

It Has Had Noted Publishers

# Newspaper At Cooperstown 75 Years Old

1958

BY A STAFF WRITER

COOPERSTOWN, N. D. (AP) — The Griggs County Sentinel-Courier is 75 years old, and its present owners are planning a birthday party soon.

The weekly newspaper has had several distinctions, Mrs. G. J. Frigaard, wife of the publisher and a columnist for the paper, said.

The newspaper was founded by a man who later purchased the Detroit Free Press in Michigan, one of the nation's better known newspapers. He was Edward D. Stair, who in addition to his newspaper career was a nationally known financier.

And two of the newspapers' editors later served for years in the United States Congress.

One was Gerald P. Nye, a United States senator from North Dakota for 20 years.

The other was James H. Sinclair, who had been a manager of the Griggs County Sentinel, which along with the Cooperstown Courier became the present newspaper. Sinclair, who died in 1943, was a representative from North Dakota 2nd District for 16 years, until his defeat in 1934.

"The paper had another distinction too," Mrs. Frigaard said, in mulling over the institution's history.

"In the early days of statehood it was the official state newspaper for the publishing of "estray" notices, which announced that a valuable, domestic animal had been found.

For a few years before the turn of the century, a person who found such an animal was required by state law to publish a notice of the find three times in a weekly newspaper in the area. If the animal was not claimed, it was the duty of the newspaper to publish a notice in a state weekly news-



MR. AND MRS. G. J. FRIGAARD, publishers of the Griggs County Sentinel-Courier at Cooperstown, N. D., glance over an issue of the weekly newspaper, which is 75 years old this year. (Forum Photo)

paper designated by the governor. The Cooperstown newspaper was so designated.

"It sure must have been fine while it lasted," Mrs. Frigaard said. "But then they changed the law.

"It must have led to a reform move," she added.

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The Cooperstown Courier, and the Griggs County Sentinel, with which it was merged, have provided residents of the area with

a record of the city almost since its founding.

And Mrs. Frigaard, who writes a highly readable and witty column for the newspaper now, is the latest of several who have had a way with a paragraph.

As an example, from the April 27, 1888, edition, come these comments from an anonymous columnist:

"Although I have only voted the Republican ticket, I believe the

Republicans are getting the big head."

And, "Simon Ouren says it would be better for all to give the sheriff a bucket of tar, and no warrants to issue. And it would make for less taxes."

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The Cooperstown Courier was founded Jan. 26, 1883, by Stair.

Stair, who had worked as a reporter for the Fargo Argus for a short time before moving to Cooperstown, sold the newspaper a year later to one Frederick Adams. He sold it five years later to Percy Trubshaw, who in turn sold it in 1912 to H. S. Rearick.

Rearick in 1901 purchased the Griggs County Sentinel. Among signatures on the deed of sale was that of James H. Sinclair, the newspaper's manager.

A few years later, Rearick sold to a group of farmers in the Cooperstown area. Nye became the paper's manager, and held the position until he was appointed in 1925 to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate.

He was elected in 1926 and was a senator until his defeat in 1945.

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The late Harry M. Thompson, who died in 1943, purchased the newspaper after taking over the managementship when Nye left.

For a short time the newspaper was operated by Mrs. Thompson, who later turned over the operation to Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Anderson, now publishers of the Barnesville Record-Review in Minnesota.

The Frigaard family, long-time residents of Cooperstown, purchased the newspaper in 1949. For a time Alan, now of Marshall, Minn., and a brother of the present owner, held an interest.

It is now owned by Mrs. M. G. Frigaard, the publisher's mother and Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Frigaard. The present publisher was sheriff of Griggs County from 1948-50