



After 63 Years In Cherokee Harry B. Price Is "Mr. Sentinel"

By Harold O. Taylor

"Horse Editor" of the Pittsburg Headlight

The Horse Editor and his camera called on Mr. Price the other day. There were two contributing factors. One was that the camera is to be sent in for repairs anyway. The other is that it was pouring down rain. This meant Harry would be on the job instead of fishing. He is one of those ardent anglers who will go on the drop of a hat—and he is ready before it hits the ground.

Despite Harry's warning, the camera still works.

The Price clan dates way, way back there in Cherokee. Harry's parents came to the immediate area right after the Civil War, making the rough trip in covered wagon from Iowa. They settled on a claim along a stream on what is now the "playboy road." His dad was a farmer.

Deciding he wanted to move to town, he traded the farm for a mercantile business, which prospered until the grasshoppers took the farmers' produce and the farmers who had taken Mr. Price's wares couldn't pay as they had promised. From there, he bought into the Cherokee Sentinel.

Harry didn't follow his dad into the business. He was there first, setting type when his stature made it necessary to stand on a box to reach the case.

The Sentinel publisher believes he is the oldest person living in Cherokee who was born there. That was 78 years ago. The publisher doesn't look that old. His age was questioned when he was a court witness not so long ago. Harry sort of disliked to prove it, but he did to the satisfaction of all involved.

While attending school, Harry went to the Sentinel March 27, 1889, to set type by hand, the only way it was being done in those days. He has been at the job ever since—63 years. Of course, he uses a linotype now.

The Sentinel was the first paper in Crawford county, aside from The Headlight, to have a linotype. Harry bought the machine, but didn't know how to operate it. He learned by pressing keys and seeing what happened. Some of the initial lines came out such as "hTe bridge wore a ogwn of S\$atin" but soon he was going to town on the mechanical lead spewer.

By virtue of being the publisher, editor, reporter, makeup man, pressman and circulation manager, Mr. Price never gets in a dispute with his staff. He never bothers with copy either. Little is ever written in the office. Mr. Price just sits down at the machine and starts from there, sending out slugs from the metal pot to fill out the issue.

During his 63 years in the business—once he was in partnership with his father before taking over the plant himself—Mr. Price has never been threatened by an irate subscriber. He attributes this largely to never writing anything about anyone. He evades scandal, holding that not to be news. He tries to give everyone a pat on the back. The only thing he dodges is poetry. He won't print that.

Press day is a big day around the plant. The papers must be printed, then the single wraps made—providing it isn't a good fishing day. If it should be an extra good day when they were bound to bite, Mr. Price might be a day late with the paper. But no one seems to mind.

Over his circulation territory, Mr. Price is known as an editor who never duns a subscriber. Some of his readers get as much as five or six years behind. But occasionally they drop in and pay up.

During the war, he sent free papers to service men from the Cherokee area. He was mailing out 350 at one time. Doing the mailing wrappers was a big chore in itself, but the response from the service men made it worth the effort, he says.

He would include some spicy stories for the boys overseas. One week they were a little more spicy than usual. The wife of a former minister sort of chided him about some of the paragraphs. He in turn asked how she knew. She blushed, stammered, confessed and went on her way. She kept on taking the paper.

The Sentinel gets a surprisingly large amount of type in its columns. Other