

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

"Carroll Record Stock"

Carroll County Times article for 13 March 1994

By Joe Getty

During the 19th century, the small towns of Carroll County functioned in many ways as self-contained units. Craftsmen and businesses located in these towns to serve the surrounding agricultural community. The lack of transportation, in comparison to modern standards, meant that the small town became the center for social and other activities, including churches, schools, fraternal organizations, community bands and seasonal celebrations. Systems of communications were also self-contained in comparison to today, and many of Carroll County's towns had their one local newspaper to serve community needs.

In Taneytown and the surrounding area, the local newspaper was The Carroll Record. Preston B. Englar was a founder of the newspaper and served as the editor until his death in 1945. Under his leadership, The Carroll Record promoted local history by publishing numerous articles about the history of this region.

To stimulate circulation of the newspaper, Englar produced a series of histories about Taneytown and neighboring communities written by local residents. These weekly articles are being compiled by the Historical Society and will be published for the first time in book format this year. The Carroll Record Histories of Northwestern Carroll County Communities, will also contain family, business and organizational histories compiled by donors to the Historical Society's publication project.

Other prominent residents of the area were active in the work of The Carroll Record. Curtis Reed and Ross Fair were responsible for typesetting and job printing of the company. The first Board of Directors consisted of W. Jesse Roberts, President; Dr. G. T. Motter, Vice-President; Harry M. Clabaugh, Secretary; George A. Arnold, Treasurer; Dr. F. J. Seiss; George H. Birnie, Dr. Clotworthy Birnie and Preston B. Englar.

After Englar's death, Charles L. Stonesifer became editor and served in that capacity until September 1967, when his majority stock in the company was sold to Charles W. Drury. Drury sold the newspaper operation in 1971 to Stromberg Publications of Ellicott City. The newspaper was moved to Hampstead and was continued under The Carroll Record name until 1977.

In a tenth anniversary article published in 1904, editor Preston B. Englar gave the following synopsis of the early history of the The Carroll Record:

"The CARROLL RECORD is the third newspaper published in Taneytown, the date of its first issue having been July 7, 1894. For a year or more prior to this date, the present Editor who owned a small job printing outfit, conceived the idea of a local paper, to be printed in Taneytown, which would absorb, not only his plant, but that of John J. Reid, another local printer. The idea remained without much hopes of materialization until The Carrolltonian, published in Westminster, went into the hands of receivers and was offered at public sale.

"This sale was attended by the writer, and Mr. Reid, the former placing the last bid on the plant, but it was not accepted, the amount being considered much below the proper value. At a later date, however, the plant was purchased privately of Clabaugh & Roberts, receivers. Prior to its removal to Taneytown, the promoters of the enterprise, being somewhat in doubt of the safety of the investment as an

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individual undertaking, called a meeting of those whose interest had been enlisted, and a Stock Company was formed for the purchase and installation of the plant, which was afterwards incorporated under the title of 'The Carroll Record Printing and Publishing company.'

"In the light of the history of the RECORD, many of the first actions relative to establishing it in Taneytown, are decidedly amusing. It must be remembered, however, that while this was but ten years ago, Taneytown was just beginning to shake off the slow-going customs and opinions of accumulated years, and just becoming acquainted with her possibilities. Enterprises so ambitious had not heretofore been undertaken. The spirit of confidence development, and energy which a live newspaper brings with it, had not yet been fully awakened, and the \$10.00 shares of stock almost went begging for takers.

"An incident in connection with this effort must not go unpublished. The late Dr. Samuel Swope who was then aged and very deaf, was handed the subscription list; possibly without reading the heading very carefully, and having only a dim idea that it was some sort of scheme to start a little paper on a cheap scale, he signed his name, adding '50' to the end of it. Later, he facetiously wrote his brother, Henry, that they were trying to start a paper in Taneytown; that some had subscribed 10 cents, some 20 cents and some 50 cents, and that he had subscribed 50 cents. When he was called upon for \$50.00 for five shares, he was surprised, to say the least, but he lived long enough to refuse to part with his stock at the price he had paid for it, and held it until his death."

The Historical Society is publishing "The Carroll Record Histories of Northwestern Carroll County Communities" during 1994. The book will include a supplement of family, business and organizational histories prepared by donors to this publication project. If you would like additional information about this project, contact the Historical Society at (410) 848-6494.

Photo Caption 1: A business card printed in 1910 advertises The Carroll Record as the "best Newspaper and Advertising medium in Carroll County" with subscriptions at \$1.00 a year. A photograph of the board of directors is printed on the card.

Photo Caption 2: During the early twentieth century, the printing plant of The Carroll Record operated by a line shaft powered by a one-cylinder gasoline engine. Ross Fair, who served as the typesetter, is shown in the left foreground of the photograph.

Photo Caption 3: Editor P. B. Englar is seated at his desk in The Carroll Record business office. Englar was responsible for many local history articles, includes a series of community histories that will be published as a book by the Historical Society this year.

Photo Caption 4: The Opera House in Taneytown served as the offices and plant of The Carroll Record from 1898 until it was sold in 1971.