THE
PRESSES
HAVE
STOPPED

What William Kernodle began as a small publishing firm in Kirksville, Missouri, in 1865 evolved into a large-scale publishing company known as The Journal Printing Company.

The Journal Printing Company published various types of printed materials such as this very magazine, The Chariton Collector. The company earned a respectable reputation as a publisher of books and periodicals dealing with osteopathic medicine, such as the Autobiography of Andrew Taylor Still and Principles of Osteopathic Techniques. For years, it served as the official printer of osteopathy.

In 1887, Robert Miehle, a Chicago pressman, invented the Miehle Press. The Journal Printing Company owned two of the hand-fed presses, one shown here in the basement of the building.
In 1865, *The Kirksville Journal* was a weekly newspaper printed by The Journal Printing Company. It competed against two other weekly papers, *The Weekly Graphic* and *The Kirksville Democrat*, while the *Journal* was in publication from 1865 to 1923.

The Journal was located in several places over the years. From about 1885 until 1905 it was located on the south side of the square and then moved into a new building in 1905. On March 15, 1890, a mysterious fire destroyed the better part of the buildings on the south side of the square. Three stores were saved from the blaze. Those saved were the Savings Bank Building (where Footsteps is today) and the two buildings east of it. However, the fire didn't keep the Journal from publishing its paper; the newspaper was printed and distributed on time, but was in condensed form. According to the Kirksville Fire Department the cause of the fire was never known. Personal property and the Journal's files were destroyed by this blaze. The Journal Printing Company was rebuilt in the same location as it was before the fire occurred. After 20 years of business on the square, the Journal chose to build a new building on the corner of Elson and McPherson Streets. It has been at this location since 1905.

In 1890s they printed the newspaper on a two-revolution Lee Press that was operated by hand. Later it was powered by steam engine. After the Journal began printing books, they used two hand-fed Miehle presses. In 1943, these presses were replaced by two Kelly presses. The Kelly presses were half the size of the Miehle, but they were several times faster and much easier to operate. Later, three offset presses, camera equipment, and an electronic typewriter were added to compliment the monotype system of type setting.

Long years of employee service was a characteristic of The Journal Printing Company. For instance, Frank W. Towne was employed by the Journal for 53 years, first as foreman and later served as company president. He put his knowledge into the printing business and was very helpful in the operation's success. Other employees put in an average of 20 to 40 years of service.

In 1939, Frank Buckingham was hired as a press-feeder. His job included hand setting the type and feeding the paper through the presses. He was employed by The Journal Printing Company for 40 years.

In 1942 he left to serve in World War II. Upon his return in 1945, he went back to work at the Journal. That same year he was promoted to compositor. Mr. Buckingham formally retired in 1981. He said he stayed with the company for so many years because, "I like the work, it was interesting. I like the challenge and the satisfaction of knowing I did good work." He said he retired because, "I reached retirement age and I never got tired of staying at home."

There have been few managers with the printing company over the years. It seems to be a tradition for the Link family to be managers. The first was Francis Link who managed the company from 1887 to 1922. His son, Charles, was manager from 1922 to 1940. Charles' son, Robert, took over as manager in 1940. During World War II the Links purchased the company from the other 22 stockholders. The building is still owned by the Links
today. Robert was assisted in the plant operations by his two brothers, Francis and Carl. Robert Link managed the business until it sold in 1979 to Jack Emerick.

The Journal has served many customers all over the country, some as far as Washington, D.C., California, and even as far away as Chile.

After 119 years of service, The Journal Printing Company, the oldest business in Kirksville, printed its last book, *The Grand Masters of Masons of North America*, in June of 1984. After more than a century of service to the community, the sounds of the presses have been silenced.

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*By Mike Truitt*

Mark White

Randy Adkins

The city streets and surrounding businesses have changed since this picture was taken during the early 1930s. The car in front of the Journal Building was Charles Link's 1928 Buick Sedan.

The Journal Printing Company, as shown here in 1960, was once considered the largest printing operation in Northeast Missouri.