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AUTHOR Whitaker, W. Richard
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ABSTRACT

There are many parallels between the Richard M. Nixon administration and Warren G. Harding's term: both Republicans, both touched by scandal, and both having a unique relationship with the press. But in Harding's case the relationship was a positive one. One of Harding's first official acts as president was to restore the regular White House news conferences which had been dropped by Woodrow Wilson during World War I. Harding made himself available to the members of the press corps; he knew about their job, and he went out of his way to make their work easier. There were times of difficulty--during the Washington Disarmament Conference of 1921 when Harding made a diplomatic slip of the tongue and in the summer of 1922 when a million men were idled in two bitter strikes. But for the most part, the president worked with correspondents on the basis of complete frankness and respect which was reciprocated. The friendship and goodwill between Harding and the press advanced the status of White House correspondents to the point where they could not be ignored by future presidents. (Author/RB)

WARREN G. HARDING AND THE PRESS

by

W. Richard Whitaker
San Jose State University

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INTRODUCTION: PRESENT AND PAST

Administration scandals. The President. Advisers and members of the Cabinet under indictment, on trial or convicted. Coverage of the President by the press.

Issues in current news headlines? Of course. But the phrases also fit another administration--that of America's only publisher-President, Warren G. Harding, who served as Chief Executive from 1921-23. There are many parallels between the Nixon administration and Harding's term: both Republican, both touched by scandal, and both having a unique relationship with the press. But in Harding's case, the relationship was a positive one. Author after author, in writing about Harding and his administration, however much they may have downgraded the man or his term in office, all concede that when it came to dealing with newspapermen, Warren G. Harding of Ohio had no peer. According to historian Andrew Sinclair:

> Harding added a new factor to successful campaign strategy. His relations with the journalists were excellent, and he knew all about their jobs and their deadlines and their troubles. Thus he went out of his way to make their lives easier. From the press point of view, Harding was one of the most popular candidates and Presidents that the nation ever had.[1]

James E. Pollard, in evaluating Harding in relation to other presidents vis-a-vis the press, said:

> Harding advanced the status of relations between the White House and the press. In this he brought to his office the advantage of the newspaperman's viewpoint. . . . By and large, Harding and the White House correspondents worked together on the basis of complete frankness and mutual respect. . . . He understood their viewpoint, he showed confidence in them by seeking their advice, and he took part readily in their play. Few other presidents have matched his record in these respects.[2]

To Leo C. Rosten, Harding was to newspapermen "a brother under the skin" and therefore enjoyed a "high degree of popularity." Because of these traits, Harding "fared well with the press."[3]

One of Harding's first acts as President was to restore the regular White House news conferences which had been dropped by President Woodrow Wilson upon the outbreak of World War I. As Pollard points out:

> The give and take in his press conferences, moreover, were on a much different footing from what they had been under his predecessor. To Wilson, they were a painful necessity. To Harding they were an opportunity to mingle with his own kind of people and with rare exceptions he enjoyed them. He took the newspapermen into his confidence and in return for this trust they were generally sympathetic and wrote their daily stint with understanding.[4]

The relationship of Harding to the press and the press to Harding, as well as the impact of that relationship upon the modern presidency, is the subject of this paper.

FROM PUBLISHER TO PRESIDENT

Warren G. Harding became a newspaper publisher at the age of 19 when he and two associates purchased the Marion Star in central Ohio in 1884. Harding soon bought out his partners, and by the turn of the century, had managed to turn the paper into a successful enterprise. He participated in state politics, holding a succession of Republican offices. In 1914, Harding became the first popularly elected senator from the Buckeye State, and in 1920, he was elected to the presidency following a "front porch" campaign from his Marion home.

Harding was his own best publicist, and his close relationship with journalists guaranteed a "good press." To accomodate

the expected hordes of newsmen, a special bungalow was erected near Harding's presidential headquarters in Marion where, as Andrew Sinclair writes:

> Once or twice a day, Harding would wander in, greet them personally by name, borrow a plug of tobacco or a stogie, and say "shoot!" He would then answer all questions in a friendly way, without evasion; but he would specify which news could be used and which could not. He always handed out copies of his speech to the correspondents before he spoke so that his words could catch the headlines in time. He was ready to pitch horseshoes or exchange stories off the cuff with almost all reporters; and by relying on their discretion and that of their editors, he kept an intimacy with them that made them friendly to him.[5]

"In the final analysis," according to Harding historian Robert Murray, "what made all this publicity effective was the candidate himself . . . . The publicity was believable because Harding was believable."[6]

Following Harding's election, one of the deans of the Washington press corps--Gus J. Karger of the Cincinnati Times-Star, a confidant of William Howard Taft during his term of office--proposed a set of press guidelines in a memorandum. Harding seems to have adopted them with little change.

Karger's memorandum suggested an "open policy" between the Executive and the press corps, with the President being available for interview, or at least willing to transmit via his personal secretary, George Christian Jr., the answers to any questions reporters might have. "The newspapermen want the news," Karger admonished. "Everything that is done to make it easy for them in their legitimate requirements will help them and assist the Administration." But it was to be an anonymous administration as well. "The President must not be quoted, directly or indirectly, without his knowledge and consent," Karger began, adding,

"Insofar as what he says may be printed, it must be on the responsibility of the writer as 'coming from a high authority,' or with some other qualifying phrase."[7] It was a policy which would try the patience of both the President and correspndents.

HONEYMOON WITH THE PRESS

There were many changes in the White House as the Harding years began, but among the greatest of those changes was the new relationship between newsmen and the President. The terms of Karger's memo seem to have been accepted as the "unwritten law," and reporters seemed genuinely interested in cooperating with the new President. At his first news conference, Harding met the incoming throng of reporters at the door, shaking hands with each one. For many, he had an individual word of greeting. Then, the President went back to his desk surrounded by newsmen and began to talk.[8] Harding formally set Tuesday and Friday meeting dates for the press corps, and the New York Times described the scene on that occasion:

> Today he talked easily with an occasional use of a newspaper slang term and showed desire that afternoon and morning newspapers should have equal opportunity to obtain news at the White House.
>
> Standing behind the big mahogany desk in the President's workroom in the executive office building, as his predecessor had stood on similar occasions, President Harding was surrounded by a closely packed group of about fifty or more correspondents, most of them in front of the desk, with an overflow extending to each side of it.[9]

Those Tuesday sessions spelled trouble for one young reporter, 20-year old Louis Rothschild of Fairchild Publications, a group of trade press newspapers. His beat was the Federal Trade Commission, the Departments of Commerce and Labor, as well as the White House. There was bound to be a conflict. Rothschild related his memories

of the date-setting:

> Opening the session, the President said that it was his intention to hold press conferences twice a week, on Tuesday mornings and again on Friday afternoon so as to give an equal break to both morning and afternoon publications. He asked for comments . . . .
>
> A cub reporter piped up, "Mr. President, you can't do that because it conflicts with Secretary Hoover's press conference on Tuesday morning and I have to be there." Amid loud laughter, the President suggested that I take my problem up with Secretary Hoover, for I was that cub reporter.
>
> Thereafter President Harding knew me as "Louie."[10]

President Harding, according to Rothschild, went out of his way to be friendly with the newspapermen. The President held a formal evening black-tie reception for the newspaper corps shortly after his inauguration. Rothschild attended, taking his sister as his "date," and he remembers being greeted by the President by his first name. Those were the touches that made the press corps "genuinely fond of Harding," to use Rothschild's evaluation.

Harding talked freely about the operations of government, and with the Tuesday morning press conferences coming after Cabinet meetings, the President would discuss the questions debated during the meeting, and would tell what a particular secretary had said. Often, cabinet officers were embarrassed to find their views in print.[11]

Whenever possible, Harding would give reporters direct answers, but there were times that the answer was either non-committal or evasive. On occasions, answers to embarrassing questions would be sharp and stinging. Harding realized, however, that he was at the mercy of his interrogators, and there would be times after he had made a statement when he would ask the

conferees not to make use of statements he had unguardedly made.[12]

While Harding enjoyed reading the morning papers at breakfast--he usually found time to scan the New York Herald, the Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune, the Marion Star and occasionally the New York Times and the Columbus [Ohio] Dispatch[13]--there were times when Harding exploded in anger at some of the writing by journalists.[14]

Less than a week after his inauguration, Harding held an informal midnight news conference outside the White House, discussing a four-hour dinner conference he had just held with Senate and House leaders. It was another good sign, according to Editor and Publisher:

> Mr. Harding seems to have developed to a marked degree a happy faculty for rewarding the persistence of the Washington correspondents in the light of what he, as publisher of the Marion Star might expect of one of his men. To that he adds a very keen appreciation of the fact that newspaper men represent the public in Washington.
>
> The President has been more than cordial in his relations with the corps.[15]

On occasions when Harding was out of town, the regular routine was bypassed. If it was a Friday, the afternoon press conference was abandoned, and there was no effort made to interview the President under those circumstances.

The Presidential party was made up of from ten to thirty newspaper correspondents, depending on the importance of the trip. The press associations always sent at least one man, and often special writers went along. Correspondents were immediately attached to the Presidential party, each one bearing an official identification card issued by the presidential secretary which allowed the bearer to pass all police lines at will. With them also traveled the still and motion-picture photographers, and

special telegraph company representatives to expedite the handling of news reports.[16]

Thus it was on a note of mutual trust to form good press relations that the Harding administration began and moved through most of 1921. But another event was upcoming--a major event which would put a damper on the cordial, intimate relations Harding had with newsmen--the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armaments. After that, things would never quite be the same.

THE WASHINGTON DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

The aftermath of World War I and the continued strife in Europe following that conflict produced an American backlash, a call for disarmament. In the Senate, a resolution calling for arms limitation soon blossomed into a call for a full-scale international meeting. It became the Washington Disarmament Conference of 1921-22, to which all of the world's major military and naval powers were invited.

Ever publicity conscious, the Harding administration slated the conference to open November 12, the day after Armistice Day and the first ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The conference began on a Saturday, and it lasted only briefly on the first day--long enough for a brief welcoming address by Harding, then an astounding proposal by Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes to scrap many of the capital ships of the great powers. That proposal was front-page news on the Sunday papers of the United States and the world.

The Harding administration took the press into consideration during the planning of the disarmament talks. Several

months prior to the beginning of the conference, a special committee of Washington correspondents had been asked by the State Department to draft recommendations for the accomodation of the large numbers of foreign correspondents who would be coming to Washington to report the proceedings. As a result, foreign newsmen were given the same privileges as those of American newsmen, and many of the two hundred overseas journalists began attending President Harding's news conferences.

The Washington Conference proved to be the first major stumbling block in President Harding's relations with the press. In mid-December, 1921, Harding misinterpreted the provisions of the four-power treaty between the United States, Britain, France and Japan which provided the four would respect one another's rights in the Pacific and refer future disputes in the area to a joint conference. Harding said the treaty did not apply to the Japanese home islands, and his wrong answer set off a series of diplomatic shockwaves which did not cease until later on that evening when the White House issued a correction. From this incident, blown well out of proportion, especially when the Japanese government shifted its position a week later and took the view that Harding articulated,[17] the myth of the bumbling, ignorant Warren G. Harding was spawned. In spite of the research material available, this portrayal is only being abandoned by more recent writers.

Stanford University's William L. Rivers, in a 1967 book, terms Harding "almost totally inept," and says the President "blundered disasterously" with his wrong answer, and as a result, Secretary Hughes "pressured him into requiring that all

questions be submitted in advance, in writing."[18] In another book, Rivers says that Hughes, "his chin whiskers bristling, rushed to the White House to get an official correction," and then forced Harding to accept written questions at his news conferences. According to Rivers, the Harding faux pas forced "a crushing backdown for a President who was warmest and most expansive in talking to newspapermen."[19]

Earlier writers embroidered the incident even further. Some had Hughes offering his resignation, while others had the Secretary lecturing the President and ordering a crackdown on oral questions. A milder view has been taken by F. B. Marbut, professor emeritus of journalism at Pennsylvania State University. To Marbut, the incident caused a "flurry" of "intense excitement," but Hughes only "hurried" to the White House. He points out that written questions had been used prior to that time.[20]

The New York Times reported that the President gave the incorrect answer in response to a written question.[21] How long had written questions been the rule? For the answer, it is necessary to go back to late November, 1921. The Times reported that Harding had established a question box for his semi-weekly press conferences. Every correspondent would be required to submit his questions in writing before entering the President's office. The questions were then to be given to Mr. Harding, and he would answer them as he saw fit. Harding was simply not able to cover all the ground the correspondents desired.[22]

Newsmen apparently made efforts to learn from Secretary Hughes what had transpired between the President and the Secretary, but Hughes, the chairman of the American delegation to the con-

ference, would not discuss what the two had said. The Times reported that the President acted without the consultation of the State Department and without any definite purpose of announcing the attitude of the administration. The paper said Harding was "merely voicing a personal opinion and had no thought of precipitating a clash in conference circles."[23] The publication of the treaty December 13 caused a flurry of excitement in Congress and in the Hearst press, with different groups attempting to interpret certain sections of the treaty. Hence, the turmoil over Harding's error a few days later.

At his next news conference on December 24, Harding told newsmen that he felt differing interpretations placed upon the terms of the Four-Power Treaty were "unimportant."[24] The President, to make his position clear, twice suspended the rule which barred quoting him directly or indirectly, and agreed to the use of the statements in quotation marks. At Harding's news conference the following Friday, his dimly lit oval office room was crowded with newspapermen hoping he would amplify on his statement of the previous Tuesday. While Harding would not permit himself to be quoted directly on some of his answers to questions, he did grant permission for the use of a stenographic report of his reply to a question about whether he felt the world had made "great progress in the direction of peace and good will."[25]

For the most part, the President's subsequent news conferences were again reported with the usual terms of "it can be stated on the highest authority that . . ." and similar phrases used to indicate the President was speaking, but not for quotation. This rule was broken briefly during Harding's final news conference

of the year when he denied publi: ied stories of friction between himself and Secretary of State Hughes. The President was asked whether he cared to comment on the published statement that Hughes was "vexed" and expected to quit the cabinet.

"There is noting in that," replied Harding. "That is silly." Since quotation of the President was not permitted, a correspondent asked Harding whether reporters might quote his characterization of the story as silly.

"The President said it was silly," Harding responded, approving the quotation. "Silly with capital letters."[26]

SECOND THOUGHTS BEGIN

The flare-up over Harding's slip at the Disarmament Conference can be viewed as a watershed of sorts, for from that time on, it seems the presidency ceased to be enjoyable to Harding. The feeling seems to first come out on paper in mid-January, 1922, when Harding wrote to Jerome Landfield, publisher of the Independent and Weekly Review magazine. In talking about the difficulties in working with news correspondents, Harding said:

> I have no doubt I am a great disappointment to many in my newspaper interviews. It is quite probable that I am not sufficiently exact and that I must be disappointing to both writers and my friends on the outside in many of the interviews, or in many of the expressions made in these interviews. I should like to say to you that the great difficulty of saying things more definitely lies in the fact that the Executive cannot always reveal everything which is in his mind, and I have an inherent dislike to be abrupt or seemingly impolite. I told the newspaper men yesterday a thing which I am happy to repeat now to you--it is much more difficult to illumine a situation or express one's self definitely when the one speaking bears responsibility for the outcome of any given situation.[27]

Six weeks later, he revealed in public his disillusionment with the presidential office, for he complained at a dinner at

the National Press Club that he could not find the time to get done all the things he wanted to do. "I never find myself done," he said. "I never find myself with my work completed. I do not believe there is a human being who can do all the work there is to be done in the President's office.

"It seems," he told his listeners, "as though I have been President for twenty years," adding that life was "so full."[28] With the scandals of his administration beginning to be known as some of his "friends" appointed to political office betrayed him, Harding told the assembled newspapermen a wry joke about himself. Out of a meeting which was supposed to be "off the record," it has come down as one of the traits of Warren G. Harding--his inability to deny a request.

He remembered the words of his father: "Warren, it's a good thing you weren't born a girl. With your inability to say 'no' you'd be in a family way all the time."[29] The remark betrayed another Harding trait which is significant for this paper--he trusted the members of the press. Reporters knew his limitations, and Harding made to effort to hide them. Instead, time after time, he confided in newsmen.

One gets the feeling that Harding never ceased to be a newspaper man. One time, when Kansas Republican editor William Allen White was a guest at the Executive Mansion, instead of talking national problems or politics, the President discussed newspapering for an hour. At one point in the conversation, Harding made an offhand remark that also has come down to feed the Harding myth--this one on friendship: "My God, this is a hell of a job! I have no troubles with my enemies. I can take care of my enemies all right. But my . . . God-dam friends,

White, they're the ones that keep me walking the floor nights!"[30]

But Harding, feeling more and more restricted by the bounds of the presidency, didn't always walk the floor at night. On one occasion, he made an unscheduled appearance at the door of the National Press Club.

"The President of the United States is out at the desk," said the door attendant to a group of newspapermen in the private room gathered around a table playing hearts, "and he wants to know where the game is." Walker Buel of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, presiding over that evening, assured the attendant that the President was indeed welcome. Mr. Harding was led in past some rather astonished diners, quickly shucked his coat, and with a regularity began to drop a queen of spades on Sam Bell of the Philadelphia Public Ledger. The President won $1.60 that night, then turned the money over to the waiter who had been attending to his needs that evening.

At one point, the hearts players suggested that it might be advisable to break the game up early out of deference to their White House guest. "Not on my account," replied the President. "Mrs. Harding'll think I'm sick if I get home before midnight."[31]

STRAINED PRESS RELATIONS

The summer months of 1922 were not good for Harding. Bitter strikes by the nation's coal miners and railroad shopmen which idled a million men forced the President to abandon any hopes of leaving Washington for a vacation. The frustrations of attempting to arrange a solution to the strikes made a harrassed man out of the usually genial Harding, and week after week, reporters could see the ordeal taking its physical toll of the President. On one

occasion, following a lengthy negotiating conference, the President came out of his office on a sweltering summer day, shirt-sleeved and wan of face, to talk with White House reporters. "I'm glad to get away from that job in there," he told them. "It's good to be with you fellows for a few minutes."[32]

The President's problems were compounded by a breakdown in Mrs. Harding's health. A recurring kidney condition brought her near the point of death, but it was not until September 9 that her illness began to challenge strike news for front-page headlines. For three nights, reporters chain-smoked cigarets while sitting in the lobby of the executive office, maintaining a death-watch. Ironically, Mrs. Harding's influence guided their actions. Newsmen carefully threw their cigaret stubs in the fireplace and put burned matches back in their boxes. The President's wife had once scolded them for littering in that very lobby.[33]

At the time of the strike difficulty, Harding was also having his most problems with newsmen. The "honeymoon" had worn off, although the President continued to have good relations with most reporters. The ground rules were simple at news conferences: written questions and no direct quotations.

Generally, those questions which made his features tighten significantly were ones which probed Congressional criticism of the administration and specific cabinet members. At one point, the President questioned the news judgment of correspondents who gave too much space to those attacks and in veiled terms implied that the White House would not look with favor upon representatives of a newspaper which followed that practice. This set off a storm of criticism, for it meant that the White House wanted favorable publicity or nothing at all.[34] Some Congressional critics charged

Harding with attempting to muzzle the press, and Editor and Publisher pointed out that the issue showed "A man may be both a good newspaperman and a good public official--but seldom at one and the same time . . . ."[35]

JOURNEY TO NEW YORK

For two years in a row, President Harding had been forced to bypass the annual meeting of the Associated Press in New York City. Aside from the fact that it would have given Harding an opportunity to be with members of his own profession, it would also have given him the chance to influence editorial opinion on the part of the publishers and editors throughout the country. He did not intend to let the opportunity slip by in 1923.

The President's address to Associated Press on April 24, 1923 was deemed "one of the most forceful and momentous speeches of his public career" by the New York Times, for Harding took the occasion to make a major foreign policy address in vowing that the United States would not enter the League of Nations "by the side door, the back door or the cellar door."[36]

While in New York, President and Mrs. Harding had dinner, then attended a Broadway play. After the performance, they visited the new plant of the New York Tribune, hosted by publisher Ogden Reid and his wife. The Presidential party arrived about 11:30 p.m., and was whisked by elevator to the fifth floor where the Reids took charge of the tour.

They first began in the Associated Press automatic teletype room. Harding shook hands with the telegraph operators, then moved into the composing room. Here, it had been arranged that the President would make up the editorial page. Photographers posed Harding, along with his wife and the composing room foreman

and other compositors, on the wrong side of the page form. The President waited until the photographers had finished shooting before moving around to the proper side where he reportedly "put on a performance utterly amazing to those who had formed the idea that President Harding was merely a 'picture printer'."[37] Mr. Harding, "with unerring accuracy and speed," picked up take after take of type and dropped it into the form in proper position. He worked with both hands, which apparently was a custom of Ohio printers strange to New Yorkers. The President completed the first column without missing a line, then repeated the performance with the second column. When he completed the tally, he was but one line short. By this time, "the Presidential hands were well grimed with ink and the white Presidential vest had an ink streak clear across it, but the Presidential smile was getting more and more illuminating with every motion."

The Presidential performance seemed to illustrate the truth of an observation made by a reporter, Charles R. Grasty, following an interview with Harding a few days earlier. Grasty said the President "still has a newspaper heart," and that Mr. Harding still "keeps the Marion Star handy."[38]

THE HARDING ERA ENDS

President Harding's period of worst relations with the press passed after the worrisome days of 1922, although his dealings with correspondents did not match the free and easy days of the "honeymoon" period. While Harding had a high regard for the Washington press corps, he had learned in the past that he must be wary at times. On one occasion, he told a dinner of the Womens Republican Clubs of New Jersey that "I love those boys down in front," indicating

the seated correspondents, "but they never let me forget that I must be President all the time."[39]

But President Harding did not have much time left after his New York visit. In failing health, he would be dead of an apoplectic stroke three months later in San Francisco on August 2, 1923, nearing the end of an exhausting nationwide tour and inspection trip to Alaska.[40]

The American press extended itself upon the death of President Harding. Historian Robert Murray observed:

> Treating his administration sympathetically, the majority of newspapers emphasized the severe problems which he had faced on March 4, 1921, and the calm manner in which he had attempted to solve them. Even those critics who remained opposed to his specific policies attested to his sincerity and high-minded purpose. Many remarked on the increasing devotion to his job and some spoke to him as a martyr to the presidency. All agreed on his gentleness, his patience, and his tolerence.[41]

But just like Harding's honeymoon with the press, the good evaluations didn't last long, for in October, 1923, the Senate opened hearings into what were to become the first of a series of Harding administration scandals. Teapot Dome was the first blow to the Harding image, and by the end of the 1920s, the public mind was conditioned to regard Warren G. Harding as an inept president managed by others, and one who appointed crooks and grafters to public office.

With so many mixed observations, it seems necessary to attempt to set the Harding era into more of a balanced perspective. As revisionist historian Robert Murray and popular historian-journalist Mark Sullivan before him observed, Harding was not a bad president. He did fulfill his campaign promise to return the country to normalcy, following a conservative Republican

policy in so doing. He made some good appointments to public office as well as bad.

Of most importance for this study, Warren G. Harding and his administration advanced the status of White House correspondents to where they could not be ignored by future presidents, a fact made painfully apparent to recent Chief Executives.

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FOOTNOTES

[1]Andrew Sinclair, The Available Man (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 161.

[2]James E. Pollard, The Presidents and the Press (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947), p. 712.

[3]Leo C. Rosten, The Washington Correspondents (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1937), pp. 26-27.

[4]Pollard, p. 702.

[5]Sinclair, p. 161.

[6]Robert K. Murray, The Harding Era (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), p. 51.

[7]Memorandum on the Press by Gus J. Karger to Warren G. Harding, January 15, 1921. Warren G. Harding Papers, Ohio Historical Society (microfilm edition), reel 81, frames 883-85.

[8]Murray, p. 114.

[9]New York Times, March 23, 1921

[10]Louis Rothschild to author, March 5, 1972.

[11]J. Frederick Essary, Covering Washington (New York: Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1927), pp. 89-90.

[12]Essary, p. 90.

[13]Harry M. Daugherty to Cyril Clemens, September 8, 1939. Harding Papers, reel 254, frame 210.

[14]Herbert Corey, "The Presidents and the Press," Saturday Evening Post, January 9, 1932, pp. 100-101.

[15]Editor and Publisher, March 12, 1921. Quoted in Pollard, p. 70

[16]Essary, p. 116.

[17]New York Times, December 28, 1921.

[18]William L. Rivers, The Opinionmakers (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), p. 133.

[19]William L. Rivers, The Mass Media and Modern Society (San Francisco: Rinehart Press, 1971), p. 120.

[20]F. B. Marbut, News From the Capital (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971), p. 174.

[21]New York Times, December 21, 1921.

[22]New York Times, November 30, 1921.

[23]New York Times, December 21, 1921.

[24]New York Times, December 25, 1921.

[25]New York Times, December 28, 1921.

[26]New York Times, January 1, 1922.

[27]Warren G. Harding to Jerome Landfield, January 18, 1922. Harding Papers, reel 207, frame 110.

[28]New York Times, March 4, 1922.

[29]Cabell Phillips (ed.), Dateline: Washington (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1949), p. 61.

[30]William Allen White, The Autobiography of William Allen White (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946), pp. 618-19.

[31]Phillips, pp. 72-73.

[32]Phillips, p. 259.

[33]Murray, p. 419.

[34]Pollard, p. 706.

[35]Editor and Publisher, June 10, 1922.

[36]New York Times, April 25, 1923.

[37]Undated newspaper clipping by Frederick B. Edwards from the New York Tribune. Harding Papers, Florence Kling Harding collection, reel 246, frame 647.

[38]New York Times, April 23, 1923.

[39]New York Times, May 13, 1922.

[40]See W. Richard Whitaker, "The Night Harding Died," Journalism History, Vol. 1, No. 1, for a description of press coverage of Harding's unexpected death.

[41]Murray, pp. 456-57.

The author is an assistant professor of journalism at San Jose State University. This paper is compiled from his Ph.D. dissertation, Warren G. Harding and the Press, Ohio University, 1972, Ralph Izard, adviser.