Index to Early Memphis Newspapers

In the 19th century Memphis commonly had multiple newspapers being published at the same time. These newspapers covered the political spectrum and competition was fierce and combative. Many of them we know only from the references to them made in the copies of the newspapers that survived to be microfilmed in the 20th century.

This indexing project began with a focus on the early predecessor of the current Memphis Commercial Appeal. However it soon became apparent that the other surviving newspapers should be indexed. During the Civil War the Memphis Appeal began a long migration across the Confederacy and received Memphis news only through letters or from reading the newspapers that remained in Memphis when the Federal army occupied the city.

This index is a subjective index focusing primarily on local and regional events. National and international news articles were included if the editors of the newspapers took an interest in an issue.

The Memphis Eagle was founded in 1842 as a weekly Whig paper known as the American Eagle. Its chief rival was the Democratic-leaning Memphis Appeal.

In late 1842 the paper began putting out a daily paper, the Memphis Eagle, while continuing the weekly American Eagle. The weekly paper was a compilation of articles that appeared in the daily paper. For that reason, I switched over to indexing articles in the daily Eagle in 1846. In late 1851 the Eagle merged with the Enquirer to become the Memphis Eagle-Enquirer.

The Memphis Enquirer was founded in March 1836 as a weekly Whig Party newspaper. Its chief rivals in the 1830's were the Memphis Gazette and the Memphis Western World, both Democratic-leaning newspapers. In the 1840's its chief rival was the Democratic-leaning Memphis Appeal. No microfilm copies exist for the Gazette and Western World.

In 1851 the Enquirer merged with the Eagle to become the Memphis Eagle-Enquirer.

The Memphis Appeal began publishing in 1843 and eventually became the modern Memphis Commercial Appeal. In 1890, the Appeal absorbed the Avalanche to become the Memphis Appeal-Avalanche.

In 1894, the Memphis Appeal merged with the Daily Commercial, founded in 1890, to become the Commercial Appeal, the current daily newspaper in Memphis.

The pages are numbered in the order they appear in the microfilm version of the paper. In some cases this may differ from the page order in the print version or the version in Chronicling America. Beginning with the 1870 paper, indexing follows the pagination in Chronicling America.

The Memphis Bulletin was founded in 1855 as a daily morning Whig Party newspaper. As a conservative-leaning Whig newspaper it favored the Union cause during the Civil War and published throughout the war in Memphis. After the war it was edited by former CSA Admiral Raphael Semmes and tilted towards the Conservative (Democratic) party positions. It ceased publication in 1868.

The Memphis Argus was founded in 1859 as a daily Democratic newspaper. During the Union occupation of Memphis, a northern editor was appointed by the military commander to curb the newspaper's staunchly pro-Confederate stance. At the end of the war it resumed a pro-Southern rights position. It ceased publication in 1866.

The Memphis Avalanche was founded in 1860 as a Democratic, strongly pro-secession newspaper. It was suspended in 1862 after the Union forces captured Memphis and resumed publishing in 1866 with M. C. Gallaway as editor. Gallaway maintained a running feud with the local Republican party and after Gallaway's arrest on contempt charges, his wife took over as editor until his release. The Avalanche's
main rivals were the **Memphis Appeal** and the **Memphis Public Ledger**. It maintained a staunchly pro-Southern rights policy throughout the Reconstruction period. In 1895 the **Avalanche** was absorbed by the **Memphis Appeal**.

The Index to the Civil War in Memphis Newspapers includes the following papers.

- **Memphis Appeal** (Ap)
- **Memphis Argus** (Ar)
- **Memphis Avalanche** (Av)
- **Memphis Bulletin** (B)
- **Memphis Weekly Bulletin** (WB)
- **Memphis Public Ledger** (L)

All the newspapers included in the Index to the Early Memphis Newspapers are available on microfilm at the University of Memphis Libraries.

The **Memphis Appeal** (1857-1886) and the **Memphis Public Ledger** (1866-1883) are available in limited runs at [Chronicling America](https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov) online.

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