



Poor Grade of Paper Newspapers, since about 1850 are printed on poor-quality paper. Made of as ground wood or mechanical wood pulp, tends to become discolored, brittle, and acidic over time and easily tear when handled.

History of

Local Newspapers

(Note: To simulate the appearance of early newspapers, there are 4 columns on each folio (page), topics have headlines, lines separate legs (columns) and horizontal rules end each item.)



Boston's First Newspaper Was Illegal

In 1690, Boston printer Benjamin Harris illegally produced the first issue of *Publick Occurrences*, the first multi-page newspaper published in the American colonies.

A British law was that, "no person [was to] keep a printing-press for printing nor [was] any ⇒

book, pamphlet or other matter whatsoever" to be printed without the governor's "especial leave and license first obtained." Harris had no license. All copies found of the *Publick Occurrences* were destroyed. One copy survived and is in the British Library.

Boston News-Letter First Legal Newspaper

The first legal newspaper, the Boston News-Letter, began on Apr. 24, 1704. John Campbell, a Boston postmaster, was the first editor and publisher. Issued weekly, it was a single page, 2 columns, with text printed on both sides.

Stagecoaches, Visitors Brought Newspapers

The earliest newspapers to reach the Hamlet came from Boston and Salem. Travellers left them at the tavern and with friends they visited.

Locals mainly heard news about the town and surrounding areas, at the Sabbath meetings and the tavern. Later, when the town had a post office, some people had Boston newspapers sent to their post office box.

The News-Letter mainly had news from London journals and news about various Boston events and the European wars. It also had listings for ship arrivals, deaths, sermons, political appointments, fires and accidents.

There were no advertisements.

Campbell sold the News-Letter at his post office, likely for a penny.

So ends this leg

Random Hamilton News Appeared

Toward the end of the 19th century, a few local papers began to occasionally publish articles about Hamilton. Many of these articles were about the new religious camp-ground in the Asbury Grove area of Hamilton.

Major Hamilton news in the 1800s was:

1793 - Hamilton became a separate town from Ipswich
182? – Thomas Manning Mill opened. ⇒

Zion's Herald 1823-2011

A newspaper reaching the many people that annually went to Hamilton's Asbury Grove was the Zion's Herald.

Founded by a group of lay Methodists, *The Zion's Herald* was a weekly journal. It had 3 columns on 8 pgs., each 17x24 in.

By 1883, its circulation was up to 15,000. Alonzo S. Weed printed and distributed the Herald to subscribers for \$2.50/yr.

The Herald primarily was "devoted to religion and moral subjects;" however, it also carried departments for women, children and book reviews.

Contents also included short sermons, poetry, biography, and political, literary, and scientific news items.

It was strongly opposed to slavery. The Herald also advocated temperance and women's rights.

1839 – Eastern Railroad extended to Hamilton.
1843 – Meetinghouse rebuilt.
1860 – Asbury Grove Methodist Camp Ground opened.
1869 – Hamilton House Hotel opened on ✓ Main St.
1886 – Voted to prohibit liquor sales. 1883 - Myopia Hunt Club, Hamilton, began.
1872- Chebacco House opened.
1886 – Horsecar service extended into Hamilton.
1888 – Town installed clock in meetinghouse steeple.
1888 – Wennepoyken House opened.
1896 – Hamilton established a fire company.

Newspapers Mailed to Some in Hamilton

For news New England, the country and Europe, some people had newspapers from Boston and New York mailed to them.

Hamilton's Austin Brown (1820-1908) subscribed to: the Essex County Mercury ("made up from the reading matter of the Salem Gazette," subscription \$1.50 a year), the Boston Journal (\$1 yearly), the tri-weekly New York Tribune (\$1.50 yearly) and the Salem Evening News.

Advertisers Pay the Bills, Not Readers

Newspapers survived by advertising income, not by what people paid to get them. Local stores and businesses bought advertisements in the newspapers to reach their customers. To be successful, a newspaper needed a large circulation of local readers.

Salem Evening News of 1880 Became Salem News in 2002

There was enough news to cover and enough advertising to cover costs for a daily newspaper to begin in 1880.

The Salem Evening News mantra was to provide "the truthful and plain-spoken advocacy of the interest of the citizens of Salem, and to furnish a reliable record of all the fresh news in the vicinity,"

Frank C. Damon was the city editor. and was connected with the paper from the beginning.

Its longtime headquarters was at 159-189 Washington St., They moved to Beverly in the 1990's. ⇒

Ipswich Chronicle 1872-Current

The Ipswich Chronicle, a weekly, began in 1872. Edward Davenport and Frederick Goodwin were the first publishers.

About 1875, I.J. Potter acquired the newspaper. With his brother, J. M. Potter, they also published the Amesbury Village, Lynn Reporter, Lynn Bee and the Yankee Blade of Boston.

The Ipswich Chronicle had articles about the Hamlet district of Ipswich and later, when the Hamlet became the town of Hamilton, including a long article about the opening of the town hall in 1897.

In 2006, Gate House Media acquired the Ipswich Chronicle.

The News, sold to the Ottaway Co. in 1994, merged with the Beverly Times and the Peabody Times.

On Aug. 19, 2002, the name of the Salem paper changed to Salem News (*dropping the 'evening'*).

In 2005, the Eagle-Tribune Publishing Co. of North Andover bought the Salem News.

Later that year, Community Newspaper Holdings bought the Eagle-Tribune Publishing Co.

Many Newspapers Started in the 1800s

In the 1800s, a great many newspapers began. Most existed for only a short time.

There were more than a dozen newspapers in Salem, including: .

Salem Impartial Register, 1800-1801
Salem Register, 1802-1918
Salem Observer, 1824-1895
Salem Literary and Commercial Observer, 1825-1827
Salem Gazette, 1871-Current

Many more were in Ipswich, such as:

Ipswich Register, 1837-1839
Ipswich Bulletin, 1866- 1868
Ipswich Advance, 1871- 1872
Ipswich Chronicle, 1872
Ipswich News and Chronicle, 1936-1945
Ipswich Independent, 1882-1912
Ipswich Today, 1970-1983

As population grew, there were morning and afternoon newspapers. Morning papers had news from the previous afternoon and night; the evening papers had morning and afternoon news.



Railroad Ave. Paper Store Hamilton's Hub of Newspaper Distribution

For many years from 1937 to about 1995, most newspapers in Hamilton and Wenham were distributed from the Paper Store on Railroad Ave.

A visit to the paper store, for many people, was a daily must. They knew when, the morning and afternoon Boston newspapers would be dropped off at the train station. They would get the papers, perhaps have a coffee or cold tonic, and chit-chat with other locals.

Near the paper store entrance, there was a red, wood, wheelbarrow. People would sit on the wagon, when its sidewalls were removed, and read the day's paper; however, its main use was to cart bundles of the day's Boston newspapers from the train depot.³⁰

From 1970 to 1977, Phil Hanson of Hamilton leased the building. He ran a paper store, in which there was a lunch counter.³⁰

Before Hanson, Neil T. Crockett, who owned the Hamilton-Wenham News Agency, a newspaper distribution service, ran the shop.³⁰ Crockett bought the business in 1957 from Samuel S. Conary, a Wenham selectman.²⁰⁵ Conary left the selectman's office, in 1947, to buy the paper store and property from Earl E. Johnson of Hamilton.

In 1937, Johnson razed the original building on this site and erected the paper store building. He opened a store selling Boston and local newspapers, as well as candy, ice cream, tonic, magazines, and tobacco.²⁰³

Johnson's paper store also was the distribution center for newspapers to houses in Wenham and Hamilton. He hired boys to deliver papers to assigned routes.

Wenham-Hamilton Times, 1892-1902

In 1892, Albert Vittum published the Wenham-Hamilton Times and the Asbury Grove Cottager.

In October 1893, the first issue of the WHT had a 6-column folio, but later in the year was enlarged to 7 columns. 15 x 22, 8 pg.

Vittum printed 125 copies of the WHT, at his Beverly plant. In May 1899, there were 24 subscribers to the WHT in Hamilton and Wenham had an unknown number.

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Beverly Citizen 1851-current

Mar. 28 1851, the Beverly Citizen was the first newspaper published in Beverly. It was a 6-column, 25 x 32-in. folio, printed in Boston. Arthur F Wales, the publisher, had an express delivery business between Beverly and Boston.

Competitors were a couple of Salem newspapers, which had been published for more than 20 years.

In 1855, John B. Cressy purchased the business and began printing it in Beverly.

Irving W Allen purchased the Citizen in 1881. George Chinn was the editor and he was followed by J. Herman Carver of Newburyport.

In December 1892, Charles A. King purchased the paper. It continued until June 1919, when King halted publication.

At the time Hamilton had a population of less than 1,000 and Wenham was less than 900. Neither town had many retail businesses.

The WHT ceased publication in 1902.

Vittum also published the Beverly Evening Times, the Essex County Mercury and the Beverly Weekly Times.

Wenham-Hamilton Star, 1894-1895

The Wenham-Hamilton Star was a brief competitor to the Wenham-Hamilton Times. The Salem Register published the Star in 1894 and 1895.

Like the Times, the Star was an 8-pg. weekly and its size was 15 in. x 22 in. Likely, the Star was placed at the shops offering the Times.

Beverly Evening Times, 1893-1964

The paper began as a 6-column folio. at close of the first year, it was 7 columns; and at the end of second year, it was 8.

Established with 600 subscribers, the Beverly Evening Times, within 6 months had a circulation of 1,000.

In 1964, Evening was dropped from the name. It closed in 1995, when the owner, Ottaway Newspapers, acquired the Salem Evening News and merged its Beverly and Peabody papers into the Salem paper.

Noted journalist Ben Bradlee started his career as a copy boy, in the 1930s, at the Beverly Evening Times.

Many Newspaper Correspondents

Articles about developments in nearby towns came from independent correspondents. They were paid by column inch of the published information they submitted.

Knowing that in laying out of printed pages there often would be short gaps at the bottom of a column and between articles, correspondents submitted small filler items with quirky topics.

In an 1889 issue of the Salem Gazette, there was a short item commenting on there ⇒

Searching the Net for News

Digital news transmission began in the mid 1990s. Many print news sources started using the Internet, along with their paper distribution. Broadcast news also was adding Internet distribution.

The Salem News and the Hamilton-Wenham Chronicle were early local sources of so-called digital news. Both created websites for readers to get local news.

In September 2010, the Hamilton-Wenham Patch became the first local news source only available via the Internet. Robert B. "Bobby" Gates was the first editor.

The Patch Media Co. began the H-W Patch. At the time, it was a subsidiary of AOL. The name "patch" was intended to signify that the news was only for a specific ⇒

being a 3-story hen house on the Meadowbrook Farm on Highland Street, in Hamilton.

A 1900 Wenham-Hamilton Times article noted that *"in some cases it is not safe for the unknown men, who appear at the various farmhouses, to be taken in and fed."*

Salem Register 1800-1911

Written for working class it opposed views of the Salem Gazette that had many wealthy readers. From 1807-1840, when on Essex St., it was the Essex Register.

patch, e.g., the Hamilton and Wenham patch.

Gates only covered the H-W patch for news. The content expanded throughout each day. When news stories were removed from the Patch, they were transferred to an archive the Patch maintained.

The Patch was free. Income came from small ads inserted among the digital news stories.

For various economic reasons, local digital news service has greatly changed. No longer is there a dedicated editor. Digital news publishers now have a large staff of editors, all writing for many different outlets.

Digital news no longer is free. Further, recipients, called visitors, need provide personal information, in addition to their email address.

Hamilton-Wenham Chronicle, 1949-Current

Vol. 1, No. 1 of the Hamilton-Wenham Chronicle was published Sep. 30, 1949. The editor was Morley L. Piper, who lived on Orchard Rd. Correspondents were: Ann Neary, Thelma Graham and Jimmy Dodge, of Hamilton, and Norma Flynn of Wenham. Ella Johnson of Hamilton handled advertising.

Piper and Johnson worked in a room on the first floor of the house on the corner of Railroad Ave. and Willow St. The correspondents worked at their homes.

"At first," Piper said, "town officials were reluctant to provide information. They did not want to talk to the press. As the officials and other people became more familiar with the paper, news was brought to office."

The writing was news style, with focus on reporting the "who, what, where, when and why" of a development, devoid of the writer's opinions and comments.

The H-W Chronicle was a venture of the Ipswich Chronicle Publishing Co., which was established in 1872. The H-W Chronicle was printed at the Ipswich Chronicle plant.

When introduced, the H-W Chronicle had broad-sheet-size pages (29 x 22 in.). The pages had 7 columns and typically had 9 or more articles per page. Each issue had 8 pages. ⇒

There was no home delivery, either by mail or delivery boys. Distribution, on Thursdays, was only by sales at local stores in Hamilton, Wenham and nearby towns. Typically, about 1,200 copies were sold, for a nickel.

Editor Piper left the H-W Chronicle in 1952. He went to work at the Boston Globe, in Boston, in the sales department.

The Ipswich Chronicle Publishing sold the H-W Chronicle to North Shore Weeklies, which was sold to Fidelity Investments, in 1986. Which in 1991, created Community Newspaper Co., a holding company for several media properties. In 2001, Fidelity sold CNC, to the Boston Herald. In 2006, Gate House Media acquired CNC.



First issue, Hamilton-Wenham Chronicle, Sep. 30, 1949

Beverly Chronicle Just a Year, 1890

W. C. Trump published the Beverly Chronicle on Saturdays. Lasted for less than a year in 1890.

Jack Hauck, Jan. 2019