Information Concerning Copyright from the Clarke Historical Library

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Copyright information summarized here is accurate as of the date of issuance, but is subject to change due to a subsequent revision of federal law or court ruling.

Copyright is a complicated subject; however, some basic rules apply to both users and authors. Among the most critical for bringing a previously printed newspaper online are the following:

- **Starting January 1, 2027, any newspaper printed on or before 1930 is in the public domain and can be digitized and uploaded online.**
- **Any newspaper published between 1930 and 1964 is likely in the public domain.**
    - To be protected by copyright, a paper published after 1930 and before 1964 had to include a printed copyright notice within the paper itself. If there was no notice, the paper was not copyrighted.
    - If the newspaper is judged to be in the public domain, it can be digitized and posted online without needing any permission.
- **If a copyright notice was published, the copyright expired after 28 years unless a renewal was requested. A handy online tool to check if a renewal was filed is http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/cce/**
- **Any newspaper published before 1978 may be in the public domain.**
    - Before 1978, to obtain copyright, a newspaper was required to publish a copyright notice in the newspaper. Beginning in 1964, renewal was automatic.
    - If the newspaper is determined to be in the public domain, it may be digitized and brought online without requiring any permission.
- **Newspapers published from 1978 to the present are copyrighted** because, after 1977, copyright is automatically granted upon publication, with or without written notice.
    - Permission of the copyright holder is required to digitize and bring such a paper online.
- You can copy anything if you have written permission from the copyright holder.

Learn more about copyright: Cornell University Library's Copyright Term and Public Domain guide is a reliable resource for questions about copyright.