

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, there are some basic rules that apply to both users and authors. Among the most critical for bringing a previously printed newspaper online are the following:

- **As of January 1, 2025, any newspaper printed before 1930 or earlier is in the public domain** and may be digitized and brought online
- **Any newspaper published after 1930 and prior to 1964 has a strong probability of being in the public domain.**
 - To be protected by copyright a paper published between 1930 and prior to 1964 was required to include a printed copyright notice within the paper itself. If there is no notice, the paper is not copyrighted.
 - If the newspaper is determined to be in the public domain, it may be digitized and brought online without requiring any permissions.
- **If a copyright notice was published, copyright expired after 28 years, unless a renewal was requested.** A convenient online tool through which you can determine if a renewal was requested is: <http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/cce/>
- **Any newspaper published before 1978 may be in the public domain.**
 - Prior to 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 permissions.
- **Newspapers published from 1978 to the present are copyrighted** because after 1977, copyright is automatically granted upon publication, with or without a written notice.
 - Permission of the copyright holder is required to digitize and bring such a paper online.
- Remember, you can copy anything with the written permission of the copyright holder, so ask them.

Read more about copyright: Cornell University Library's [Copyright Term and Public Domain guide](#) is a reliable source of information for copyright questions.