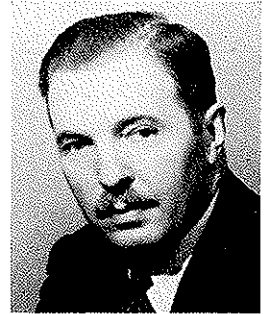


First Science Editor in the U. S.

NEWSPAPERS AND SCIENCE



By DAVID DIETZ



Mine has been the satisfaction of seeing a personal endeavor grow into a recognized profession.

This September the National Association of Science Writers celebrated its 25th anniversary with a dinner in Atlantic City. I had suggested the formation of the organization 25 years ago and had been elected its first president because I had been the first newspaperman in the United States to hold the title of science editor.

In 1934 the association had 14 members. Today it has some 150 active members and an equal number of associate members.

I had become the science editor of the Scripps-Howard Newspapers in 1921. In 1923 I started a daily column on the subject of science and to date I have written about seven million words in it.

Over the years I have often been asked what led me to devote myself to the popularization of science in a newspaper column and in books.

I guess it was a compromise between
DAVID DIETZ, science editor of the Scripps-Howard chain of newspapers, was born in Cleveland and now lives in Cleveland Heights. He is a graduate of Western Reserve and the winner of a Pulitzer Prize in Journalism, among a very long list of other honors. He received an Ohioana Career Medal in 1958.

my love of science and my love of writing.

Too Young To Read

My father was an enthusiastic amateur astronomer and I can recall looking at the pictures in his books before I was old enough to read.

My first formal introduction to science came in a course in Physics in old Central High School in Cleveland. I finished the year with a grade of 99.

You might wonder why I did not go on to become a physicist. The answer is simple. The summer I finished high school, I got a job on *The Cleveland Press*. I have been on the editorial staff of that newspaper ever since.

During my four years at Western Reserve University, I served as college correspondent during the school term and as a cub reporter during the summer. I covered Case Tech, across the fence from Reserve, as well as my own college.

I wrote my first science article in 1915 while a freshman at Reserve. It was an interview with the late Dr. Dayton C. Miller, then the professor of physics at Case and a world-famous authority on sound waves.

The Silly Green Cap

Wearing the silly green cap that Reserve freshman were required to wear, I
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trudged up the stairs of the Physics Building to Dr. Miller's office. He received me with the same courtesy he would have given an eminent visitor from a European university.

My article was well received by the

late Victor Morgan, then the editor of the *Cleveland Press*, and it pleased Dr. Miller. It marked the beginning of a friendship that lasted throughout the rest of the eminent scientist's life. His encouragement had a great deal to do with my decision to devote myself to the popularization of science.