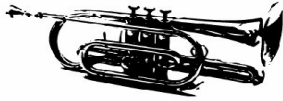


# NEW HOLLAND

## Area Historical Society



Volume 19 Issue 2

Spring 2023

## Society Celebrates 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the New Holland Clarion

Submitted by Brian Frankhouser

The highlight of the newest exhibit at the museum is a copy of the first newspaper published by the Clarion on January 18, 1873. This historic item will be on display for a short time only, so bring your family and friends to read about the goings-on in the little village of New Holland 150 years ago! There are also more recent editions of the newspaper that can be handled and are available on the reading table near the library. Also, on display will be a promotional item from the Clarion that was distributed about 1915, showing 27 different views in New Holland. How many will you be able to recognize? The Clarion grew out of a small job printing business started by E. G. Groff in 1856. It passed through several owners before being purchased by local school teacher, George H. Ranck, in 1869. Ranck raised enough money by partnering with J. W. Sandoe in 1873 to rent space in the Witwer Building (next door to the east of where the museum is now located), and to publish the first newspaper in town since the "Anti-Masonic Herald" over 40 years prior. The New Holland Clarion was an immediate success. Ranck bought out his partner in 1878 and sat in the editor's chair until 1904. The business was sold to C. R. Martin and H. A. Showalter in 1903. The new owners erected a building at 143 East Main Street (where Elkwood is now located), with an entrance about 40 feet from the street. Ranck moved to western Pennsylvania and continued in the newspaper business until he was asked to return to New Holland in 1915 to assume the editor's position again. He permanently retired in 1922 when Harry Ressler became editor. In 1931, R. Evers Whitmore, Sr. purchased the business. He assumed the editor's job, and in 1936, enlarged the building so that the entrance was flush with the sidewalk. Whitmore made the Clarion a family business, and his three children, Robert (Bob), Raymond (Scoop), and Elizabeth (Betty) became an integral part of its success. The town was blessed with this treasure until 1984.

### OFFICERS 2023

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**MISSION STATEMENT**  
*The mission of the New Holland Area Historical Society is to collect, organize, and preserve information and historical materials that give insight to understanding the life and times of the New Holland area and to share these findings with others through Museum exhibits, lectures, and educational outreach programs.*



H.A. Showalter on the porch of the new Clarion office about 1904

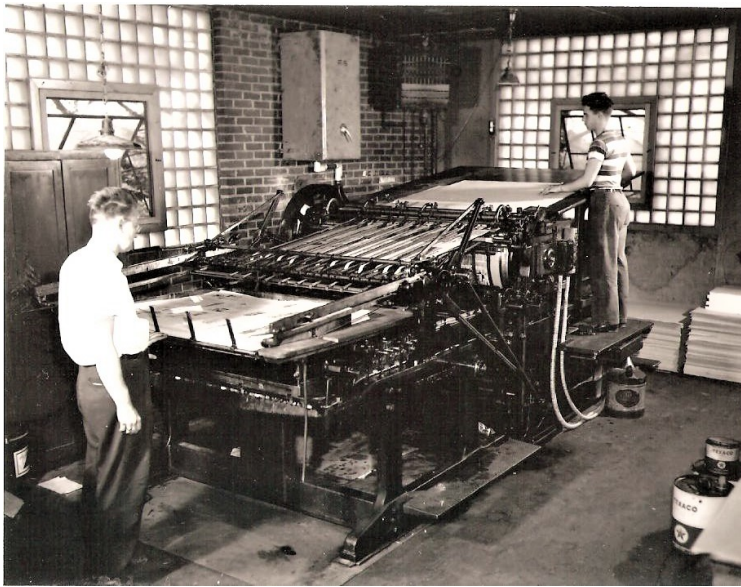


Employees of the New Holland *Clarion* circa 1936 from left to right:  
R. Evers Whitmore Sr. - Editor and Publisher, J. Norman Eby, Harry E. Ressler – Associate  
Editor, John H. Ressler, Moses Horning.

## Early Memories of the *New Holland Clarion* Printshop

Submitted by Mike Ressler

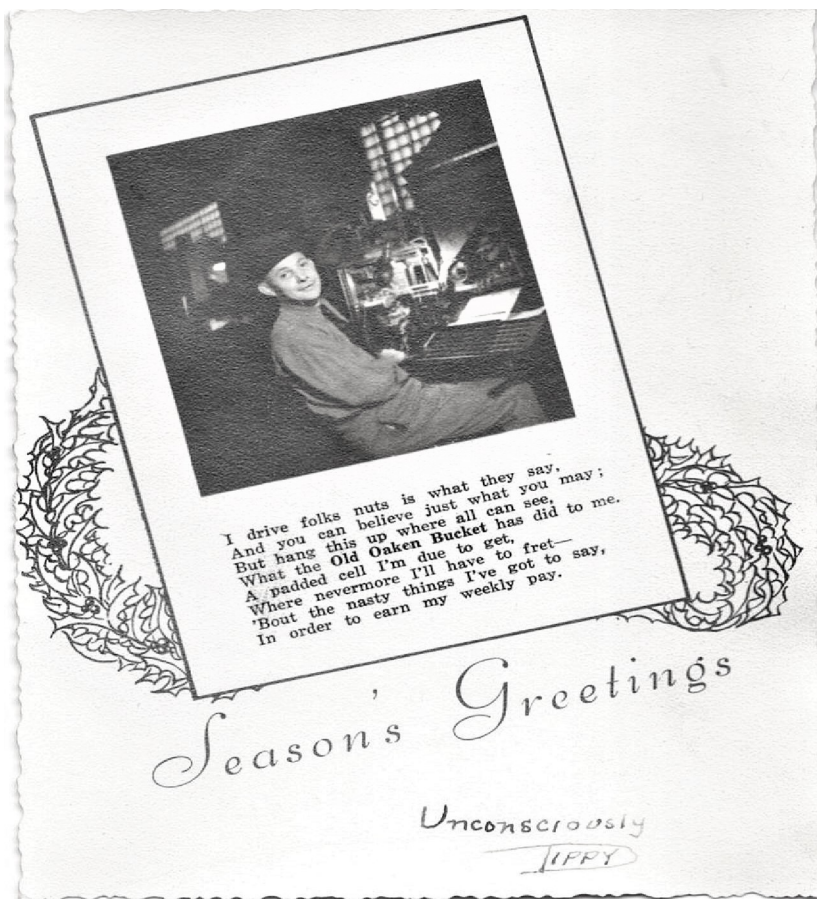
As a young boy of about eight years old, it was very exciting to wander into the *Clarion* printshop to get a glimpse of a “modern” (circa 1960) printshop. I was able to enter this strange world because my grandfather, Harry E. Ressler, was sitting at a linotype machine near the front of the shop and, on two nights a week, my dad, John H. Ressler, joined him to get the *Clarion* ready to go to print. To enter the shop I walked down a long narrow alley beside 143 East Main Street (now Elkwood) about 60 feet to a door on the left. Opening the door, I was greeted by the smells of the shop. The odors of ink, cleaning solvents, and molten lead filled the air. Walking through another door I got my first glimpse of a linotype machine. It was an amazing contraption of wheels spinning long belts connected to other wheels. A long arm would occasionally drop down and then return to the top where there were large flat enclosed trays called magazines that held the letters and other symbols that could be used by the operator. The operator sat on a chair in the front of the machine typing on a keyboard that looked nothing like a typewriter or computer keyboard. It was divided into three parts – lowercase letters on the left, uppercase on the right, and numbers and special characters in the center. From years of use, the letters printed on the face of each key had worn off. My grandfather had to know the keyboard from memory. I learned years later that he was never able to use a typewriter – they were a mystery to him. The spinning wheels, clicking sounds of the keys being pressed by the typist, and tinkling sounds of the individual letters dropping down into the magazine made a kind of music unique to this strange instrument. When the operator filled one line of type he would depress a handle near his right hand. This would start an amazing sequence of large wheels turning and levers rising and falling. The line of type rose, moved to the left, and dropped into an area where molten lead was ready to flow onto the line of letters. In seconds, a new line of finished type dropped into a chute to a tray. It was way too hot for me to touch but my grandfather could pick it up, proofread it at a glance, and return it to the tray. Line after line of type would drop into the tray accompanied by the sounds of the wheels turning and the letters dropping back into the magazine. Wandering away from the linotype I passed by trays of hand-set type and worktables and soon found the press in the back corner on the left. It was hard to see because there wasn’t much light in the shop. Large windows made up of cubes of solid glass helped light the shop during the day but at night it seemed like a dark place. The press was huge and took two men to run. It too was an amazing invention with many moving parts, and it made its own rhythmic music as large full sheets of newspaper entered blank and came out the other end printed from top to bottom. How did the other side get printed? That I never figured out. It was a weekly race to get the *Clarion* ready to go to print and that was only one thing these men did. Many small jobs including sale notices, newsletters, brochures, the “New Holland Line,” and, every year, the Farm Show booklet, came out of this shop. As I left the shop, again passing by the linotype machines, I couldn’t help but notice a slight grin on my grandfather’s face as he typed away at the keyboard, apparently creating a humorous story for his “Old Oaken Bucket” column. It would take a few more years for me to really appreciate the art and craft of the printer and the importance of their contribution to our community. And now their work has become a treasure chest of information and stories about our town and area. We have much to be thankful for.



Running the newsprint press: R. Evers Whitmore, Sr. on left checking the output and an unknown employee on right feeding the paper. Circa 1930s.



Right photo – Original location of the Clarion in 1882. This building currently houses Lickity-Split Restaurant on the left 209 E. Main St., and Hick’s Clock Shoppe & Repair on the right 211 E. Main St.



This is a Christmas greeting card my grandfather created in 1940. It includes a photo of him at the linotype machine, and a humorous poem commenting on his column, "The Old Oaken Bucket." He signed it "Dippy," a name he used for himself occasionally in the "Old Oaken Bucket." I think (not 100% sure) that it stood for "Dip N. Haul," a sobriquet he used to describe his process of dipping his "Old Oaken Bucket" into the well of humorous news of friends and neighbors and writing it up in his column. No one was safe, everyone was fair game. It's a nice photo of my grandfather sitting at the linotype.

**NEW HOLLAND AREA HISTORICAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Type of membership requested (please check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ Annual Personal/Household (\$20)                      \_\_\_\_\_ Partner (\$100-\$500)

\_\_\_\_\_ Legacy Partner (\$500-\$999)                      \_\_\_\_\_ Heritage Partner (\$1000 and up)

**"Partner memberships"** – Your name will appear in the newsletter for four consecutive editions regardless of when the membership is received. You may remain anonymous.

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to NHAHS and mail with this application to:  
New Holland Area Historical Society PO Box 464 New Holland PA 17557

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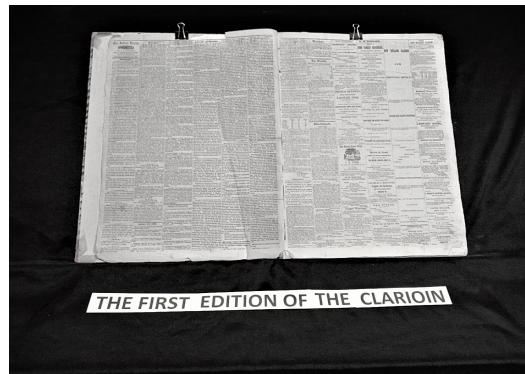
# NEW HOLLAND

Area Historical Society



PO Box 464  
New Holland PA 17557  
[www.NhHistorical.com](http://www.NhHistorical.com)

**These two photos are from the new display in the museum. See the story on page 1 of this newsletter. Think they're too small? Good! Come visit the museum and see this and much more about the beloved Clarion Newspaper**



**The following programs are planned for 2023:**

**Held in the Chapel at Garden Spot Village  
433 S. Kinzer Ave. New Holland PA**

**April 20th**

**Abandoned America; a hauntingly, beautiful urban exploration, chronicling the abandoned buildings in our midst including schools, churches, hospitals, power plants etc.; Matthew Christopher, presenter**

**May 18th**

**“They made Lancaster great” Program about two individuals:**

**Jacob Eichholtz-Artist– –Painted many portraits of people in Lancaster and Philadelphia many of them are famous**

**Amos Ellmaker-Businessman– –Who has ties to New Holland**

**June July August – No Program**