

Rainier (Oregon) Review Newspaper History

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The Rainier Review was established in 1905 by W. P. Ely of Kelso, Wash., who was at that time owner and publisher of the Cowlitz Valley Journal. Mr. Ely had a partner, G. E. Kellogg, who acted as editor. The new paper had four pages, five columns, 13 ems (*), and published all home news. Rainier's population at that time was less than 500, and the paper was printed at Kelso, with the Rainier office open for business most of the time.

Soon Mr. Kellogg seems to have bought out the Cowlitz Valley Journal and Mr. Ely had the Rainier Review. Then the masthead read "Review Publishing Co., W. P. Ely, Proprietor. A. P. Bettersworth, editor and manager". This was in early 1906.

Soon George H. Umbaugh became editor, replacing Bettersworth. Mr. Umbaugh is said to have been a wide-awake editor, putting out a newsy paper. But right away bitterness arose between the Review and the Houlton Register. Out of this difficulty came the Rainier Advance, published in Houlton and piloted by those who opposed the Review's policy. The Advance made its initial appearance on Saturday, April 14, 1906, edited by H. G. Kemp, a Methodist minister, and W. C. Ficher, an attorney, was assistant editor. It pledged itself to an open war against saloons, while the Review favored the saloons. At that time this war between the prohibition and liquor interests was general everywhere. Later the Review favored prohibition, but the files of the paper are missing, so there is no record of what happened, but the saloons stayed! The Advance was short lived and nothing more is recorded of its existence.

In July, 1907, E. H. Flagg was editor of the Review, and Walter C. Fry was listed as editor later in the year. Then came P. C. Garrison, who served for one year, turning it over to Charles A. Nutt in March, 1912. Up to this time the Review was a hand set paper, but in 1912 a linotype was installed, the first one in the county. The paper was also increased in size.

In September, 1919, A. E. Veatch took over and stayed until 1932, when he sold to Harold Axford. Mr. Veatch had made many improvements during his ownership and sold when he had become broken in health. In April, 1933, Mr. Axford sold a half interest to Paul S. Paulson, and they were partners for two months when Mr. Paulson bought out Mr. Axford in June, 1933, and edited the paper until June, 1935. Maurice Nelson then took over the Review, and Mr. Paulson moved to St. Helens where he started the Chronicle.

After three years, the Nelsons sold out to Mr. and Mrs. A. R. McCall in 1938, and they are still here after 30 years. The paper has increased to keep up with the times as the town has grown, and a bright future is in store for Rainier along with the rest of the county, as we face development of big business which has come to this area.

(*) In newspaper publishing, "ems" is a unit of measurement used in typography. Specifically, an "em" is a relative unit of length that is equal to the current font's point size. The term originated during the era of hot metal typesetting.