first issue of The Pioneer (Democratic Organ) was created by Joseph Berry with a circulation of 400.

1856 - P.W. Hardesty bought and renamed it the Jeffersonian.

1856-1858 - No Paper Existed.

1858 - I.B. McDonald bought the office of the Jeffersonian and established the Columbia City News.

1865 - Eli Brown purchased the Columbia City News and renamed it the Columbia City Post.

1879 - Half interest of The Post was sold to John W. Adams.

1881 - John Adams became sole owner of the Columbia City Post.

History of The Commercial

1854 - Henry Walker established the Whitley County Republican.

1859 - John Shannon bought it and renamed it the Columbia City Argus.

The Columbia City Argus was bought by Paul Hooper and the ownership changed hands several times, but it always returned to Paul Hooper.

1868 - The Columbia City Argus was purchased by John W. Baker.

1877 - The Columbia City Argus was renamed as The Commercial.

Evolution of The Post & Mail

1891 - Wallace Williamson and John Price bought the Columbia City Times which had been a weekly Democratic Paper and changed the name to The Mail (Republican).


1895 - The Mail failed financially.

1896 - Wallace Williamson bought a new office and began The Mail again.

1905 - Wallace Williamson then bought The Commercial and formed the Commercial-Mail.

1929 - The Commercial-Mail combined with The Post to become The Post & Mail.

It was during this period of Indiana history that featured "the bitterness with which rival editors attacked each other. Battles of words were long and drawn out. These disputes arose over various subjects such as the size and quality of their papers, statements and misstatements of facts, the appropriation of articles without giving proper credit to the author and most frequently, perhaps, over partisan politics." Some historians of the journalism field felt partisan politics was expected and even encouraged, for it made for lively reading and some time lively living.

The primary purpose of the newspaper can be determined to be one of informing the masses. This informing may occur in numerous ways whether local gossip or governmental decisions which may or may not have been included in the early newspapers. The early newprints coupled experimentation with style, size, circulation and periodicity in output all of which resulted over time in the evolution of the newspapers. The ever changing ownership of the pioneer newspapers allowed for varying sources implementing an even greater source of change. It was the editor that allowed such changes to be made.

The aspiring role of the editor was one of obvious importance in a community, for it was the editor who controlled the operations. Because the editor held power over accepting or rejecting articles and issues concerning local, state, national and world news, the average farmer in a rural county was at the mercy of the editors'
discretionary tactics. The implications of such habits could seemingly influence the issues with which the public was concerned and obviously hinder the awareness of all who relied upon the newspaper as a sole means of obtaining information. These 'powers' were often cited as being a source of unreliability by editors when criticizing their colleagues. If a county had the good fortune of possessing two newspapers, one newspaper would check the other. In most situation a rival newspaper sprang up because of the political affiliation of the former.

Indiana in the late 1800's was considered to be a balanced state in terms of its political proclivities. Because Indiana remained largely rural and steeped in agricultural activities, few large cities existed. This consistency in size allowed for an even dispersion of Democrats and Republicans throughout the state. Hence, any aggressive acts made by one of the major parties were often met and fought until a balance was restored or a victor of sorts could be named. This obviously was the case of any political affiliated newspapers as an opposing newspaper came into existence. Often the editor was the source of antagonistic measures hurled at the opposing party allowing for but another source of influence to be wielded.

The role of the editor during the 1800's evolved to be quite a coveted position. It was traditional in the mid-1880's onward for the president to appoint the corresponding political party's editor to the position of postmaster in each county. This position was one of the highest paid in all the government-related fields, thus increasing the rivalry among the editors. 9 Often the editor's

position became a catalyst to obtain a more prestigious standing in community circles, for this proved to be the case in Whitley County.

Each of the men who were editors in Whitley County in the year 1890 had earned a college degree, which seems to imply definite elements of progress and refinement were encompassed in the position. Each editor also was appointed at least once as postmaster, again inferring a position of importance. Wallace W. Williamson, John W. Baker and John W. Adams were in one sense all rival editors attempting to perform the same tasks. Whitley County poses as an interesting element in the archives of journalism, for it was one of the counties that held alliance with three politically affiliated newspapers. A third newspaper was added to the community because of dissatisfaction with the aggressiveness of the Democratic party. Hence, two Republican newspapers co-existed in Whitley County for about nine years between 1896 and 1905.

The original duo consisted of The Commercial, which was Republican, and The Post which was the Democratic organ. The editor of The Commercial was John W. Baker who apparently was competent, having first been editor of a newspaper in the nearby community of Warsaw. He must have been a persevering man for he was the sole editor of The Commercial from 1869 to 1905, yet he obviously failed to satisfy the more aggressive members of his community within the Republican Party. After his departure, however, from editorial circles, he was nominated for the position of mayor of Columbia City as he approached the age of 72, indicating the

10 The Whitley County Bulletin, p. 3.
respect the community held for him.\textsuperscript{11}

The editor of the Democratic paper was John A. Adams. He, too, was a respected man in the community, having been appointed postmaster from 1893-1897. Tradition holds fast in this man's heritage, for today the Columbia City Post & Mail is controlled by John W. Adam's descendents.

The man sought to replace, or more appropriately, improve the Republican editorial stance needed a quick wit and the desire to become the aggressor in the political feuds fought through this medium. Wallace W. Williamson was found to be the most likely candidate for such a position. He had received experience in Memphis, St. Louis and Denver as a correspondent for their larger daily newspapers. "During his career he aquired a reputation as a journalist of exceptional ability, a prolific and informative writer, and an energetic newshound."\textsuperscript{12} Owing to his strong political and editorial views, some of his adversaries bestowed upon him the nickname of 'Buck', and it was said that "probably no citizen has had a greater impact on the progress of Columbia City and Whitley County than Wallace W. Williamson."\textsuperscript{13} He was an influential man both through journalism and through activities in the social circles. He was involved with numerous civic groups and attained the position of bank president in 1933.

After Williamson quickly established himself as the aggressive Republican editor, the bantering between the two rivals commenced.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Whitley County Bulletin}, p. 6.


\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
Each editor found delight in haranguing the other, whether the motive was important or trivial in nature. An example of such scoffing may be attested by the following editorials, the first appearing on November 3, 1910, in the Democratic paper The Post and the latter on May 11, 1910, in the Republican paper The Commercial-Mail which had been newly formed by the sale and merger of The Commercial and the Mail to Williamson who continued to serve as editor.

The Commercial-Mail has never taken enough interest in Governor Hauly to know how to spell the name correctly. It always puts an "e" in it. If it would spell it "Haulee", it would pass as being spelled according to the reform method which is being objected to by good spellers only.

A similar dig was issued by the Commercial-Mail in response to another irritant.

After being pummeled for days by this paper, The Post has finally made a few forced remarks concerning the qualifications of the democratic candidates for office. But anyone acquainted with the "strong" editorial methods employed by the democratic organ can plainly see that the remarks were "forced" and hard "forced" at that. The compliments came from the hat rim down, rather from the suspenders buckle up. In this "forced" march nothing was said about the efficiency or inefficiency of the present democratic officials seeking to be re-elected.... There's something about this non-endorsement policy that is too deep for many of the democrats and republicans of this country.

An interesting episode occurred between the two rival editors that has almost been forgotten and swept away. The story, as conveyed by a knowledgeable man of Whitley county history, is basically as follows. Williamson and Adams, around the year of 1891, developed a bantering feud that ended up in the courts. Williamson charged that Adams was overcharging for his legals
thus defrauding the tax payer. The charge made by Williamson incriminating Adams as a thief was beyond the acceptable limits of Adams. Adams demanded that Williamson retract his statement only to have Williamson refuse. At that point Adams then hired an attorney and brought Williamson to court on a criminal charge of slander. Williamson was found guilty and forced to admit that he had based his story on heresay. The jury was indecisive in assessing a punishment, as some wanted to penalize him for $1,000 and force him to serve a year's imprisonment. The final decision was for a mere $25 fine. This episode made for lively social implications and interesting bits of history.\textsuperscript{15}

The basic nature of the individual Whitley County editors during the year 1890 can be used as a tool in understanding some of their respective motives in wielding their editorial prowess. In deciding what to retain or what to delete from their newspapers, one must examine the issues facing the community in terms of local, state and national issues. A comprehensive analysis based on the actual editorial printed in that year should allow for an insightful discovery of what the editorial opinion of the year 1890 actually was.

The 1890's are commonly recalled as being a time of renovation and exploring the last of the frontiers; it was a time of expanded industrialization which allowed monopolies to establish a subtle stronghold in the economics of the nation. A rapid change was transpiring within the role of the government and in the flexibility and accessibility the population was beginning to obtain.\textsuperscript{15} Schultz
In terms of global occurrences, decisions were made, artistic creations were rendered and philosophies established that would eventually have an impact on the growing nation.

Thus in March, 1890, Spain granted the right of universal suffrage to all its constituents in the country. This seemingly backward country must have had some liberal philosophers for such a decree to be implemented. This announcement surely had an obvious encouraging effect on the women's movement, for in the United States, it was an era of little recognition and acceptance of the women's movement. In Great Britain the first form of free elementary education came into existence, though the system of free education had been an integral part of the Indiana educational mechanism since 1867. This means of education allowed for a more uniform method of obtaining standards and maintaining the belief of Jefferson that all who were willing and capable should be allowed the opportunity to obtain an education.\(^\text{16}\)

Also in Great Britain, Alfred Marshall, the renowned economist, completed one of his most famous works entitled *Principles of Economics*. This book altered the way of economic thinking for decades to follow by thoroughly explaining the concepts of marginal analysis and neo-classicalist thought. Tolstoy and Ibsen put forth some of their most well-known pieces which also proved to be influential in modern drama and the development thereof. Cézanne painted 'The Cardplayers' in the year 1890; he also was most influential in his field and became more popular over time. Tchaikovsky was creating melodious movements that continue to stand tall in the music world, and the one-eared artist named Van Gogh passed

away on November 22, 1890. 17

These seemingly trivial items at that point in time may later prove to be recognized in the various fields in which they participated. But why were they often overlooked? Are great things too auspicious to be noticed, or is it due to the lack of recognition given? Whose position is it to become aware of these occurrences and decide on their importance in terms of relating them to others? If the editor was the sole possessor of the responsibility of reporting and focusing on current issues, it was an awesome task he faced.

On the national level, 1890 opened with Miss Nellie Bly completing the fastest trip around the world as she traveled in various modes of transportation in an eastward direction in a matter of seventy-two days, six hours and eleven minutes. In June the Eleventh Census in the history of the country showed a total population of 62,622,250 which was an increase of over 12.4 million since 1880. Added to the union were Idaho and Wyoming, increasing the nation's size to include more of the vast west. 18

In Chicago the first sky-scraper built entirely with a steel frame was erected as a result of the high cost of land there. 19

Because economic trends were pushing towards big business and an increase in industrialized products, the population was slowly shifting from rural to urban living, thus creating a need for

17 Ibid.


19 Williams, p.353.
social reform. In 1890 the Socialist Labor Party was increasing its following, focusing on the plight of the alienated worker who was discriminated against by the influx of big business. Slum areas were becoming larger and more severe which contrasted with the year-end profit statements of such monopolies as the Standard Oil Trust and Sugar Refineries Company.

Such unfair extremes found many people justifiably outraged at the suppression of competition. The wealthy share holders never understood the plight of the working many who merely sought to feed and clothe his family. The first step towards the destruction of such inequality occurred in 1890 with the passage of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. The Sherman Act declared illegal "every contract, combination in the form of trust or otherwise, or conspiracy, in restraint of trade or commerce among the several states, or with foreign nations." Senator John Sherman of Ohio was credited for introducing the bill, as it later was a catalyst for more specific legislation.20

Benajamin Harrison, like Sherman, was born in Ohio, but later practiced law in Indianapolis. He was President at the time of the enactment of the Sherman Act. Under this administration the Republicans initially controlled the Senate and the House of Representative, until November of 1890 at which time the Democrats regained control of the House. The administration's leaders were: James Blaine, Secretary of State; Thomas Reed, Speaker of the House of Representatives; William McKinley, Chairman of the Ways

20Ibid.
and Means Committee. In the election of 1888, Harrison actually recieved 96,000 fewer popular votes but won the majority of the electoral votes, hence winning the election. Such closeness in the Presidential contest helps to explain the efforts of both parties to blur the national issues.\footnote{Ibid.} Both parties had internal conflicts. Making one platform similar to the other helped to retain adherents and possibly acquire votes.

One of the key reasons behind the plurality victory emerged from the increasing popularity of the Popularist Party. In the election of 1888, the Populist Party received over one million votes, which dispersed the aggregate vote over the three parties. The Populist Party developed mainly from an agrarian and rural base which in the late 1880's had formed an organization simply called the Farmers' Alliance. This alliance became politically active in 1888 as the Populist Party and even more so in 1890. The crucial element that was the foundation of the platform was a series of reforms designed to improve the position of the American Farmer due to industrial growth. This group opposed the tariff, viewing it as a means of supplementing the rich while handicapping the farmer.\footnote{Allen Weinstein and Frank Otto Gatell, Freedom and Crisis (New York: Random House, 1981), p. 263.}

The Alliance also favored an increase in the supply of money through remonetorizing silver. The Sherman Silver Purchase Act, signed July 14, 1890, should have pleased the Alliance. The act required the Treasury to purchase 4,5000,000 ounces per month at
the prevailing market price and to issue in payment legal tender Treasury notes redeemable in gold or silver at the option of the Treasury. 23 Those purchases had the effect of increasing circulation of redeemable paper currency and weakening the Federal gold reserve. Some feared, however, that the silver inflation might take the country off the gold standard.

The cause of the Democratic landslide in November, 1890 has often been attributed to one piece of legislation: The McKinley Tariff Act. This tariff raised the average duty 42.2% which was opposed by the Democrats, Farmers' Alliance and the Populist Party. The Act was intended to promote South American trade, but it also caused prices of the protected goods to rise. The tariff raised the level of duties on wool goods, cotton goods and steel products and put sugar on the duty free list. The McKinley Tariff was presented by William McKinley and laid high duties on foreign goods coming into competition with home manufacturers, and admitted free those which did not. 24

The pieces of legislation put into effect in 1890 held an important role in altering the course of events. Other items of interest that ensued that year varied in subject matter. In April a Supreme Court decision denied validity of state prohibition laws which affected the transporting of intoxicating liquors during the period of interstate transportation. Another decision came from the Mormon Church: the church no longer sanctioned plural marriages. 25

23 Williamson, p. 252.
24 Ibid.
Some conflicts in Congress forced some organizational rules to be implemented, thus enabling a more efficient term to be executed. A problem arose out of the lack of power the Speaker possessed when trying to call a quorum, when those actually present refused to respond to roll call. The corresponding regulations, dubbed the New Rule, enabled the speaker to include those present even if not responding to roll call, and also, no dilatory motions need be entertained by the Speaker.  

These issues outlined above proved to be the ones given the most weight in a historical perspective on the national level. It was an era of contrast and change, thus encouraging the evolution of the country. A more focused perspective can be obtained by evaluating the state of Indiana and ascertaining the issues of importance. The predominant strains of European blood in the Hoosiers were English, Scottish, Irish and German which combined to form rigid philosophies and particular mental characteristics of the people. In general the attitudes of those early pioneers were derived from the old country which included open-handed hospitality, a quick temper yet explosive humor and a contempt for business shrewdness or close bargaining, to list but a few traits. Some of their principal philosophies also stemmed from the old country; they often were devout Christians believing in simple dress and simple homes while enjoying a plain society, and upholding the traditional values that one's deeds return to the doer and that life is much more dear than property.  

26 Ibid.  

general characteristics of the people within Indiana should allow for an insight into the relevant issues pertaining to the farmers and citizens.

The breakdown of percentages of employees within the various employment sectors during 1890 in Indiana was as follows: 44.4% agriculture, 20.0% manufacturing, 12.7% trade/transportation, 1.1% mining and quarrying. The majority of the people (73.1%) lived in rural areas while 26.6% of the people lived in urban areas. 28

One of the main concerns of the people centered around the poor and often inadequate working conditions found in various industries across the state. Laws had been passed restricting the number of working hours allowed by children under sixteen and women in the mining and manufacturing industries, implying further restrictions were in order. A child under sixteen could not work in cotton or woolen mills for more than ten hours a day. Most factory employees worked ten hours a day six days a week under harsh conditions. The low wages which were the compensation for their toils far from justified the extreme conditions which they faced. Twenty-six strikes which included 2,441 employees occurred in the sparsely populated state. 29

The reason for any industrial production developed mainly from the transportation improvements being made throughout the state. Some problems, however, resulted from the road improvement tactics. The construction of roads was financed, not by general taxation, but by assessments upon adjacent property owners who had to petition for improvements. The bulk of the responsibility rested upon a few and failed to disperse the cost among all who used them. 30

28 Phillips, p. 323.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., p. 405.
Educational reform had been underway for about ten years, but the system also had its problems. Difficulties were found in the preparation and recruitment of competent teachers because they also shunned the low pay and poor working conditions. The public school system was floundering and trying to improve its position.  

The farming community, which virtually affected every resident within the state, faced difficult problems deriving from legislation on the national level. The farmers faced declining prices for most crops. In 1883, the average price per bushel of wheat was at $1.11; in 1890 the same bushel would bring the farmer a mere $0.51. The price per pound of first-class beef in 1884 was $0.06 followed in 1890 by a decline to $0.04. The price reduction often made it difficult for many to survive.  

Another issue which caught public attention concerned a group called the White Caps which was similar to the Klu Klux Klan except for one interesting point; the White Caps were dedicated to the enforcement of private standards of morality among the community members of the white people. The state government failed to halt such beatings and lynchings, bringing national attention to the state for such uncivilized actions. The public lynchings of both blacks and whites occurred mainly in the southern half of the state, though observable prejudices occurred everywhere. 

31 Ibid., p. 380.  
32 A History of Indiana, p. 1048.  
33 Phillips, p. 375.
The state and the counties faced problems such as the aforementioned, as noted in history books. Of what were the residents of Whitley County aware? The information they received came basically from the county newspapers. Thus, the role of the printed media became extremely important. The editorial sections were supposed to inform, question, make judgments, and shape the opinion of its clientele. What did the editors of the Whitley County newspapers consider important, valid, erroneous, and worthy of their comments? In order to discover the judgemental views of the editors, the actual editorials must be scrutinized and evaluated for the year 1890.

CHAPTER 2

In the area of world affairs, the editor of The Post issued brief statements covering unimportant items. The Post printed the following about Germany:

The autocratic policy pursued by the young Emperor of Germany in practically relying upon himself alone in guiding the policy of the vast empire over which he rules, creates an ominous feeling of disaster in the future. 34

On June 13, The Post recognized the influence of France's decisions on the United States' farmer.

France imposes an additional duty on the importation of corn. As the U.S. furnishes that country nearly all this cereal, the farm in this country will be largely affected.

The Commercial contained a few remarks on global issues, focusing on England, and ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous. On 34 The Post, March 29, 1890.
January 15 the paper noted a struggle in Africa.

Fight they will - for amusement. It is now reported that the English and Portuguese of East Africa will go to battle. Let them go! is the echo from our shore, for "La Groppe" will soon become old hat to the restless Europeans and then they will return to the same old, never-changing topic, "war," which seems to hold a chain which their revengeful spirits cannot resist.

Five days later the following editorial appeared in the Commercial:

Tipping servants is carried on to such an extent in England that waiters are known to pay at restaurants one dollar a day for the privilege of waiting on customers, instead of proprietors paying them. One American was said that the only hired person he found in Europe who refused to take a fee was an Irishman. Travelers find that more obliging servants than those of the old world cannot be found - if they are paid well. This practice of giving tips to waiters has grown to such an enormous extent in England that someday we will hear of a grand collapse of the whole thing.

Generally, however, foreign countries were mentioned only with reference to the tariff laws which the editor opposed. The Post made mention of the issue in the following manner:

European countries threaten a general retaliation upon the U.S., by an increased duty upon the products of the farm, if the McKinley bill passes. When the American farmer is shut out from the markets of the world, and has to rely upon that at home, the humbug of the "home market" theory will be thoroughly exploded.35

The Commercial then acknowledged the foreign influence on the bullion controversy. In an editorial which appeared on June 25 the editor felt:

that the only reason assigned for the recent shipment of gold to Europe is that the German government is seeking to make up its losses during the past few months, and to that end is buying here. If England and Germany would

35Ibid., May 2, 1890.
unite with the U.S. in adopting an international ratio for gold and silver coinage, and would restore silver to full money power, thus hoarding gold would not be necessary. There is not gold enough for the money basis of the trade world, and nothing so well demonstrates that fact as this struggle to retain a store of gold in government banks.

Wallace Williamson, the editor of the Commercial also published a long editorial in response to the protective policy that had been attacked, entitled 'The Tariff on Wools.'

The tariff on wools has always been a favorite of attack with those who seek to break down the protective system. They seem never to have forgotten the advice of their patron saint, Richard Cobden, to concentrate their attacks upon some single point as this gained further conquest will be found all the easier. But in demanding repeal of the wool tariff the free trade attorney is compelled to ignore the sympathy at other times affected for the farmer, and to shut his eyes to the fact that 3/4 of the wool growers are farmers, holding sheep as a portion of their farm equipment. And in this inconsistency he exposes the fact that for other so-called raw material - is but a veiled attack upon the whole system of protection to domestic industries.

While the flock owner is pointed to the low prices of wool as proof that the tariff is no benefit to him, every other man who is supposed to have an interest in making wool cheaper than it is now is asked to vote to put wool on the free list under assurance that it is the tariff that keeps prices at present figures. The only consistency to be found in these lies in the desire to break down the protective policy, and obtain that end by confusing voters who may honestly endeavor to determine what is for their best interests.

Foreign wools are especially menacing to the business of the domestic flock owned by the reason of the facility with which they can be transported and the safety and economy of storage while awaiting the convenience of purchasers. Add to this the admitted advantage of an adequate home supply, and the farmers’ right to equal protection with his fellow citizens in other callings, and there remains no arguments against the existing wool tariff - of the favoring the removal of all protective duties.36

36 The Commercial, July 9, 1890, editorial.
Wallace also used the position of foreign governments to support the need of a tariff. The following editorial appeared on July 16:

The *Indianapolis Journal* says that American free traders insist that the tariff is a "tax," and that it is paid for by the consumers. Foreign manufactures know better, and so do the British organs of free trade. They know the principle burden of the tariff duty is on the foreign manufacturer. Commenting on the McKinley bill, the *Birmingham Post* says: "The maximum relief which it can give to English steel rail producers will not exceed $4.00 per ton." How can a reduction of the duty in steel rails give relief to English manufacturers if they pay no part of the tax?

The opinion of the *Commercial's* editor was so adamant in his support of the tariff, that other newspaper articles were also used for reference in the *Commercial's* editorial page.

*Legioner Leader*: It is a significant foreign fact that our aggregate foreign trade during the last fiscal year was the largest in our history, amount being $1,647,192,014 or more by $1 million more than the highest previous showing. The balance is in our favor - that is the exports are worth studying as conclusive proof of the fact that our traffic with other nations is by no means so small or so loosing as the free trade orators are in the habit of representing.\(^\text{37}\)

In response to the possible positive effects of a decrease in the tariff an editorial was issued to admonish such thought by the logical analysis of cost, on October 18.

*The London Financial Times* admits that American "forces outside competition to cut down expenses to the bone." Without protection we should have to cut ours to the bone, and it would have to be as it is there, to the bone of labor, which represents 90% of the cost of product.

Williamson had confidence in the McKinley Act, as it was a tool of the Republican Party. He enforced its logic by his own reasoning.

\(^{37}\text{Ibid.}, November 14, 1890.\)
If the tariff is a tax the reduction of the duty on sugar by the McKinley bill will save the people ten times as much as they will pay in the increased cost of other things. But the increase of prices, if felt at all, will be in luxuries, while sugar is an article of universal consumption.38

Five days later, Williamson again supported the McKinley Tariff Act as he felt it would bring the price of goods down due to forced competition.

An exchange states that during the past six or eight years the prices of all kinds of iron goods have declined all the way from 10 to 20 per cent, but during that period the price of tin plate has maintained because of a low duty which enabled the English monopoly to get its price without fear of competition. The competition starting up under the McKinley Tariff will soon bring prices down.

Finally, on November 19, 1890, the final words encouraging the use of tariffs appeared:

Here is another free-trade admission. The New York Times favors international copyright laws because it "would relieve American authors from unfair competition." Precisely, and pray tell us why the same rule should not be applied to those who work with their hands.

Obviously, the agrarian base of Indiana promoted the tariff act and any other legislation that protected and strengthened the position of the farmer.

The Women's Suffrage Movement and Prohibition received little ink in 1890, implying either little support or an attempt by the editors to discourage such organizations. The Commercial covered Prohibition in the following fashion:

The Prohibitionists met in convention at the opera house on Saturday last and placed in nomination a county ticket.39

38 The Post, March 8, 1890.

39 The Commercial, April 30, 1890.
Such coverage was a bland surmise of a once strong movement.

The Post provided a bit more coverage, though the methods used were less tactful.

The Prohibition Act of South Dakota goes into effect April 30th. In all time past the experience of such legislation is that there is no public sentiment to enforce it. Like all quack nostrums of compulsion, it fails. 40

The March 22nd issue of The Post contained an editorial that suggested that the Prohibitionist movement was merely a reactionary movement.

The utter failure of Prohibition in Kansas has resulted in reactionary movement to that state, demanding of the legislature a resubmission of the question. It will win.

On January 15, The Commercial satirically acknowledged the efforts of the "weaker sex" in a half-hearted editorial.

Miss Anthony is distributing in South Dakota 50,000 copies of Senator Palmer's speech upon women's suffrage. The speech is said to be one of the best ever made in behalf of the "dear creatures" and so no wonder Miss Anthony is warming it up to the men of South Dakota. There are more men than women in the west, but for reasons unknown the men back against the wall and the women slash away, giving it to them hot and heavy usually carrying off the victorious laurels.

However, the slow advancement of the determined women was recognized by the Commercial on March 26 of 1890.

An exchange states that the question "shall women be admitted into the General Conference as lay delegates?" has been submitted to the congregations of all Methodist churches in the U.S., and enough of the returns have been received to show that the women have carried the day, they are entitled to seats in the General Conference as lay delegates.

40 Ibid., December 10, 1890.
And again the Commercial acknowledges the women's skills and the drive that they possess.

There are in Indiana a great many women who form extensively and are as skilled as any of the men. These women have made money out of business, and would not give it up for any other calling.⁴¹

Another issue which grabbed public attention dealt with the race controversy. The discriminatory tactics of some were recognized and chided after a much publicized lynching. This lengthy editorial in the Commercial may have been intended to sicken and make the people of Whitley County more aware of such happenings.

The murder of three white men in less than a month stains the criminal records of the Country with a fearful outbreak of outlawry - The accused, but untried, victims riddled with bullets - a Georgia Paper Prints Some Health Sense.

Columbia, S.C., Dec. 30 - Three hundred armed men with faces masked surrounded a jail just at the darkest hour before day while the inmates are heavily sleeping. They... organized the body. The jailer is quietly seized and quickly overpowered, his keys taken from him, the heavy doors unlocked, and before eight negroes are sleeping within are awakened their cells are filled with strange figures, they are seized and carried out into the night, their cries for mercy, prayers and curses alike unheeded by their silent executioners.

These eight negroes were charged with committing and being accessory to the following crimes: The afternoon of Oct. 30 John J. Hefferman was shot and killed instantly in a restaurant in the town of Barnwell... The killing took place in a colored restaurant, where Hefferman had followed Johnson. Five other negroes were jailed as accessories.

Two hundred men then formed a line a short distance from them and poured volley after volley into the negroes. They were shot to pieces. The firing was the first intimation the people of the town had of trouble. It seemed then as if the negroes would rise up and revenge the lynchings. In response to a request the governor ordered a body of infantry and one of cavalry to prepare for service. The whites are armed and pretty well organized. The town is reasonably quiet.

⁴¹Ibid., January 8, 1890.
The leading citizens of Barnwell met Saturday evening and prepared a statement intended as a palliation of the slaughter. In it they recount the murder of the 3 citizens mentioned above and add that the continuations of the case of the murders of Hefferman disappointed the whites and emboldened the negroes. They ascribe the latest wholesay lynching to the indignant resentment of whites at these brutal murders.

Augusta, GA, Dec. 30 - The Chronicle, refering to the lynchings of the negroes confined in the jail at Barnwell, S.C. says:

"White men who mob and shoot negroes accused of violent crimes violate the laws of God and their country. They are guilty of murder, and, however revolting the crimes supposed to have been committed by those upon whom their vengeance is wreaked, men who take law into their own hands, who usurp the place of the judge and jury, are conspirators against the integrity of the state and enables to the most sacred rights and the only safeguard of the liberty of the people. The shootings of negroes, whether guilty or not, is brutal. It is a disgrace to our civilization, and a scandal and a shame to any community that tolerates or perpetuates such acts of lawlessness inhumanity and crimes." 42

Some weeks later the Commercia carried a sentence which may have been racist or not:

In S.C. two superstitious colored persons becoming frightened at the darkness which preceded a storm sank to the ground and expired almost instantly. 43

The Post reviewed racial discrimination in a somewhat uncompromising tone. The editorials covering the "race war" were very insightful as to the particular mood of the day.

last week at Indianapolis, all the men in a large machine shop walked out becasue the manager employed a colored-man to work in the same building with them. There seems to be something of a "race war" not very far from home. The attention of the Honorable Bill Chandler, the negroe loving senator from New Hampshire should be drawn to this outrage at the very home of the president. 44

42 Ibid., April 12, 1890.
43 The Post, January 15, 1890.
44 Ibid.
The Post acknowledged the beginning of a race war in Illinois as the blacks began their own integration program of public schools. There is a very promising race war at Alton, in the good Republican state of Illinois. It is too bad for the sake of the leather legend republican press that all these negro outrages are not confined to the localities where the people vote democratic ticket. At Alton the white brethren refuse to patronize the same school where negroes attend. And the negroes, while admitting that ample provision has been made for them to be educated apart from the whites, claim to do as they please in the matter. That's business: it is refreshing to see the coons sticking up for their rights.\textsuperscript{45}

A representative of the Negro race was asked to comment on the attitudes of his fellow men. His comments were carried in a September 19th editorial in The Post.

Frederick Douglas, the aged representative, intellectually, of his race, asks that the Negro be "let alone" and given "fair play." The wisdom of this policy ought to be adopted by both parties. Reed wants to count them whether they vote his ticket or not. Doughlas says they are competent to take care of their own interests.

The editorials often focused upon some rather minor issues. The coverage of the selection site and date of the World's Fair was included in several editorials in the Commercial.

The three sub-committeemen of the Springers World's Fair resolution hold such views that it is reported that no two of them can agree. New York and Chicago are both waiting in breathless anxiety for them to come to a decision. New York, ready to fight like a Turk, while Chicago will feel big enough to fight the whole world if the committee fails to locate the world's fair at both places.\textsuperscript{46}

The Commercial followed the progress of the fair and the distractions

\textsuperscript{45}Commercial, January 20, 1890.

\textsuperscript{46}Ibid., January 28, 1890.
that may have impeded its popularity. Because of such distractions, the official date became a popular topic, and on March 12th the following editorial appeared:

The World's Fair may have its time of taking place changed from year to year of 1892 to 1893... We think the change could be very wisely made, if for nothing more than because the excitement of campaign will detract greatly from it. Chicago takes matters cool, now, as she has proven herself more of a successful hog than New York. The latter is still growling and snapping around like a toothless bulldog.

The Post also acknowledged the fair by noting on March 8th:

The World's Fair project seems to hang fire. The House Committee refuses to report the bill until a full guarantee is given financially.

An issue of local importance upon which many editorials were focused developed around the condition of roads in the county.

The Post had a definite opinion of the situation.

The gravel road question has outgrown the puny system of laws whereby a few are taxed by special assessment for the benefit of the many. The leading lines of highway ought to be built by the state, and the lessor by the county or township. In ten years, if the amount of money now collected for road tax would be judiciously applied, every road in the county would be made first class. Agitate! Agitate!47

Eight days later, in the same tone, The Post again appealed.

The special assessment plan of constructing highways, in our judgement, is all wrong. To make the landowners abutting on our leading lines of highways pay for the cost of making good gravel roads, seem to us an injustice. The community, as a whole, gets the benefit, and why not let them help pay for it. The truth is, the leading lines of roads must be constructed by the state, and then the county and township can do the rest.

The Commercial used personal appeal in promoting the road

47 The Post, February 8, 1890.
improvement issue.

Dr. Amermar says he now more than ever is in favor of gravel roads, since he took a ride over the elegant public highway that abounds so numerously in Huntington County.48

On the April 30th editorial page, Williamson acknowledged the fallibility of both men and the road system which he felt prompted profanity.

In order to avoid like temptation upon the part of others, we suggest that gravel roads should be built in our county at once. John Kepner says he was almost lead to profanity one day last week, in contrasting the muddy roads of Whitley county to the fine gravel road of Huntington county.

Another topic of interest about which the editors wrote concerned the legislative branch of the Federal government. The Congress proved to be in need of some organizational developments of which the editors were aware and favored. The Commercial explained its editorial views in such a fashion:

Speaker Reed has triumphed. The long agony is over. The new code of rules has been adopted by the House and the principles of majority rule vindicated. Under the new rules the House will be able to translate business more expeditiously than for many years past. The county is indebted to Mr. Reed and the Republicans of the House, for having the courage to topple over mumbo-jumbo of precedents and give the people their right. The people do not elect a majority of the House of Representatives to have it controlled by the minority.49

Another judgemental editorial on behalf of the Congressional rules was issued by the Commercial on July 30.

No better reason has been given for the passage of a Federal election bill than Blaine gave him

48 Commercial, April 30, 1890.

49 Ibid., February 19, 1890.
soon after the election in 1884, when he said: Gentlemen, there cannot be political equality among the citizens of a free Republic; there cannot be a minority of white men in the South ruling a majority of white men in the North. Patriotism, self respect, protection for person and safety for country, all cry out against it. It becomes the primal question of American manhood. It demands a hearing and a settlement will vindicate the equality of American citizens in all personal and civil rights. It will at least establish the equality of white men under the national government, and will give to the Northern man who fought to preserve the Union as large a voice in its government as may be exercised by the Southern man who fought to destroy the union.

Another issue which received national attention dealt with the educational system. The Commercial acknowledged the institution, but only once in an entire year, through the following editorial.

We are glad to see the DePaw University, Greencastle, Indiana, offers a free scholarship for the entire college course to the honor graduates of the commissioned High School of the State. Although the University has always been in hearty sympathy with public schools, this action will unite it more closely with the peoples' college...

The Post was aware of a compulsory education system that was trying to be implemented which left a definite impact on the mind of the editor. Feelings of contempt were conveyed through the February editorial.

Compulsory voting, like compulsory education, don't "compel." These two anti-Democratic ideas ought to be yoked with the stupendous fallacy that protection "protects" and that other farce— that prohibition "prohibits." The American idea, as expounded by Jefferson, is the largest liberty to the individual citizen consistent with public order. Force laws, when invading the rights inherent to the citizens, always a failure because there is

50 Commercial, March 18, 1890.
no public sentiment to enforce them. That it is a duty to vote; that it is a duty to send your children to school; that it is wrong to get drunk; that it is robbery to take the earnings of ninety-nine to make one rich, are all axiomatic truths. Education, and not force will ultimately correct the evils flowing from the lack of performance of duty in not voting, education and temperance. As for that other lay enacted and enforced, levying tribute on the many for the benefit of a few, it is doomed.

One month later, The Post again acknowledged the fact that force does not bring the utopian dream, but merely resentment.

Wisconsin has a compulsory education law. The effort to enforce it meets with stern resistance, and of course it will fail. When will the utopian dreamers, who imagine the state to regulate everything, learn that the invasion, under the cover of the law, of a single right of a citizen will be resented.

Specific opposition was cited using the German-Lutheran organization as a catalyst for noncompulsory education laws. The rights needed by this religious group were necessary in order to educate their children in the manner they felt appropriate.

The German Lutherans of Indiana are organizing in time against the enactment of compulsory education laws in this state, like these in Wisconsin and Illinois. They heartily sustain the common school system, but claim the right to maintain parochial schools, and educate their children in the German language if they so desire. This right is inherent and any legislation abridging it The Post will oppose.

The belief in human rights and standards of right and wrong in terms of taxation were also an issue with the editor of The Post. His lack of acceptance of monopolistic restraints on competition and the consequences there of were obvious to the reader. The living conditions due to such restrictions of the impoverished workers made the need for reform obvious.

51 The Post, May 23, 1890.
Governor Hill, of New York, very wisely refused to call out the militia to guard the New York Central Railroads in the strike of its underpaid employees. When these great corporations can no longer rely upon the military power to override the rights of labor, they will be willing to arbitrate.52

The tax system was also chided by The Post as the tax system was felt to be a hinderance to both the laborer and producer.

The ruin wrought by the wind, the devastation of the flood, the trail of death left in the tracks of la grippe are indeed calamitous, but as nothing compared with the pall which cripples the labors of the wage-worker and producer by a vicious system of indirect taxation.53

Seven days later, support was given to a more equitable system by The Post's editor. The introduction of a national income tax received favorable opinion.

The movement in favor of an income tax gains strength day by day. The Post's editor has favored this mode of national taxation for many years. It is a notorious fact that the Vanderbilts and Jay Goulds don't pay a tithe of the tax they should. An income tax would catch the plutocrats.

The Commercial failed to make mention of any items concerning human rights or taxation, possibly reflecting the administration's position on these matters.

Much debate and heated controversy resulted from having two politically affiliated and opposed newspapers. The bantering back and forth expressing support for the supported party and attacking the other party took the bulk of space in the editorials of each newspaper. The Commercial upheld its stance, as well as the Republican Party's in the following manner.

The Commercial is very sorry that Republicans permitted themselves to carry their little local differences so far as to defeat the nominees.

53 Ibid., April 4, 1890.
for trustee in Smith and Cleveland townships. We speak of these townships for reason that the Republicans have a majority of the voters in them and are entitled to office.\(^{54}\)

In support of the Republican national administration the following editorial emerged on July 23 in the Commercial.

**Warsaw Times:** That the Republican Party, as an organization, has redeemed and fulfilled its pledges, is abundantly proven by the following list or measures:

1. Tariff Bill
2. Federal Elections Bill
3. Silver Bill
4. Anti-Trust Bill
5. Dependent Pension Bill
6. Admissions Customs Bill
7. Territorial Admission Bill
8. Battleship Bill

The political elections in November never failed to bring forth statements in support of Republicans. Williamson, the Commercial's editor, used his position to promote the GOP and the candidates of each election.

The record of each of the Republican candidates on the county ticket is clean in every particular. There is not a man on the ticket that is not competent and deserving in every particular.\(^{55}\)

In encouraging people to vote and to fill the positions with honest men, Williamson used the editorial page as a convenient medium to convey such opinions.

**To The Voters of Whitley County**

The coming election is one of great importance to you as voters and taxpayers. The corruption shown to exist in the clerk's office of Whitley County: the taxing of fees of parties who are unfortunate enough to go to law, away above what the law allows; the payment of monies, in the way of commissions, to the Attorney General out of funds that ought to be left in our own county treasury and which would help lessen the burden of taxpayers if left where they belong; the purchasing of stationary records of foreign

\(^{54}\) *Commercial*, April 6, 1890.

\(^{55}\) *Ibid.*
companies at two and three times the price asked by home offices for the same thing... The exposure of these frauds comes from the partial investigation of the Democratic household...

There may be nothing further to disclose, but the people feel suspicious and ought to and will demand a thorough cleaning up. It will not hurt any man who is innocent, and the motto is and must be, "let no guilty man escape."

Think of these things. Let us try a change. There are plenty of Democrats willing to help Republicans who have been crying out against high taxes, exhorbitant charges, now have an opportunity to see these abuses corrected. Rouse Up! Get Awake! Look around you; think a little; better your condition if possible... Let us see if we can't cut down on taxes and other expenses. If, after we have fairly tried a complete change, we find no improvement, we can at least go back to the old way and set and grin and rub our bruises.56

In response to electing the county officers the following admission was made by the Commercial.

One term of four years is long enough for any man to hold office. If an office is a good thing, one man should not have a monopoly on it, and if it is a burden one man should not be asked to carry it for too long. Frequent changes for the public good is what the public want.57

The Commercial summed up its purpose in a single sentence by proclaiming:

The weekly Commercial is published in the interest of the great Republican party and not in the interest of any individual member or faction.58

The Post also exchanged political blows, in possibly a more subtle way.

A cartoon in the Chicago Daily of Monday last, depict in ragged clothes an old farmer belonging to the alliance, points a moral of self-sacrificed idoltry. His coat is mortaged, his pants are

56 Ibid.
57 Ibid., October 1, 1890.
58 Ibid., November 19, 1890.
are mortaged, and even the course plow shoes
he wears are mortaged. All these mortages
have been foreclosed, yet he sings
"My party tis of thee I sing,
With all thy fault I love thee still."
The idoltry of the farmers in preaching oppo-
sition to trusts, combines and plundering tar-
iffs, and yet voting for a party which sustains
and fosters them...

The Post expressed delight in the defeat of the Republican party
and belittled Harrison's administration for its apparent incompetence.

"Apathy" is assigned as the cause for the over-
whelming defeat of the Republican party at the
April elections. There is no doubt at what the
true cause is. The causes which led to this
apathy, the Harrison press carefully hide from
view. Why so chasy and uncovering of the sins
of omission and comission of your party, Gentlemen?

The Post again rebuked Harrison's administration as it failed to keep
its campaign promises. The promises of prosperity and production
were idealistic in an abstract sense and unfulfilled in the Demo-
crats eyes.

The farmer and working-men of the country have
certainly not forgotten the glorious promises
that were made to them last year, that if Harrison
should be elected, that the country would pass
through an era of prosperity such as was never
known in history. Harrison was elected and what
has been the result? It is too well known and too
painful to be here recounted. Every man with a
thimble full of brains knows that the promises
made were all lies of the most vicious type and
time has proven them to be such. It might be
well to ask your Republican neighbor if a single,
solitary promise made has been realized.

The Post scoffed the excuse given by the Republican party why their
people stayed away from the polls. The Post gave the reason why

59 The Post, April 5, 1890.
60 Ibid., April 18, 1890.
61 Ibid., January 8, 1890.
the Republicans lost the election; the people simply felt the leadership was inadequate.

It is a very lame excuse for a party to say that its voters stayed away from the polls. One of the most expressive ways of rebuking a party leadership is not to vote.\textsuperscript{62}

The Post then exhibited one last rebuttal in response to the attacks on its style of editing and in expressing its views.

Conservatism is a good line of action when the conditions are between extremes. Conservatism is often only another name for cowardice. Radicalism revolutionizes. It desires to invade. Every great forward movement advancing the rights of the masses against the classes has been made by radicals. They are the sappers and miners leading the forlorn hope of the army engaged in the contest for equal rights. Don't talk to us of conservatism in the attack made upon the iniquitous system of fees and prerequisites in Indiana. The present system, hoary with fraud and extortion, must be dug up by the roots and burned at the stake. It must be known no more, only as a relic of barbarism. That done, it is safe to entrust conservatism with the task of modeling a law doing justice to servant as well as master.\textsuperscript{63}

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., November 20, 1890.

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid.
CHAPTER 3

The newspaper in Whitley County, The Commercial and The Post, obviously evoked different styles in writing, tact and methodologies. The Post possessed a more aggressive philosophy towards promoting change than did The Commercial. An editorial on April 11, 1890 in The Post, provided justification for the tactics used:

It is well to talk a little plain sometimes. Soft words don't bring thieving boys out of the apple trees but a good sized club, in the farmer's hand, was an argument very convincing. This is about the experience of The Post. Because of its fearless course in exposing wrongs against the people, Ray, Blanche and Sweetheart have set up a howl that The Post was started to raise hell. If to hold public officials to a strict accountability for the trust imposed in them does that, then so be it. The Post advocates democratic principles to the core. Whitewash is not kept in this office. Honest men and true Democrats say that it is the only course which will strengthen the party. Organs, claquers and lears to the contrary.

The journalism field in that era had developed an internal system of checks and balances by keeping in line its own party as well as haranguing the opposing party.

Many issues failed to grab the editors' attention, as can be noted by the lack of editorials. The issues which received most attention generally had a direct impact upon the residents of the county. In terms of editorials noting foreign occurrences, few were offered. Neither paper paid much heed to foreign developments, thereby unintentionally helping to maintain the status quo of rural isolation: hence, the midwestern syndrome.

The tariff issue, however, received much coverage and editorial feeling. Farming was the major occupation in Whitley County at that time, inferring it affected the bulk of the population. The
tariff quotas imposed by regulating laws had both direct and indirect affects upon the farmers. The editors realized the negative aspects of such laws and sought to make the farmer aware of the circumstances. In this situation the farmers became more aware of the situation and joined forces for mutual support and strength. The Farmers Alliance and similar interest groups proved to be a strong lobby in the Congressional corridors and formed a historical base of activism for today's farmers.

An issue which received national attention, but little local concern, centered around the bullion question. The lack of insight and understanding by the individuals in the community may have been a reason for avoidance by the editors. The editors apparently realized the lack of interest concerning the gold and silver questions which may have prompted them to devote their efforts to a more pertinent issue.

The monopolies and the Sherman Anti-Trust Act also failed to draw much local editorial attention. The reasons for such negligence may simply have been out of ignorance or naivety of the conditions imposed by such industrial giants. The rural areas were obviously unaffected by poor working conditions imposed by large industrial giants. Hence, the "big city" problems passed by virtually unnoticed in the Whitley County community, and the editors again may have felt it necessary to avoid the topic. The gilded age was one full of contrasts. Was it possible for the editors to have ignored the subject in light of the negative connotations involved with the poor working conditions? If causing social unrest within the community cultivated discord, then what good would the farmers' attention have upon the situation? Such thinking may have been developed in
The minds of the editors.

The Prohibitionist and women's movements merely provoked scorn and mockery on the editorial pages. In rural areas it seems that tradition is steeped into every facet of the lives of the people. Tradition is often difficult to destroy as may be ascertained from the lowly position of the woman today; the editorials conveyed such sentiment. The expectations and goals of women in the farming community rarely developed into something beyond being school maams. The lack of foresight of the county editors merely hindered the advancement of women and prolonged the injustice. The attitudes of the community were simply restated through the editorials allowing for a vicious, destructive circle to develop.

One interesting aspect of the political affiliations of the newspapers was their avoidance of the Harrison administration. Harrison was born a Buckeye, yet practiced law in Indianapolis. The Post only issued negative statements once concerning the Harrison administration; The Commercial rarely acknowledged the positive attributes. A reason for virtual avoidance by both parties may have been the distance from the national government. Local officials were more easily identified in the eyes of the constituents. Big government had not begun to regulate peoples' lives. Thus, no real involvement was felt. Another reason the administration may have been avoided on the editorial page could have stemmed from the extreme similarity in platforms of the Republican and Democratic Parties. If a democratic editorial were to belittle the political views of the administration, a comparison could have been published as to the similar political views of the two platforms.

Religion, race problems and education were rarely discussed on the editorial section of each paper other than to cite specific occurrences.
The race conflicts were difficult situations at that time, for the position of the blacks had not been fully established and was constantly altering its direction. Definite biases existed among community members which contrasted with the moral fibers of the church affiliated faction. One would like to entertain the thought that prejudice was merely the result of ignorance which education could alleviate. This, as can be easily attested in 1903, was not the case in 1890. The editorials failed to promote a progressive attitude of change.

The educational system was developing in 1890. The mood of the religious organizations was that of rebellion as compulsory education was being introduced. The strong convictions and tradition of education with a religious base conflicted with the governmental approach - the source of discord in 1890. The editors had an unstated obligation of making their clients aware of the events, of stimulating their thoughts by providing them with information that could lead to sound judgements. The editors may also have felt compelled to support their political parties which could have conflicted with the beliefs in the community. In order to appease both sides, tempered and low-key comments were the order of the day. The repercussions of such near-sighted beliefs are still being felt today. Indiana has one of the highest illiteracy rates in the country stemming back to the rebellious attitudes of the community which denounced compulsory education. The editors, once again, seemingly failed to promote positive change.

The editors, as already noted, seemed to choose their topics for the editorial page with respect to the direct involvement their constituents would have with an issue. The gilded age was an age of
contrasts and change, but the Midwest was slow to accept the changes into its rural world. Rapid advances were felt and noticed, yet the magnitude of growth often went unnoticed. It appeared that the editors of Whitley County in 1890 chose their topics carefully when these concerned subjects other than politics. The conservative, old-country blood-lines made for biased opinions. The religious beliefs which were firmly based in the community held an unstated power over many, including the editorial page. It was not the desire of the editors to offend with abrasive editorials; consequently, issues that evoked strong responses were avoided. The early editors were not yet secure with their positions to allow them to change and alter the attitudes of the community. The motivation was based on circulation.

The gilded age in Whitley County may have left many things unstated. On the surface many improvements were being made within the community. Yet many destructive attitudes remained entrenched. It was a period of change and growth which, to occur smoothly, should have been coupled with changing attitudes and opinions. Whitley County was faced with change, though not at the magnitude found on the national level. The editors were "forced" into a compromising position which limited the value and significance of their editorial pages. Expressed differently, their editorials were not dynamic, leading or opinion shaping. They would disappoint the modern reader.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, John, editor. The Post, editorials, 1890.


