

SIDNEY J. CATTS AND THE PRESS:
A STUDY OF THE EDITORIAL COVERAGE OF THE 1916
GOVERNOR'S RACE BY SELECTED FLORIDA
NEWSPAPERS

By
JEAN CARVER CHANCE

A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

1969

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page Number
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I: THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY	11
CHAPTER II: THE RECOUNT	25
CHAPTER III: THE GENERAL ELECTION: AN UPSET	47
SUMMARY	61
BIBLIOGRAPHY	67
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	69

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate Council
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Journalism and Communications

SIDNEY J. CATTS AND THE PRESS:
A STUDY OF THE EDITORIAL COVERAGE OF THE 1916
GOVERNOR'S RACE BY SELECTED FLORIDA NEWSPAPERS

By

Jean Carver Chance

December, 1969

Chairman: John Paul Jones, Dean
College of Journalism and Communications

Major Department: College of Journalism and Communications

Although Florida historians refer to Sidney Catts as one of Florida's most colorful figures, there is little published material relating to the state's twenty-second governor. Much of what has been written has relied heavily upon newspaper accounts of the period. The purpose of this study is to establish that the state press' opinion of Catts' candidacy fluctuated, rather than remained in steady opposition, as some of the most popular works about Catts maintain. By utilizing a daily analysis of editorial references to Catts by selected newspapers and developing several categories of reaction to Catts, the author attempted to set forth a better understanding of changing editorial views in this particular period in hopes that future scholars writing about Catts might be aided in utilizing newspapers as primary research tools. The study showed that as the primary election, recount, and general election periods progressed, for various reasons newspapers fluctuated in their opinions toward Catts. A random approach to determining newspaper opinion might have left the misleading view that the press generally opposed Catts, but this detailed analysis clearly indicates that opinions varied.

LIST OF TABLES

	Page Number
TABLE I: <u>LAKELAND TELEGRAM</u> TABULATION OF PRESS POSITIONS ON CALTS-KNOTT CONTEST	36
TABLE II: <u>JACKSONVILLE DIXIE</u> TABULATION OF PRESS POSITIONS ON CALTS-KNOTT CONTEST	45
TABLE III: STATE PRESS POSITIONS ON CANDIDATES AT VARIOUS STAGES OF 1916 GUBERNATORIAL CONTEST	63