

Warrick Publishing Company

Founded: 1850

Location: 204 West Locust Street, Boonville (1998)

The Warrick Publishing Company is a holding company for six newspapers. The papers include the *Warrick (Boonville) Enquirer*, *Boonville Standard*, *Chandler Post*, *Newburgh Register*, *Warrick East*, and *Warrick West*. All but the two most recent additions were purchased by Brehm Communications of San Diego, California, in 1983 from C. Richard Johnson. Johnson had become owner of four newspapers by the late 1960s, after starting out as an editor with the *Standard*. By 1995 the Warrick Publishing Company had twenty-five full-time employees and a combined circulation of 20,000. In 1998 the company employed twenty people and had estimated sales of between \$1 million and \$4.9 million. Myra Teal served as the publisher.

*Warrick Enquirer*. Edward T. White and Dr. W. L. Barker, president of the Warrick County Medical Association, created the *Democrat* as a Democratic party paper in 1858. Before Barker and White the weekly had been the called the *Tribune* and the *Journal*, a Know Nothing (American) party periodical created by Isaac Falls in 1854. By 1859 Charles Dalrymple had become publisher, supporting Stephen Douglas for president in 1860. Judge J. W. B. Moore and John T. Fleming purchased the *Democrat* in June 1861. Moore had been elected probate judge of Warrick County in 1840. He was later elected clerk of the circuit court and judge of common pleas. In 1862 Fleming became the sole owner of the *Democrat* and changed the name to the *Enquirer*, a paper devoted to both the Union and the Democratic party. A former Confederate soldier, E. L. Crawford, purchased the paper toward the close of the Civil War, appointing Judge Moore as editor. In 1868 Thomas Martin replaced Moore as editor. In actuality, Crawford

edited the paper but, fearing bad publicity because of his service in the war, refrained from listing his own name as editor.

In 1870 William Swint and Thomas Martin bought the weekly. Within a year Swint became the sole owner, presiding over its publication until selling it in 1893. Swint was the son of German immigrants and had been involved in the newspaper business since age thirteen. He served under Union colors during the Civil War. After the war he returned to the *Rockport Democrat*, where he had been a foreman before 1861. He left the *Democrat* in 1868 to work for the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, remaining there until purchasing the *Enquirer*.

G. Homer Hazen next purchased the paper, selling it to William B. Carleton and Robin B. Hubbard in September 1921. By 1923 Carleton stood alone as the paper's owner, keeping control of the weekly until 1944. David Newby retained control over the Democratic standard-bearer after World War II. In 1966 Newby sold the paper to C. Richard Johnson, who changed the name of the weekly to the *Warrick Enquirer* in 1971. Throughout Johnson's tenure the editors included Richard L. Byers, until early 1971, Patricia Skelton for six months in the same year, and Lois Ivie after December 1971.

*Boonville Standard.* The Republicans answered the *Democrat* in the pages of the *Standard*, created by M. B. Crawford in November 1875. Crawford was a member of a joint-stock company, the Boonville Standard Publishing Company, that owned the paper. A series of owners followed Crawford—J. B. Berkshire, C. F. Wertz, a Mr. Wagstaff, and John E. Stinson. After four years of constant turnover, Israel E. Youngblood and William Admire took control, absorbing the *Warrick Chronicle* in 1879. Youngblood was a former schoolteacher who was elected superintendent in 1877. Admire handled the editorial functions for the paper. By 1880 the *Standard* cost \$1.25 per year and had the largest subscription numbers in the county. The

paper was a seven-column folio measuring twenty-four inches by thirty-six inches. Admire and Youngblood retained possession until 1881 when the weekly was sold to R. M. Graham. Graham kept the paper for four years, handing it to J. M. Wood in 1885. Wood sold the weekly to Clarence W. Bennett in 1888, who kept control of the paper until 1906.

Thomas E. Downs and Charles H. Johnson bought the company next, merging the *Standard* with the *Republican* to create the *Republican Standard*. Downs, a Spanish-American War veteran, died 19 March 1928 leaving control to Johnson. Johnson had been an apprentice under William Swint at the *Democrat*, leaving after Swint's death. He had also worked under Bennett until joining the *Republican*, owned by his future partner, Downs, in 1905. Johnson not only wrote about politics, but was an active politician, holding an elected seat on the city council in 1901, and serving as clerk of Boonville before the turn of the century. C. Richard Johnson, Charles's son, became publisher in 1939.

*Chandler Post*. The *Lite* became the *Post* after being purchased by C. Richard Johnson in 1963. It was first published in 1962. In 1990 the paper was combined with the *Newburgh Register*.

*Newburgh Register*. C. Richard Johnson bought the paper in 1962. It was the creation of E. H. Cook, who began publication in March 1915. Cook did not continue in journalism long, however, selling the paper to Albert R. Burns in May 1915. Burns continued as publisher for thirty years, relinquishing his duties to Richard L. Byers in 1945. Byers kept control of the weekly for only two years. In 1947 he sold it to Roy Powell. Powell sold the company to Alfred D. Hanes three years later, buying it back within two years from Hanes. In the interim Hanes had sold the business to Forest W. Cromwell in early 1951, only to repurchase it in October and sell it to Powell in early 1952. James R. Greenfield bought the paper in September 1952, handing it

to Dalton Wood and J. W. House, Jr., in 1954. Luther Parton became the owner in 1959, selling the business within a few years to Noel L. Patton. C. Richard Johnson combined the *Register's* publication run with the *Chandler Post* in 1962