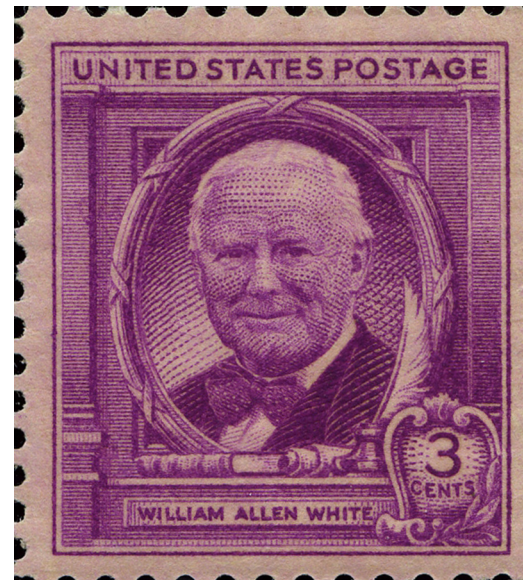


# William Allen White

Newspaper editor ( 1868 - 1944 )



Courtesy of KENNETH NEILL

William Allen White was a renowned newspaper editor, politician, and author. Between the two world wars, White, known as the “Sage of Emporia,” became the iconic middle-American spokesman for millions throughout the United States.

Born in Emporia, Kansas, White attended the College of Emporia and the University of Kansas. In 1892 he started work at *The Kansas City Star* as an editorial writer and a year later married Sallie Lindsay. In 1895, White purchased his hometown newspaper, the *Emporia Gazette* for \$3,000. He burst on to the national scene with an August 16, 1896 editorial entitled “*What’s the Matter With Kansas?*”

White developed a friendship with President THEODORE ROOSEVELT in the 1890s that lasted until Roosevelt’s death in 1919. The two would be instrumental in forming the Progressive (Bull-Moose) Party in 1912 in opposition to the forces surrounding incumbent Republican president WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT. Later, White supported much of the New Deal, but opposed FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT in his first three Presidential elections. White died before voting in the 1944 election.

Despite differences with FDR, White agreed to Roosevelt’s request to help generate public support for the Allies before America’s entrance into World War II. White was fundamental in the formation of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, sometimes known as the White Committee. He spent much of his last three years involved with the committee.

He won a 1923 Pulitzer Prize for an editorial he wrote after being arrested in a dispute over free speech following objections to the way Kansas treated the workers who participated in the railroad strike of 1922. When Book of the Month Club began in 1926, White was a founding editor along with HENRY SEIDEL CANBY, Christopher Morley and Heywood Broun.

Another Pulitzer Prize came his way in 1946 when his autobiography was published posthumously.