

HISTORY OF PUTNAM COUNTY NEWSPAPERS
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The history of Putnam County; newspapers, since the last seventies, which have been established from time to time, is given below as shown in the "History of Putnam County", up to 1923.

Several spasmodic efforts were made to establish a newspaper in Cookeville, beginning with the Monticello Times (later the Cookeville Times), published by Jonathan Buck. Jack McDowell, Dr. Baker, and others, made unsuccessful attempts in this direction. The "chronicle" and "Echo" are long forgotten names of two early sheets. James Cope, of White County, conducted a small paper here for a year or so, back in the late seventies. Still later a Mr. Womack engaged in the newspaper game for a short time. The first really substantial newspaper was the "Cookeville Press," established about 1886, under the editorial guidance of Captain Walton Smith. The N. & K. railroad was being projected about this time and the editorial columns of the "Press" strongly emphasized our natural resources. Rutledge Smith and Joe E. Gore conducted the paper under a joint partnership. About 1892 a stock company was organized for the publication of a new newspaper, "The Cookeville Courier." A year later the controlling interest in the corporation passed into the hands of John S. Denton and W. S. McClain, who had charge of the paper for about two years, when it was absorbed by the "Press." After the death of his senior partner, Mr. Smith continued the publication of the paper until other duties forced him to give up newspaper work. The "Press" ceased publication about 1910. "The Cookeville Citizen" was established in 1895 by W. S. McClain, who sold the paper to Charles Sims, of Sparta, about two years later. It too went to the newspaper graveyard in the third year. "The Southern Republican," owned by a stock company with money to burn, in a newspaper sense, was next to appear on the scene. With elaborate equipment and an imported editor, Mr. Carr, it made a strong fight, but it was soon over. Then John E. Oliver took charge and changed the name to "The Mountaineer" – but it would not go very long. Prof. Amonette Draper then tried his hand for a few months but the financial difficulties multiplied, and finally the plant was sold to Quimby Dyer, who changed the name to "News-Reporter." After about two years Mr. Dyer sold the plant to parties at Newport, TN. Walter A. Wirt opened a job printing office in Cookeville, December, 1889, which he later sold to his brother, Elmer L. Wirt. The business prospered and in 1902 Mr. Wirt decided to add a newspaper. "The Putnam County Herald," which had grown steadily along with the town and county. Its plant as totally destroyed by fire in 1908, but it soon had a larger and better equipment. "The Upper Cumberland News," the last to venture upon the tempestuous waters of local journalism, appeared in 1923. J. F. Gentry was the editor. – History of Putnam County.

In February, 1927, the Upper Cumberland News and the Putnam County Herald were consolidated, and published as the Putnam County Herald and Upper Cumberland News. In 1923 the Herald-News was purchased by James N. Cox, S. Hayden Young, E. C. Warner and Beecher Gentry. Some months after the purchase the name Upper Cumberland News was dropped and the Putnam County Herald left at the mast head. In 1923 Mr. Young's interest was purchased, leaving the other three as the present owners of the Herald.

Since 1931 the owners of the Herald have published the Livingston Enterprise.

In August of this year, the Sparta Expositor, a 59-year-old newspaper, was purchased and is now being published at Sparta.

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