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## *Well, Let's Get Started*

**T**HIS CHAPTER is addressed to the several hundred persons who each year start a column for the first time, and to others who are still feeling their way.

So you would like to write a column!

"Writing a column every week isn't easy," said Earl Tucker, author of "Rambling Roses and Flying Bricks" in the Thomasville (Ala.) *Times*. "Last night I was trying to think up something to write about and all I could do was make little sketches on a piece of paper. I would pick up a newspaper, thinking I might get an idea, but all I saw was something about Korea, and I'm just not going to write about Korea."

In their mischievous manner, columnists attribute their skills to everything from inheritance to being sort of "queer." But beneath their self-conscious "Oh shucks" denial of having any literary secrets, you will find some solid patterns for getting and developing ideas. They are good folks to know. They are friendly, quick to sense a joke and catch a slant, sympathetic, resourceful, unerring in spotting a stuffed-shirt personality and able to make and hold friends at all levels of society. They know the power of the infer-

There is no originality on the part of those who write alleged witticisms on the walls of public places. The smutty jokes I see scrawled today are the same I saw scrawled in 1917.—Arch W. Jarrell, Grand Island (Nebr.) *Independent*.

ence and the danger of innuendo. They love to plant an idea and see it flower in the minds of public officials and average citizens.

In a phrase, columnists are moulders of public opinion. They have perspective. They have insight. But like other literary men they sow their philosophies in well-plowed ground; that is, in observations, anecdotes, verse, and other standard forms of reading and entertainment.

In writing a column, one starts from where he is; all he has to do is to come alive. A small-town reporter who has a keen awareness of people and things can find a column of news and gather data for a personal column in the course of circling a single block. Every life is an adventure and every day has meaning for each person. Then there are *things*— the paving one walks upon, the sky above, the state of the growing plants and flowers, the mechanical gadgets which give Americans seven-league boots.

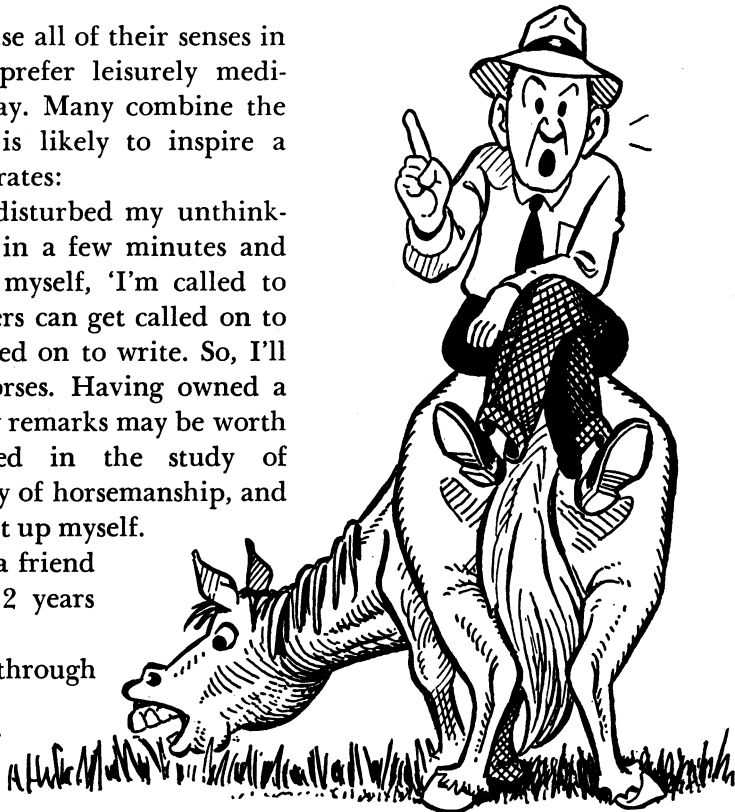
Some extrovert columnists use all of their senses in developing columns. Others prefer leisurely meditation at the end of a busy day. Many combine the two methods. But anything is likely to inspire a column, as Earl Tucker illustrates:

"A horse galloped by and disturbed my unthinking mood. He came back by in a few minutes and disturbed it again. I said to myself, 'I'm called to write about horses.' If preachers can get called on to preach I reckon I can get called on to write. So, I'll tell you all I know about horses. Having owned a horse once, I feel like these few remarks may be worth something to those interested in the study of equestrianism. That's the study of horsemanship, and a right fine word if I did look it up myself.

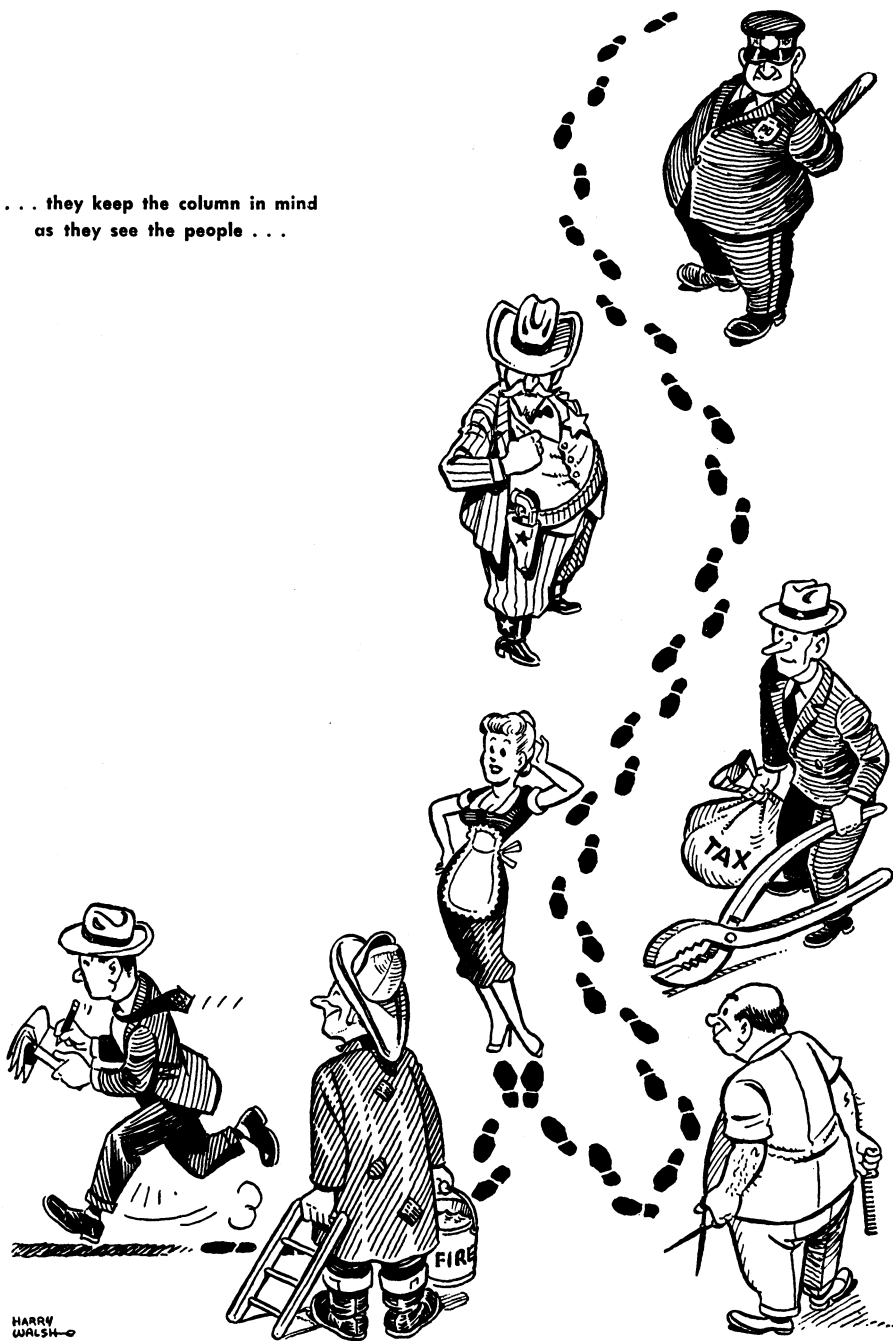
"I acquired my horse from a friend of mine when I was about 12 years old. . . ."

The column continued through

". . . so I'll tell you all I know about horses . . ."



... they keep the column in mind  
as they see the people ...



several hundred words to the day when the horse of the writer's boyhood died of sweet potato poisoning. Pathos was combined with talk of how to tell a horse's age, racing, Kentucky derby, hoss trading.

Busy small-town publishers cannot, however, depend on column subjects to come galloping by their windows. Neither do they have the time deliberately to go out looking for column items. If they had a lot of time, they probably would do research for formal editorials and a carefully edited page of editorial features. But lacking this time, they keep the column in mind as they see the people—the police, the sheriff, the tax collectors, the office secretaries, the chamber of commerce staff, their barbers, firemen, janitors, farmers in town, and business men at civic club luncheons. They listen, and they take notes.

"The average small-town editor is not really an editor at all," wrote Hugo K. Frear of the Bedford (Penn.) *Gazette* in *The National Publisher*.<sup>1</sup> "He may be a first-rate managing editor, a good businessman, and a competent reporter; but seldom an editor. He can't afford the time to be. . . . Bear in mind that we refer to the editor who fulfills the larger-city definition of that title—the man described by Roget's *Thesaurus* as 'a commentator, critic, essayist, pamphleteer, publicist, reviewer.' The man, that is, who writes editorials."

Frear, winner of a National Editorial Association award for columning, pointed out that bigger-city editorial writers have the time and resources to make small-town writers look bad by comparison. While he does not regard the column as a *cure-all*, he gave this advice:

"Give yourself three hours of free time out of that busy week—Sunday evening is an elegant, trouble-free time. Put a heading on the column. Relax. Forget

#### SEE BOTH ENDS

While many columnists accumulate their material and write it as time permits, most of the better columns are planned. The writers have at least a rough idea of the development of the piece, and its ending. The essayists plan even more carefully. Humorists can afford to let their fun develop spontaneously, providing they later edit the stuff carefully. Planned hodge-podge columns can follow a frequently repeated formula. An idea for a column should include both ending and conclusion. What goes between will take some digging. Digging is fun when the end is in sight.

If you can't influence a man any other way, praise him for being the kind of a man who can't be influenced, and you'll have him eating out of your hand.—Odebolt (Iowa) *Chronicle*.

<sup>1</sup> February, 1950, pp. 7-8.

That girl on Broadway says it seems like those who get the biggest kick out of life do the least kicking. — Lubbock (Tex.) *Avalanche*.

#### BEHIND SCENES

Speech coverage from manuscripts and from the audience may be quite good and yet the occasion may have ignored news angles. Both reporters and columnists sometimes find the real news in things not done, words not spoken, delegations not present. When editors write columns they may find their regular space ideally suited to elaboration of event-coverage, public business, and politics. There are no towns so small as not to have occasional news of this negative sort. And what people think can be news.

your own worries, and the world's worries. Just start writing about the interesting things that happened around town last week. Write to fill the column. And keep writing each week thereafter. Come hell or high water, *write that column!* The column succeeds, of course, because of its versatility. Readers are drawn to it because they can't afford to miss it. There might be a juicy morsel of fun about a neighbor."

Now, let us assume that you wish to write an "about town" column. You wish to report and comment on the lighter side of the news and to record the jokes, anecdotes, gripes, and smart sayings you hear on your rounds. Occasionally you will find a situation which will inspire you to "let yourself go." Then you will write with feeling, some fine phrases, and possibly some indignation over official malfunctioning. Yet you don't expect to be a scold. Mainly, you wish your paper to have a voice, or several. And you wish an outlet for ideas which may not be worth a long editorial but which will express a point of view and gain converts to your way of thinking.

But now, you must begin. You ask some advice and seek some ideas.

First, who are you? The columnist may be himself, writing as he talks and merely delivering a monologue on a few subjects. But as a variety columnist you may wish to strike a pose. Now is the time to decide. You must select a tempo. Will you pose as a clown or a scholar? Will you be a "regular fellow" or will you speak with authority, or as one having inside information? Why not be yourself—your brighter self. Later, with experience, you can develop into a "character" if you wish.

What does a columnist do? He reports . . . gripes . . . praises . . . wisecracks . . . philosophizes . . . apologizes . . . explains . . . worries . . . exults . . . tells stories.

But, you ask, from what pulpit; what is his point of view? Well, you don't need an ivory tower (remember to trade that expression some day). Columnists write from all kinds of places, such as editorial desks, easy chairs, teachers' platforms, doghouses, sidewalks, and—we could almost say—the edges of gutters. They feign many points of view and assume characterizations ranging from dolts to poets. Yet they are consistent.

Your column title, "About Town," is non-committal as to tone. It suggests a reporting job. You can ask readers for contributions—written or oral. You can confess that filling a column requires a lot of items. You will condition your audience gradually to your ideas before you start meddling with neighborhood mores. First, get a following. Develop your column formulas. Gain confidence.

Know your people well. Remember that many of them never went to college. You may unconsciously talk down to readers sometimes, but only because you have information and ideas to report. Do it man-to-man. Don't be afraid to give the impression that you have an idea in which you believe, but always assume that the readers are intelligent and that, given your facts, they will see things as you do. But don't be surprised if they don't, and don't fail to share your space with them.

"Your best columns will be about something you feel very keenly and know thoroughly," wrote Robert K. Beck of the Centerville (Iowa) *Iowegian and Citizen in Publishers' Auxiliary*.

Beck's subjects range from baby sitting to Joe Stalin. His most talked-about paragraph was about his 18-month-old son's sticking his blond head in a bucket of blue paint. Mothers live in fear of such happenings.

Don't think it is necessary to be a clown, to use

#### LOOKING AHEAD

Spontaneity is a vital thing in columns, but subject matter is not found without alertness and some planning. An idea book can be kept to remind one he had a swell thought on how to write a column for a special event or holiday. This futures book should be large enough to carry brief notes for later reference.

The coward's meanest trick is to nod agreement with a catty criticism when he doesn't agree with it at all.—Fountain Inn (S. C.) Tribune.

Psay, did you ever psee any-  
thing pso funny as the English  
language? Psuch words as  
psychology, for example. Psuch  
pspelling is just too psilly for  
anything.—D. L. Keith, Windom  
(Minn.) Citizen.

#### LITTLE QUESTIONS

In their request for the unusual and the significant, reporters habitually overlook small news which readers want. A big neon sign is erected. How was it made? How much electricity does it consume? What does it weigh? . . . The cornerstone for a public building arrives. Who carved the names, and with what? Does he ever make a mistake? What would be done if a tiny corner were broken off the cornerstone, ruining its perfection? Sidewalk crowds ask these questions. Who, better than a columnist, can answer them?

trick typography, and to think up asinine spelling. You don't have to use bad manners to get attention. You don't have to shout. You do have to keep on writing week after week. Some of the biggest reader responses have come from appreciation of a modest little paragraph in ordinary body type.

Write as if writing is fun; it is. Write as if you expect readers to have fun in the reading. Put readers' names in your column, but don't repeat the same names or cater overmuch to people who travel in sets and cliques. Be grateful for contributed items. Say that you are. And don't forget your colleagues in the print shop; include them in your mentions, but not often.

Here are two good ideas from Harlan Miller of the Des Moines *Register*:

1. Carry a notebook everywhere.
2. Spend some time facing your typewriter in solitude.

An ever-present notebook is an invitation to see, to ask, to record. A typewriter, however, is an invitation to write—too hastily. Columnists need to see, deeply, then to write in a novel way. They should refrain from expressing ordinary opinions in an expected sort of way. Facts are seldom humdrum; opinions often are. The reader's reward should be your clever phrase, your hidden quip, your subtle statement which permits the reader to draw the conclusion or state the moral. You wouldn't explain the obvious point of a joke; don't force the reader to enunciate a platitude he saw coming several sentences back.

Having a regular place to write is important. Many a columnist is a slave to a place and a time. We knew a gifted paragrapher who wrote his barbed bits in a cubbyhole behind a cut cabinet. He sat beside a huge roll-top desk and wrote on an ancient typewriter. Progress came, with new desks, new partitions, and new typewriters. The columnist never had another

happy Sunday morning, which was his regular time for writing his paragraphs.

Some columnists write only after others in their families have retired. Others write at intervals as time permits, and a few have typewriters for the purpose hidden in back shops among stacks of paper and supplies. Charles A. Guy, the "Westerner" of the Lubbock (Tex.) *Journal*, contributes this comment on his methods:

"I write under the worst conditions possible, which means I write both in the office and at home and, when out of town, in hotel rooms, newspaper shops—anywhere and everywhere. Customarily, I do my writing during the working day at the office. Since I have a policy of not closing my office door, I write a paragraph, then talk to a visitor; write another paragraph, then answer the phone; write another paragraph, then talk to a staff member who comes in with a problem. In short, I have written my column in airplanes, on trains, in a mine, in the patio of a Yaqui military garrison—almost everywhere but in a submarine.

"I have tried only once to dictate my column. It was fifteen years ago after a horse fell with me and I came up with a broken arm. Although I had been dictating letters for many years, I simply couldn't dictate the column. It had run out of my fingers for too long. I wrote the column with one hand. You would be surprised how well you could run a typewriter with one hand—if you had to."

Any interest which readers feel in a column arouses their curiosity about the columnist. They wish to know whether he is human, as they feel they are. People are funny. Columnists are people. You can profitably share some of your personal problems. The great and greatly beloved William Allen White of Emporia, Kansas, wrote about shaving "this funny

#### DICTATION

Editors who have stenographers or voice-recorders sometimes dictate their columns. The practice has the merit of encouraging a tell-it-as-you-talk style. But most journalists think better at their typewriters. A few compose at their Linotypes. In any event, good writing habits can be formed, as judged by results.

Anybody could get rich if he could guess the exact moment at which a piece of junk becomes an antique.—Youngstown (Ohio) *Vindicator*.



**DEADLINES**

Newspaper workers produce great volumes of articles under the pressure of deadlines. In turning to free-lance writing, without deadlines, they sometimes flounder miserably, unable to get started. And many professional writers suffer agonies in working themselves into a creative mood. Columnists, too, need the pressure of a definite time and place to finish their stint. This discipline seems to put one in the spirit of columning. Some syndicate writers find they do their best work under the pressure and worry of a narrow margin between them and their deadlines. The thrill of feeling a good column developing is heightened by the knowledge that the deadline will be met, after all.

old face." His editorials had a column-like tone and structure. People knew not only how he thought, but also how he felt.

You, the new columnist, awaken to the raucous buzz of an alarm clock. Thousands have the same experience in your county. There you have it—something in common. All right; report it. Be specific. What was your first thought on awakening? Why? Had you rather be awakened with music? What kind of music? Or can you depend on the noise of the neighbor's lawn mower at 6 a.m.? You recall other ways of being roused: Army bugles, the cacophony of alarm clocks in a dormitory, a fraternity brother's poke in the ribs, a telephone call from a hotel desk clerk. You wonder how Farmer Brown routs the sandman. Or does the modern farmer get up before the sun? You ask a real dirt farmer. He says he has a cow which bawls for her feed at a convenient early hour. You record his remarks in your notebook for later typing.

But, back to clocks; you note that most alarm clocks displayed today are electric. Wonderful thing, this electricity. But who fixes electric clocks? Take it from there. You may get an ad when you look up the repair man.

On another awakening, you notice the wall paper designs and recall that frontier cabins were papered with newspapers. What are the new styles in wall coverings? What about wall coverings through the ages? What about new plastic materials? Take it from there.

In another room, you see a hole in the wall paper. Bad news that; the termites are at work. Why not poison them with arsenic in the paste? But then you would not know the pesky things were eating down the house. Clever things, the termites defy even modern chemistry. They are competent engineers

and are masters of camouflage. They are bad news but good column material.

Now in the bathroom, sight of a tube of toothpaste remind you that cake decorating mixtures now come in tubes. What next? You wonder if you can shave with cake filling. Shaving takes water, soft preferred. How many gallons are used in a bathroom every day? With water tables falling, people must give some serious thought to conserving rainfall. Cities are dying for want of water. Will your town ever be short?

Junior has dirt on his hands, but doesn't worry. The farmer loses dirt to drainage ditches and does worry. What is alive in a cubic inch of soil? It's amazing when you know the answer.

Junior balances on his toes on the rim of the bath tub and you think of insurance company ads on household accidents. How can the home, man's castle, be so lethal? Call the roll of hazards in the home and ask readers for ideas.

You haven't far to look about the house to see all the personal mentions you should make in a year. Other column subjects will occur to you on the way to your office. What a beautiful day. Or perhaps not, to a farmer needing rain. Look at that saucy cardinal. He almost moves one to poetry. Back in 1928 when William Allen White saw a similar sight he wrote:

He was singing his heart out in the sun of the early morning today; sitting on the top branch of a brown lilac bush, all burning red was he. His throbbing notes came full and fine. Clothed in the feathery brown lace of the bush the red bird glowed like a drop of blood bursting from a heart full of passionate faith. He sang because he had to sing. His urge was part of the force that moves the stars — mechanical maybe; certainly natural. But we who heard him, we who translated his joy into gratitude, who took his song and made it our own delight, who caught it on our own wavelength and so aspired with the high gods, well, if our thrill was only

A bride out in Purdyville got a whistling tea kettle for a wedding gift. Next morning as she was getting breakfast, clad in an abbreviated nightie, the kettle startled her with a lusty wolf whistle. — Lyons (Kans.) News.

When a man wants his handkerchief he reaches around and takes it out of hip-pocket. When a girl wants hers she arises, shakes herself, and picks it up. —Exchange.

## THE MEMORY

Age isn't a necessity in columnning, but some of it helps. The memory should be a columnist's storehouse of data. Has he lived, worked, read, suffered, traveled, grieved, and exulted in vain? Has he gained no vocal powers from accidents, near-accidents, successes, and failures? Why should he not dare to write, now and then, from his head and heart? Emotion is motion. Why be afraid to use it—in good taste—in the column?

A great lover is not the man with the most conquests, but the one who makes one conquest and then continues in the army of occupation for life. —Glenn E. Bunnell, Hartington (Nebr.) News.

the mechanics of nature working, then the great mechanic back of the machine must know joy, too; must feel the thrill of beauty, the passion of high hopes. For the parts cannot be greater than the whole.

And God's in His Heaven.<sup>2</sup>

You move toward town with swinging steps. It's great to be alive. There's old Mrs. Jones, 88 and mighty pert. Stop a moment. How does the world look to a woman who has lived so much? Pick a quote. Readers will love you for having shown this respect for Grandma Jones.

On to work . . . to open the mail . . . to talk . . . to question . . . to listen . . . and to write in your little notebook.

You will be offered jokes. In general, reject them. Few are original. Unless original, they should be credited if printed. But they can be paraphrased, made into tall tales, or put into dialogue form. Traveling salesmen are good folks to know. Their jokes may be risqué but they also know anecdotes and have news of markets, styles, price trends, and goings-on in other towns.

People will offer you much advice. They will urge you to "burn down" the city manager because there is a hole in a certain street. You can criticize the city manager, of course; he is a public servant. You may do so. But he may be your neighbor, your fellow Rotarian, your friend. You may desire to take the complainant to the city hall to face the city manager. The chances will be good for clearing up the matter and making friends of possible enemies.

Public officials may come to blows. We read two accounts of a fight between a mayor and a city commissioner. One unimaginative reporter wrote a straight account which could only have made it difficult for the wives of the officials to face each other

<sup>2</sup>*Forty Years on Main Street*, p. 382. Used by permission of Rinehart & Company, Inc. Copyright 1937.

across a bridge table. The other reporter wrote a hilarious account in the jargon of a sports writer. "His Honor led with a sharp left—and missed by three feet, then the commissioner pivoted neatly, countered with a right uppercut . . . and fell on his face," he recorded.

As a columnist, you will hear many demands that things be kept out of the paper. Your column is a good place to explain why news should not be suppressed. Be specific. Offer examples. This one will illustrate the point:

In the early days of electrical refrigeration, a house was damaged when a motor caught fire. Then there was another similar blaze, and still another. The dealer demanded that the third and subsequent stories be omitted. His business was endangered. He was warned about the danger of rumors when facts are suppressed. He insisted that he was a victim of circumstances and should be protected by newspaper silence. Then a columnist asked that he be permitted to put the dealer's dilemma frankly before the public. The dealer was skeptical, but agreed to the experiment. The columnist let out all the stops, telling how the unlucky dealer in refrigerators was losing his health, his hair, his business, etc., etc. Readers were asked to save this man, his business, and his home by expressions of sympathy. The result, in personal and telephone calls, flowers, and other attention overwhelmed the amazed business man, who had the best business in months. And luckily he had no more fires.

As a new columnist, and needing a vacation, you may be tempted to surrender your space to guest writers for a couple of weeks. It is a safe procedure to have the columns in hand before you leave. Mrs. John Bigwig's daughter, just home from finishing school, wrote a snazzy column for her school paper

Is a teacher hired, employed, or engaged? It is our opinion that she is at first hired; after she's been in town six months, she's engaged; and three months later, after the wedding bells, she's employed.—Roy M. Garner, Mobridge (S. D.) Tribune.

The old-fashioned woman who tacked carpet rags now has a granddaughter who thinks rag tacking is tacky.—Dallas (Tex.) News.

A family walks to town on Sunday. The sun is bright. The daughter is radiant in finery. The younger son impatiently skips along. The mother is a picture of serenity. The father looks as if his shirt collar were chafing his neck. This is the greatest of American scenes.—Bill Surber, Shelbyville (Tenn.) *Gazette*.

Anybody can cook steak and French fries over a campfire, but in the modern kitchen it takes not only scientific know-how, but lots of know-where.—Barrie Young, Oakland (Iowa) *Acorn*.

and would like to take over your space temporarily, or permanently. But her speculation on local romances may bring a storm of protest and her compliments on Mrs. Brown's hat, seen at the Country Club social, won't be taken at face value. The hat, you see, was a last year's model and Mrs. Brown thinks the writer knew it and is needling her.

And your seemingly innocent observations may result in surprising explosions. One columnist reported seeing a very solid citizen coming out of a downtown watering place of fair to good reputation. But the man had told his wife that he was going out of town that afternoon. He demanded that the publisher keep his name out of the paper forever after.

Printing people's brags isn't always a good idea, either. White lies look black in printer's ink. Public speakers and curbstone orators have some kind of inherent right to exaggerate facts for an effect, such as keeping the hearers awake or getting their attention. It is cruel to print their words exactly, quite apart from the occasion and the mood.

You may note that a few papers are running high school-ish gossip columns. These boy-girl items on who is or is no longer dating whom make severe demands on the heart strings. You have only to remember your teen-age years to know that while the young heart mends rapidly, it must not be assumed that it cannot be "broken." Reader interest in gossip is morbidly high, but you will be a happier columnist if you leave affairs of the heart to the persons concerned. And you may even live longer.

There are three events in a person's life which offer little danger of offending, except with inaccuracies. These are his birth, his marriage, and his death. Treat each of these events with dignity. In fact, it is wise always to remember the dignity of the individual personality. You can make it a basic policy of your

column to repeat often the idea that every individual has, under democracy, a precious right in the inviolability of his person and his reputation, and his privilege of choosing his location, his vocation, and his leisurely pursuits.

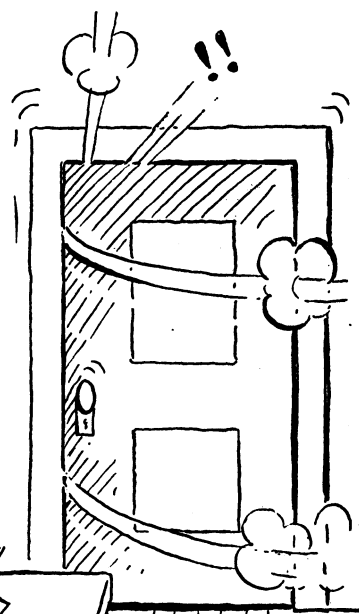
"Face" is important in a small town where there are few strangers. Tempers have lost some of their mettle in recent years, but we recall how an ordinarily even-tempered man acted when he took his family to a community Christmas tree. Expecting no favors from Santa Claus, he felt vastly insulted when Santa, in high glee, presented him a large, be-ribboned gourd. This man broke the gourd over a chair and stalked out in wrath. The gourd, we recall, is not held in high regard when it is not a dipper at the well.

Indirect reprimands may take the form of this item from the Goodland (Kans.) News:

When you hear some folks you know blow and brag, you are reminded of the time the flea said to the elephant, "Boy, didn't we shake the bridge back there when we crossed it!"

But you will find that it pays to keep a column clean, kindly, and sympathetic. Other columns will have enough of sorrow. Publishers realize today that

... a carelessly conducted column may arouse sharp  
and damaging reactions ...



columns are flexible devices for building good will and stabilizing circulation. Conversely, a carelessly conducted column may arouse sharp and damaging reactions.

If you are a kidder, you will be tempted to tease people through the column. Take care. The line between acceptable kidding and being suspected of making an uncomplimentary remark is very narrow. And if people never know when to take you seriously your influence will decline.

We have mentioned the use of news in columns. You will represent your readers as you gather stories on your rounds. You will report things in the spirit of the people concerned. On your beat, you will match wits with your news sources, quip for quip and mood for mood. Calling at an office is a sort of ritual — a proffered cigarette, a what-do-you-know, and an exchange of pleasantries before the serious news is collected. People will probe you for laughs, and they will read your column in the same spirit.

Simple reporting is hard to beat. Note what your friends read, and wear, and say. Watch for new gadgets, black eyes, sprained ankles, chigger bites. Learn why a person is missing from his desk. Replies to questions will elicit news items, of course, but column material also.

We have demonstrated, we hope, that you will never lack for column material; rather, the main lack is time. Keep that little notebook handy to record ideas which otherwise you won't remember. Keep it with you as you read books, magazines, newspapers, and legal documents. Columning becomes a state of mind; an inspiration for a column may come at any time. You're talking to the justice of the peace and it suddenly occurs to you that the history of his office must be interesting. It is, and you can do a column on every public office.

Daylight saving idea came from an old Indian chief who cut off one end of his blanket and had it sewed on the other end to make the blanket longer.— Clarke A. Sanford, Margaretville (N. Y.) Catskill Mountain News.

Now, let's wind up this chapter with two musts:

1. Try to say exactly what you mean — and mean it. Words are tricky. Watch for double meanings.

2. When you criticize, be specific. Your targets are entitled to a clean-cut bill of indictment. If you can't bring yourself to name and make your position clear, you are certainly not ready to risk the dangers of partial identification and innuendo, which may lead to libel suits.

Be stubbornly fair, and fear no reader.

Be honest with your conscience, and suffer no remorse.

Remember that people live very close to their emotions, meaning that their first concerns are for themselves. As a columnist you will be examined not only for what you say, but for what you feel. Loyalty to the community is assumed, but its reality may unhappily be cast into the shadow of doubt by some critical remark meant to be constructive. Bob Callan, columnist of the Kaufman (Tex.) *Herald*, puts it this way:

"Readers will follow a journalist through many editions to find out what is in his heart, when they wouldn't give a Chinese dollar to find out what is in his mind."

A St. John vacationist has sent home post cards which read, "Having a wonderful time. Wish I could afford it."—Cleveland Cole, St. John (Kans.) News.