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“This is the story of an extraordinary man—a business leader most beloved by those who knew him best. There are a lot of lessons in Frank Batten’s life—and in the story of how the Weather Channel became a mega-success after he announced that he was going to close it.”

—**Donald E. Graham**, Chairman, The Washington Post Company

## **FRANK BATTEN**

### **THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE FOUNDER OF THE WEATHER CHANNEL**

Frank Batten Sr. (1927–2009) created the Weather Channel in 1982, despite mocking by colleagues in the media that around-the-clock weather forecasting would be as exciting as watching paint dry. The network, and later its companion website, Weather.com, became the largest private weather company in the world and an American cultural icon. Yet few have heard of Batten, a media pioneer whose Virginia newspaper was the only major daily to back school integration.

In **FRANK BATTEN: The Untold Story of the Founder of the Weather Channel (September 2011; UVA Press)**, Connie Sage—former longtime reporter and editor for the *Virginian-Pilot*—offers the first authorized biography of this unsung hero. Starting out in his uncle’s newspaper business in Norfolk, Virginia, as a reporter and advertising salesman, Batten assumed leadership of the *Virginian-Pilot* and *Ledger-Star* at the age of twenty-seven and grew Landmark Communications into a media powerhouse. He created two billion-dollar businesses and gave away more than \$400 million to charity, nearly all of it to education. As chairman of the Associated Press from 1982 to 1987, he helped guide the news agency back onto sound financial footing.

Batten also faced a tremendous personal challenge that would have sidelined many: he lost his vocal cords to cancer two years before starting the Weather Channel. This is the untold story of a man whose name few recognize, yet who helped change the face of the media in the twentieth century.

**Connie Sage** is a former longtime reporter and editor for the *Virginian-Pilot* in Norfolk, Virginia, and was on the corporate staff of Landmark Communications.

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