

Molders of the Modern *Courier*

Shortly after John C. Hartman's death, his nephew, John P. von Lackum II, became president of the W. H. Hartman Company, and another nephew, Karl C. von Lackum, became vice-president. Jackson McCoy, while retaining the position of general manager, also assumed the title of editor and began editorial direction of the paper.

John P. von Lackum II had come to the *Courier* in 1915 and had worked in the circulation department, eventually becoming city circulation director. He had supervised the first truck delivery of papers in the early twenties, and his work in mapping the city to show the location of each home and its "newspaper status" was a factor in the survival of the *Courier* in the circulation battles with the *Tribune*.

J. C. Hartman's will left the majority of stock in the newspaper in trust under the joint control of the von Lackum family — John, Karl, Miss Genevieve von Lackum (who had been Hartman's assistant for twenty-two years) and Mrs. Lester (De Ette) Miller — all grandchildren of the original founder of the *Courier*. Karl von Lackum, in addition to serving as vice-president of the corporation, has also served for twenty-three years as

state editor, supervising the collection and editing of territory news.

World War II brought a period of circulation and advertising growth to the newspaper but it also brought serious management problems. The circulation between 1940 and 1945 rose from 34,759 to 42,730 and the advertising lineage increased from 5,540,388 lines to 6,709,710 in the same period. But the increasing shortage of newsprint forced the eventual rationing of advertising, and the departure of staff members for service, including some key personnel, created manpower shortages. Women took over some of the reporting assignments on the city staff and proved so competent that the practice of employing one or two women reporters, in addition to those in the women's department, was continued in the post-war years.

The war brought rapid industrial expansion to Waterloo as the Deere Tractor Works went into production of tank transmissions, and the Rath Packing Company ran full blast to provide meat both for the United States and for lend-lease purposes. Other Waterloo industries made important contributions to the war effort.

It was a period in which the newspaper bore a heavy responsibility for reporting the war news without violating the voluntary censorship then in effect. The *Courier* was the first to report the grim news on November 13, 1942, when the Navy an-

nounced that all five Sullivan brothers from Waterloo, who had enlisted together, had died together when the cruiser *Juneau* was sunk in the South Pacific.

The end of the war produced the last "extra" ever published by the *Courier*. The news staff had maintained an "around the clock" watch for several days in expectation that the Japanese surrender was imminent. Finally, the cry, "Let her roll," was shouted down to the pressroom by Managing Editor Gene Thorne, himself a veteran of the war who had seen active combat duty in Sicily and Italy. The *Courier* extras were sold out as quickly as they could be carried out on the street. Waterloo citizens, who were parading up and down the streets both on foot and in automobiles, shouting and blowing horns, had already received the news by radio but purchased the extras as souvenirs of the event.

An enormous expansion in economic activity followed the end of the war as the public sought to satisfy the pent-up demand which had been denied by war restrictions. Farmers were particularly prosperous and this brought rising incomes throughout northeastern Iowa. The circulation of the *Courier* increased to 49,154 in 1950, and advertising lineage rose to 12,394,284.

Jackson McCoy, who had directed the newspaper through a great depression and a great war and had made it into a prosperous organ with edi-

torial prestige and public respect, died following an emergency appendectomy on June 22, 1952. His son, Robert J. McCoy, trained by his father in the business, was named editor and general manager to succeed him.

The younger McCoy inaugurated a new program of expansion to keep pace with the growing size of the city and the responsibilities of the newspaper. Colored comics and a magazine supplement were added in 1952, and the sports, farm, and women's departments were expanded. In 1957 the newspaper was enlarged to nine columns and the typographical format modernized.

Soon, however, another major expansion became necessary. Although the circulation had approximately tripled since the *Courier* moved into its new building in 1923 and although the population of Waterloo had increased from the 36,230 of 1920 to the estimated 75,000 of today, the publication of the paper was being carried on in space only slightly larger than that used in 1920.

Therefore a major expansion of the building was undertaken in 1958 and will be completed sometime this year. The expansion involves construction of a third floor for the newsroom on the present building and the installation of a Goss "anti-friction" press capable of printing 60,000 64-page papers an hour. The press will enable the *Courier* to print color photo-engravings.

DAVID DENTAN