Directories of Iowa Newspapers, 1850-1869

Douglas C. McMurtie
DIRECTORIES OF IOWA NEWSPAPERS, 1850-1869

By Douglas C. McMurtrie

The one completely dependable source of newspaper history is the files of the paper themselves. It was this source on which David C. Mott primarily depended in the preparation of his "Early Iowa Newspapers" which appeared in the ANNALS OF IOWA of January, 1928. Lacking files or copies of the papers, however, the historian is forced to fall back on two secondary sources: (1) the county histories and (2) newspaper directories.

In 1869 began the annual series of Rowell's American Newspaper Directory, which is invaluable to the student of newspaper history in the seventies and eighties. Prior to 1869, however, directories of newspapers were few and far between and, for some reason or other, they are exceedingly rare. It may even be that no copy of any one of the directories for the years between 1850 and 1869 is to be found in the state of Iowa.

These directories provide, however, exceedingly valuable material to the historian. In view of their rarity, therefore, I am here presenting the section relating to Iowa newspapers in four of them.

The listings are undoubtedly far from complete, for the compilers had no authoritative sources on which to draw, and correspondence was slow and difficult. The chief defects, however, will be found in omissions, the compilers apparently having sound evidence that most of the papers listed were being published. The Kennedy list, enumerating the newspapers published in 1850, was based on the returns of the U. S. Census of 1850; the others were private compilations.

Obvious abbreviations have been spelled out in the present transcript. The county name is mostly enclosed in parenthesis. The title of the newspaper is here set in italics. We have followed their spelling of proper names and general style.

from The United States Census Statistics of 1850, expressly for Livingston's Law Register for 1852. New York: John Livingston, 1852. (The Iowa section is on page 12.)


(Lee County) [Fort Madison]. *Iowa Statesman*. Weekly. Circulation 800.

(Lee County) [Keokuk]. *Whig and Register*. Weekly. Whig. Circulation 1,600.


DIRECTORIES OF EARLY IOWA NEWSPAPERS


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LAY & BROTHER, compilers. The Newspaper Record, containing a complete list of Newspapers and Periodicals in the United States, Canada and Great Britain... Philadelphia, 1856.
(The Iowa section is on pages 14-15.)

Bloomfield (Davis). *True Flag.*
Bluff City (Potawatamie). *Chronotype.*
Bluff City (Potawatamie). *Bugle.*
Burlington (Des Moines). *Hawk-eye.*
Burlington (Des Moines). *State Gazette.*
Burlington (Des Moines). *Telegraph.*
Burlington (Des Moines). *Farmer & Horticultural List.*
Camanche (Clinton). *Camanche Chief.*
Cedar Rapids (Lima). [Sic.] *Cedar Valley Times.*
Cedar Rapids (Lima). [Sic.] *Era.*
Council Bluffs (Potawatamie). *Bugle.*
Davenport (Scott). *Gazette.*
Davenport (Scott). *State Democrat.*
Davenport (Scott). *Courier.*
Davenport (Scott). *Temperance Organ.*
Davenport (Scott). *Der Demokrat (Ger.)*
Davenport (Scott). *Banner.*
Delphi (Delaware). *Argus.*
Delphi (Delaware). *Republican.*
Dubuque (Dubuque). *Tribune.*
Dubuque (Dubuque). *Herald.*
Dubuque (Dubuque). *Express.*
Dubuque (Dubuque). *Observer.*
Elkader (Clayton). *Tribune.*
Fairfield (Jefferson). *Ledger.*
Fairfield (Jefferson). *Prairie Farmer.*
Fairfield (Jefferson). *Sentinel.*
Fort Des Moines (Polk). *Statesman.*
Fort Madison (Lee). *Christian Evangelist.*
Fort Madison (Lee). *Plain Dealer.*
Fort Madison (Lee). *Times.*
Fort Madison (Lee). *Argus.*
Garnaville (Clayton). *Herald.*
Independence (Buchanan). Civilian.
Indianola (Warren). Republican.
Indianola (Warren). Reporter.
Keokuk (Lee). Times.
Keokuk (Lee). Gate City.
Keokuk (Lee). Des Moines Valley Whig.
Keokuk (Lee). Dispatch.
Keosauqua (Van Buren). Republican.
Knoxville (Marion). Journal.
Lancaster (Keokuk). Friend.
Lansing (Allamakee). Intelligencer.
Marion (Linn). Register.
Mt. Pleasant (Henry). Observer.
Mt. Pleasant (Henry). True Democrat.
Muscatine (Muscatine). Enquirer.
Newton (Jasper). Express.
Oskaloosa (Mahaska). Herald.
Oskaloosa (Mahaska). Times.
Ottumwa (Wapello). Courier.
Pella (Marion). Gazette.
Preparation (Monona). News & Messenger.
St. Marys (Mills). Gazette.
Sidney (Fremont). Journal.
Tipton (Cedar). Advertiser.
Vernon (Van Buren). Democratic Mirror.
Vinton (Benton). Eagle.
Wapello (Louisa). Intelligencer.

New York: Watson & Co., Publishers, 102 Nassau Street, 1861. (The Iowa section is on pages 21-23.)

Bloomfield. World's Own. Weekly.
Burris [Louisa Co.]. Iowan. Weekly.
Camanche (Clinton). Chief. Weekly.
Camanche (Clinton). Democrat. Weekly.
Cedar Falls (Black Hawk). Banner. Weekly.
Cedar Falls (Black Hawk). Democrat. Weekly.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Rapids (Linn)</td>
<td>Gazette</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cedar Rapids (Linn)</td>
<td>Times</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centerville</td>
<td>Chieftain</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centerville</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chariton Court House</td>
<td>Patriot</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clear Lake</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarinda</td>
<td>Herald</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Clarksville</td>
<td>Transcript</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinton</td>
<td>Herald</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Columbus City (Louisa Co.)</td>
<td>Enterprise</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Corydon</td>
<td>Democrat</td>
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<td>Bugle</td>
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<td>Council Bluffs</td>
<td>Clarion</td>
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<td>Union</td>
<td>Daily</td>
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<td>Council Bluffs</td>
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<td>Oracle</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Davenport</td>
<td>Democrat &amp; News</td>
<td>Daily and weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Davenport</td>
<td>Demokrat</td>
<td>[Ger.] Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Davenport</td>
<td>Gazette</td>
<td>Daily and weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davenport</td>
<td>News</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Decatur City</td>
<td>The Spirit</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Decorah</td>
<td>Gazette</td>
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<td>Decorah</td>
<td>Rough Notes</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Democrat &amp; Republican</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Iowa News</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Des Moines</td>
<td>Journal</td>
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<td>Des Moines</td>
<td>Pioneer Farmer</td>
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<td>Des Moines</td>
<td>Statesman</td>
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<td>Des Moines</td>
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<td>Standard</td>
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<td>Dubuque</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
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<td>Dubuque</td>
<td>Herald</td>
<td>Daily and weekly</td>
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<td>Times</td>
<td>Daily and weekly</td>
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<td>Dubuque</td>
<td>Staats-Zeitung [Ger-</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td></td>
<td>man]</td>
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<td>Dubuque</td>
<td>Tribune</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Dyersville</td>
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<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Eddyville</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
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<td>Eldora</td>
<td>Sentinel</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Elkader</td>
<td>Tribune</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
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<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>Jeffersonian</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Ledger</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fayette</td>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fayette</td>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fort Dodge</td>
<td>Republican</td>
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<td>Fort Dodge</td>
<td>Sentinel</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fort Madison</td>
<td>Evangelist</td>
<td>[Religious.] Monthly</td>
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<td>Fort Madison</td>
<td>Plaindealer</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Guttenburgh</td>
<td>Journal</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guttenburgh</td>
<td>Register</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamilton (Webster City)</td>
<td>Freeman</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>Record</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hardin</td>
<td>Courier</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>American Eagle</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Independence</td>
<td>Guardian</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>The Rising Tide</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indianola Court House</td>
<td>Visitor</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa City</td>
<td>Reporter</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Iowa City</td>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Iowa City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keokuk</td>
<td>Gate City</td>
<td>Daily and weekly</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Le Claire (Scott). Express. Weekly.
Le Claire (Scott). Republican. Weekly.
Lyons [Clinton Co.]. Advocate. Weekly.
Lyons [Clinton Co.]. Mirror. Weekly.
Marion. Register. Weekly.
New Oregon [Howard Co.]. Plain Dealer. Weekly.
Sigourney. Life in the West. Weekly.
Sioux City. Register. Weekly.
St. Charles [Charles City]. Intelligencer. Weekly.
Toledo. Transcript. Weekly.
Vernon Springs [Howard Co.]. Eagle. Weekly.

1 The locations of nearly all of the newspapers in these lists are identified either by the name of a well known city or town now in existence, or by the name of the county. A few were located at towns long since abandoned and now unknown to most readers. Where we know the location of such places we have supplied the name of the county in brackets. Where we have not known the location, as this one, we say so in a footnote.—Editor Annals.


... New York: Geo. P. Rowell & Co., ... 1869. (Iowa section on pages 31-36.)

The preface of this volume is dated January 1, 1869, so the listings apparently indicate the status of the papers at the end of 1868. This directory was checked most conscientiously and is based on information received directly from the publishers of the papers listed. For each paper there is given the name, frequency, politics, number of pages, page size, subscription price, year of establishment, personnel of editorial and publishing auspices, and the amount of circulation claimed. There are given here only the data which seem germane to the present purpose: the place of publication, the name of the paper, the frequency, politics, the year of establishment, and the personnel. The other information can always be obtained by interested investigators from the Directory itself.

Afton. Reveille. No report.²
   W. R. Roberts, editor and publisher.
   A. C. Bailey, editor and publisher.
   Val. Mendel, editor and publisher.
   Lucas & Patrick, editors and publishers.

The words "no report" mean that such a paper was known to have been published but that the editor could not confirm the fact that it was still being published at the time the Directory went to press.
Belle Plaine. *Benton County Transcript.* No report.
Bellevue. *Union Guard.* No report.
Bentonsport. *Signal.* No report.
Charles City. *Advocate.* No report.
Charles City. *Post.* No report.
Clermont. *Fayette County Leader.* No report.
Clinton. *Herald.* No report.


Lansing. Union. No report.
Lyons City. Banner. No report.
Magnolia. Harrison County Union. No report.
Maquoketa. Jackson County Sentinel. No report.
Marengo. Iowa Valley Review. No report.
Marion. Linn County Patriot. No report.
DIRECTORIES OF EARLY IOWA NEWSPAPERS

Mt. Ayr. Republican. No report.


Panora. *Guthrie County Ledger.* No report.


3 Location not known.

4 Location not known. Possibly Lime Spring, Howard County.


West Union. *Iowa Public Record*. No report.


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