Frank Lee Martin

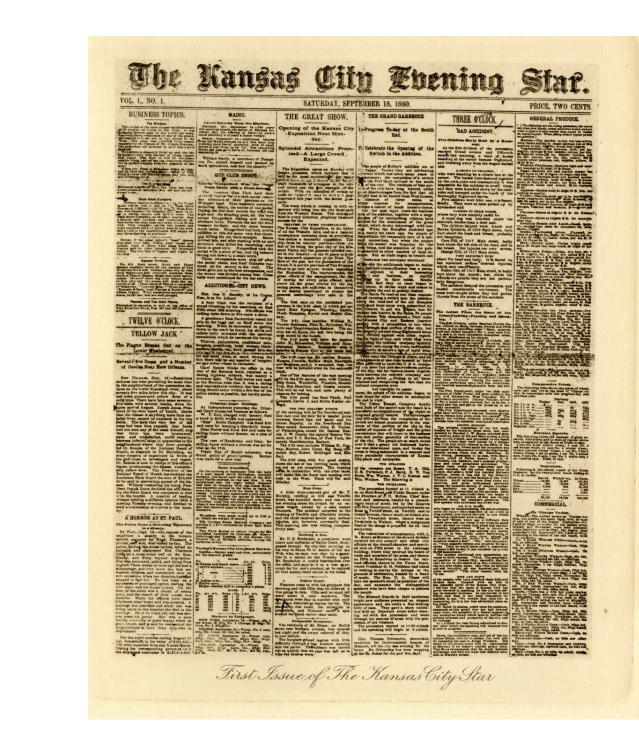


In the Beginning

Frank was the third child born to Lee and Anna Martin on July 7, 1881 in Benedict, Nebraska. His father, a successful farmer, cattleman and Nebraska legislator died in May 1893 at the age of 43. Frank was only 11 years old.

Frank's mother moved her children to Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1894, where she lived until her death in October 1935.

Frank received his A. B. degree from the University of Nebraska in 1902.



The Making of a Newspaperman

Frank left Lincoln for Kansas City the day after he graduated and worked as a reporter for the Kansas City Star until 1906. His work brought praise from the Star's publisher, William Rockhill Nelson, who promoted Martin to assistant telegraph editor. Later, in 1907, Martin was made assistant city editor.

During Martin's tenure with the Star, he met Martha Marie Hall who worked as a receptionist there. They were married September 25, 1907.

Martin applied his experience working on the Star to The Missourian in later years; many of his standards paralleled those of Nelson.

Nelson's concept of an ideal newspaper editor was unique: "He should have absolutely no financial or social interest in his community." Nelson refused to attend banquets and public meetings, would make no speeches, and would not join any clubs or organizations.





Martin and two unidentified men. C:11/13/3 Courtesy of University Archives

Members of the Journalism Faculty with a guest of the

A. Ross Hill, University president

1911 Journalism Week. Front Dean Walter Williams and

Courtesy of University Archives

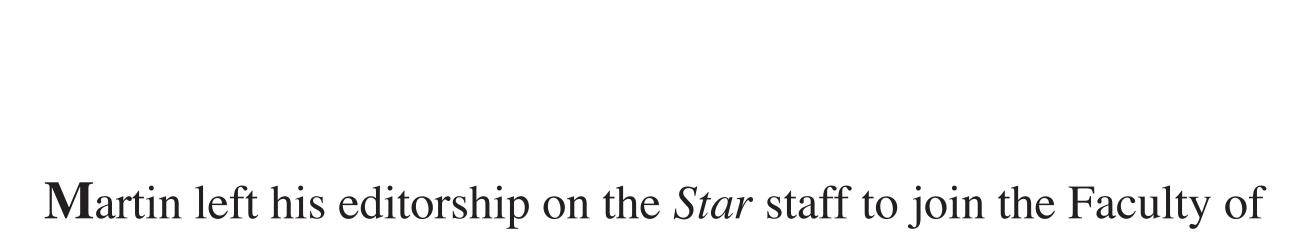
From Practitioner to Educator

Walter Williams, founder and dean of the newly founded the Missouri School of Journalism at the University of Missouri, offered Martin a position as assistant professor in 1909. Martin had been assistant city editor for only two years.

Other schools of journalism adopted the pyramid form of news writing taught by Martin as well.

Martin was articulate when he spoke, but he did not speak unless it was important.

The British Institute of Journalists elected him a member in May 1935, an honor seldom conferred upon an American.



students to be skilled newspapermen. According to his former students, Martin stressed the practical

skills when teaching "The Theory and Practice of Journalism."

He readily accepted his new assignment: that of teaching

a school whose function was questioned by many.

Martin followed in Williams' footsteps many times. Not only did he replace Williams as dean of the Missouri School of Journalism, but he was also chairman of the convention of the Press Congress of the World in Mexico in 1931.

Williams founded and acted as first president of the Press Back-Charles G. Ross, Isadore Loeb, Frank L. Martin and Congress in 1915, a post he resigned in 1926.



Courtesy of University Archives

Frank with wife Martha

Courtesy of University Archives

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Work Abroad

Walter Williams arranged for Frank to spend a sabbatical year as news-editor of the Japan Advertiser, an English-language

Martin, his wife, daughter Martha Anne, and son Frank Jr. left Columbia on May 10, 1915 sailing on May 15 from San Francisco to Tokyo. They returned to Columbia on August 15, 1916.



Group of delegates arriving in Mexico City for the regional convention of the Press Congress of the World. In center, holding coat, Associate Dean Frank L. Martin of the School of Journalism, chairman of the general committee; on Dean Martin's left is Robert Bell of Christchurch, New Zealand, president of the Congress.

CHAPTER 1931

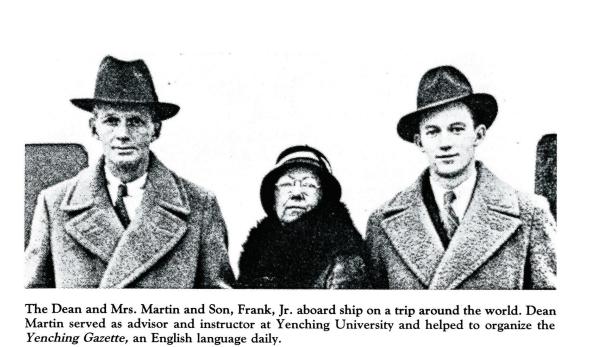
Mexico City hosts world

Shortly after his return from Mexico City, Martin would again take a leave to visit the Orient, this time as an exchange professor at Yenching University in 1932.

Martin's task was a difficult one; Chinese journalism was undergoing the transition from the old shell to the modern form. Martin supervised the publishing and printing of the Yenching Gazette and also taught classes.

His Love for Books and Reading

David Lu was the first exchange student from the Yenching-Missouri Exchange program. Lu first met Martin in 1930 and recalls Martin as having a Lincolnian appearance: tall, graying, and quiet. Several times Lu visited the Martin home, "which was full of books." Martin was an avid reader, and when he was not in his office he would sit in a big chair in his living room at home and read for hours, not wanting to be disturbed.



From Teaching to Leading

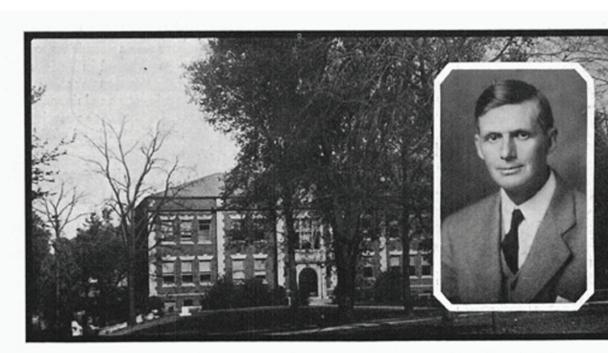
Martin was named acting dean effective June 5, 1930, and associate dean September 1, 1930. Martin was only acting dean until Williams' death on July 29, 1935.

After William's death, Martin was finally recognized for his services to the School of Journalism by being named Dean by the Board of Curators effective September 1, 1935.



"Twenty-five years of service in the same place is one thing; success is another; public recognition is still something else. All three have come to Dean Martin. More than 1,000 journalists have passed under the point of this man's pencil, have been motivated by his personality, and have gone to major newspaper posts in many lands. His sparing praise has meaning; his quiet scorn has power. Mediocrity does not satisfy him..."

"At any rate, there are many proofs that it is teaching that counts. And the answer to the preponderance of doubt two decades ago that journalism could be taught may lie in the quarter of a century of training newspapermen, which is marked today for Frank Lee Martin, associate dean. He believes in the anonymity of newspaper workers. So without his knowledge, since it would be against his wishes, this simple record is set down on the silver anniversary of his going 'on leave' from a newsroom to teach."



A letter to the editor in the student newspaper was mildly critical of Senator Long, who was given a copy of the paper before it went to print. He ordered the edition destroyed and appointed a censor for the paper. The students wrote to the Missouri School of Journalism, requesting permission to enroll in order to complete their training.

In the fall of 1934, Martin issued a significant statement that

allow the student newspaper, The Daily Reveille, to be censored by

expressed in a few words the School's upstanding views on freedom of

the press. The occasion for the statement was the expulsion of a group

The Louisiana Seven

"The Missouri School of Journalism would be glad to have those journalism students, expelled from Louisiana State University, come to Missouri to complete their education, provided, of course, they meet the necessary requirements for entrance. At this school these students will find instruction based on the cardinal principles of a free untrammeled press and the right to comment upon or criticize public actions, restrained only by a common sense of decency. Without freedom of the press the sovereign people cannot retain or exercise their sovereignty."



The former LSU students were (top, from left) David R. McGuire Jr., Sam Montague, Cal Joseph Abraham, Stanley Shlosman, Carl Corbin and Jesse H. Cutrer Jr.; Student President Don Thurman (far right) welcomed them. Not shown Rea Godbold.

Excerpts and photos taken from the following books: The life and teachings of Frank Lee Martin / by Sandy Kay Baer. Thesis (M.A.)--University of Missouri--Columbia, 1971.

Journalism education at the University of Missouri-Columbia / by Earl English. Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth, c1988.

A journalism of humanity: a candid history of the world's first journalism school / Steve Weinberg. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, c2008.

William Rockhill Nelson; the story of a man, a newspaper and a city, by members of the staff of the Kansas City star. Cambridge, Printed at the Riverside Press, 1915.