



February 3, 1998

The Diamond Ice Plant was not the first of its kind here when it opened in February 1938, but it was a few steps ahead of its predecessors. In the 1920s and early 1930s, the ice house at the Perry Mill (home of Pride of Perry flour) provided a delivery service of ice to homes and businesses throughout the city by horse-drawn wagons.

The Perry Mill was sold to General Mills in the 1930s and it was soon shut down. Before Diamond Ice appeared on the scene, Tom Potts came here to build and operate a business he called the New Perry Ice Co. in a one-story building at 514 Delaware, across the street from Donaldson-Yahn Lumber Co. where Ruble-Vance Motor Co. is now located. The New Perry Ice Co. did not have frozen food lockers at first but added them after Diamond Ice introduced the feature here. Mr. Potts, who also was a licensed embalmer, later purchased the Davis & Son Funeral Home on Sixth street, whereupon he closed the ice plant. After World War II, he sold the funeral home to Bill Parker.

Glenn Yahn, retired Perry lumberman, watched construction of the New Perry Ice Co. from his office across the street. He remembers that the Diamond Ice Plant was opened at Seventh and Flynn streets not too long after Mr. Potts started his ice business. "People wondered if both could exist in a town this size," he says. "Diamond Ice was bigger and offered storage lockers, which Tom Potts did not have at that time. Both businesses were still operating in 1940, but soon after that Tom closed or sold his business and became an undertaker by buying Davis & Son Funeral Home."

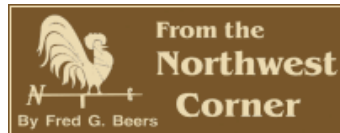
Among the first employees hired by Clarence Page, co-owner of the Diamond Ice Plant, was John Divine, Perry high school wrestling coach and science teacher who later became senior high principal. Most teachers needed summer jobs in those days, and Coach Divine was hired for that period between school terms. He had worked in the office at the old Perry Mill. Two others from the Perry Mill, Charles Schaefer and Don Lumbers, also moved over to the Diamond Ice Plant. Betty Andrews, Mr. Schaefer's daughter, remembers that he was plant manager from the time of the opening until the business was closed, and Mr. Lumbers was plant operator. Joe Lumbers, his son, also was a deliveryman. All of them were big, broad-shouldered men capable of wrestling 100-pound chunks of ice easily. E. B. Dye, who had experience in the ice manufacturing and storage business, was another plant operator. Mr. Page outfitted all of them in gray uniforms with military-style caps and the company's logo stitched over the left shirt pocket.

At the gala grand opening, Mr. Page said: "We see in the city of Perry a trading center that presents a bright outlook for the coming years. We believe in the city and we believe in the business." His faith and confidence were well-founded. The Perry area provided a good marketplace for his product, ice, and services, food lockers. The business did well here until the time came when virtually every home had an electric (or gas) refrigerator and a deep freeze. Then ice houses went out of fashion, and the Diamond Ice Plant was forced to close.

The Diamond Ice Plant was located on the lower floor of a sturdy-looking two-story building. The second floor, reached by a long, steep metal stairway attached to the exterior north side wall, was the home of the Perry Independent Order of Odd Fellows and the Rebekah lodge. In an earlier life, the building had been the home of the John Young Implement Co. Some years later the IOOF and Rebekahs built a new lodge hall in the 1100 block on Cedar street and the Diamond Ice Plant's upstairs became the home of Perry's Teen Town, then sponsored by the Rotary club. In time, floorboards in the second story developed a decided swaying motion when teens and their adult sponsors walked or danced on them, and the upper story was deemed unsafe for occupancy. The upper level was closed, Teen Town moved to a downstairs location on the square, and the old ice plant building was demolished by professional wreckers in 1973 shortly after the entire south

wall crumbled. By then the Diamond Ice Plant was long gone, and the property eventually became the location of the new NAPA Auto Parts Store, which is still there.

The Diamond Ice Plant served a definite need in its day, and that included employment of several local breadwinners, but it also introduced us to the convenience of frozen food storage. Plus, it gave this community a joyful foretaste of better economic times. We've come a long way since then, but part of today's essentials, which we take for granted, had their beginning from just such roots.



February 6, 1998

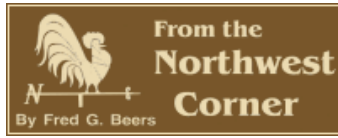
Recent items from the mailbag may be of interest to you. One of these is a note from Wichita bearing the signature of a long-time friend, Pat Jones Sewell. She writes concerning my recent column explaining the game of shinny which was favored by kids of the 1930s and 1940s in Perry, and that included Pat.

"Boy, do I remember shinny," Pat writes. "I played shinny a great deal with my pals in this neighborhood. I think it is something we all did for entertainment back then. So much fun! We played in the alley behind our house on Delaware, between Seventh and Eighth streets. The Jones house no longer exists but it was on the space which now served as the First Bank's parking lot. It was the residence of Frank and Elsie Jones, Fran Jr., Frances Marion and Pat. Frank Sr. was a clerk at the post office. The Jones home was directly across the street from *The Journal* office, and because of that proximity, Pat says a lot of things she did as a kid wound up on the front page of the paper.

Along with the note she sends a clipping from the front page of a 1938 issue of this newspaper. It contains a feature article and a two-column photo of Pat and four of her buddies digging a cave on a vacant lot between the fire station and the American Legion hall. The story relates that the kids, all about the age of 12 or 13, had been playing shinny in the alley behind the Jones house. The can they were using as a sort of dry-land hockey puck kept winding up in the garden of real estate agent and former Mayor H. H. Reynolds, who lived next door to the Presbyterian church. To prevent continuing damage to his garden, Mr. Reynolds tactfully offered the kids free use of the vacant lot he owned on Delaware street. They gladly accepted, and, steeped as they must have been in the lore of *Our Gang* movies, it didn't take them long to decide to build a cave on the back side of the lot. It provided a brief respite from the game of shinny.

The story identified members of the gang as Kenneth Brengle, Alvin Andrews, Dale Ausburn, Jimmy (Henpeck) Henderson, Vernon (Wed) Nicewander, Harcourt (Corky) Thomas and Jack (Sonny) Hicks. Pat, being a girl, was accorded honorary membership. The term "gang" did not carry the negative connotation that it has today. The photo in the paper shows five of the youths working on the cave, except that two of them are merely leaning on their shovels while the others labor. One of the two idlers was merely taking after typical WPA workers of the day, the article said, while the other wanted to grow up to be a WPA timekeeper. The kids had been fast friends since the second grade. Their gang had no dues, no officers and no name. It was unstructured.

I enjoyed Pat's note and the 60-year-old *PDJ* article enclosed with it. Would you believe I remember when it first appeared? Perhaps some of you do, too.



February 10, 1998

What a great weekend we had for classic movie buffs! Two of the all-time greatest, most stupendous films in history appeared on local TV on consecutive nights and it was almost a serendipitous occasion, for me, at least. Both were listed in the printed schedules we all consult, but I failed to notice either one of them right up to the starting times, so they came as a delightful surprise. If you're a fan, you probably already know the ones I mean. "Gone With the Wind," which heads my personal list of all-time favorites, was run in its entirety Friday night on Ted Turner's Super Station, then on Saturday night B.J. Wexler celebrated the 10th anniversary of his OETA movie program with a screening of "Casablanca." It was like waking up in cinematic heaven.

I well remember when Margaret Mitchell's epic Civil War romance novel burst upon the scene in the 1930s. Her lengthy book made history in several ways. For one thing, it was perhaps the longest fictional tome ever to make the best-seller list, with approximately twice the number of pages usually found in that select group. GWTW, the novel, created nationwide interest as the public debated which star should be cast in each role in the inevitable movie version, from the leading characters right down to the smallest bit part.

There was never any question about who would play Rhett Butler. The author surely had only Clark Gable in mind when she wrote the book and there was a unanimous expression that no one else could handle the part. The dashing actor, who at the time was known to all as "the king," years before Elvis claimed that title, was exactly right for the part. His appearance, manner of speaking and real-life personality were well known and they precisely fit the character created by the author.

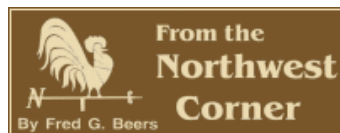
The choice of an actress to portray leading lady Scarlett O'Hara, however, was so contentious that it launched an intense national dialogue. Many possibilities were suggested, and David Selznick, the producer, nearly caused a riot when he ultimately selected Vivien Leigh, a little known British actress, of all things, to essay the challenging role of the feisty Southern belle. That, coupled with his choice of another British performer, Leslie Howard, for the part of the Southern patrician Ashley Wilkes, nearly caused another Civil War among movie fans of the day. When the three-hour film was finally released in 1939, however, it was warmly received and swept most of the Academy Award nominations that year. It is still an immensely popular theater movie when it is periodically released, and Mr. Turner rakes in several dollars each time he allows it to be shown on his TV station.

When GWTW came to Perry for its initial showing on a fall day in 1939, it was projected on the standard square screen at the Roxy Theatre on the east side of the square. Charlie Wolleson, owner of the Roxy, had to change his normal policy because of the length of the film. Instead of two nightly showings, the three-hour epic was shown once as a matinee, starting at about 3 p.m., and then again as a night feature, starting at about 7 p.m. A brief intermission was built into the film to allow movie-goers a trip to the bathroom or just a few minutes to stretch their legs.

The Roxy did not have a concession stand -- Foster's Corner Drug was right next door -- so many young people brought refreshments in a brown paper bag to relieve the pangs of hunger and tide them over until supper time after the matinee. My friend Bob Elliott and I took in the first screening at the Roxy and each of us had a sandwich of some description and an apple or a banana. Though mere lads, we thoroughly enjoyed the film spectacle and could hardly believe our ears when Rhett told Scarlett in the final scene that he frankly didn't give a d____! Such profanity was unknown in movies of the day.

"Casablanca" came along some three years later, in the fall of 1942, and the local showing was the main attraction on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights at the newly opened Perry Theatre, a sumptuous movie palace on Sixth street where the Exchange Bank drive-through facility now is located. I saw that for the first time with a young lady who had recently moved to Perry from Enid, and it was only a few months before I answered the call of Uncle Sam and signed up as a soldier for the duration of World War II. For all those reasons, I could never forget that drama, even if it had not been such a classy movie. It was a major vehicle for Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, Paul Henreid, Claude Rains, Peter Lorre, Sydney Greenstreet and Cuddles Sakall. With a dynamite cast like that, the film could not help but succeed. Plus, it was released at about the same time President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill held a significant wartime conference in the city that served as the movie's locale Casablanca.

The opportunity to see again just one of those magnificent old films is a thing to be treasured, but having both of them on consecutive nights is almost too breathtaking to appreciate. I'd do it every weekend if that were possible and never grow weary of seeing them. "Here's looking at you, kid." That was one of Bogart's classic lines in Casablanca. And, just like the song that we still regard as an icon of that time, it and the movie will continue to stay at the top of my list "As Time Goes By," along with GWTW. They truly do not make them like that any more!



February 13, 1998

Thanks to some notes received recently in the U.S. mail from former Perry residents, I have more interesting tidbits to share with you. One of these is from Mrs. Roy Garten Jr. of Ponca City, who grew up here as Jo Wollard, one of the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. G. C. Wollard. Her father was an early-day rural mail carrier at the Perry post office and later a member of the state board of affairs during the administration of Gov. Henry S. Johnston.

Jo took special note of the column about Bertha Bier's recollection of the time when Fir avenue was being widened from two lanes of blacktop to four lanes of cement with a brick median separating them. That was in 1962. It brought to Mrs. Garten's mind a story from the early 1920s. She writes:

"This is a story my father told me. We lived at 1013 Elm street, and Father was coming home in the car, driving west on Fir street. It was after a rain and Fir was very unpaved and very muddy. Walt Powers lived in the 800 or 900 block, on the north side of Fir. His very young son, Bob, was sitting out in the mud in the street building mud pies or something that suited his fancy. Daddy honked at him to get out of the way. Little Bob just kept on with his mud building and gestured with his arm for Daddy to go around him. Daddy laughingly came home to share the story with us. It has stayed in my memory and given me many chuckles."

Thanks to Jo Garten for this little slice of life from another age in Perry America. "Little Bob Powers" was very lucky he got the chance to grow up and operate the Powers Abstract Agency after the death of his father, Walt Sr. Incidentally, the Powers home still stands at 901 Fir, but it has been substantially remodeled by the present owner, Millie Highfill, and her late husband, Lowell. The Wollard home on Elm street is now owned by Associate District Judge Dan Allen, and it has been wonderfully preserved.

A brief but welcome letter comes from Ginny Plaunty of Eugene, Oregon. It was prompted by a note she received from Sadie Gates, an old friend. Ms. Gates also sent Ginny a copy of this column containing reminiscences of Prosper E.

Letellier and his family. Mr. Letellier was custodian of the old three-story Perry high school building which was demolished in the 1960s to make way for the present campus. Ginny's first husband was Wayne Letellier, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Letellier. Wayne was a printer and worked in the backshop of this newspaper while I was employed there several years ago. He and Ginny and their children, Gary and Darlene, moved to California in 1956. Wayne died on Christmas day in 1987. Ginny writes that Gary, the grandson of P .E. Letellier, is airport manager at North Bend, Oregon, and the father of Todd, 19, and Erin, 16. Darlene is an insurance agent in Santa Clara, California. She has a daughter, Julie, 15.

Of the sons and daughters of Mr. and Mrs. P.E. Letellier, only Amel, now 80, is still living, and he is in failing health. Sharon Grether, secretary at the Perry Presbyterian church, is a daughter of the former Mabel Letellier, one of Wayne's sisters. Ginny sends greetings to all who remember the family's days in Perry.

I also want to acknowledge receipt of an interesting brochure telling about the year-long centennial celebration in Tulsa, which was formally incorporated as an Oklahoma territorial city in 1898. The material was sent to me by Mrs. Lowry McKee, who grew up in Perry as Ethel Delores Human. It contains a rundown on milestones in Tulsa history, dating back to 1803 when the area was acquired by the U.S. as part of the Louisiana Purchase, and many other significant occurrences. I am still reading some of the interesting pieces in the brochure, and my thanks for sending it go to Ethel Delores. Many of you will remember her parents, Charlie and Ethel Huffman. The family home was 701 Ivanhoe street, where Mr. and Mrs. Paul Ebersole now live. Mr. Huffman operated a grocery store just off the northwest corner of the square in the building now occupied by H&R Block at 417 Seventh street. His good-natured wit and friendly nature are legendary in this community.



February 17, 1998

Don Stoddard, a regular reader and an occasional contributor to this column, takes note of my frequent references to the time when both of us were growing up in Perry. Don writes: "My thoughts took me back to the latter half of the 1940s, when the present location of Habben's Real Estate office, on Sixth street, was an empty lot. I wonder how many people now living in Perry can remember the root beer stand that was erected on that lot by the Frankie Vann family?"

Continuing, Don writes: "Being such a small lot, there was only room for a handful of cars to park, but most of us kids in high school back then didn't own a car anyway, so it didn't matter that much. The majority of us walked to wherever we were going, both summer and winter. The Perry Theatre was located directly across the street from that root beer stand. I can remember coming out of the theatre on those hot, sultry summer nights back then and heading across the street to the root beer stand. I think the only businesses air-conditioned in Perry at that time were the two movie theatres, the Roxy and the Perry. I can still taste the great frosty flavor of those root beers."

Don goes on: "I can also remember a soft drink stand that was located on the curve, across the highway from where our school bus barn is now located. I can't remember the name of the family that built that stand, but I do remember that they came to Perry for whatever reason from Battle Creek, Michigan, and that they had a daughter in high school here at that time. I also recall that there was a miniature golf course on that curve not far from that soft drink stand. Just thinking of those soft drink drive-ins and the old Perry and Roxy Theatres brings back a flood of good memories of the Perry that I knew and loved, back some 50 years ago."

My own memories of those places go back a bit beyond that because Don and I are not precisely the same generation. (In other words, I'm older than Don.) For instance, I still remember when Orlando Walkling and his son, Virgil, had a hotel, restaurant and meat market where Joe and Betty Habben now have their real estate office. The Walkling building was a two-story frame structure and the hotel occupied the upper floor. An exterior balcony with wooden railing gave access to all of the hotel rooms. Food service was downstairs, and that was where the elder Mr. Walkling also sold whole goat's milk and, occasionally, goat's milk ice cream, which many people regarded as a delicacy. I do not have a very vivid memory of Frankie Vann's family root beer stand in that location. Some of you will remember that Dr. J.E. Beech, still later, had his osteopathic clinic in the building now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Habben's business.

I can help out a bit with information about the drive-in which was once located on the curve across the highway from our present school bus barn. The name of that business was "The Period," and it was built in about 1948 by Chester and Margaret Stoughton. Don correctly remembers that they came here from Battle Creek. Many of us were hearing a Michigan "Yankee" accent for the first time when the Stoughtons arrived, and we found it interesting. The daughter, I believe, was named Kaye. The Stoughton family stayed in Perry only a few years, but during that time they provided us with about the first postwar drive-in eatery, a precursor of such things as McDonald's and Sonic. The Period was located on land owned by the late Mr. and Mrs. R.J. Huston, parents of Helen Voigt and Ruth VanArsdell. An oil field service firm now has an office and equipment yard there. I believe the Stoughtons also may have operated the miniature golf course that Don remembers. Other restaurants in Perry at that time, according to Moorehead's 1948 city directory, were the Auto-Eat Cafe, 402 Sixth street; Corner Lunch, 123 Seventh; Elite Cafe', 609 Delaware; Harvey's Cafe', 302 Sixth; Kumback Lunch, 625 Delaware; Marcy Cafe', 608 Cedar; Nu-Way Cafe', 307 Seventh; Perry Coffee Shop, 600 Cedar; Severe's Barbecue, 420 Kaw; and U.S. Cafe', 642 Cedar. How many of those do you remember?

Thanks to Don Stoddard for bringing back these memories of a half-century ago in Perry.



February 20, 1998

Today I get around to some unrelated matters that have been brought to my attention.

Mary Loewen, who lives in Silver City, New Mexico, called recently to advise me that she has come across a well-preserved copy of the 1927 Perry High School yearbook, *Peroma*, and she thought someone from here might be interested in it. From time to time I have seen copies of that yearbook at various places around town, so I know some folks already have it. But if anyone out there needs a copy, you can contact Ms. Loewen at 1050 Pine Street, Silver City, NM 88061, telephone 505-388-3166.

The *Peroma* name is a contraction of Perry (Per) and Oklahoma (oma), and students at PHS produced yearbooks with that name for many years. They contained the standard group pictures and individual mug shots of the students and faculty, along with feature sections on sports and organizations. They were well done and, apparently, the students themselves wrote and edited the copy, designed the pages and just generally did the complete job, except for printing of course.

Dorothy Lampe and husband Ervin have moved into town from the Sumner community, and I just recently discovered that we are neighbors. For years, Dorothy was the Sumner correspondent for *The Perry Daily Journal*, back in the days when the paper had several competent ladies sending in news from all corners of Noble county. Dorothy was showing me some

old newspapers she's been saving through the years, and that always interests me. There's no single theme that connects the papers and not all of them are copies of *The Journal*, but each one headlines a topic of general interest. Results of the general election fill the front page of the November 3, 1954, PDJ. To refresh your memory, here are some of the stories from that date.

Democrat John Beasley was elected sheriff, defeating Republican W. S. Beckham. Merl Harman, sheriff for 22 years, did not seek reelection. Tillie Loula, Republican, won the county assessor's post by defeating Democrat Martin Piel. Sherman Trussel was reelected county commissioner, defeating Lee Nicewander; Dale Kirkhart defeated A. R. Chiles for county commissioner; and Stanley Cockrell was reelected commissioner without opposition. Also, Dr. Robert S. Taylor, Republican, was reelected state representative from Noble county for a third term, winning by a large margin over Democrat Jack Pulley of Morrison. Nationally, Democrats won control of the lower house of Congress despite GOP President Eisenhower's great personal popularity. Flipping through those old papers was fun, and I thank Dorothy for sharing them with me.

Gene Howard, who runs the Around the Corner Antique Shop on Sixth street, shops garage sales frequently in search of treasures. At Newkirk recently he bought a leather-covered wooden suitcase and found some unexpected things inside. The one that really caught his attention was an Oklahoma history book, minus the cover. The unusual feature, however, is that the book is composed of sheets about 5x13 1/2. Each page has three panel pictures with illustrations (pen and ink sketches) and captions telling the history of Oklahoma from the time of the earliest recorded exploration (1629) to the wild oil development years (About 1928). Judging from the appearance, I am guessing that the material was originally published in the 1930s and was intended for serious installation in newspapers of the day. Although the illustrator's style is that of comic strip artists from that period, the panels all deal seriously with history. The pages are not numbered or dated, so it's hard to say when this was published.

Gene has been in the antique business for something like 50 years and he says he is always running across unexpected treasures. He began as a young teen-ager growing up in Massachusetts when a second-hand store operator hired him to help out after school hours. The business appealed to him and he's been at it ever since. Gene has lived in the Perry area about 15 years. Like all antique shops, his place is brim full of all kinds of things and I enjoyed flipping through the curious little Oklahoma history book with him.



February 24, 1998

A bitter argument rages today over an issue that originally seemed to be merely an innocuous, logical progression in the makeup and style of the mighty New York Times. The newspaper is widely held to be the embodiment of all that is good and right in the world of journalism. Its entitlement to that accord is being called into question now as readers and media critics alike take their shots and choose up sides. Does this have anything to do with coverage of President Clinton and the latest sex accusation's? No, it is nothing so insignificant as that. The public anger stems from a noisy debate over the publisher's recent decision to add color and new sections to the venerable old newspaper. Color? In the sedate New York Times? Horrors!

At least, that's the reaction we're hearing and reading about in the trade journals that reach us here in the hinterland. The newspaper is perhaps not widely read or distributed in these parts and so we are isolated from the great noisy controversy that is racking the urban areas where digesting the Times is regarded as a necessity if one is to be informed

on anything of importance that happens in our world. The paper's motto is the familiar "All the news that's fit to print," and for generations it has attempted to remain absolutely true to that lofty line. The content and the quality have not changed and they are not being challenged now. It's the look of the pages in the newspaper that has drawn fire from many who are considered expert judges of such things. Those critics include many, many readers.

Management of the newspaper concluded some time ago that the Times must change with the times (no pun intended) and abandon its policy against the use of color. They weighed the merits of limiting the use of color only to select advertisements and not using it in news photos or to brighten up the editorial pages with pie-charts, boxes and other typographical tricks. Such gimmicks have been popularized by the nationally distributed USA Today, an upstart which has taken over some of the exclusive readership territory once reserved for the New York Times. USA Today's splashy colors and other eye-catching graphic devices have perhaps changed or at least mightily influenced the look of virtually every newspaper in the country, and that now includes the Times.

In the end, editorial poo-bahs at the Times decided to use color on page one photos and elsewhere throughout the paper on a daily basis, and to add several new sections dealing with topical matters they believed of interest to their readers. I am sure they were not prepared for the avalanche of carping, hooting and derision that has descended upon them as a result. They are being accused of trivializing news coverage by choosing page one photos for their feature value, rather than their reflection of hard news items. The news sections have not escaped the wrath of professional newspaperwatchers and everyday readers. They believe the newspaper is making itself over into a magazine and abandoning its traditional role of covering "all the news."

It appears that change, or at least such drastic change, does not occur in a newspaper without trauma. Readers have a tendency to feel they are part owners of the paper, which of course they are not. The fact that they react so emotionally is an indication of how intricate is the relationship between readers and those who provide the newspaper for their information and, yes, entertainment. Wisely, the editorial and managerial board at the New York Times has elected to weather the storm and give everyone a chance to adjust before doing anything else. It will be interesting to see how all this turns out. In the meantime, we'll have more about it in the next column.



February 27, 1998

The other day, this column reported on the noisy controversy kicked up by the decision of the publisher of the *New York Times* to add something so unremarkable as color to news pages of the venerable old "gray lady." Most papers in markets of all sizes have chosen to do that in recent years. The argument over the Times' decision is likely to continue and perhaps even grow in intensity until readers either reconcile themselves to such a "revolutionary" change or the publisher backs off and drops the new look. Fat chance that will happen.

All this debate drove me to haul out a coffee table book I purchased some time ago at the estate sale which followed the death of my neighbor and long-time friend, Paul W. Cress. The book contains half-size photographic reproductions of memorable page ones from the Times between 1920 and 1978. The amount of history covered by that time span is brought home when you see it so graphically presented in a book of this sort. The headlines and the stories themselves

are clearly legible and they make fascinating reading for anyone with the slightest interest in the background of world developments, some of them still swirling and very much in progress.

The New York newspaper has been a reliable, solid as a rock medium for covering events of the day throughout the world for well over a century. It has survived many upheavals in the newspaper business in the boroughs that make up the New York City megalopolis and its influence extends well beyond that geographic area. It's safe to say that readers throughout the world have turned to that paper for decades in order to learn what's going on around the globe. They still do. The paper's reporters, special writers, columnists and editors are in a class by themselves. "All the news that's fit to print" is more than a boastful slogan. The Times provides nothing less. Its character and reputation are not being impugned in the present debate. The editorial policy is something else, but for the most part its bias is confined to the editorial page. Liberals love it. Conservatives are less enthused. But that has nothing to do with the controversy at hand.

I understand the paper has raised the single copy price of its famed Sunday edition from \$3.50 to \$3.95, but that apparently is not at issue in this brouhaha.

The page one reproductions in the coffee table book I purchased from the Paul W. Cress estate begin with January 11, 1920, when the formal World War peace accord was signed in Paris, and President Wilson was preparing to call for the first meeting of the new League of Nations. The final page is from August 7, 1978, when the top story tells of the death of Pope Paul VI at the Vatican. From that first page one to the last, the general appearance of the New York Times was unchanged. The constant through all those years, and for decades prior to and subsequent to it, was the quality and extent of the paper's coverage. Color pictures and fancy-shmancy typographical tricks had nothing to do with it. The paper will continue to be a successful and highly reliable quality newspaper well after this tempest subsides.