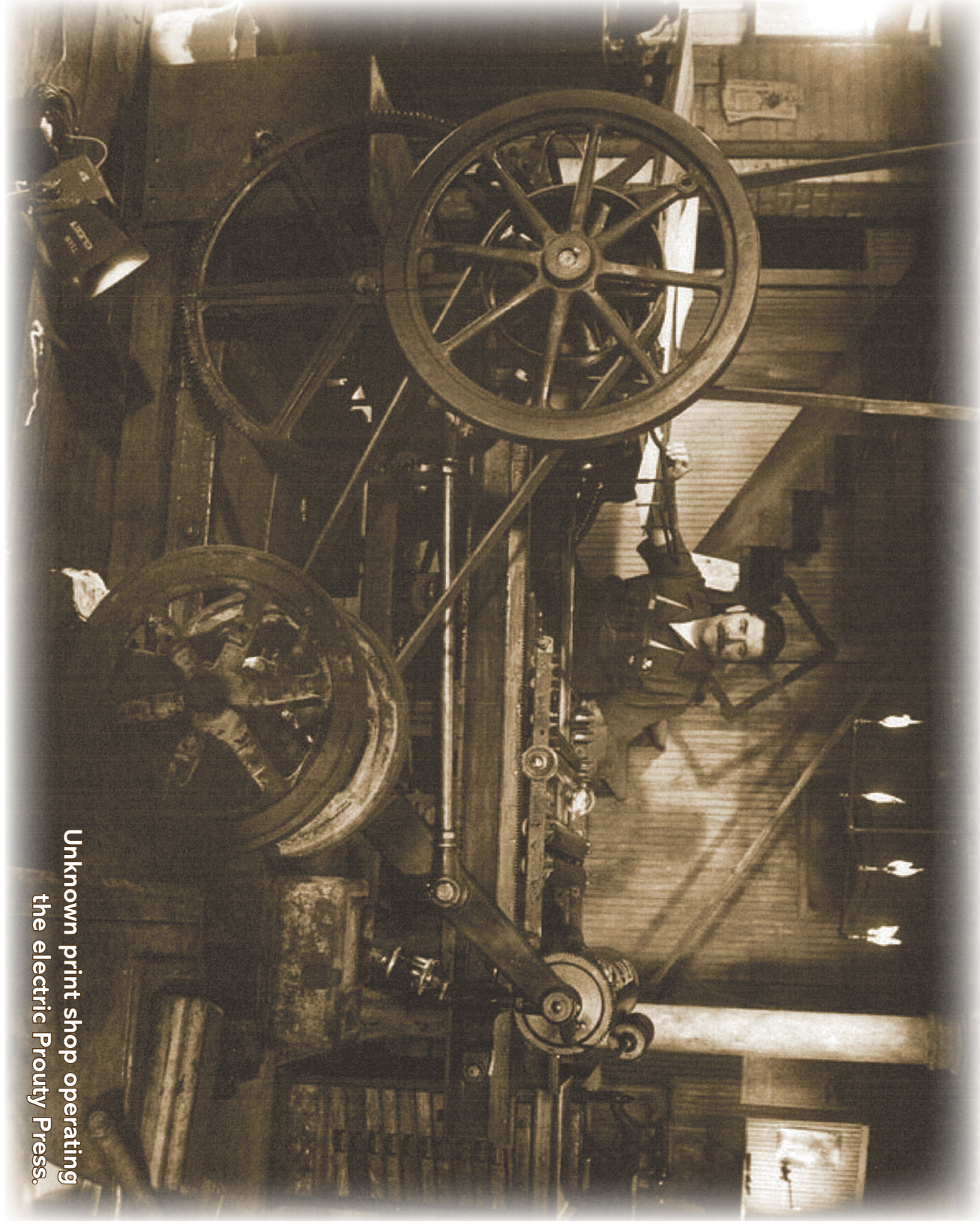


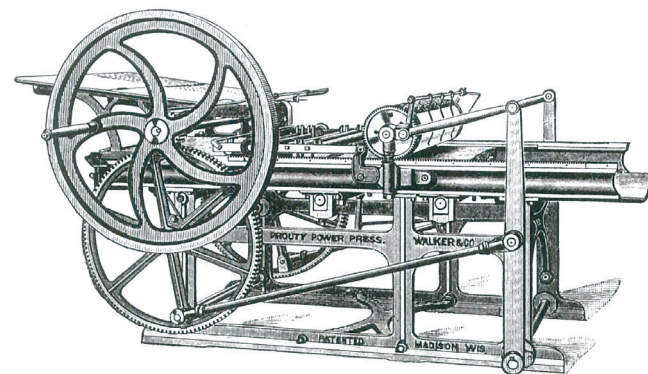
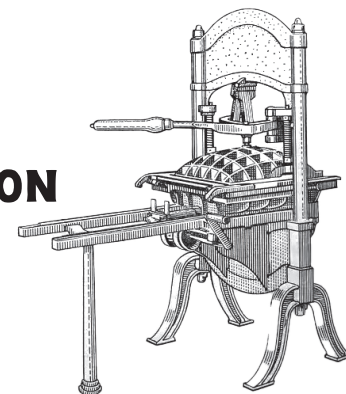


Unknown print shop operating
the electric Prouty Press.

LEWISTOWN News-ARGUS

521 W MAIN ST • LEWISTOWN, MT

WASHINGTON
**HAND
PRESS**

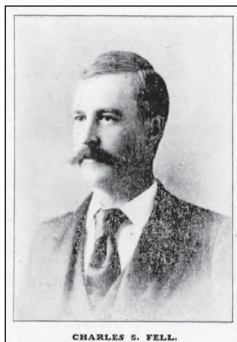


PROUTY PRESS

similar to first electric press used by

**CHARLES FELL &
JOHN VROOMAN**

Charles S Fell and John M Vrooman came from Billings with a hand press and a small supply of type slung in sacks over the necks of their horses. They started the Mineral Argus in the then-booming gold town of Maiden using a Washington Hand Press.



CHARLES S. FELL.

The newspaper prospered with the town, but soon the gold began to peter out. The two partners moved their business to Lewistown, the newly names county seat of the recently created Fergus County. In 1886, they published the first Lewistown issue of what they now called the Fergus County Argus.

By 1899, the Fergus County Argus became the first institution in the county to use electricity probably printing with an electrical Prouty Press.

The newspaper changed hands and titles in the decades that followed, surviving competition from other newspapers, drought and the Depression.

It came to be owned in the 1930s by five partners. Called the Lewistown Democrat News, its majority owners were publisher Tom Stout, a former congressman; business manager Harry Lay; and advertising manager Earl McGinnis. Minority owners were Lloyd Raw, in charge of printing and the accompanying office supply store, and Jack Hanley, editor.

The five sold the business after World War II to George and Russell Bennett. The brothers, who were raised in Hobson, had owned newspapers in Texas and other southwestern states. Lloyd Raw continued with the Bennett brothers, and Jack Hanley became administrative assistant to then Montana governor Sam Ford.

After two years, the Bennetts decided to sell the Democrat News and its printing and office supply business.

Ken Byerly, a midwesterner who owned the Thermopolis, Wyo. Independent Record for seven years (including more than three years while serving in the Army Air Corps during World War II), bought the business effective May 1, 1947. Lloyd Raw continued with the newspaper, which Byerly renamed the Lewistown Daily News in 1948. It was published five times a week.

Byerly sold the Daily News to Ed Fike, a Californian, who proved to be a colorful but unsuccessful owner. Within a few years, Byerly bought back the paper, near bankruptcy, at a sheriff's sale on the Fergus County courthouse steps.

Ken Byerly ran the paper from a distance until he retired in 1971. Shortly afterward, in 1972, he converted the small daily to a semi-weekly (twice a week) all-local-news community newspaper. It was renamed the Lewistown News-Argus, a combination of its original and most recent names. The office supply was sold but the printing department remained as an important part of the business.

At the same time the paper went semi-weekly, it also went offset (as opposed to hot lead or hot type, as it had been for decades), beginning a process of updating its printing and pre-press equipment and technology that continues unabated today.

The switch to a true community newspaper was a key move, as circulation increased by 2,000 as the newspaper's reach into its Central Montana market (and ability to deliver results to its advertisers) dramatically increased.

In 1977, Ken's son, Dave, joined the business, and in 1993 he was officially named publisher.

In September of 2000, the News-Argus ended 53 years in the Byerly family, when it was sold to the Yellowstone Newspaper Group, a Livingston, Montana-based group owned by John Sullivan, with 2 daily newspapers, 2 bi-weekly news papers and 6 weekly newspapers.

In November of 2022, the News-Argus was sold to Adams Publishing Group. APG operates daily and weekly newspapers in 19 states, including 15 in Montana.

Jacques Rutten has been publisher of the Lewistown News-Argus since 2009. He began at the News-Argus working for the Byerly family and has stayed on through it's most recent owners.

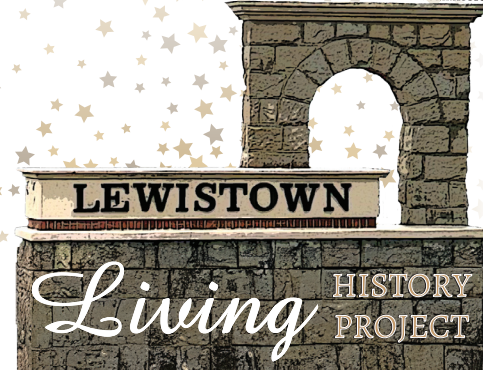
The staff at the newspaper strives to provide the most comprehensive news, sports, entertainment and agricultural coverage for the residents of Central Montana.

The Lewistown News-Argus also provides many other services, including complete professional commercial printing and mailing services.

The motto at the Lewistown News-Argus is

**"COVERING CENTRAL MONTANA
LIKE THE STARS."**

LEWISTOWN HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION



**SCAN
FOR MORE
INFORMATION**