

**WHEN
CANADIAN
NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS
WERE KING**

The Rise & Fall of the Fourth Estate

REED W. TURCOTTE

Plus Forty Years of Publishing Anecdotes

WHEN CANADIAN NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS WERE KING

By **Reed Turcotte**

Newspaper & Magazine Publisher,

Author & Emphatic Storyteller

E-Edition

PUBLISHED BY: BCP Publishing

Division of Boundary Creek Printing & Publishing Co.
Ltd. (est.1896)

Copyright 2017

Thank you for downloading this book. Although this is an e-edition, it remains the copyrighted property of the author and may not be reproduced, scanned, or distributed for any commercial or non-commercial use without permission from the author. Quotes used in reviews are the exception. No alteration of content is allowed.

If you enjoyed this book, then encourage your friends to download their own copy.

Your support and respect for the property of this author is appreciated.

Website: publisherswerekings.com

“The words that affect us most are the ones that inspire mankind to think for themselves”

Reed Turcotte (1991)

Contents

Acknowledgements

Prologue

- 6** Introduction: The saga of newspaper Publishers
- 31** Chapter 1: Canada's First newspapers from 1790-1826; including William Lyon Mackenzie
- 39** Chapter 2: The Nations newspaper founder-John Ross Robertson, 1841-1918
- 53** Chapter 3: The Mad Publisher from B.C.-Amor De Cosmos, 1825-1897
- 64** Chapter 4: Prairie newspapers prosper- their history
- 74** Chapter 5: Money was hard to find; the story of independent publishers Ross and Lowery
- 88** Chapter 6: Taylor was a big man in the early Vancouver newspaper scene
- 92** Chapter 7: Cromie made everything special on Canada's West Coast
- 100** Chapter 8: Did the Golden Age of Newspapers Peak in 1911?
- 107** Chapter 9: A century of Southam owned papers
- 119** Chapter 10: He was a gruff and tough newsman but he took the *Star* to incredible heights
- 127** Chapter 11: Who had the Best Paper in Canada? John Wesley Dafoe was an influential journalist, much as Joseph E. Atkinson was a great Toronto publisher
- 134** Chapter 12: The Thomson family takes control
- 141** Chapter 13: The lady "Ma" with the salty language
- 145** Chapter 14: Columbian featuring Rikk Taylor

- 151** Chapter 15: The rise, fall and rise again of Conrad Black
159 Chapter 16: Izzy Asper wanted to be 'king of all media'
163 Chapter 17: Radler soldiers on

Intermission (Forty years of anecdotes)

- 171** Chapter 18: Makings of a small town publisher
186 Chapter 19: Small town publisher lands in Canada's
smallest city

Back to the Main Feature (today's publishers)

- 215** Chapter 20: Buy cheap or distressed-David Black's motto
222 Chapter 21: New Age Publishers come forward
230 Chapter 22: Is the powerful Paul Godfrey the saviour of
Canada's newspaper industry?
237 Chapter 23: Grippo's Glacier Media commands a big
piece of the pie
248 Chapter 24: New Media has taken over from Old Media
258 Chapter 25: Now we face the final curtain – the demise
of newspapers in Canada
269 Chapter 26: The industry as it stands today, warts and all
287 Chapter 27: Musings, Forecast and Deduction

Acknowledgements

A special heartfelt thankyou goes out to my wife Lorraine, who besides being my confidante has assisted me with my last few newspapers and magazines and my previous three books, as well as this one.

I have been blessed to have learned the newsprint trade by so many wonderful professionals over the last forty years, especially the many prominent and successful publishers, CEOs, presidents and editors who are mentioned in this book. It has been an honor serving in the same profession as you.

To you all, you are truly 'kings'.

In the 18th century, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "If the choice were government without newspapers, or newspapers without government, he would choose the latter".

Prologue

Rise & Fall of the 4th Estate

The Fourth Estate: news media, especially print journalism or the press is defined as a societal or political force

In small town Canada during the late 1800s ending around the year 1999, the local community newspaper publisher/owner was the king of their particular domain (town). He or she, but mostly he and mostly white, were as important as the town mayor, priest and prominent citizens combined.

The local publisher, in those days gone-by, was the leader of the area's commerce and was the person the community looked up to and trusted. Newspapers printed copies each and every day (or week) and delivered to various distribution outlets. They were the life blood and the heart and soul of the city they served and they mirrored the town's consciousness. Each issue was pursued from cover to cover by the readers and every word printed was discussed and in many cases, argued about in the local coffee shops and various gathering points.

Once upon a time, newspaper publishers were looked upon as leaders and their papers were a living, breathing identity that took on the persona of their owner (publisher). This is not necessarily the case now – today publishers (who are generally CEOs) fall in line with lawyers, politicians, journalists and realtors – at best with distaste and at worst with disgust, but these views

may slowly change in the next few years due to, believe it or not, the hated internet....more on this subject in the last chapter.

This book portrays the saga of newspaper publishers in Canada from the late 1700s until today. The beginning and back end of this book parallels the history of newspapers and their prominent publishers in Canada. Two chapters in the middle are full of anecdotes that happened during this author's forty years as a publisher in the newspaper industry. These chapters have a touch of provocative fodder regarding business people, local politicians and so called celebrities who helped shape the city and or province they called home in the 1970s, 80s, 90s and early 2000s. It was in this environment that this writer honed his publication skills by meeting and reporting on these community leaders including other publishers and editors. Many of these 'stars in the making' were corrupt, ruthless, controversial and laughable in the way they pursued their short sighted visions. They of course, became great copy. Others were gracious, humble and intelligent and unfortunately they made for mediocre copy.

The final chapters 'When Canadian Newspaper Publishers Were King' tells the tales of the new media and the fall from grace of Canada's old (print) media and the real reasons behind their demise. The future of newsprint is also dissected.

There was a time when newspapers and their publishers sat above the sun and they were king of their domain. That was until their slip from grace. The similarity between the Fourth Estate and the fall of the Third Reich is comparable, as Nazi Germany stood on top of the world only to collapse into its own dust and disappear forever. It is happening once again, this time to the newspaper industry, seventy-two years later.

Newspaper conglomerate press barons and the collusion between them are as much to blame for this demise as social media ever was. Many CEO's large newspapers have been unable to find buyers but the market for smaller community newspapers, which have faced less online competition, has held up better. In general, smaller newspapers are worth more in relative terms than large papers. "A newspaper in small-to-medium markets tends to be worth more on a relative basis than a big city paper," notes longtime newspaper analyst John Morton. Big cities tend to have more media outlets competing for advertising, and big city newspapers are more likely to have onerous union contracts. Even the odd sale of a daily paper is unlikely to stoke much private equity interest in the industry. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, "the downward trends the industry faces are too challenging for most firms to want to take on."

While there are still a large number of newspapers offered for sale, most of them have more liabilities than worthwhile assets. While newspapers earnings have suffered, the value of newspaper franchises has suffered more. Because the equity markets attempt to price future earnings, press barons newspaper share values have swooned because of the uncertainty of their future revenue streams. The loss of value in newspapers has carried over to writers. In 2016, for the third year in a row, the Career Cast survey of the best and worst jobs in the North America reports that a newspaper reporter is the worst career. It pointed to fewer job prospects because of publications closing down and declining ad revenue providing less money for salaries. Being an over the air broadcaster was the third worst and advertising sales was in the bottom ten. Average annual salary for print journalists in 2016 was \$37,200.

Depending on location and circumstances, each specific newspaper will face varied threats and changes. In some cases, new owners have increased their reliance on print rather than seeking out more digital services. However, in most cases, there is an attempt to find new revenue sources online that are less based on print sales. How much further ad sales will decline cannot be predicted with accuracy. Ultimately, the newspaper of the future may bear little resemblance to the newsprint edition familiar to older readers. It may become a hybrid, part-print and part-Internet.

However there was a time when Canadian newspaper publishers controlled the business and political environment of their towns and cities and they were treated like royalty, here then is there story.



Newspaper Publisher George Brown
founder of the Globe and Mail

Introduction

The Saga of Newspaper Publishers

The history of Canadian newspapers put in perspective in chronological order

Newspapers did not exist in New France (Canada was not a term yet used), somewhat because of the opposition of French officials to the setting up of printing presses in their colony. The British Conquest and then the conclusion of the seven year war in 1763 brought a few printers from the Americas northward. In 1764, two printers from Philadelphia, William Brown and Thomas Gilmore, began the bilingual *Quebec Gazette* at Québec City. In 1785 Fleury Mesplet, a French printer who had been jailed because of his attempts to persuade Québec to join the American Revolution, started publishing the *Montreal Gazette* (now the oldest continuing newspaper in the country). At that time, there were no political stories, as all political news was controlled by the wealthy elite. In the early decades of British North America, the primary purpose of the press was to propagate official propaganda - freedom of the press was an alien idea. Prior to the approximate turn of the 18th into the 19th century, there was no "public sphere" in Canada and therefore no press to cover such.

It was the first printers (publishers) working during the late 1800s who began the tedious and difficult work of creating a true, liberated press in Canada. These men faced many obstacles, including beatings, jailing, and the very serious threat of being charged with criminal or seditious libel. As the early printing press was an essential tool of colonial administration, anyone who attempted to publish anything other than the government notices experienced hardships. There was a prohibition on publishing legislature proceedings. There were colonial laws that were used by British authorities to manufacture loyalty, and the punishments were severe if one did not “tow” the line. As a result, many of these daring early printers and publishers carried massive debt, and were in constant fear of intimidation.

One of the earliest publishers was John Bushell who partnered with Bartholomew Green. Bushell had moved to Halifax (from Boston) and had opened up a printing office when Green passed away suddenly. On March 23, 1752, Bushell published the first edition of the *Halifax Gazette* and became the colony's first "King's Printer". He was an independent entrepreneur, given no government salary, and what government administrators thought their subjects should read and what Bushell's subscribers and advertisers wanted in the paper were not necessarily the same. The government did not trust his loyalty and so with a flick of their wrist they made the local Provincial Secretary the editor of his paper. Bushell, faced with these obstacles, struggled with debt and turned to alcohol which eventually led to his death.

Up to the plate steps Anton Heinrich who learned his trade in Germany but came to America with the British Army before relocating to Halifax and anglicizing his name to the more

appropriate Henry Anthony. Anthony acquired Bushell's printing enterprise which included the *Gazette*. In October 1765 he printed an editorial in his paper that suggested that Nova Scotians were opposed to the Stamp Act. This resulted in doubts about his loyalty, and he fled back to Massachusetts and the *Gazette* was temporarily shut down. Eventually, he made his way back into the government's good graces and was recommissioned to print the *Royal Gazette*.

Two other early publishers were William Brown and Thomas Gilmore. They were originally from Philadelphia and in 1764 these two men launched the government sponsored Quebec Gazette. The paper was bilingual and was very heavily censored and scrutinized by the government of the day.

Next up was Fleury Mesplet who migrated to Montreal from France with the intent of being a printer; however, he was jailed out of suspicion before printing anything due to his status as an American sympathizer and relationship with Benjamin Franklin. In 1778 he printed Canada's first entirely French newspaper, The Gazette (Montreal). His editor, Valentin Jautard, chose stories with radical tones and both men were promptly imprisoned. Mesplet was soon released and allowed to go back to work for the government because he was the only capable printer, though technically, he remained imprisoned.

It was the 1790s when Louis Roy launched the *Upper Canada Gazette*, which continued publishing until 1849. In 1797, Roy left the paper due to political persecution after printing some incendiary opinions and fled to New York. In 1793, under the auspices of Upper Canada's first governor, a Québec printer

started the *Upper Canada Gazette* at Newark (Niagara-on-the-Lake), the first newspaper in what is now Ontario. Like the *Halifax Gazette*, these first papers - operated in colonies where populations were low and remained utterly dependent upon government patronage in order to exist. In Upper Canada, William Lyon Mackenzie pressed the Assembly to subsidize the province's first paper mill, in part to ensure a source of newsprint for his journal. This was an example of the close relationship that existed between newspapers and governments, even for an outspoken democratic firecracker as Mackenzie was.

Development of legislative assemblies in British North America encouraged political factions and at the same time, particularly in Halifax, Saint John, Montréal, Kingston and York (Toronto), a merchant class with an interest both in reading commercial intelligence and in advertising. Weekly newspapers started to sprout up everywhere and allied themselves with political interests and the various mercantile and agricultural businesses.

In Lower Canada, the *Québec City Mercury* (1805) and the *Montréal Herald* (1811) became mouthpieces for the province's English-speaking merchants, while *Le Canadien* (1806) and *La Minerve* (1826) spoke for the rising French Canadian professional interests. In Upper Canada, William Lyon Mackenzie used his *Colonial Advocate* (1824) to argue the cause of Reformers in general and farmers in particular against the dominant professional and mercantile groups. In the Maritimes, newspapers such as Joseph Howe's *Novascotian* (1824) of Halifax also challenged the authority of colonial oligarchies.

Le Canadien a French weekly newspaper published in Lower Canada from November 22, 1806 to March 14, 1810. Its motto was: "*Nos institutions, notre langue et nos droits*" (Our institutions, our language, and our rights). It was the political mouthpiece of the Parti canadien, the voice of the liberal elite and local merchants. The paper repeatedly ran editorials for responsible government, and spoke out in a defense of the Canadiens and their traditions against the British rulers, while still professing loyalty to the king. In 1810 Governor James Craig had the editor Pierre Bédard and his colleagues at the paper arrested and imprisoned without trial for the criticism they printed. The paper was re-established in the 1830s under Étienne Parent, who was imprisoned for promoting responsible government in nine years later. During the rebellion era, it criticized the Durham report, opposed the union with Upper Canada, and supported the Lafontaine ministry. Le Canadien was a mainstay of Liberalism until it closed at the end of the century.

Brothers Gideon and Sylvester Tiffany started as official government printers in the 1790s, but refused to print only government sanctioned news and instead printed news from America. When they refused to heed warnings from the government, they were more formally persecuted. In April 1797, Gideon was charged with blasphemy, fired, fined, and jailed. Sylvester was then also charged with "treasonable and seditious conduct". In his defense he declared that "As the people's printer, it is my duty to devote my head, heart and hands to their service...The interests of the King and people are inseparable". Eventually the brothers were forced to give up printing, though Sylvester attempted a number of other papers before moving to

New York. Titus Geer Simmons was appointed as the new King's printer following the legal persecution of the Tiffany brothers, though he was not officially trained in printing. The Tiffany brothers were brought back and continued to determine much of the paper's content until 1799.

William Lyon Mackenzie was a great influence for political development in Upper Canada (Ontario) and a fierce advocate for responsible government. In 1824, he founded the *Colonial Advocate*, which was the first independent paper in the province to have significant political impact. Mackenzie viewed the colonial administration as incompetent, ineffective, and expensive, and he used the *Advocate* to publicize these opinions. Though the paper became the most widely circulated paper of its time, it was not profitable and Mackenzie struggled with debt for many years. In 1826 his printing office was broken into and destroyed by a mob who did not agree with Mackenzie's views. When Mackenzie sued the assailants, he won his case and collected enough in damages to repair the press and pay off his debts, as well as gain public sympathy.

Mackenzie is a prime example of an editor who used his printing as a tool to take on the troubled politics of the time and he opened the doors for future newspaper publishers to enter the trade and make a living.

In 1828, Joseph Howe took over Halifax's *Weekly Chronicle*, renaming it the *Acadian*. He then also purchased the *Novascotian*. His aggressive journalism made him the voice of Nova Scotia. Originally he was very loyal to the British government, but he started to shift his loyalties to Nova Scotia.

Howe, like Mackenzie, demanded home rule in the name of responsible government. In 1835, Howe was prosecuted for criminal libel for one of his articles and he spoke in argument for a free press at his trial. Although he was technically guilty according to the law, the jury was quick to acquit him. Howe's success during his trial made him a local hero in Nova Scotia and it was this success that took Howe into the provincial parliament, where he eventually became a provincial premier.

Henry David Winton arrived in Newfoundland on August 28, 1818 and in 1820, he founded the *Public Ledger and Newfoundland General Advisor*, the fourth newspaper in St. John's. Winton used the paper to publish his own political ideas staunchly in support of an answerable government. Because of his strong political views he eventually became the enemy of Catholics as well as those in favor of reform - to the extent that some people wished him harm. On May 19, 1835, Winton was attacked by a group of unknown assailants and his ears were cut off. Despite this and further similar threats, Winton continued to write in opposition of the reform government until his death.

John Ryan was an American expatriate who, in 1807 and with the help of William Lewis, published the first issue of the *Royal St. John's Gazette*, the earliest newspaper in Newfoundland. Ryan soon began exposing government favoritism and unfairness in the Gazette, much to the chagrin of officials.

In 1806, Joseph Willcocks moved to Niagara where he began publishing the *Upper Canada Guardian; or Freeman's Journal* which he used as a vehicle for his political opinions and criticisms. He (like others) was promptly jailed for contempt. In

1808, he rejoined politics and became Canada's first real leader of the Opposition against those aligned with the colonial government. He stopped printing his journal in 1812 and in July 1813, offered his services to the Americans while holding a seat in the Legislative Assembly. Willcocks was formally charged with treason in 1814.

George Brown (1818–1880) and his father immigrated to Toronto from Scotland in 1837 and in 1843 they founded the "Banner," a Presbyterian weekly supporting the Free Kirk principles and political reform. In 1844, Brown founded The Globe and Mail, a paper with strong political tones. Brown bought out many of his competitors and increased circulation using advanced technology. In 1860 it was Canada's largest newspaper.

In the 1850s, Brown entered politics and became the Reform Party leader and eventually reached an agreement that led to the Confederation and the founding of the Dominion of Canada. Afterwards, he resigned from Parliament, but continued to promote his political views in the "Globe". Brown fought endless battles with the typographical union from 1843 to 1872, he paid union wages not because of his generosity but because the union forced it upon him. In 1880 Brown was horribly killed by an angry ex-employee.

In Victoria in 1856, Bishop Modeste Demers imported a hand press intending to publish religious materials where it remained unused until 1858, when the American printer Frederick Marriott used the "Demers press" to publish four different British Columbia newspapers, the most influential of which was the

British Colonist. The Demers press continued to be used for publishing until 1908.

It was not unusual for a paper to deviate from the party line as *The Mail* did when it broke with the Macdonald Conservatives in the 1880s, forcing the party to set up the *Empire* newspaper in 1887. The independence of newspapers from political parties and governments varied from place to place, but in general, newspapers had more potential for independence from parties as their revenues from circulation and advertising grew. While they may not have been tools of the political parties, newspapers remained closely tied into their factions well into the 20th century. The *Toronto Star* was reorganized in 1899 by a business consortium anxious to obtain a voice for the new Liberal Prime Minister, Wilfrid Laurier. The Ontario Conservatives purchased the *Toronto News* in 1908 to act as a party mouth piece. During the first decade of the 20th century the *Calgary Herald* used the organizational zeal of the Alberta Conservative Party to sell newspaper subscriptions. As late as the 1930s, most major Québec newspapers were still tied into patronage from the ruling government.

In part, the politicization of newspapers continued because readers demanded partisanship. Politics was a serious matter in 19th-century Canada where newspapers were expected to have their own views. Thus the phenomenon of the two newspaper towns occurred. By 1870 every town large enough to support one newspaper supported two, one Liberal and one Conservative. As well, newspapers had never cut themselves off completely from government patronage.

Since 1867 the federal government had subsidized newspaper publishers by granting them special postal rates. Canada's first international wire service, in 1903 the Canadian Associated Press was subsidized by the federal government, as was the domestic news co-operative, Canadian Press, during the initial years after its founding in 1917.

The relationship between Canadian newspapers and the Government also had a darker side. Early publishers who were considered overly critical of government actions could and did find themselves in jail (as stated in previous pages). Libel and criminal libel laws were used to silence bothersome editors with state action aimed primarily at left-wing newspapers. The Québec government of Maurice Duplessis (1936-39 and 1944-59) used its padlock act to shut down what it considered to be communist newspapers and limited censorship was imposed by the federal government in 1970, following the kidnapping of two men during the October crisis.

While partisanship remained, the financial dependence of newspapers on governments and political parties did decline throughout the 19th century. The reason has to do with the finances of newspaper publishing and with overall economic development as newspapers faced high overhead costs. Newspapers were forced to incur the same initial outlays for equipment, typesetting and editorial matter whether they printed one copy or did a run of nine thousand. In the 1860s, when daily circulations were usually under five thousand, these overhead costs were covered by party or government patronage but as population expanded and literacy increased, publishers were able to spread these overhead costs over to their merchants and

readers. As a newspaper's circulation increased, businesses became more interested in it as an advertising medium. With productive capacity increasing in all industries, advertising as a means of persuading people to buy the massive volume of goods being produced became crucial.

Early advertisers were mainly wholesalers trying to catch the attention of other merchants. By the 1880s retail advertising, aimed at a mass market was now dominant and in the 1900's consumers were flooded with newspaper advertisements calling upon them to purchase such things as soap, tooth whiteners and groceries. Big city dailies now were earning up to eighty percent of their revenues from the advertising that now was appearing in their newspaper pages.

Technological developments in the newspaper industry, and in the economy as a whole, hastened the trend to large-circulation, advertising-based newspapers. The spread of the Telegraph during the 1850s and the laying of the Atlantic cable in 1866 increased the availability of world news to newspapers, but at the same time increased their overhead costs of production. By the 1880s, high-speed web presses and stereotyping allowed newspapers to expand their circulations in order to earn more revenue to cover these costs.

In 1876 the combined circulation of daily newspapers in the nine major urban cities was 113,000. Seven years later, it had more than doubled. Railway building, from the mid-19th century onwards, put more of the population within reach of daily and weekly newspapers. By the 1890s, typesetting machines such as the linotype were allowing daily newspapers to expand their size

from the standard four, eight or twelve page format to thirty-two or forty eight pages. This greatly increased the amount of advertising space available. At the same time, the development of newsprint manufactured from wood pulp provided a cheap source of supply to newspapers. The price of newsprint plummeted from \$203 a ton in 1873 to \$50 a ton in 1900.

Early newspapers were weeklies, although a few might be published up to three times a week. Canada's first daily newspaper, the *Montréal Daily Advertiser*, began in 1833, only to go bankrupt within a year. Daily publication began in earnest in the 1840s when two other Montréal newspapers, the *Gazette* and *Herald*, decided to publish each day during the busy commercial season of the summer. Population growth, increased literacy and urbanization hastened the transformation from weekly to daily journals.

In 1873, there were 47 dailies in Canada and by 1900 the country now had one hundred and twelve daily newspapers. The major dailies, in turn, used the mail and the railway system to blanket the countryside with their weekly editions and special weekend supplements such as the *Toronto Star Weekly* or *Montréal Family Herald*.

Newspapers, first weeklies and later dailies, sprang up in the West as white settlements increased. Victoria's *British Colonist* began publication in 1858, the *Manitoba Free Press* in 1872, the *Saskatchewan Herald* in 1878, and the *Edmonton Bulletin* in 1880.

The growth of a new working class in the larger cities, particularly Toronto and Montréal, encouraged new kinds of newspapers with more emphasis on local news, mass circulation, classified advertisements and (in some cases) muckraking. These newer papers, which sold for a penny a copy (a half or a third of the price of the older established dailies), included Montréal's *La Presse* (1884) and *Star* (1869); Toronto's *Telegram* (1876), *News* (1881), *World* (1880) and *Star* (1892); and the Hamilton *Herald* (1889). The older established papers also increased circulation to attract the new classes of readers. In Toronto in 1872 each family bought, on average, one newspaper but by 1883 the average Toronto family was purchasing two newspapers each day.

In the province of Québec as a whole, newspaper growth was initially hampered by a low literacy rate. In 1871 only fifty percent of Québec's French-speaking adults could read and write, compared to ninety percent for all Ontario adults. Unique to Québec though were daily newspapers devoted to religious ends, such as the ultramontane Roman Catholic *Le Nouveau Monde* (1867) and the Protestant *Daily Witness* (1860). In Québec, newspapers allied to the church, to nationalism and to the cause of French Canada flourished well into the 20th century.

In 1910 nationalist Henri Bourassa founded *Le Devoir* to promote Québec interests. Papers such as *Le Devoir*, though small in terms of circulation, remained influential among the Québec intellectuals.

Labour daily newspapers have been uncommon in Canada. The *Toronto Star* was started by striking printers in 1892, with the backing of the local trade union movement but within a year it

had gone bankrupt and passed out of labour hands. In 1948 the Winnipeg *Citizen* began publication with labour backing. Starved for capital, it too went out of business in a year.

The number of daily newspapers peaked at one hundred and thirty eight in 1913. By then, the pressures to curb competition and concentrate ownership had already begun. Within each town and city, newspapers vied with each other to expand circulation and thus capture advertising. The competition was costly. Losers merged with stronger papers or went out of business. In Toronto, for instance, the *Mail* and the *Empire* merged in 1895; the resultant *Mail and Empire* merged with the *Globe* in 1936. By 1949, two formerly independent Halifax newspapers each with two daily editions, *The Chronicle* (morning) and *The Star* (afternoon); and *The Herald* (morning) and *The Mail* (afternoon) had merged into one operation with twice a day editions, *The Chronicle-Herald* (morning) and *The Mail-Star* (afternoon).

The growth of radio in the 1930s and television in the 1950s broke the print monopoly over advertising. By 1953 there were only eighty nine daily newspapers in the country. By 1986 that number had climbed to one hundred and ten. However, by the late 1980s, only eight Canadian cities were served by two or more separately owned daily newspapers. With political partisanship becoming less important to readers, the system of the two newspaper town had broken down.

Even far -away places like Whitehorse had a newspaper, the *Whitehorse Star's* little shack on Main Street and its owner Horace Moore ran a one man show, much like old time publishers

had done for the previous eighty years. Moore had bought the Star in 1938 and was trying to eke out a living publishing a six page paper once a week, and do some commercial printing jobs to keep the wolf from the door. Then in 1942 things changed for Moore, and the Yukon. The American Troops building the Alaska Highway hit the Yukon like a juggernaut. Things changed so much that *Time* magazine ran a story about, of all things, *The Whitehorse Star*. *Time* wrote: "Outside the tiny white-framed building a large sign simply says 'printing'. That's the headquarters of *The Whitehorse Star* in the Yukon Territory. Inside, another large sign pleads 'don't shoot, we're doing our best'. The first sign went up six years ago because Editor Horace Edward Moore wanted business. The second went up last week, because he had too much."

The Time's article waxed elegantly, "Moore was a birdlike sixty-three year old who emigrated long ago from England. From his paper, and from what other printing jobs he could pick up, he hoped for a living and leisure. Moore acquired a linotype machine and an operator, increased his paper's size from four to six pages, and turned out job printing for Whitehorse's few stores. One year he won a Canadian Weekly Newspaper Association award for the best paper with under five hundred circulation. Best of all, he did all of this in an easy five day week".

"The Alaska Highway brought briskness to publisher Moore's idyllic retreat when thousands of US Army Engineers and private construction workers transformed Whitehorse into something unreal. Job printing orders went up like a rocket. Officers and contractors now bang on The Star's doors with orders for letterheads, record forms, tickets and contracts in the thousands. With the aid of a new automatic press and four

assistants, two of which are army men who work part-time, pipe-smoking cap-wearing Horace Moore did the best he could. But gone were the five-day weeks and the life of Riley. Whitehorse's frosty ink stained paradise has been invaded".

By the late 1980s daily newspapers were a diminished but still major part of the Canadian mass-media industry. Most newspapers belonged, individually or through chains, to conglomerate enterprises with large holdings in other media or other businesses. Some leading publishers were again diversifying, this time into the new electronic print medium: either online services for access on office or home computers, or videotex services for access on adapted television terminals with key pads.

The Toronto *Globe and Mail*, for example, had established the Info Globe online service with a database of the newspaper's contents over a number of years and in the 1990s went into partnership with the Chapters bookstore chain. Southam Inc., owners of the Southam chain of newspapers, and Torstar Corp., owners of the *Toronto Star*, had formed Infomart, a videotex marketing organization prominent in the development of the Canadian Telidon system. The *Star* later dropped out. Le Soleil of Québec City and *La Presse* of Montréal were early participants in videotex trials. The *London Free Press* was a pioneer in the use of videotex for informational advertising in shopping centres.

Electronic print was expected to start cutting into the newspapers' advertising revenue, and possibly their readership base, as the technology developed to provide flat, portable terminals and higher definition print and graphics. However, the

convenience of the daily newspaper as a comprehensive source of news, general information and entertainment, with readability, portability and flexibility, appeared likely to sustain it for a long period. Many of the early electronic print services were big losers as improvements in the technology were introduced more slowly than many firms had expected.

Roy Thomson, 1st Baron Thomson of Fleet Thomson (see separate chapter on Thomson) acquired his first newspaper in 1934 with a down payment of two hundred dollars when he purchased the local daily in Timmins, Ontario. He began an expansion of both radio stations and newspapers in various Ontario locations in partnership with fellow Canadian, Jack Kent Cooke. By the early 1950s, he owned 19 newspapers and was president of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association.

In 1969, newspapers were put under a microscope, in a Senate Special Committee study on Mass Media under the chairmanship of Senator Keith Davey. Then yet another study in 1980 called the Royal Commission on newspapers, whose members were Chairman Tom Kent, Laurent Picard and Borden Spears. Both studies dwelt on the extent of concentration of newspaper ownership and the diminution of newspaper competition, the Kent commission stressing the conglomeration of newspapers with other types of business. Both studies maintained that freedom of the press embodied the principle of widespread dissemination of information and opinion from a diversity of sources, and that this could be injured by excessive concentration of the press. The Davey recommendation that the

federal government establish a Press Ownership Review Board to curb newspaper mergers was unheeded.

The Kent recommendation that newspaper owners should not be permitted to hold a radio and TV broadcasting license in the same market, was accepted in principle by the Trudeau government. It was given only limited application by the CRTC and was dropped by the Mulroney government and at the same time Ottawa also put pressure on newspapers to belong to press councils. By the late 1980s press councils were functioning in all provinces except Saskatchewan.

The Kent recommendations to reduce the worst cases of concentration and to offset the effects of conglomeration by measures to provide for journalistic independence and public accountability were not accepted. They were strongly opposed by the proprietors as an alleged interference with press freedom.

Mergers and closings of big-city dailies in the twentieth century contrasted with the emergence of new dailies, as small towns grew into cities. An important new development since 1960 had been the appearance of tabloid newspapers in the larger metropolitan areas. Until their arrival, nearly all big-city dailies were newspapers, or mergers of newspapers, already established by the turn of the century. The tabloids repeated the strategy of Canada's first mass-circulation dailies in the late 19th century (*La Presse* in Montréal and the *Star* in Toronto) of appealing to the "lowbrow" audience. The pioneer of tabloids in Canada was Pierre Peladeau, with the extraordinarily successful *Le Journal de Montréal* and *Le Journal de Québec* in the 1960s.

The Toronto Sun, rising out of the ashes of the *Toronto Telegram* in 1971, repeated this success in English Canada - adding right-wing populism to the tabloid formula of sex, sin and sport and expanded into a chain including sister "Suns" in Edmonton, Ottawa and Calgary. The other main innovation in newspaper marketing occurred at the up-scale end of the market in 1980 and succeeding years when the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, at this point owned by the Thomson Group as part plants in Atlantic, central and Western Canada.

These various developments provided Canadians, depending on where they lived, with roughly four types of daily newspaper: the upscale, national daily, represented by the *Toronto Globe and Mail* and *National Post* in English and *Le Devoir* of Montréal in French, the down-scale tabloids; small-city dailies, such as the Thomson papers and the smaller Desmarais papers in French, and middle-market omnibus dailies, the largest circulation group, existing as monopolies in most larger cities, competing with tabloids in others. Those dailies were typified by Southam newspapers such as the *Calgary Herald* or *Montréal Gazette* in English, and Unimedia's *Le Soleil* of Québec City in French. A fifth category consists of Chinese-language dailies, the *Toronto Chinese Express* and *Shing Wah Daily News* and the *Vancouver Chinese Voice* and *Chinese Times*.

According to Statistics Canada, by the late 80s, eighty percent of the adult population reported reading at least three or four issues of a daily newspaper each week. Regular newspaper reading came close to matching the proportion of the population that could get prompt newspaper delivery, with readership a little lower in French Canada than in the English market.

The French-language market accounted for eighteen percent of national circulation, spread among eleven newspapers, nine of which were published in Québec, with one in Ottawa and one in Moncton. Ninety percent of French circulation was accounted for by three chains: Pierre Karl Péladeau's Quebecor Inc. (with about half of the chain circulation), Paul Desmarais's Gesca and Jacques Francoeur's UniMédia.

In New Brunswick, nearly all of the major print publications, which include three dailies and several French and English weeklies, are controlled by one person, James K. Irving. *Brunswick News Inc.* is the largest owner of media in New Brunswick co-owned by the Irving Group of Companies, one of the largest industrial conglomerates in Eastern Canada.

Taking both French and English markets together, only a quarter of the number of newspapers and less than a quarter of circulation was in the hands of independents, and several of these, the *Toronto Star* and *London Free Press* belonged to multimedia conglomerates. Concentration was reflected regionally by the fact that in all but three provinces (Ontario, Québec and Nova Scotia), single chains controlled two-thirds or more of provincial circulation. Figures prepared by Statistics Canada showed the following percentages of national circulation controlled by the four largest owners in Canada. In 1950, 37.2%; 1955, 34.3%; 1960, 35.7%; 1965, 43.6%; 1970, 52.9%; 1975, 62.7%; 1980, 65.1% and in 1986 they controlled 67%. A further concentrative factor contributing to homogeneity in Canadian journalism was the common ownership by the daily newspaper proprietors of the dominant news agency, the Canadian Press, which was also a major supplier of news to radio and TV stations.

The Kent Commission found that the economics of the newspaper industry are conducive both to reduction of competition in local markets and to concentration of ownership. Newspapers derive about eighty per-cent of their revenue from selling up to sixty per-cent of their space to advertisers, and only about twenty per-cent of their revenue from selling newspapers to readers. Advertisers in most markets can reach readers more cheaply through one newspaper than through two or more. Thus, head-to-head competition between the same newspapers has disappeared from most cities, and a limited variety of newspapers is only possible where the market is large enough to be segmented into distinct audiences.

At the same time, the high capital cost of starting or re-equipping a newspaper, combined with the economies to be realized through skilled central management, have favoured chains over independents. Once a newspaper's monopoly is established in a market, or a segment of a market, a paper has proved to be more profitable than the average business. Such newspapers serve as cash sources to develop other enterprises in a conglomerate.

The hometown nature of the daily newspaper remains its strongest characteristic. Even with the relatively recent development in Canada of market segmentation and a metropolitan pattern of journalism, the national or regional paper must retain a firm base in the metropolis where it is published. Opinion surveys show that although audiences prefer TV for national and world news, and generally find TV the most believable medium, they still read the daily newspaper for local and regional coverage with weeklies filling the community void.

On the average, two-thirds or more of a newspaper's editorial budget is spent in-house, rather than for outside news services and features. Newspapers try to develop a sense of common interest and common cause with their readers.

By the Nineties, national coverage in Canadian newspapers had improved in depth and scope since the 1960s, owing largely to the efforts of the Canadian Press, Southam, the Toronto *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* to provide stronger Ottawa and interregional coverage. International news coverage by Canadian journalists has gradually been extended, urged on by criticism in both the Davey and Kent reports. In public-affairs coverage, which continues to be the newspaper's primary social responsibility, the press has felt increasingly bound to follow the scenarios of TV, the preferred medium of the politicians, particularly at the national level and in the larger provinces. Most studies of newspaper content have concluded that newspaper journalism continues to play a strong role in setting the agenda for public debate by establishing news priorities.

As the number of big-city dailies declined and the remaining newspapers tended to drop unprofitable out-of-town circulation, community newspapers enjoyed a boom. From 1971 to 1980 aggregate weekly circulation of community newspapers increased from 3.8 million to 8.8 million, or from about one-eighth to more than one-quarter of aggregate weekly circulation of the daily newspapers.

During this period there was a steady trend toward concentration of ownership of community newspapers into chains, and of ownership by the proprietors of dailies. Statistics

Canada reported that by 1985 total circulation of community papers stood at 9.5 million. This figure includes both French and English papers as well as bilingual papers, mainly in Québec, with a total circulation of 2.8 million and ethnic weeklies with a total circulation of 95,000. Many community newspapers are distributed free and rely entirely on advertising for revenue.

In the 1980s, daily newspapers in the larger cities moved from afternoon to morning publications and to publishing large Sunday editions. The dailies consolidated a place for themselves alongside the other media, helped somewhat by the fragmentation of radio and TV audiences owing to the multiplication of stations and channels.

The growth of newspapers in the 1980s came to an end following the advent of widespread use of the Internet in the 1990s. Since the 1990s, print journalism and the newspaper business have seen dramatic changes in profit, market and advertisers. The number of newspapers that have gone into bankruptcy has risen severely in North America; competition from Internet media has continued to grow, competing for limited advertising dollars. Although the newspaper industry has always been cyclical, the explosion of the Internet in the 1990s has increased the number of available news outlets to the point of dramatically cutting into the historical hegemony of the newspaper industry as a purveyor of news.

Television and Internet are capable of instant news updates and breaking stories are aired immediately and do not have to wait for printing and distribution. Although newspapers might be in trouble, an appetite for news remains strong even as

big papers have become increasingly less profitable, they are still widely read. As the demand for news has exploded, online news sources have become progressively popular and every major (and many smaller) newspapers in North America have an online presence. Consumers are now reading web sites (many who “borrow” news) online for free, having forsaken traditional media, especially newspapers including their internet versions.

Tim Creery, Thomas Walkom, Jessica Potter, thecanadianencyclopedia and Les McLaughlin are some of the sources that were used for this chapter.



William Lyon Mackenzie founded the *Colonial Advocate* which was Canada's first independent newspaper in Upper Canada in 1824.

Chapter One

Canada's First Newspapers

“When Canadian Newspaper Publishers Were King” uses real names of people. This story is historically accurate even though the newspaper industry today is very fluid and what was true yesterday may not be today. A very small touch of artistic licence has been added to some of these pages to bring the characters, incidents, events and ultimately the story to life.

It is up for debate who truly was the first newspaper publisher in Canada as the men writing the copy were towing the government line and were referred to as printers, not publishers. The first true publishers were probably brothers, Gideon and Sylvester Tiffany. Although Canada's first newspaper (as stated in the Introduction) was John Bushell's the Halifax Gazette which began publishing in 1752, it was the Tiffany brothers who refused to print only government sanctioned news. On their own accord they added news from America, much to the chagrin of the powers to be in England. In other words they put their paper's readers first rather than the government of the time.

William Lyon Mackenzie (1795-1861) was a great influence for political development in Upper Canada (Ontario) and a fierce advocate for responsible government. At age fifteen, he was the youngest member of the commercial news room of a local newspaper in Scotland. In 1820 Mackenzie sailed to Canada and in 1824, he founded the *Colonial Advocate*, which was the first independent paper to have significant political impact. The first number of his first newspaper appeared on 18 May 1824 with the avowed purpose of influencing voters in their choice of representatives in the approaching election. Initially, Mackenzie supported the British connection, primogeniture, and the principle of clergy reserves, but he also praised American institutions. The *Advocate* quickly ran into financial difficulties and into problems with the post office agents. Mackenzie was partly at fault for sending copies to many influential non-subscribers, a parallel to his habit of writing to anyone of consequence.

In November 1824 he transferred his operations to York, where he became increasingly critical of the Tory establishment as his debts increased. Although, according to Charles Lindsey's estimate, circulation at the beginning of 1825 was 825 copies, Mackenzie was soon faced with a rival Reform paper, Francis Collins *Canadian Freeman*, and from July to December 1825 the *Colonial Advocate* suspended publication. Yet in October Mackenzie purchased a new printing press and type from the United States. Early in 1826 he began to consider changing to an agricultural journal or selling to Charles Fothergill and returning to Dundas as a merchant. An editorial change was taking place that

spring. His attacks on leading Tories such as William Allan, the Boulton family, and George Gurnett came more scurrilous, but yellow journalism, admittedly common to other editors, failed to improve circulation. In May 1826 he fled to Lewiston, N.Y., to avoid arrest for debt.

At this juncture Mackenzie was saved by an act of Tory stupidity. On June 8th 1826 a group of fifteen young, well-connected Tories, perhaps organized by Samuel Peters Jarvis, thinly disguised themselves as Indians (Indigenous), raided his York office in broad daylight, smashed the press, and threw type into the bay. The Tory magistrates did nothing to protect Mackenzie's property.

Mackenzie viewed the colonial administration as incompetent, ineffective, and expensive, and he used the *Advocate* to publicize these opinions. Though his newspaper became the most widely circulated paper, it was not profitable for Mackenzie and he struggled with debt for many years. Mackenzie supported some characteristically British institutions, notably the British Empire, primogeniture, and the clergy reserves, but he also praised American institutions in the paper.

Mackenzie advocated in favour of the Reform cause and became an outspoken critic of the Family Compact, an upper-class clique which dominated the government of Upper Canada. However, the newspaper continued to face financial pressures. It had only 825 subscribers by the beginning of 1825, and faced stiff competition from another Reform newspaper, the *Canadian Freeman*. As a result, Mackenzie had to suspend publishing the

Colonial Advocate from July to December 1825. He purchased a new printing press in fall 1825 and resumed publication in 1826, now engaging in even more scurrilous attacks on leading Tory politicians such as William Allan, G. Darcy Boulton, Henry John Boulton, and George Gurnett. However, Mackenzie continued to amass debts, and in May 1826, he fled across the American border to Lewiston, New York to evade his creditors.

Mackenzie took full advantage of the “type” incident, returning to York and suing the perpetrators in a sensational trial, which propelled Mackenzie into the ranks of martyrs of Upper Canadian liberty, alongside Robert Thorpe and Robert Fleming Gourlay. Mackenzie refused a settlement of £200 (approximately the value of the damage) and insisted on trial. His legal team, which included Marshall Spring Bidwell, argued effectively and the jury returned a verdict of £625, far more than the amount of damage done to the press.

There are three implications of the “types” riot according to historian Paul Romney. First, he argues the riot illustrates how the elite's self-justifications regularly skirted the rule of law they held out as their Loyalist mission. Second, he demonstrated that the significant damages Mackenzie received in his civil lawsuit against the vandals did not reflect the soundness of the criminal administration of justice in Upper Canada. And lastly, he sees in the “type throwing riot” the seed of the Rebellion in a deeper sense than those earlier writers who viewed it simply as the start of a highly personal feud between Mackenzie and the elite Canadian Family. Romney emphasizes that Mackenzie’s personal harassment, the “outrage,” served as a lightning rod of discontent

because so many Upper Canadians had faced similar endemic abuses and hence identified their political fortunes with his.

Mackenzie used the money and fame which the trial had brought him to re-establish his business on sound financial footing. Mackenzie now aligned himself with John Rolph in arguing that American-born settlers in Upper Canada should have the full rights of British subjects. Mackenzie played a role in organizing a committee to present grievances to the British government: the committee selected Robert Randal to travel to London to advocate on behalf of the American-born settlers. In London, Randal allied himself with British Reformer Joseph Hume in presenting the colonists' grievances to the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, Lord Goderich. Goderich agreed that injustice was being done and instructed the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada to redress the grievances. This incident taught Mackenzie the efficacy of appealing directly to Britain.

Mackenzie decided to try his hand at politics. The riding Mackenzie chose to contest was the two-member county of York, which included present-day Toronto north of Queen St, and the counties of York, Peel, and Ontario. The population, to a large extent of American extraction, promised to be Reform oriented. Three other leading Reform candidates declared themselves: J. E. Small and Robert Baldwin, both moderates, and the more radical Jesse Ketchum. When Mackenzie received less support than the others at meetings, he turned to stating his case in the newspapers. As part of his newspaper campaign he published a "Black List" which dissected the opposition, but was himself taken to task by Collins and the Tory editors, the former dubbing him "William Liar Mackenzie." Mackenzie's tactics worked; he and

Ketchum were victorious in a Reform landslide. After Mackenzie was expelled from the assembly a new theatre of operations for him opened up with the incorporation of York as Toronto on 6 March 1834. Both Tories and Reformers presented slates of candidates in its first election on 27 March. Mackenzie was elected alderman, and the Reformers obtained a majority on the council. Mackenzie was chosen Toronto's first mayor by his fellow councillors, defeating John Rolph. As mayor, Mackenzie was both head of council and chief magistrate for the city. In the provincial election of October 1834, some months before his term as mayor was completed, Mackenzie won the 2nd Riding of York and the Reformers a majority in the assembly.

Their chances had not been hurt by the storm of criticism from both Reform and Tory sources, including Egerton Ryerson, which greeted Mackenzie's publication in May 1834 of Joseph Hume's "baneful domination" letter, with its seeming call for independence for the colonies, even by the use of violence. Mackenzie rushed into print a new paper, the *Constitution*, although he had forsworn journalism "forever" in 1834. It was supposed to appear, symbolically, on the fourth of July. Mackenzie's flirtation with American constitutional practices was moving towards its zenith. But despite continued evidence of corrupt or unjust practices, such as the rejection on a technicality of his petition to the house for an investigation of his defeat, Mackenzie wrote only of constitutional change.

In the spring of 1837, however, the tone began to change. The arrival of Lord John Russell's "Ten Resolutions" which removed all assembly control over the executive in Lower Canada seemed to

finally satisfy Mackenzie that nothing could be hoped for from the imperial government

Mackenzie was a prime example of an editor/publisher who used his printing as a tool to take on the troubled politics of the time and open the door for the newspaper to enter the public sphere.



John Ross Robertson (1841 – 1918) became the co-owner of Toronto's first evening newspaper, the Daily Telegraph in 1866. Robertson was a newspaper pioneer and once he was arrested in Upper Fort Gary (Winnipeg) by Louis Riel.

Pic courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Chapter Two

The Nations Newspaper Founder

John Ross Robertson had already become a familiar face in Toronto newspaper offices, where he was involved in job printing. For several years after he left school his career mixed journalism, printing, and publishing and for a time he worked on the reporting and advertising staff of the *Leader*, edited by Charles Lindsey. In addition, he set up a job-printing office when he published *Young Canada Sporting Life*, an expanded version of his school paper, with more coverage of pastimes and sports. This was likely Canada's first periodical devoted to sport and later, in 1861, he changed its name to *Sporting Life*, which continued publishing until 1863. He also published *Robertson's Canadian Railway Guide* and from 1863 to 1865 the *Grumbler*, a satirical weekly that was started by Erastus Wiman.

George Brown, publisher of the *Globe*, hired Robertson in 1865 as city editor, responsible for court and city hall news. Here Robertson developed what was to become his foremost journalistic strength, the ability to ferret out local news, and he easily won a contest among *Globe* reporters for bringing in the

most news items by garnering 150 in one day. He is credited with introducing to the paper the practice of writing crisp, short paragraphs about a multiplicity of local happenings, rather than sermon-like and wordy essays about outstanding events.

Robertson disliked working at the *Globe* however, partly because it published long political diatribes at the expense of local news, but even more so because he considered Brown “the most notable charlatan this country has ever known.”

Robertson jumped at the chance when James Beaty Cook, on the staff of the *Leader*, invited him in 1866 to become co-proprietor of Toronto’s first evening newspaper which was not a separate edition of a morning newspaper. From its first copy on 21 May, the *Daily Telegraph* was an ambitious undertaking. Robertson and Cook quickly established morning and weekly editions and sought to topple the dominant *Globe* by mixing Conservative politics, sensation, and the occasional independent political comment. The paper trumpeted its intention to pursue politics “without party spirit” and to expose “unsparingly all abuses and denounce all corruption no matter who the guilty parties may be.” Its promise of “today’s news today” heralded the coming to Canada of the innovative American-style “penny” press for the mass market.

At the *Telegraph*, Robertson and Cook eschewed lengthy political editorials for timely scoops; the *Telegraph* was, for example, the first paper in Toronto to announce the Fenian raid of 1866 at Ridgeway (see John O’Neill). Robertson’s ground breaking journalism was apparent in his breathless eyewitness account of the Red River uprising of 1869–70. With *Globe* correspondent

Robert Cunningham, he travelled to the northwest by rail, steamer, and, for the last arduous 400 miles, horse-drawn cart. The Red River settlement would soon be called Manitoba.

In January 1870 Louis Riel promptly had Robertson arrested and imprisoned in Upper Fort Garry (Winnipeg). After an interview with Riel, Robertson was expelled as a “dangerous character.” Making the most of this exploit by Robertson, the *Telegraph* employed the attention-grabbing, self-promotional techniques of a new style of journalism. In marked contrast to the staid, impersonal accounts in the *Globe*, it pulled out all the stops for “reports of the insurrection (which) will be fuller, more graphic and more trustworthy than (those in) any other journal.” Under stacked, descriptive headlines, often 12 lines deep and in single columns, Robertson wired a highly charged, personal account of the rebellion. His dramatic reports were reprinted throughout the North American press.

Robertson’s work on the *Telegraph* demonstrated a strong, even stubborn, independent streak, and a steadfast determination to speak his mind. In 1870 he denounced the violence carried out by members of the Young Britons during the Orange parade in Toronto, despite his prominence as an Orangeman; as a consequence, he was condemned by some of the leaders in the order and the office of his newspaper was threatened with destruction.

Sir John Stephen Willison spoke of the “vigour, courage and originality” of the *Telegraph*, but the paper was not successful financially, and it eventually fell victim to the hostility of Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, who wanted a dependable Tory

organ in Toronto to combat Brown's *Globe*. The Conservative party had begun providing support to the *Telegraph* in 1869 at the behest of Cook and Editor Daniel Morrison. However, Macdonald distrusted Robertson because of the *Telegraph's* criticism of his government, especially for its handling of the rebellion in 1869–70 and its policies on subsidies to railways; once, Robertson pointedly ignored a call from Ottawa asking the paper to “call off its dogs.”

Convinced of Robertson's inherent unreliability, Macdonald withdrew vital Tory patronage from the *Telegraph* after Cook left the partnership in May 1871. Faced with ruin, Robertson attempted to conciliate Macdonald and make the *Telegraph* the official Tory organ, but in vain. Unhappy with both the *Leader* and the *Telegraph*, which in November he said was a “mere blackmail sheet, and the sooner it is crushed the better,” Macdonald was already making plans for not only the ouster of Robertson from the *Telegraph* but also the publication of the new Tory organ, the *Toronto Daily Mail*. The *Telegraph* ceased to appear in May 1872.

Overlooking their political and personal enmity, George Brown hired Robertson as the *Globe's* resident correspondent and business representative in London, England. Robertson lasted until 1875, when he returned to Toronto and became the business manager of the weekly *Nation*, the Canada First organ founded in the previous year. He acquitted himself well, and so in 1876 was the logical choice of Goldwin Smith, who was one of the principal contributors to the *Nation*, as publisher of a new Toronto daily to challenge Brown's *Globe*. Smith gave Robertson \$10,000 to found a paper for the masses and not the classes.”

On 18 April 1876 the *Evening Telegram* appeared for the first time, its name chosen to signal the immediacy of the news it printed. Robertson promised that it would be an “independent” newspaper, “not an organ; it will have no patron but the public.” He soon alienated Smith, however, by refusing to go along with him on the subject of Canada’s relations with the United States and by supporting the Conservatives in the 1878 campaign. The first editor, John Charles Dent, also soon left.

The paper “paid from the start,” according to Robertson. Key to its success was Robertson’s innovative practice of cutting the rate for want ads to one cent a word, which was half the going rate and the reduction of the paper’s price to one penny 14 months after it was launched. Robertson’s competitive tactic of “a word a cent and a cent a copy,” and his focus on local news made the *Telegram* indispensable reading for Torontonians. Indeed, one of the sights of Toronto was the gathering at 5:00 p.m. of hundreds of men around the *Telegram*’s office on Melinda Street to read the “wants” columns on the front page. The *Telegram* became the newspaper with the largest circulation in the city by the early 1880s.

The *Telegram* also prospered because of Robertson’s success in keeping labour costs low. A paternalistic employer, he paid for staff funeral costs and reluctantly granted the occasional raise, but he was notoriously domineering and tight-fisted. He believed that virtue was its own reward, and that low pay and long hours kept his employees virtuous. Anti-union like George Brown, Robertson denied his printers the right to organize and was able to pay below union-scale wages. His *Telegraph* had been a leader in resisting the campaign by printers for a nine-hour day,

and during the 1872 strike Robertson successfully prosecuted one of his men for deserting his job.

In 1882 the *Telegram* became the first target among the Toronto dailies of a boycott organized by the International Typographical Union with the support of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council. The boycott failed in 1884 and the paper remained defiantly non-union until 1891. Although it was widely believed that Robertson then graciously paid union fees for his workers, his printers paid them. The unionization of the *Telegram's* printers was significant in that it completed the unionization of all Toronto newspapers and hastened the acceptance of trade unions as a legitimate part of industrial organization.

Along with Hugh Graham's *Montreal Daily Star*, Robertson's *Telegram* became the embodiment of the new people's press in Canada, which focused on a sensationalist and massive coverage of local news instead of partisan editorials on national politics. Their founders were among the first Canadian press barons. In Toronto Robertson pioneered the successful news formula, which satisfied the need of the increasingly literate urban population for easily understandable and entertaining information.

The *Telegram* specialized in presenting news in the form of a pot-pourri of titbit items, trivia, maverick politics, and vigorous local political crusades, one of the first being against a proposal for a bonus of \$250,000 from the city to the promoters of the Credit Valley Railway. It was the first to emphasize municipal events by reporting on the city council, the water commission, police courts, hospitals, sports, and crime. The

newspaper's innovative practice of using interviews to canvass public opinion helped its circulation to rise spectacularly.

By the 1880s Robertson's *Telegram* was already considered by Charles Pelham Mulvany "*par excellence*, the family newspaper" in Toronto and it was an institution, read by everyone from the fashionable belle in her boudoir to Bidy in the basement! Robertson had accomplished this feat by employing the self-advertising techniques of the American penny press. Rather than simply reporting the news, the *Telegram* began to make the news. In addition to mounting heavily publicized investigations of the "financial folly enacted . . . by our elected representatives," Robertson and the *Telegram* also promoted and paid for a number of public projects such as providing band music in parks and importing an ambulance from Britain. The newspaper constantly kept its name before the public; for example, starting with the federal election in 1878, it projected returns by means of an oxyhydrogen lamp in front of the *Telegram's* office before crowds that reached 10,000. By 1880 the *Telegram* was also considered the best advertising vehicle in the city because of its pre-eminence in Toronto homes, and it attracted the business of the expanding department stores of Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson, as well as of the emerging manufacturers of brand name products.

Robertson was fortunate in obtaining the services of highly effective editors to succeed Dent, first Alexander Fraser Pirie, and then in 1888 John Robinson. According to historian Jesse Edgar Middleton, the opinionated and blunt "Black Jack" Robinson made the *Telegram* a terror to aldermen and civic officials who showed signs of wobbling. Robinson's editorial tirades mirrored

Robertson's strident support of the Orange order, the British - empire, and Canadian nationalism, and his anti-American, anti-Quebec, and anticlerical biases. The newspaper in turn reflected and reinforced the sentiments of much of late-19th-century Protestant Tory Toronto.

In 1877 Robertson had also begun a career characterized by literary scholar Douglas Grant Lochhead as that of "a successful and seemingly shameless pirate-publisher" when he reprinted in paperback a work by Dwight Lyman Moody, first published in the United States, without authorization or payment of royalties. In the absence of effective copyright legislation, Robertson was able to sell the works of popular foreign authors, in his "Robertson Cheap Editions," at 3 to 50 cents a copy, a fraction of their list price. It is estimated that he may have sold up to two million copies of about 350 pirated titles from 1877 to the early 1890s. He also frequently serialized in the *Telegram* works he published in separate editions.

By the mid- 1880s Robertson was wealthy and powerful. His influence in municipal affairs had become legendary, and the *Telegram* had the reputation of being able to make and unmake civic politicians. Robert Lorne Richardson, founder of the *Winnipeg Daily Tribune*, would observe in 1918 that "it was practically a death-knell to the aspirations of any public man in Toronto to have Mr. Robertson and his newspaper opposed to him." The energetic support of the *Telegram* was credited by some with the success of William Holmes Howland in his election as mayor in 1886. Robertson's successful endorsement of Robert John Fleming in the 1892 and subsequent mayoral elections led to the belief that the *Telegram's* support ensured victory. Later,

Thomas Langton Church was known as the *Telegram's* candidate, and the paper's aldermanic slates were also often successful.

Robertson's influence spread beyond the municipal stage in the 1890s. Encouraged in 1896 by D'Alton McCarthy and Nathaniel Clarke Wallace to run for the House of Commons as an independent Conservative in opposition to the proposed remedial legislation for Manitoba schools and in support of the National Policy, Robertson won the Toronto East riding by one of the largest majorities in Ontario. In parliament he generally supported the Conservative opposition but occasionally took independent positions. As he had all his life, he often served as a watch-dog against government waste and denounced subsidies to railways; he opposed aid to both the Canadian Pacific and the William Mackenzie and Donald Mann interests. Parliamentary life did not suit him, however, and he declined to stand for re-election in 1900, believing that he could have more influence on public affairs through the pages of his newspaper.

In parliament Robertson had been active in an ongoing campaign to pressure the government to pass a Canadian copyright act. His efforts may appear strange, given his earlier career, but he later protested that he had pirated foreign works precisely to bring about a Canadian copyright act and also to provide Canadians with accessible reading. Robertson and other Canadian publishers feared the consequences of the Berne Convention, which Britain adhered to in 1886, because it legalized the flood into Canada of cheap American reprints of British authors, thus threatening the existence of Canadian book publishing.

In January 1889, after becoming president of the Canadian Copyright Association, which he had helped establish, Robertson led a delegation to meet with the minister of justice, Sir John Sparrow David Thompson, and demanded a “national policy” for the Canadian book trade. In response, Thompson steered a bill through parliament in 1889 that would allow the publication in Canada of British authors after a short period of time. The act was still-born: the Colonial Office refused its assent, in part because it considered the Canadian act to be in conflict with such imperial legislation as the Literary Copyright Act of 1842 and the Colonial Laws Validity Act of 1865, but also in order to be able to bargain away the Canadian market in return for copyright protection for British authors in American legislation.

The British government’s continued intransigence on copyright soured relations between Ottawa and London and raised the more significant issue of Canadian independence. Thompson wrote to Robertson in 1892 that the copyright question had become for him a “question of principle,” and as prime minister, he sent him to London in 1894 to “straighten out the Copyright tangle.” Robertson reported that his unofficial mission had failed because of British sentiment that “when the day comes that Canada has a right to ride roughshod over the Imperial Act the connecting link between England and Canada will be severed.”

Yet, Robertson persevered and in 1895 he participated on behalf of the Canadian Copyright Association in a meeting with representatives of the Canadian government and the British Copyright Association to settle the affair. A tentative agreement was reached, but Canada did not achieve autonomy in copyright

matters until 1911. In that year, the imperial parliament approved legislation allowing self-governing colonies to pass their own copyright legislation, which Ottawa finally did in 1921.

Like other businessmen in the late 19th century, Robertson was an enthusiastic advocate of the movement for civic reform and public ownership of services and utilities. The *Telegram* was regarded as an important and “uncompromising” campaigner in the fight for public ownership of hydroelectric power in the early 1900s, a policy advocated by Adam Beck and his fellow Tory MLA under James Pliny Whitney. Robertson kept special watch over hydro matters in Toronto, and Edward Montague Ashworth, who later became general manager of the Toronto Electric Commissioners, would reflect in his memoirs that Robertson was “more important to us than the Mayor, or even than Adam Beck.” Robertson occasionally went so far as to dictate policy to hydro authorities; once when an engineer argued that a proposal by Robertson would ruin the utility, the latter rejoined: “Well, I *made* it, didn’t I?” Beck himself valued the *Telegram*, using it for controlled leaks; a rate increase was announced in the *Telegram* before the Toronto hydro commission even got wind of it.

Robertson’s strongly held imperialist views were evident in the *Telegram*’s strident support of Canadian participation in the South African War. Combined with his nationalist convictions, they led to his sowing the seeds for the formation of the Canadian Press agency. Dissatisfied with the anti-British bias in the cable reports of the Associated Press and aided by a grant from the federal government, Robertson and Hugh Graham in 1902 set up the Canadian Associated Press, the first wire service to transmit

news directly from London. However, its limited nature pointed to the need for a wider news service.

In 1910 the Western Associated Press, a cooperative newsgathering agency formed in western Canada in 1907, mounted a campaign against the discriminatory rates charged by Canadian Pacific Telegraphs, which held the rights to transmit the Associated Press news service. As a result, these rights were transferred to newspaper publishers and the formation of a Canadian service became a pressing matter. Robertson led publishers from eastern Canada in negotiations with the Western Associated Press to form Canadian Press Limited in 1910 and he sat on its first board.

Highly respected by his colleagues in journalism, Robertson served as president of the Toronto Press Club and honorary president of the Canadian Press Association. When he warned daily newspaper publishers they would be swamped in the Canadian Publishers' Association, they formed a separate section in 1912, a forerunner of the Canadian Daily Newspapers Association, created in 1919.

Robertson's boundless energy and widespread interests manifested themselves in other fields, and in the 1880s he devoted himself increasingly to masonic affairs, historical research and collecting, amateur sports, and philanthropy.

Robertson died in 1918. His wife in passed away in 1947 and the paper was then bought by George McCullagh for \$3.6 million. In 1952 John Bassett purchased the paper with money borrowed from the Eaton family and went on to conduct a major

rivalry with the now larger Toronto Star. Bassett also bought the Sherbrooke Daily Record from his father who was once publisher of the Montreal Gazette. The Telegram ceased publishing in October 1971 and their large subscriber list was sold to the Star for \$10 million.

Some of the information on Robertson is courtesy of the Dictionary of Canadian Biography and Jock Carroll's, The Death of the Toronto Telegram



*Armor De Cosmos
founded the
British Colonist
newspaper in
British Columbia
in December
1858.*

Chapter Three

British Columbia's "Mad" Publisher

Amor De Cosmos (1825-1897), born Alexander Smith was the founder of the "British Colonist" and to many scholars was the first British Columbia newspaper publisher who was well known for using his paper's pages to express his political opinions. De Cosmos eventually decided to enter politics where he assumed party leadership after urging for political reform and pushing for responsible government. He was elected to represent Victoria in the House of Commons while at the same time served as the provincial Premier of British Columbia. He was outspoken and eccentric, and made quite a few enemies throughout his life. De Cosmos was accused of a scandal with the unions which eventually forced him to leave politics. He died at the age of 71 but shortly before his demise De Cosmos had a complete breakdown and was declared insane.

Cosmos was born into a family who had come to Nova Scotia from the American colonies after the American Revolutionary War. William Alexander Smith was educated first at

a private school and later at King's College School in Windsor. About 1840 his family, which at that time included two boys and four girls, moved to Halifax where he became a clerk in the wholesale and retail grocery house of William and Charles Whitham. During this period he also attended night classes at the grammar school run by John Sparrow Thompson and was a member of the Dalhousie College debating club.

In 1852 Smith left Halifax for the gold-fields of California. He journeyed from New York to St Louis where he joined a party intending to travel overland to the West Coast. Indian troubles and other delays forced the group to winter at Salt Lake City, Utah. In the spring he left his party behind and, going on alone at some risk to himself, reached Placerville, California in June 1853. Once in the gold-fields, Smith began to photograph miners posing on their claims, using camera equipment brought with him across the plains. Since he was one of the first to establish this kind of business there, the venture proved "very profitable." In 1854 his elder brother Charles McKeivers Smith, who had worked for some years in Halifax as a builder, joined him.

The brothers settled at Oroville, and William engaged in "mining speculations and businesses of other kinds." The same year he had his name legally changed by the California legislature to Amor De Cosmos, an unusual name, he admitted to jeering legislators, but one that symbolized "what I love most, love of order, beauty, the world, the universe." It certainly would be more remarked upon and remembered than plain Bill Smith. Although the California statute prints the name as "Amor de Cosmos" he signed with a capital "D" accompanied until about 1870 by a Greek epsilon, and thereafter with a small "e."

In January 1858, just before the gold-rush to the Fraser River, Charles migrated north to the British colony of Vancouver Island, where he became a builder and contractor in the settlement that had mushroomed around the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Victoria. After a reconnaissance trip north in May, De Cosmos wound up his affairs in California and followed his brother in June. A few months after arriving in Victoria, he embarked on a career as a journalist and politician that for twenty-four years would keep him at the forefront of public affairs on Vancouver Island.

The *British Colonist*, which De Cosmos founded and edited until 1863, first appeared on December eleventh 1858 and in the editorial for that first issue, he established his credentials as a "friend of reform." The target of what George Woodcock has called De Cosmos's "open and fearless criticism" was the colonial administration of Governor James Douglas, the subject of attacks by Vancouver Island settlers throughout the 1850s. Although Douglas had given up his position as chief factor of the HBC in 1858, his government continued to be made up of an élite of former company officers and his own family members and friends. Reinforced in the following years by a growing number of educated civil servants and "gentlemen" from England, this group, dubbed the "family-company compact" by De Cosmos in February 1859, continued to control the colony after Douglas's departure until 1871. Its members distrusted representative institutions and believed in a hierarchical social order, to be maintained through government support for an established church, landed gentry, and a private, denominational system of education.

De Cosmos drew on the heritage of British liberalism, and especially on the ideas of his Nova Scotia mentor, Joseph Howe, to challenge the power and underlying assumptions of this élite. He hated social, economic, and political privilege, distrusted monopolies, incorporated companies, and saw in ordinary people intelligence and dignity that deserved respect. At the core of De Cosmos's critique was the belief that government should run "according to the well understood wishes of the people." These wishes, in his view, included acceptance of free speech, free assembly, representative institutions, and responsible government on Vancouver Island. He was convinced that self-government by elected assemblies would be more responsive to the settlers' interests and cheaper than the colonial regime. All British subjects, regardless of colour, from Vancouver Island to Nova Scotia, should enjoy the "inalienable rights and privileges which Englishmen inherit."

Yet, as a mid-Victorian liberal, De Cosmos also believed that ownership of property and social stability were essential prerequisites for responsible citizenship. Thus, although he argued for a more liberal franchise in his editorials, in the early 1860s, he opposed universal male suffrage: voters should pay taxes and be resident in the community.

The same mixture of liberal ideas and settlers' interests that defined De Cosmos's approach to political reform also shaped his economic views. Reflecting the spirit of the age, he celebrated railways, "men of action," moral and material progress, growing population, and expanding trade. His belief in the private ownership of resources was unquestioning. He consistently promoted farming as the foundation of colonial

prosperity yet foresaw that in British Columbia settlement must build on a more diverse base. With its fisheries “an exhaustless mine of wealth” and its forests “practically inexhaustible,” the coast region awaited only capital and labour to prosper. Hence his frustration with the influence of Governor Douglas and the HBC who he felt, somewhat erroneously, had retarded economic diversification and expansion.

De Cosmos’s faith in contemporary economic values found expression in his private business endeavours. Soon after arriving in Victoria he started to invest in real estate, including land at Fort Langley, and by 1897 he held title to thirty-four pieces of property in Victoria valued in total at \$118,000. The fact that this real estate was “hopelessly involved with mortgages” exceeding \$87,000 suggests the speculative character of his investments. In the 1860s he promoted a quartz mine, a sawmill, and a cattle farm on Vancouver Island, the last to be located on the Cowichan Indian reserve, and in the late 1880s a railway/ferry system from Victoria to Swartz Bay and the Mainland, all unsuccessful. In short, both in California and on Vancouver Island, De Cosmos behaved as did many entrepreneurs in settler societies, buying and selling property and promoting businesses.

More complex than his political and business philosophy were his views on free trade and the tariff, for here his liberalism confronted a strong sense that the northwest coast, while part of the British empire, had its own identity. Although he proclaimed in 1862 that this was an age of “free press, free trade, and freedom” and argued ten years later for reciprocity in natural resources with states and territories to the south, he was always

something of an economic nationalist, increasingly so by the 1870s.

From 1859 the *Colonist* advocated not *laissez-faire* economics but “protection to our own industry” and government aid to business, whether in the form of a “bounty” to fishermen, a subsidy for local steamship companies, or free access to land and timber for farmers and lumbermen. After British Columbia entered confederation in 1871, De Cosmos regularly favoured tariffs to support infant “manufactures and agriculture.” The “colony was young,” he argued in the House of Commons in May 1872, and “required nursing.” Gilbert Malcolm Sproat, a contemporary and occasional adversary, described him as a “thoroughgoing protectionist. “

De Cosmos’s economic nationalism was motivated in part by his profound commitment to political independence for Britain’s North American colonies. Chagrined by an imperial policy that forced colonies like Vancouver Island to be “entirely self-supporting” and thus dependent on their “own exertions,” he suggested in 1861 that the colonies “cultivate a nationality of their own.” Such a nation would emerge from a federation of all British colonies in North America, a goal which he had already defined clearly in the *Colonist*’s first editorial and which would earn him the title “father of British Columbia’s entry into confederation.”

In the years that followed he supported the construction of an intercolonial railway and the aims of the British North American Association, backed by Joseph Howe. Underlying De Cosmos’s political agenda was the goal of cheaper government

and a stronger economy. From this policy emerged two of the great causes of his career: the union of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and British Columbia's entry into confederation. The final stage in British North America's political evolution was to be the creation of an independent state represented in the imperial parliament.

For De Cosmos, the "manhood" and "self-respect" of British North Americans revolted at the very idea of remaining the political inferiors of England. In the confederation debates of March 1870 in the British Columbia legislature, and then in a June editorial of the *Victoria Daily Standard* (a paper he had founded that year and edited until 1872), he claimed the only alternative to federal union was the "separation of Canada from England, and the making of the former into another sovereign and independent American nationality." "I was born a British colonist, but do not wish to die a tadpole British colonist," he stated emphatically to the House of Commons in April 1882; "I do not wish to die without having the rights, privileges and immunities of the citizen of a nation." He specified that, although immediate independence would be premature, Canada should be able to control its own foreign relations. The suggestion that Canada might have to separate from Britain to gain full nationhood contributed to his defeat in that year's federal election.

Coexisting with De Cosmos's nationalism was an intense localism, based on the conception of "nation" as a collection of regional communities. Thus, as the *Victoria Daily Times* noted in its obituary, from his earliest days as a journalist and throughout his political career he identified closely with the interests of Victoria, his "adopted city," whose battles he fought "through

thick and thin, in his papers and in the legislature and house of commons.”

For example, during the confederation debates he argued for favourable terms, such as a protective tariff, to ensure Victoria’s place as “the chief commercial city of British Columbia, with all other parts of the Colony tributary to her. This is what Confederation on proper terms will do for us.” The two commitments were compatible because De Cosmos envisioned a highly decentralized country in which, he noted in his tadpole British colonist speech, each Province should be an independent State.

During his political career, which began slowly, De Cosmos would serve as elected representative for Victoria or the surrounding area in the Vancouver Island House of Assembly (1863–66), the British Columbia Legislative Council (1867–68 and 1870–71), the British Columbia Legislative Assembly (1871–74), and the House of Commons (1871–82). Although he would play important roles in the era after confederation, including tenure of slightly more than a year as the second premier of the province (1872–74), De Cosmos made his largest contribution during the colonial period.

He ran the first time in the general election of 1860 for the second Vancouver Island assembly but was defeated by George Hunter Cary. He stood again in a by-election, where his adopted name became an issue and he was forced to run as “William Alexander Smith commonly known as Amor de Cosmos.” The failure of one voter to recite this formula correctly resulted in his defeat. His agenda for reform having been clearly outlined

during five years of “strong and vigorous” writing in the *Colonist*, he finally embarked upon the second phase of his public career with a victory in the general election of July 1863. During the three-year term of the third assembly he sat as one of four members for Victoria City.

The leading political questions faced by the assembly at the time – union with the neighbouring colony of British Columbia and retrenchment in colonial expenditures - stemmed from the decline of the mainland gold-rushes. In spite of fresh flurries of excitement, including one in 1864 at Leech River on southern Vancouver Island, no discovery occurred comparable to the 1862 Cariboo rush. De Cosmos was a principal advocate of union with British Columbia and was prepared to give up Victoria’s free port status to achieve it. This position brought him into conflict with the commercial leaders on Wharf Street.

By January 1865 the assembly, under De Cosmos’s leadership, had passed resolutions pledging that the house would ratify union with the mainland colony “under such constitution as Her Majesty’s Government may be pleased to grant” and calling for “the strictest economy . . . compatible with the efficiency of the public service.” To test public support for these resolutions De Cosmos and Charles Bedford Young, an opponent of the resolutions, resigned. In the subsequent by-election in February 1865, De Cosmos was re-elected and Young was defeated by De Cosmos’s running mate, Leonard McClure, the new editor of the *Colonist*.

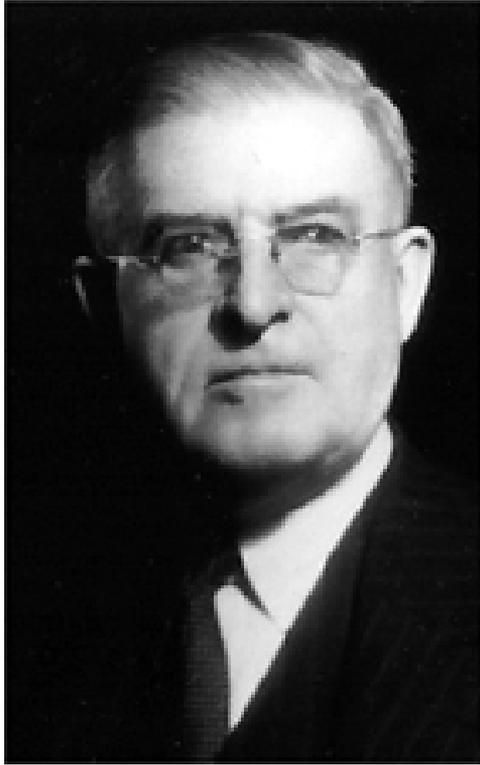
Until the expiry of its term in September 1866, the assembly was at an impasse with the governor and the Legislative

Council over colonial expenditures. Assemblymen tried and failed to reduce the civil list to save money for development, but Governor Arthur Edward Kennedy refused to pare down his establishment of officials. The rancorous relations between the governor and the assembly were reflected in the constitution adopted at the union of Vancouver Island and British Columbia that November.

When the first session of the Legislative Council for the new colony opened in early 1867, De Cosmos was there as a “popular” member representing Victoria. Popular members were appointed by the governor after a vote in the area to be represented. No governor failed to appoint the person thus chosen. He introduced a motion asking Governor Frederick Seymour to take steps to have British Columbia included “on fair and equitable terms” in the confederation then pending in eastern British North America. The council passed the motion unanimously and Seymour telegraphed the request to the Colonial Office. After the session ended, De Cosmos travelled the provinces of Canada seeking allies among Canadian politicians for his fight.

De Cosmos funeral in 1897 was sparsely attended but he left a lasting legacy that is hidden mostly under a coat of secrecy, much of which he perpetrated himself.

Some information on De Cosmos is courtesy of the Library and Archives Canada.



William Ashbury Buchanan
newspaper publisher and famed
senator

Chapter Four

Early Prairie Papers Prosper

In August 1883, Thomas Braden, a school teacher and, Andrew Armour, his friend a printer put out the *Calgary Herald Mining and Ranch Advocate* from a tent. The small weekly four page paper was financed by a five-hundred dollar interest-free loan from a Toronto milliner, Miss Frances Ann Chandler. It started with only 150 copies and its four pages were run off on a hand press that arrived just eleven days earlier on the first train into Calgary. A subscription for that first year cost three dollars. According to Diane Howard in the Encyclopedia of the Great Plains, "at that time, Braden and Armour found that westerners wanted more updated information about the growing Riel Rebellion in the Northwest Territories."

One year later, the Calgary Herald went daily. To meet demand, a new press was purchased that could print up to four hundred papers an hour, if a strong man was turning the crank. The paper was still experiencing growing pains and financial uncertainty in 1894, when J. J. Young took over the paper, saving it from near bankruptcy. During those early years, the newspaper

was improvised with updated news provided by bulletins from passengers on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The business name was changed to *Herald Publishing Company Limited* and began publishing as the *Calgary Daily Herald* on July 1885. The editor of the *Herald* in 1897 was impressed by the "humor and witty journalistic prose" of Bob Edwards one of Canada's leading journalists at the time. Edwards had a reputation as critic of government and society and as a "supporter of the emancipation of women and the temperance crusade" so the *Herald* editor reprinted some of Edwards' articles.

From February 1890 to August 1893 and December 1894 to September 1895, the weekly paper appeared as the Wednesday issue of the daily paper. Publication of the daily paper was suspended between September 1893 and December 1894 and it was not until fall of 1893 that the paper was published seven days a week. The *Calgary Daily Herald's* name was changed to the *Calgary Herald* in February 1939, and continued to be published as an afternoon paper until April 1985 when it switched to a morning newspaper.

The Southam Company purchased a majority interest in the *Calgary Herald* in its early years and then sold it off in 1996 to the Hollinger Corporation controlled by Conrad Black. In July 2000, CanWest Global made Canadian media history with its \$3.5 billion purchase of Hollinger's newspaper and internet assets, acquiring 136 daily and weekly newspapers, which included the *Calgary Herald*. By 2003, Southam was now fully absorbed into CanWest Global Communications. In 2003, Izzy Asper had now built "CanWest Global into a profitable media powerhouse with

annual revenues in excess of two billion and net earnings of ninety million. Canwest entered bankruptcy protection in late 2009, and announced in July 2010 that its newspaper subsidiary had successfully emerged from creditor protection with new owners Postmedia.

In 2011 the Calgary Herald newsroom was remodeled to enable teams to work on *Herald's* websites, social media platforms such as Twitter and advertising revenue migrated from printed to digital media. Frank Swanson was Calgary Herald publisher from 1962 to 1982, when he retired after 44 years in journalism. During World War II, as war correspondent, he covered the Nuremberg war crimes trials. He worked for the Southam Newspapers group for the *Edmonton Journal* and *The Citizen* in Ottawa.

J. Patrick O'Callaghan (1925 – 1996), "an outspoken advocate of a free and vocal press" and publisher of *The Windsor Star*, *The Ottawa Citizen*, *Edmonton Journal*, was publisher of the *Calgary Herald* from 1982 to 1989. Kevin Peterson, joined the *Calgary Herald* in 1969, first as a political reporter for the following six years, then a series of editorial positions and finally as publisher from 1989 to 1995. Ken King, then-publisher of *The Calgary Sun* with an advertising background, became publisher of the *Calgary Herald* in February 1996. By the time he left the newspaper business King had served for thirty years including senior executive positions with several of Canada's leading newspapers, as president and publisher of the *Calgary Sun* and *Calgary Herald*. A few months after King's appointment as publisher, Conrad Black acquired the Southam newspaper chain and the *Calgary Herald*. Malcolm Kirk was appointed the Herald's

publisher in August, 2006. In August 2010, Paul Godfrey President and CEO of Postmedia Network announced the appointment of Guy Huntingford as publisher of the *Calgary Herald* as it "continues its transformation into an integrated multimedia brand."

In April 2013 Godfrey announced that he was eliminating the publisher position at its chain of ten newspapers including the *Calgary Herald* in a cost-cutting measure. Postmedia, backed by a New York hedge fund, has many of Canada's largest daily newspapers including the *Herald*, *Vancouver Sun*, *the Post* and *Ottawa Citizen*.

Up in Edmonton, a new upstart newspaper named the *Journal* was founded in 1903 by three local businessmen, John Macpherson, Arthur Moore and J.W. Cunningham as a rival to Alberta's first newspaper, the twenty-three year-old *Edmonton Bulletin*. Within a week, the *Journal* took over another newspaper, *The Edmonton Post*, and established an editorial policy supporting the Conservative party against the *Bulletin's* pro-Liberal stance. In 1912, the *Journal* was sold to the Southam family. It remained under Southam ownership until 1996, when it was acquired by Hollinger International. The *Journal* was subsequently sold to Canwest in 2000, and finally came under its current ownership, Postmedia Network Inc.

In 1937, the *Journal* came into conflict with Alberta Premier William Aberhart's attempt to pass the *Accurate News and Information Act* requiring newspapers to print government rebuttals to stories the provincial cabinet deemed "inaccurate." After successfully fighting the law, the *Journal* became the first

non-American newspaper to be honoured by the Pulitzer Prize committee, receiving a special bronze plaque in 1938 for defending the freedom of the press. After the *Bulletin* folded in 1951, the *Journal* was left as Edmonton's oldest and only remaining daily newspaper. This monopoly continued until *The Edmonton Sun* began publishing in 1978.

The first issue of the forerunner to the *Medicine Hat News*, the *Times*, was run off a tiny hand press on October 29, 1885. It's not conclusive, but there are a number of people who are pretty sure that a boxcar embedded in a building at 525 North Railway St. is the site of the first building. Thanks to the entrepreneurial spirit of Thomas Braden and printer Andrew Armour (of the Calgary Herald fame) Medicine Hat was now home to its very own newspaper. The paper was a community booster and the voice for southeastern Alberta. In 1896, the then *Medicine Hat Weekly News* set up shop in a building adjacent to the former American Hotel on South Railway Street and later moved to a two-storey building at the corner of Second and Sixth downtown in 1914. In 1958, operations move into the adjacent Empress Theatre. In 1981, the *News* offices and printing plant moved to Dunmore Road, where it continues to operate today.

Until 1997, the *News* was an "afternoon" paper, but switched to a morning publication. The front page of the inaugural morning edition, on May 5, 1997, featured a story exposing unprecedented tampering by Bre-X Minerals at its gold mine in Indonesia. Two more ownership changes occurred since 2000. In 2002, the *News* was sold by Thomson to the Alberta Newspaper Group.

On November 8, 1905, Fred E. Simpson and A.S. Bennett, both from Cranbrook, British Columbia, published the first issue of the *Lethbridge Weekly Herald* in a building on what is now Fifth Street South. Shortly after the launch of the *Weekly Herald*, William Ashbury Buchanan bought a half interest in the paper, and by the end of 1906 was its sole owner. Buchanan came from a newspaper career in Ontario and managed a staff of six and circulation of 300 within the first year. On 11 December 1907, he had introduced a daily paper titled the *Lethbridge Daily Herald*. The weekly continued as a separate paper until 1950.

Buchanan, like Bennett and Simpson before him, used the *Herald* to trumpet his belief in Lethbridge's potential as a commercial centre. In 1925, at the age of forty-nine, he was named to the Canadian Senate, and remained both senator and publisher for the next twenty-nine years, dividing his time between Ottawa and Lethbridge.

Through the 1930s, all employees at the *Lethbridge Herald* took a pay cut of equal percentage. One year, the profits of the *Herald* amounted to only \$138. In 1909, Buchanan had moved the paper to a location near Sixth Street and Third Avenue South. On May 23rd 1952, Buchanan moved the *Lethbridge Daily Herald* to its current location on Seventh Street South, a location that had double the amount of floor space as the previous building. Buchanan died in 1954, and his son Hugh Buchanan, took over as owner of the paper.

Hugh Buchanan remained owner until he sold the paper in 1959 to F.P. Publications. In 1980, Thomson Newspapers bought F.P. Publications and in September 2000 sold the *Herald* to

Horizon Publications Inc. During Thomson's ownership, the *Herald* was paired with the *Medicine Hat News*, the *Taber Time*, *Lethbridge Sun Times* and a chain of weeklies in nearby suburban and rural communities. When Horizon purchased these titles in 2000, they were called the Southern Alberta Newspapers. Horizon owner David Radler reorganized them as Alta Newspaper Group Limited Partnership in 2006, when Glacier Media took an ownership stake (now fifty-nine percent) in them.

Published by the Alta Newspaper Group, the *Taber Times*, which was originally founded in 1907, came under control of Arthur Avery in 1927. For the next forty years Avery acted as both publisher and editor.

Saskatchewan Papers; Edgar Dewdney, Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, decided to name a vacant and featureless area of Saskatchewan, Pile-O-Bones. The site was renamed Regina by Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, wife of the then Governor General of Canada. Around the same time a group of prominent citizens approached lawyer Nicholas Flood Davin soon after his arrival in Regina and urged him to set up a newspaper. Davin accepted their offer and their five thousand dollars in seed money.

The *Regina Leader* printed its first edition on March first, 1883. Published weekly by the mercurial Davin, it almost immediately achieved national prominence during the North-West Rebellion and the subsequent trial of Louis Riel. Davin had immediate access to the developing story, and his scoops were picked up by the national press, briefly bringing the *Leader* to national prominence.

Davin's greatest coup was sending his reporter McFadyen Maclean to conduct a jailhouse interview with Riel. Maclean obtained this by masquerading as a francophone Catholic cleric and interviewing Riel in French under the nose of uncomprehending Anglophone watch-house guards.

Having begun with a small wooden shack before Regina had full streets, or electricity and plumbing outside Government House, *The Leader* soon moved to a substantial office building on the southwest corner of Hamilton Street and 11th Avenue, one block east of what was then the post office, southwest across street from City Hall. It then moved to a multi-story building across Hamilton Street to the south of the Simpson's department store. It ultimately relocated in the 1960s to east-city outskirts on Park Street at Victoria Avenue, where it still remains. The third Leader-Post building, Hamilton Street west of the Simpson's store

The Leader merged in 1920 with another paper, the *Regina Evening Post*, itself in a building on Twelfth Avenue at Rose Street before the merger, and continued to publish daily editions of both before consolidating them under the title *The Leader-Post* in 1930. Newspapers were a thriving industry in the days through television's arrival in the 1950s until the Internet in the 1990s began to change people's gathering of news, compounded by the merger of local companies into ownership of local companies by national multi-corporation organizations. Other titles absorbed by the *Leader-Post* included the *Regina Daily Star* and *The Province*.

A little north, another newspaper was struggling for its life. The *StarPhoenix* was first published as *The Saskatoon Phoenix* on October 17, 1902 (following a short-lived attempt at a local

newspaper called the *Saskatoon Sentinel*). In 1909, it became a daily paper and, in 1910, was renamed the *Saskatoon Capital*. The paper was sold and bought several times between its inception and the 1920s, at one point being owned by W. F. Herman, the future owner and publisher of *The Windsor Star*. By 1927, there were two daily papers in Saskatoon, the *Saskatoon Daily Star* and the *Daily Phoenix*.

In January 1928, both papers were bought by the Sifton family of Winnipeg and amalgamated into the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*. In the early 1980s the spelling of the newspaper name was modified to *StarPhoenix*. Between the 1928 amalgamation and the launch of the Saskatoon edition of *Metro* in April 2012, the *StarPhoenix* was the city's only daily newspaper. Local news coverage suffered (according to some readers) late in 1995 when the paper and its sister newspaper the *StarPhoenix* were acquired from their owner, the Markham, Ontario-based Armadale group, by Hollinger Inc., a company then headed by then Canadian media baron Conrad Black. In 1996, the *StarPhoenix* was bought by the Hollinger newspaper chain where it was subsequently sold to CanWest Global Communications in 2000 and became part of the Southam Newspapers division called Can West and then to Post Media News Inc.

Some information comes from Wikipedia, company web-sites and on-line sources



R.T. Lowery was small in stature but stood tall in the newspaper industry

Chapter Five

Money was Hard to Come By

At the turn of the century newspapers and their publishers had many prejudices and warts. They were politically aligned plus they were often very cash poor, at least the small town publishers were. To give one a real look and feel of this period of time (late 1880's to early 1900's), this chapter uses many paragraphs that were taken directly from the Boundary Creek Times newspaper in Greenwood, British Columbia and focuses on two prominent publishers of the day, Duncan Ross and R.T. Lowery.

In the fall of 1897, Midway had the *Advance*, Anaconda had the *Standard* and Greenwood, who many were calling the next Winnipeg, had the *Boundary Creek Times*. On October 9th, the *Boundary Creek Times*, featured on their masthead, Duncan Ross as the new editor with W.J. Harder continuing on as manager, although an editorial in the paper four months earlier, on May 22, welcomed Ross from the Victoria Times newspaper and announced he had purchased an interest in the Greenwood paper.

For the next ten years, editor (publisher) Ross would control the *Times* newspaper with his pro council, pro mining and pro Greenwood views. Ross was also the Chief Ranger of the

Boundary I.O.F. and a Boundary delegate of the local Liberal Association, two projects he also promoted strongly in his newspaper.

Duncan Ross, through his paper, ran an editorial employing the provincial government to take the hospital over and run it as a public institute rather than a private enterprise, as had been the case up until now. Mismanagement and incompetency by council was also brought up in print by Ross over the mess made of Copper and Government streets that had a large force of men trying to fix them up but not to the likes of Ross.

Fishing was still going strong, with Duncan Ross and a party of eight others, taking a six day trip to Rock Creek to try their luck where the Kettle River and Rock Creek came together. They took fifty pounds of oatmeal and ten pounds of bacon as part of their provisions. Other forms of down time included renting a horse and cart from the Palace Livery Stable in Greenwood for a leisurely drive into Midway on Sundays. In September the *Boundary Creek* newspaper turned two years old by publishing its 104th issue and bragging about going daily come December.

The politicians (council) of Greenwood discussed and then posted a racist (although to be fair, politicians everywhere in B.C. echoed this sentiment) by-law that stated, “for prohibiting or regulating the construction and use of buildings for laundries and for the removal of said laundries from any particular locality, when in the opinion of the council, such as laundries is a nuisance or eyesore to such locality.” *The Weekly Times* newspaper (as they were now calling themselves) through their prominent editor, said

“Such a by-law should be passed and no (Chinese) laundry should be allowed to pollute.....”

Duncan Ross further showed his venom and hatred for the Chinese when he stated in his July 25th editorial “....man claims that Chinamen are detrimental to the best interest of the country... Chinese are objectionable and detrimental...strongly advised boycotting any businessman who would sell goods to a Chinaman.” In the same issue yet another shot across the bow of the hard working Orientals took place when a further story said, “after August 1st there will be no excuse for patronizing Chinese laundries in the city as Snodgrass and Son’s big steam laundry will be in operation.” In the August 15th *Times* paper, Snodgrass and Son’s advertisement for their new laundry took racism to an all new level when they stated in bold letters, “The Chinese Must Go.”

The Chinese situation was still a bone of contention among some Greenwoodians, especially with Duncan Ross, who was using his newspaper as a pulpit to preach his anti-oriental views on his readers. In one story he said, ‘the residents of Greenwood are not sufficiently hoggish....the injury done to the town (Greenwood) by a Timothy Eaton Chinaman is greater than those who bank their money in Shanghai rather than Greenwood.’”

On December 6th in an open letter to his readers Ross announces his attention to run for Mayor in the up-coming civic election. He said, “I am opposed to the employment of Chinese and the encouragement of Chinese immigration....their employment in the city (Greenwood) should be restricted.....I (Ross) will expect a sufficient sum (money) to properly represent the city (if elected) without loss to myself.”

Yet another newspaper war of words was in the offing led by Duncan Ross, who now had another newspaper in his gun sights. The paper in question was his competition, the *Greenwood Miner* who brought in from Phoenix former Miner editor, Thos Hardy to tell council, and in particular Mr. Ross how to run Greenwood's affairs. This upset Ross who at this time was experiencing financial problems and in his July fourth issue asked the two hundred subscribers to renew their newspaper subscriptions because, "we need the money".

Intrepid editor Mr. Ross was at it again when in an August 28th issue of the *Times* paper he reported that a nineteen inch cucumber was grown in a Greenwood garden. Duncan Ross then decided to chastise his readers by saying "the public should remember that all fruits and vegetables picked by Chinamen are picked in the evening and do not compare to the Ferguson garden (home of the giant cucumber) that are cool, clean and fresh." In yet another story Ross's headline read, "A Chink with a jag". The story referred to a knife fight between two groups of Chinese, one of the groups led by the notorious Ah Me.

In October and November, the *Boundary Creek Times* newspaper was full of stories about editor Duncan Ross and his battle for a seat in the House of Commons. Not surprisingly Ross won his riding and was now part of Wilfred Laurier Liberal government. He (Ross) was now the most prominent person in Greenwood, more powerful than Robert Wood (founder and Mayor of Greenwood) himself. In December Ross said of Greenwood, "it is in a better position financially than any other town in British Columbia. There is no current indebtedness and there is a good surplus available".

The May 26th issue of the *Times* came out in its enlarged format and in the editorial of said issue; Duncan Ross laments about the extra costs of such a move and chastises half of the Greenwood merchants for not advertising in the paper. Things were a touch rocky at the Boundary Creek Printing and Publishing Company. Arthur Wheeler, who was filling in for Ross while he was out east in Ottawa taking care of constituents business, resigned to work at a Victoria daily newspaper. The *Times* was having trouble keeping employees and Ross himself said how hard it was to be a Member of Parliament, located three thousand miles away and running a newspaper, “it is a double boomerang” he stated”. Ross continued that he did not have enough money to hire a full time editor and called his newspaper, “a rudderless ship”.

During this period Ross was still hammering away in print at non-whites and many of his rants were taking on a decidedly negative tone. A clue into how he was probably overworked and experiencing financial difficulties comes in a June ninth quote, “Greenwood will celebrate Dominion Day in 1902, the intermediate period will allow sufficient time for the resident corpses to be directly buried”. The first mention of the infamous newspaper publisher, Colonel R.T. Lowery appeared in a summer issue of Ross’ *Times* newspaper. It appears Lowery sniffed out that Ross was over extended and floated a story that he might bring a second publication into Greenwood. To which Ross answered in print, “Don’t! No reasonable excuse can be offered for the publication of such a journalistic freak”.

On a positive note for Ross, a large banquet was held at the Imperial Hotel in Greenwood, upon his return as Member of Parliament in Ottawa. Politicians from Midway, Phoenix and

Greenwood were in attendance as were most of the prominent Mine managers and business people of the Boundary, who came to salute the beleaguered newspaperman come Liberal politician.

During the summer of 1905, the *Phoenix Pioneer* was the prominent newspaper in the Boundary area, not the *Times*. The *Pioneer* had lots of Greenwood ads (more than the home-town *Times*) and reported on bulls roaming the city and scaring the town's folk. *The Pioneer* also reported two terrible events that summer; 'His Life Was Crushed Out' stated a headline in the *Pioneer* paper on the death of James McGregor at the Granby Mine who was killed by falling rock. Also, a C.P.R. train loaded with ore left the tracks near Phoenix and turned the cars into kindling wood with over \$50,000 damage.

Effective January nineteenth a change took place at the Boundary Creek Times Printing and Publishing Company when a Mr. H.O. Lamb, previously of Winnipeg, took over the helm as the newspaper's editor and managing editor. Duncan Ross and his parliamentary duties had kept Ross from doing his daily newspaper job and this caused Greenwood's finest citizen to bring in help, although Ross now had the handle of President added to his paper's masthead. Lamb learnt his trade in southern Ontario and shortly after moving to Greenwood became the secretary of the reorganized Board of Trade.

In a May issue of the *Boundary Creek Times*, this story appeared. "We bid welcome to the new Greenwood paper, *the Ledge*, the first issue which appeared Thursday (yesterday). James W. Grier formerly of the *Times* is the manager and editor. The starting of a second paper in Greenwood may be taken as evidence of the growing prosperity and importance of the City.

The *Times* believes it better to be located in another town that is large enough for two papers than in one that has barely enough business to keep one going.”

The first issue of the *Ledge* looked similar to the *Times*, lots of mining news with both papers not as good, quality wise, as the *Phoenix Pioneer* up the hill. The *Ledge* said, of the *Pioneer* owner (T. Alfred Love) that he was the only wealthy publisher in Southern British Columbia. The Greenwood *Ledge* did however print in their first issue, that due to the rush to get everything set up and the newspaper out one day ahead of the *Times*, the quality and reporting had indeed suffered. The second issue was not much better and was low on ads.

James W. Grier, the *Ledge* owner, likely saw an opportunity to add another newspaper in Greenwood as Duncan Ross was not able to give full time attention to his *Boundary Creek Times*. Less than a year later, a flamboyant interior newspaper publisher named R.T. Lowery (who was already connected to the *Ledge*) would scoop in and like the opportunist some said he was, take over the *Ledge*, lock, stock and barrel. In 1911, Lowery would acquire the *Boundary Creek Times* and roll both of his publications into one, the *Greenwood Ledge*. Many decades would pass before the *Times* newspaper would re-invent itself and once again be the official (and only) paper of Greenwood.

The *Times* newspaper celebrated their tenth year in business with the publication of their September seventh issue. In the September 27th issue, the *Ledge* paper ran a front page story that lambasted Duncan Ross and his *Times* newspaper. The article said that Ross was not protecting the farmers up Sidley Mountain as he and his Liberal government were allowing the V.V. & E

railway to enter American territory. The rail line they (Ross and his paper) pontificated should be located totally in Canada. The *Ledge* paper leaned Conservative and the *Times* newspaper was used as a Liberal propaganda machine. Each of Greenwood's two newspapers hated each other and constantly used their pages to put the other down. In that same issue, the *Ledge* gloated about the formation of a new Midway Conservative organization that had fifty people attend the very first meeting. The year 1907 starts off with a new war of words between the two newspapers in Greenwood, with both papers supporting different provincial parties in the upcoming provincial election. The hatred between these two enemy camps would continue to grow over the next twelve months, much to the amusement of both of the papers' readers.

Naden, Mayor of Greenwood successfully obtains the Liberal provincial nomination with E.G. Warren, also of Greenwood collecting the Conservative nod. The *Times* paper naturally predicted a large win for Naden and said the McBride, Conservative government was destined to defeat. The *Ledge* was not going to be pushed aside, especially with the verbose R.T. Lowery now in charge, and running the *Ledge*. They printed, "Duncan Ross just came back from Ottawa and the south-end saloons in Greenwood reported a phenomenal increase in business Ross was not a prophet (he said the Conservatives would lose) but a legislator." Ross it seems was a big drinker of alcohol, which was the norm of most newspaper people at the time, including Lowery himself. This love of booze by the print media would continue well into the next century.

R. T. Lowery. Although was tiny in stature was a giant among small town newspaper publishers in the mining

communities of British Columbia's interior. According to R. J. Welwood, "Robert Thornton Lowery, was a newspaper publisher, editor, and printer; born April twelve 1859 in Halton County, Upper Canada and remained unmarried until his death on the twentieth of May 1921 in Grand Forks, B.C".

Following an education in private and public schools, Bob Lowery began working for a Toronto printing office in 1876. His first newspaper venture in Petrolea Ontario began on March twentieth 1879, when with his brothers William M. and Samuel M., he published the *Petrolea Topic*. The brothers also dealt in books and stationery. Although they sold the paper around 1886, they continued the stationery business for another year. Bob then drifted westward, first to Sault Ste. Marie, where he stayed for several years, and, in 1891, to British Columbia.

On 12 May 1893 Lowery launched his first British Columbia newspaper, the *Kaslo Claim*. The untimely collapse of silver prices in the United States placed a severe strain on the Kootenay mining industry and this, in turn, forced him to cease publication in just over three months. The front page of the last issue, bordered in black, featured a tombstone to the memory of the *Claim*. Lowery also identified merchants with overdue accounts by displaying their advertisements upside down (unpaid) or sideways (partially paid).

The lifespan of a weekly newspaper in a mining community was often short, so in the years that followed Lowery moved frequently. Often owning more than one paper at a time, he hired editors and managers for those that he did not personally supervise. He also printed newspapers owned by others. In Kaslo, Nakusp, New Denver, Sandon, Rossland, Slocan,

Vancouver, Nelson, Poplar Creek, Fernie, Greenwood, and Princeton, his controversial newspapers championed various causes, such as improved working conditions and better wages for miners, with wry wit and acid humour. Like Calgary journalist Robert Chambers Edwards, he was often critical of commercial, political, or religious bureaucrats and their organizations. Of the Canadian Pacific Railway he once wrote that it was “a wonderfully safe road to travel on and seldom kills a passenger, although occasionally someone dies of heart failure after looking at their freight charges.”

Constantly reminding readers to honour their subscriptions, Lowery claimed that “one of the noblest works of God is the man who always pays the Printer.” A cartoon that appeared almost weekly in the *Ledge*, published in New Denver, Nelson, and Fernie between 1900 and 1905, shows an unconcerned Lowery sitting at his desk with money scattered on the floor. But the weapons on the wall and his bulldog ripping the arm off a delinquent subscriber suggest another attitude. As a last resort, Lowery would play a game of poker to raise enough capital to pay his expenses. His enjoyment of whiskey and poker, combined with his smart dress and military bearing, may have been responsible for his being given the title Colonel.

After the collapse of *Lowery's Claim*, he focused on the *Ledge*, then being printed in Greenwood. He remained there until admitted to the Grand Forks hospital, where he stayed for over a year. His dying wish was to be buried in Nelson, by members of the Kootenay Pioneers' Association. He succumbed to chronic nephritis and was buried in an unmarked grave in the Anglican section of Nelson Memorial Park Cemetery. Only a fraction over five feet tall, Bob Lowery shadow loomed large over the

newspaper publishers of British Columbia for more than a quarter of a century.

In the Okanagan Commoner in June of 1921, Lowery's printer, Jim Grier wrote the following obituary: "For seven years, from 1897 to 1904, it was our good fortune to live in the Slocan and to be a co-worker with "Colonel" Lowery. We look back upon those days as a time never to be forgotten. It was in the boom days of the Silvery Slocan, the heyday of poker and blackjack, of wine and Scotch, and the strenuous life in the oldest profession on earth If "wine and women" meant sin and noise and frolic mean hell, then hell "broke loose" frequently in the Lowery days of the Silvery Slocan, and the Lord must have loved it for we had so much of it these were the days and atmosphere wherein Col. Lowery lived at peace with his fellows and the universe. His greatest trouble was in escaping from the wiles of the wealthy widow that ever pursued him, for he was a bachelor and had no children. In those days we printed at the Ledge office, New Denver, in addition to the Ledge itself an eight page seven-column newspaper, the inside pages of the *Lardeau Eagle*, then run by Johnny Langstaff, and the *Sandon Paystreak*. We also put out the monthly *Lowery's Claim*, a magazine which for a time created some noise, but was finally ruled out of the mails by puny post office officials more pious than prayerful."

Back in Greenwood the front page of the November 13th *Boundary Creek Times* in ninety-six point capital letters said it all, "YALE-CARIBOO GONE WRONG: Perversion Of Local Issues Results In Disaster For The Upper Country". The great Duncan Ross (in his mind) had the unthinkable happen to him; he lost his riding in the just completed Federal election. Ross finished second to the Conservative candidate Martin Burrell in every major town in the

riding except Phoenix. Especially hard to swallow for Ross, was finishing behind Burrell, in Ross's own home town of Greenwood.

Ross was bitter; he had predicted he would win by a landslide in his paper just the week before. One group of people Ross blamed was the Orientals who had voted against him in block. What Ross did not understand was that if you slander certain people, they will not be your friend, but rather will oppose you at every turn. Just a few weeks before, in an editorial in the Times paper, Ross said very racist things about the Chinese, Japanese and Hindus. Remember, it was Ross pulling the strings and writing these things, even if Ross's name was not on the editorial page as editor. Today, one would go to jail for such comments. The final words that Duncan Ross published about his defeat, said, "I would rather go down to defeat than win by any methods that would lose me the respect and confidence of those who have so loyally stood by me...I am as poor a man today, as the day I entered public life".

An editorial comment in the February fourth issue of the *Boundary Creek Times* could have been a harbinger of what would take place in just thirteen months due to a lack of advertising and money in the bank. They printed, "Those who owe small sums of money to this newspaper, either for subscription or job work are hereby requested to remit by post-office order or add exchange to their checks in the future".

For some reason, most likely lack of money, the *Times* newspaper did not publish between August 26th and October 7th. When the paper came back it was devoid of ads and local news. They even asked citizens who were leaving Greenwood to subscribe for two dollars and the paper would be sent to their

new town. The publication looked to be on its deathbed, which would indeed be the case in just a few months. The end finally came (at least for the next seventy two years) to the *Boundary Creek Times* newspaper and its publisher, The Boundary Creek Printing and Publishing Company Ltd. when the last issue of the newspaper was published on March third, 1911. The final curtain waxed poetically about Westbridge and its log hotel and the last ad on the last page was from the Greenwood Liquor Company.

The next issue of the *Ledge* on March ninth stated on the front page; “The Boundary Creek Times suspended publication last week and in the future will only live in memory. Duncan Ross has sold the plant, good-will etc. to the undersigned. All accounts due to the Times are to be paid. R. T. Lowery (owner of the Ledge newspaper)”.

Duncan Ross would try to get his old Federal Government seat back a few months later but would lose again. Ross would leave the area and head to Hazelton to contract building a tunnel for a railroad with two hundred men under him. He would go to his grave much too early, for on June thirty, 1915 at age forty-five, Ross was pronounced dead.

*Information for this chapter was taken from author Reed Turcotte's book,
"Greenwood, The Early Years of Canada's Smallest City"*



L.D. Taylor was a giant among newspaper publishers
in Western Canada

Chapter Six

Taylor was a Big Man in Vancouver

Doing business in Revelstoke, B.C., L.D. Taylor (L.D.) as he was then known, saw an advertisement in 1896 placed by a Victoria newspaperman, Hewitt Bostock, seeking a man to run a new daily paper, *The Vancouver Daily Province*. Bostock wanted to provide competition to the two daily papers already operating, the *World* and the *News-Advertiser* so he decided to start yet another paper.

L.D. came to Vancouver, but the publisher's job went to Walter Nichol. The first issue appeared March 26, 1898 and 1899 Taylor became the new paper's circulation manager. After seven years in that job, L.D. got restless and began looking for a bigger opportunity. It came with the news that the *World* was up for sale. The *World* was the leading evening paper in the city's early days. It had been founded in September 1888 by J.C. McLagan, who had previously launched the *Victoria Times*. McLagan had just died and his wife had been running the paper.

In June 1905 Taylor, with others, bought the *World*. Under L.D. the paper prospered big time. His timing was fortunate

because a real estate boom was sparking a general economic explosion in Vancouver and the paper got bigger and fatter. Around 1910, the *World* was able to boast that it carried the largest amount of display advertising of any daily newspaper in North America. It was a lively, aggressive paper and it made Taylor a big man in town.

In 1909 he ran for mayor and was elected, launching a unique political career in Vancouver that saw him run for the mayor's office again and again, and win and lose and win and lose over and over. He still holds the record for length of time in office.

About the time the *World* was bragging of its ad-fatness, L.D. made a fatal error. He knew the paper needed a new plant, but his decision about its size was to lead to disaster. He made it too big at seventeen storeys and 272 feet the World Building was the tallest in the British Empire and would reign as the tallest for the next two years. It had more than 84,000 square feet of floor space, immense for the time. There was another reason it attracted a lot of attention: In his 2004 biography of Taylor (titled *LD: Mayor Louis D. Taylor and the Rise of Vancouver*) Daniel Francis writes, "A row of nine semi-draped female figures, sculpted by Charles Marega, supports a cornice about halfway up the building; the bare breasts and sensuous poses scandalized the city's bluenoses."

In a reversal of his good fortune, in buying the *World* just before a real estate boom triggered general economic good times, Taylor now witnessed his building sitting largely empty because of an economic slump. A recession that began in 1913 dealt his company, along with many others, a serious blow. The *World* was

not alone in these bad times, between 1914 and 1922 some forty Canadian newspapers went under and ceased publishing. In 1915 it was Taylor's turn and he lost control of his newspaper and the building that housed it.

In 1924 the tower was sold to Bekins, a Seattle moving company who put a huge sign up on the roof and the Bekins Building now joined the Vancouver skyline. It held on to that name for nearly thirteen years until an event across the street changed its history. On March 22, 1937 the offices of *The Vancouver Sun* across Pender were destroyed by fire and the newspaper needed a new home and needed it now. The *Sun* newspaper then bought the tower on May 18, 1937 and moved in pronto. The building has been known as the Sun Tower ever since, even retaining the name when, in 1965, the paper moved out of the tower and up to 2250 Granville Street where it resided for many years.

Some parts of this chapter are courtesy of vancouverhistory.ca



Robert James Cromie, Vancouver Sun Publisher

Chapter Seven

Cromie made the ‘Sun’ Special

Robert James Cromie, publisher of the *Vancouver Sun* absorbed his newspaper's two main competitors, *The News-Advertiser* and the *Vancouver World* and consolidated the *Vancouver Sun* into one of the city's two leading dailies. The consolidation of the *Vancouver Sun* with *The News-Advertiser* and the *Vancouver World* is described by journalist Stephen Hume as follows:

“On September 1st 1917, with money borrowed from Clarence Brettun Blethen publisher of the *Seattle Daily Times*, Cromie bought out the *News-Advertiser*, founded in 1886. He absorbed its circulation and quickly appropriated its history, claiming that the takeover made the *Sun*, Vancouver’s oldest newspaper. Dropping the evening edition, he began publishing in the morning. The paper’s readership jumped from 10,000 to 17,000 and less than a year later its Sunday edition was selling more than 25,000 copies.

On 11 March 1924, for \$475,000, Cromie purchased the *Vancouver Daily World* from Charles Edwin Campbell, an entrepreneur who had owned it since 1921. Cromie later converted the *World* into the *Vancouver Evening Sun*, whose circulation reached 47,000 and topped 50,000 on Sundays in less than a decade. The almost fivefold increase in readership was a remarkable business turnaround, but it was not achieved without difficulty. When Cromie had trouble meeting a deadline to pay \$135,000 he still owed Campbell, his creditor threatened to seize the *Sun*".

According to newspaper historian Charles Tory Bruce, the irrepressible Cromie made "an emotional appeal" to Frederick Neal Southam, vice-president of Southam Limited, owner of the *Province* newspaper which was Cromie's last major competitor in the Vancouver market. Southam was sufficiently impressed by the brash young publisher's enthusiasm to advance the funds. Bruce relates that *The Province* subsequently held third-mortgage bonds on the *Sun* for several years. Early in January 1926, Cromie dropped the morning edition completely.

D.A. McGregor described Cromie's acquisition and consolidation of the *Sun* in 1946 as saying that "on September 1, 1917, the *Sun* took over the *News-Advertiser*, paying J. S. H. Matson only \$100,000 for it. At one stroke Cromie did two good pieces of business. He eliminated a rival, which, though not very aggressive at the time, might any day become assertive again and he added that rival's circulation to his own. The circulation of the *News-Advertiser* at the time was eight thousand, that claimed by the *Sun* was ten thousand."

In purchasing the *World*, Cromie apparently neglected to stipulate that Mr. Campbell should stay out of the Vancouver newspaper field so Campbell jumped back in. On June 2, 1924, he started publication of the *Evening Star*, invading the very portion of the field on which Cromie was pinning his greatest hopes.

The *Evening Star* was a six-day paper with a reduced news service, selling at one cent a copy on the street and at thirty cents a month delivered. The *Star*, its publisher announced, would cover the news of the world in condensed form. Its slogan would be, "If it will help make a greater Vancouver, the *Star* is for it."

In January, 1926, General Odlum and Cromie made a deal which stabilized the newspaper situation and had the effect of eliminating a lot of senseless and profitless competition. The *Evening Star* became the *Morning Star*, taking over the *Morning Sun's* circulation, while the *Sun* acquired the *Star's* evening circulation and withdrew from the morning field altogether. At the same time, the Sunday Sun, which was a relic of the Sunday morning edition of the old *News-Advertiser*, ceased publication as a Sunday newspaper, and became the Saturday edition of the *Evening Sun*.

The *Sun* under Cromie posed as the champion of British Columbia against what it called selfish eastern interests. Mr. Cromie knew nothing of the newspaper business when he took hold of the *Sun*, but he set himself to learn and he learned rapidly. He was a great reader and had an infinite curiosity. He liked to travel and talk to people and ask questions. He was fond of making experiments. He was never afraid of making mistakes or of getting his feet muddied. He was somewhat erratic at first, and had a procession of managing editors. But he learned something

from each and at last knew what he could do and what he wanted to do. He upset the somewhat comfortable traditions that had developed in Vancouver newspaper circles. The Sun under F. C. Wade had been aggressive enough politically. Under Cromie it adopted aggressive news policies and sales policies as well. It put up a strong fight for circulation and advertising. It posed as the champion of British Columbia against what it called selfish eastern interests and it took up the fight for more equitable freight rates, for better rail connection with the Interior.

Cromie had little interest in playing the game of party politics, but he had a deep and consistent interest in building up his newspaper, and no scruples about using politics and parties to do it. The *Vancouver Sun* under Cromie's ownership was described by Stuart Keate, publisher of the *Vancouver Sun* from 1964 until his retirement in 1978, as "the working-man's paper, at once raucous, rambunctious and dedicated to the proposition that the simple business of a newspaper was to raise hell." In his 1961 book *Vancouver: From Milltown to Metropolis* Alan Morley observed, *a propos* of Cromie in his capacity as publisher of the *Vancouver Sun*, "Eccentric, bold, ruthless, resourceful, he determined to identify the *Sun* with Vancouver and Vancouver with the Sun."

Cromie died suddenly on May 11, 1936 in Oak Bay, British Columbia. In an obituary for Cromie published in the *Winnipeg Evening Tribune* on May 12, 1936, British Columbia Premier Duff Pattullo was quoted as saying that, "British Columbia's loss also is great, for Mr. Cromie was an ardent advocate for greater Oriental trade, pointing out the vast potentialities in the Far East for products of this province."

The Hon. Ian Alistair Mackenzie, Minister of Defense, and member for the past fifteen years of the British Columbia legislature and of the House of Commons for Vancouver ridings was quoted as saying, "In my opinion, Robert Cromie did more for Vancouver and British Columbia in the last twenty years than any other single man. He had a vision of greatness for his home city and he worked tirelessly for its achievement."

Mayor Gerry McGeer of Vancouver, Liberal House Member for Vancouver-Burrard, said, "In the untimely passing of Bob Cromie, Vancouver has suffered a loss it can ill afford at this particular time. We, in Vancouver, have benefited greatly since the time "Bob" Cromie became one of the host of our citizens who love Vancouver almost more than life. Canadian journalism has lost a great leader. Vancouver has lost a great journalist and a great citizen. Vancouver mourns his passing in the knowledge that her problem of finding a man to take his place will not be an easy one to solve." Cromie's three sons, Donald, Samuel and Peter took over running the paper and in 1963 D.C. Cromie sold the newspaper to FP Publications.

According to a journalist who wrote a slightly negative piece in 2012 in *Dependent* magazine....It is common knowledge that the *Sun* began as a mouthpiece for the Liberal party. "Of course this was quite a different model of the press than we know now—back then it was called the party press," explains Marc Edge, author of *Pacific Press* and former Vancouver journalist. "Newspapers were started up by political parties to promote their candidates and platforms. Back then, the *Sun* was fond of printing lengthy excerpts of the party's meeting minutes, full-text political

speeches, and virtually anything that would discount the credibility of their conservative rival the *News-Advertiser*.

What is less comfortably discussed is how long this cozy political relationship lasted. The Sun was a Liberal Party organ, a fact they tried to keep secret during the '50s, their Liberal sympathies continued to last well into the 1970s. In its infancy, the *Sun* was used as a bargaining chip in a massive railway scandal. When the Pacific Great Eastern line went south and \$25 million in government bailouts “disappeared,” Scottish contractor and key railway player Colonel Jack Stewart bought the paper from its owners. Stewart thought the publication could help shape public opinion in his company's favour while he simultaneously picked the public's pockets”.

Stewart then hastily retreated back to Europe, temporarily leaving his share of the paper with a lowly office assistant by the name of Robert Cromie. Before Stewart had schooled him on the intricacies of the newspaper business in, Cromie was a bellhop at a Winnipeg hotel. Apparently when Stewart came back, Cromie didn't want to sign it back over, so he just kept it.

Some say Cromie found company stock in a trash-can and others claim the *Sun* was a gift in lieu of salary. Whatever the case, the province happened to be chasing Stewart with a \$6.9 million lawsuit at the time, a figure which was later cut down to \$1.1 million, thanks in part to Cromie's steadfast testimony. Thus, with no prior qualifications, and little knowledge of the newspaper industry, the Cromie family began a media empire in Vancouver which became second to none.

Robert Cromie was a bit of an eccentric, and he did like to travel and promote other countries, his travels took him to Joseph Stalin's Russia in 1933, where roughly six million people were dying of starvation due to forced collectivization. "I ask you to please don't worry any more about Russia," Cromie told his staff upon his return. "If Stalin and his group were such monsters, why did not the people turn on them? Why would they stand for it?"

In the '40s and '50s, stiff competition heated up between Vancouver's three major dailies. The *Province* was leading the pack in circulation, ahead of the *Sun* and the lagging *Herald*. All were slashing advertising rates and pushing editorial envelopes to stay in the game. Not pleased with this tiresome arrangement, Robert's son, Don Cromie arranged a fishing getaway with the general manager of Toronto's Southam Press, the 'absentee landlord' who owned the *Province*. With a handshake over sparkling Howe Sound waters in 1956, the two sealed a deal to buy out the *Herald* and begin a dubious (but legal) partnership known as *Pacific Press*.

Canada's Restrictive Trade Practices Commission was not happy with the monopoly. It was known as anti-combines legislation in Canada and there was an investigation where they found that this was an illegal combination. But while the investigation dragged on, the *Sun* and *Province* quietly consolidated operations anyway. Both papers were composed and pressed using the *Sun's* facilities. Cromie and his Southam counterpart argued vehemently that a partnership was financially necessary for the survival of both publications, conveniently forgetting about the *Herald* altogether. The businessmen expertly

danced around the legally binding word “merger,” claiming one or both papers would have folded otherwise.

Don Cromie now publisher (owner) of the *Sun* newspaper used to bring appetizers such as clams, oysters and liquor to the newsroom for Friday-night parties. When he died in 1993, *Sun* reporter Frances Bula called him “erratic, eccentric, brilliant, imaginative, interested in everything, aloof, warm, blessed with plenty of energy and a short attention span, a flashy dresser, never very financially successful and completely unpredictable.”

A special mention must go to Hal Straight who is best remembered as the managing editor of the Vancouver Sun in the early 1940s and again later in the 1950s. Although Straight was not a publisher of the Sun he was publisher of the North Shore Citizen from its beginnings in 1958 and through its hay day, until he sold his paper in 1974. Straight was a baseball player and a very prominent player in the Vancouver newspaper industry.

*Information on Cromie and the Vancouver Sun is partially sourced through
Wikipedia and Marc Edge*

Chapter Eight

Did the Golden Age peak in 1911?

Newspapers, first weeklies and later dailies, sprang up in Western Canada as white settlers and a few Chinese moved into what until then, was mostly native lands. Victoria's *British Colonist* began publishing in 1858, the *Manitoba Free Press* in 1872, the *Saskatchewan Herald* in 1878, and the Edmonton *Bulletin* in 1880. At the same time newspaper publishers in eastern Canada were redefining what newspapers could be.

A new aggressive type of publisher came forward in the 1870s led by the gregarious Hugh Graham of the Montreal Star, the so called voice of the working-class Orange Protestantism. He and others adapted the model of the American penny press and sold cheap newspapers with a strong partisan slant and an emphasis on local news of crime, scandal, and corruption.

Entertainment news became increasingly prominent, especially the comings and goings of celebrities. Sports in

particular gained much attention, as readers followed the wins and losses of their local teams and in other cities.

Special features were added that attracted women, including articles on recipes, grooming, and fashions. The new technology made printing cheaper and faster, and encouraged multiple editions that provided updated news throughout the day in the major cities. The *Montreal Star* by 1899, sold 52,600 copies a day, and by 1913 forty per-cent of its circulation was outside of Montreal. It was the dominate English-language newspaper.

In the late 1800s most Canadian newspapers were local affairs, designed primarily to inform local partisans about the provincial and national political scene. The publishers depended on loyal partisan subscribers, as well as contracts for public printing controlled by the political parties. Objectivity was not the goal, as the editors and reporters endeavored to reinforce the partisan attitudes on major public questions.

With the rise of national advertising agencies after 1900, a major transformation was underway with the advertisers wanting to reach the maximum possible circulation, regardless of partisanship. The result was a series of consolidations yielding much larger, largely nonpartisan newspapers, which depended more heavily on advertising revenue than on subscriptions from loyal party members. By 1900, three-fourths of the revenue of Toronto newspapers came from advertising. About two thirds of the newspapers' editorial pages loyally supported either the Conservative or the Liberal party, while the remainder, we're independent.

Across the board, the news pages increasingly featured more objectivity and bipartisanship, and the publishers were mostly focused on advertising revenues that were proportionate to overall circulation. A newspaper that appealed only to one party cut its potential audience in half. Simultaneously, the rapid growth of industry in Ontario and Quebec, coupled with the rapid settlement of the prairies, produced a large more affluent newspaper-reading population.

The result was a golden age for Canadian newspapers peaking about 1911, when papers and their publishers truly were king of all media. Shortly after, many papers failed during the first world-war era. Advertising agencies in 1915 gained a major advantage with the arrival of the Audit Bureau of Circulations, which for the first-time provided reliable data on circulation, as opposed to the partisan boasting and exaggeration that had been the norm. The agencies now had a stronger hand in bargaining for lower advertising rates. The 1920s became a time of consolidation, budget-cutting and dropping of traditional party affiliation.

By 1930 only twenty-four per cent of Canada's dailies were considered partisan, seventeen per cent were independent partisan, and the majority, fifty per cent, had become fully independent. In this era outside interests took over the chains and they became parts of large conglomerates. By 2004 the five largest chains controlled seventy-two percent of the papers, and seventy-nine percent of the circulation.

Weekly newspapers in Canada started to become a force in the communities they served, around the mid -1960s. A

movement of people from the farms and inner cities to the suburbs left a news void that weeklies quickly filled. Isobel-Patricia Lonergan in her thesis to the Faculty of Graduate and Post- Doctoral Affairs at Carleton University said, “These partnerships demonstrate what Jock Lauterer, teacher of community journalism at Penn State argues is the first law of community journalism, which is that there exists a fundamental and reciprocal relationship between the paper and its town.

A community newspaper cared about its community in a supportive, positive, nurturing way. The paper’s own birth, history, development, welfare and future were inextricably bound up in the history and future of its community.

Lauterer also claimed that community newspapers also act as adviser, booster, supporter, advocate and mirror to the community. It is incumbent upon the paper to be “accurate, unflinching yet benevolent”.

It is, perhaps, this emphasis on benevolence and nurturing that has historically seen community newspapers portrayed as the media industry’s poor cousins. While Lauterer appears to be extolling the virtues of community news as a means of connecting society at a most basic level – via reinforcement of community identity – he also appears to be advocating a model where weeklies become promoters for their community, presenting social, political and economic material with a positive spin that provides a skewed narrative. It is this very model others have found faulty.

Kenneth R. Byerly is credited with coining the term “community journalism”. He wrote in 1961 that community newspapers today are burgeoning in big city and suburban areas

and have new strength in small cities and towns. They offer much in employment, satisfaction, income, service, and ownership. A reason for the success of these ... newspapers is their “friendly neighbor” relationship with readers. This affinity also creates problems for community newspapers which differ from those of metropolitan press.

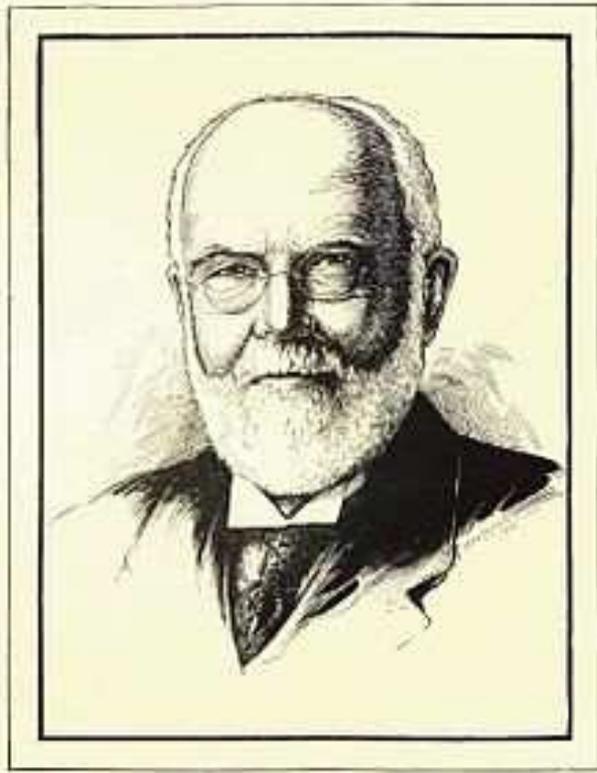
Critics of community journalism argue that it is this very idea of the friendly neighbour relationship that threatens the journalistic independence of community newspapers. It is argued that nearness to the community leads to “timidity and laziness” lest the journalist offend his or her neighbours with aggressive reporting of community conflicts. Labels such as “boosterism” (enthusiastic promotion of something) and “refrigerator journalism” (intensely personal content that affects only a few people, such as a team photo) often permeate discussions regarding community newspapers, where the community newspaper is described as a thinly veiled advertising medium with little news.

Bill Reader suggests the “persistent myth” that small-town journalism is substandard compared with larger papers is in part due to a scathing rebuke about the lazy country editor that media critic Ben Bagdikian wrote about in *Harper’s Magazine* in 1964. Perhaps in response to Byerly’s assertion in 1961 that “weeklies are the last stronghold of personal journalism in America”, Bagdikian described weeklies (and most small dailies) as the “backyard of the trade, repositories for any piece of journalistic junk tossed over the fence” where canned copy and “commercial pluggery” are often found on the pages of smaller circulation papers.

By the late 1980s daily newspapers were a diminished but still major part of the Canadian mass-media industry. Most newspapers belonged, individually or through chains, to conglomerate enterprises with large holdings in other media or businesses.”

Even Lauterer, who is considered an advocate of community journalism, levied strong criticism against the community press when, in 2006, he wrote: Many small- papers seem to attract and harbor the washed-up derelicts of our business; community papers at their worst become sort of a stale backwater for the flotsam and jetsam of journalism. This resulted in poor management, terrible writing and uninspired photography, a community paper that resembles the journalistic version of a zombie.

*Information on this chapter was obtained from sources that include
Wikipedia and I.P. Lonergan*



William Southam was the first Canadian media baron

Chapter Nine

A Century of Southam Newspapers

Southam's newspaper history spans well over a century and largely parallels the development of the paper industry in Canada. William Southam, a self-made man, left school in 1855 at age twelve and got his first job delivering papers for the London (Ontario) Free Press. In 1871 Southam, then thirty-three years old, bought a failing newspaper in Hamilton, Ontario, with partner William Carey. He paid \$4,000 for his part in the venture. Southam was off to a small start but already had his eye on the *Spectator*, a much larger venture.

During this time, newspapers survived largely on government patronage. The *Spectator* and *Journal of Commerce* had prospered due to favorable government advertising contracts secured from the Conservative administration, which lasted until 1873. But by 1877 the rival Liberals ruled and advertising and printing contracts slumped. Southam and Carey were betting on a Conservative victory in the upcoming elections, which would assure the fortunes of the *Spectator*.

After becoming half-owner of the *Spectator*, Southam made sure the newspaper backed the Conservative Party in the election. The gamble paid off as on September 17, 1878, the *Spectator's* presses ran late announcing the Conservative return to power. In 1881 Southam and Carey branched out by purchasing a printing firm in Toronto, the Mail Job Printing Co. They printed railroad timetables and folders and eventually got into theater programs, posters, and even shredded paper flakes for parades. The *Spectator* also expanded by beginning a book printing business. In 1896, after the Liberal government regained power, the owners of the *Ottawa Citizen*, another Conservative government paper, feared a slump in government advertising and printing contracts so they turned to Southam as a buyer and a second newspaper was added to the company's stable. Wilson Southam, the eldest son in the family, was pegged to run the *Citizen*. He was soon joined by Harry, the fourth eldest son. The Southam family's control over the company expanded further. In 1889, Southam's second son, Frederick Neal, was sent to Montreal to open a printing shop to serve the railway industry headquartered there. For a mere \$1500, Neal was able to buy two ticket presses and a cutting machine and hire seven staff members.

In 1904 the company was reorganized and renamed Southam Ltd. Its portfolio included ownership of the *Citizen*, half of the *Spectator*, printing plants and investments in steel making and other manufacturing concerns. Five years later, the Mail Job Printing Co. in Toronto was renamed Southam Press Ltd., and operations were moved to Duncan and Adelaide Streets in Toronto.

Seeking expansion by penetrating new markets, Southam acquired other newspapers. In 1908 Southam bought a controlling interest in the *Calgary Herald*, the *Mining and Ranch Advocate*, and the *General Advertiser*. Four years later, the *Edmonton Journal* was added to its portfolio. In the early part of the century, Brothers Wilson and Harry Southam got into trouble for encouraging critical coverage from the *Citizen's* reporters. The elder Southams hoped matters might repair themselves when the Conservative government of Robert Borden returned to power in 1911. But the Borden regime became so critical of the *Citizen's* coverage of its affairs that it threatened to open a rival newspaper in Ottawa.

Matters grew to a head in 1912 when founder William Southam canceled his own home subscription to the *Citizen* over its editorial trespasses. The company began a policy that grants newspaper editors independence from Southam's owners and because of the company's size, from local pressures. The newspaper chain would have in theory, no "Southam editorial line". Instead, each management would create one for their newspaper as they saw fit.

Despite these troubles, in 1920, Southam purchased the *Winnipeg Tribune* and was well on its way to becoming among Canada's largest newspaper and communication chains. The *Tribune* had grown out of the ashes of the former *Winnipeg Sun*. Two years later, the Southams, whose corporate vehicle was now called William Southam and Sons, pushed even further westward when they bought a controlling interest in the *Vancouver Province*. Not long after, the rival Vancouver daily, the *Sun* ran into financial trouble under owner Robert Cromie. He knew who

to turn to for help and Frederick Neal Southam offered a lifeboat. William Southam and Sons would assume a third mortgage on the *Sun*.

Frederick Neal Southam would serve as president of William Southam and Sons from 1928 to 1945. He took over from Wilson, who had served from 1918 out of Ottawa. After the First World War, company founder William Southam began gradually ceding control to his five sons. In the 1920s, Southam newspapers branched out into the emerging radio broadcast market. The first was the *Vancouver Province*, which broadcast on station CDED to crystal radio listeners beginning on March 13, 1922. Both the *Edmonton Journal* and the *Calgary Herald* went to the airwaves six weeks later, taking a 60 percent stake each in station CJCA and CFAC, respectively. In 1954, Southam would acquire a 20 percent stake in station CHCT-TV in Calgary. In 1924 the *Hamilton Spectator* traded advertising space in its newspaper for the right to operate its own radio station.

Three years later, Southam went through a thorough restructuring, changing its name to the Southam Publishing Company Ltd. The main aim of this move was to gather all outstanding shares Southam held, many reflecting minority stakes in regional newspapers and broadcasting concerns, and exchange them for shares and securities of the new company. The company also established offices in Montreal and Toronto in order to be able to sell advertising space throughout the newspaper chain. In addition, Southam sent reporters to bureaus in Ottawa, Washington, and London. Through this network, reporters could file stories for use in any of the Southam newspapers. So was born Southam News Services.

In 1945 union staff at the *Winnipeg Tribune* went on strike. Southam's head office refused to intervene, declaring the dispute a local matter. But the International Typographical Union, in solidarity with the striking Winnipeg staff, brought Southam papers in Hamilton, Ottawa, Edmonton, and Vancouver out on strike. The Vancouver strike turned bloody when printers attempted to cross the picket line and were beaten back. Trucks attempting to move newspapers from the printing plant were overturned and burned.

Earlier, in 1938, the company's name had been changed yet again to the Southam Company. Shares in the company were first issued to the public on the Toronto Stock Exchange in 1945. Three years later, Southam purchased all outstanding shares belonging to the *News of Medicine Hat*, in Alberta, for \$125,000. In 1955 the company took full control of the newspaper.

By the 1960s the company was branching out into other industries. In 1960 St. Clair Balfour, then president of Southam, concluded a deal to buy Hugh C. MacLean Publications Ltd. That led shortly to the formation of Southam-MacLean Publications Ltd. The business comprised business and professional trade magazines. Under Southam's stewardship, it began conducting trade shows, seminars, and market research and opened yet more trade publications. It also formed Video Surgery, which tapes medical operations and sells them to doctors and medical schools in North America for training and instruction.

In the next four years, Southam purchased up to twenty business publications of varying sizes, including fourteen journals bought as part of Age Publishing Co. Ltd. of Toronto for \$792,000.

By far the largest of these acquisitions was Southam-Maclean Publications' purchase of the *Financial Times of Canada* from E.C. Ertl estate in 1961. By 1965, Southam moved its head office from Montreal to Toronto, nearer Bay Street and that city's banking and financial core. Also in 1965, Southam formed Southstar Publishers Ltd., a joint venture with Toronto Star Ltd., to publish the *Canadian*, a weekly glossy magazine. The *Canadian* would eventually appear weekly in many Southam newspapers.

A year later, the company scooped up the North Bay Nugget after the employee-owned newspaper was put on the market. At the same time, Don Cromie, now owner of the *Vancouver Sun*, encountered financial problems of his own and turned once again to Southam for help. A handshake aboard a boat in the Vancouver harbor between Cromie and St. Clair Balfour (see Cromie chapter), who was then managing director of Southam solved matters. The *Province* would print a morning edition and the *Sun* would retain the afternoon slot. Both newspapers would be sold to a third company, Pacific Press Ltd., to be jointly owned by Southam and Sun Publishing. In December 1965, both Vancouver newspapers moved to a \$10 million plant on Granville Street in Vancouver. Two years earlier, Don Cromie had sold his stake in Sun Publishing to F.P. Publications.

Meanwhile, across the country in Weston, Ontario, Southam bought Murray Printing & Gravure for \$700,000, a move that increased Southam's printing capacity by half. The Murray plant was modernized and Southam's Toronto printing capacity was relocated to the new site.

In 1969 Southam expanded yet again by purchasing the *Windsor Star* and the *Brantford Expositor*. The buying spree continued into 1971, when the company added the *Montreal Gazette* to its stable, paying \$3.7 million and 100,000 shares of the company. The Montreal newspaper had been formed almost 200 years earlier when a colleague of Benjamin Franklin, then in Montreal to win recruits to the American Revolution, stayed behind after the inventor and statesman left, and formed his own newspaper. By the end of 1971 Southam had also purchased the *Owen Sound Sun-Times* for \$950,000 and the *Prince George Citizen* for \$2 million. In November 1973 the *Ottawa Citizen* moved to a modern, purpose-built plant. Here it would become the first newspaper in Canada to use video terminals for editing newspaper articles, as opposed to running a red pen over type-written copy.

In 1975 Gordon Fisher took over from Balfour as president of Southam. That same year the company purchased the *Daily Star* in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. In 1976 the *Hamilton Spectator* moved into a new \$23 million plant, complete with a newsroom the size of a football field. Two years later, the name of the company was changed to its current name, Southam Inc. The company also made a strategic purchase to go into book-selling, buying Coles Book Stores Ltd. at \$23 a share. Coles would subsequently become the country's largest book seller, with over 250 outlets in 124 cities and towns, including fifty-eight U.S. outlets.

In early 1980, Southam bought a one-third interest in the *Montreal Gazette* from F.P. Publications for \$13 million. This move gave it full control of Montreal's leading English-language

newspaper. That same year, Southam strengthened its hold on the Vancouver newspaper market when it bought outright control of Pacific Press Ltd. for \$42.25 million. A year later, the Kamloops News, in British Columbia, was added to the company's newspaper stable.

The early 1980s recession hit advertising revenues at Southam's newspaper operation, with western Canada hit the hardest. With the western newspaper sector struggling, the focus was on Southam's non-newspaper assets to perform and make up for lost advertising revenue. One competitive measure was to expand into the U.S. market; in October 1983, Southam acquired Dittler Brothers, of Atlanta, Georgia, for \$67.6 million.

Southam was branching out from its core newspaper operation with gathering pace. In fact, in 1984, revenue from Southam's newspaper operations and other business segments balanced out for the first time. Such progress was welcome because labor lock-outs in Vancouver and Montreal the previous year had cost Southam \$6.5 million in earnings.

In 1985, Gordon Fisher, Southam's president, died suddenly after an unexpected illness, leaving no clear successor. That opened the way for rumored takeover bids for the company and a slumping share price. The slide in stock value was eventually halted by a share exchange worth \$225 million between Southam and rival Torstar Corporation. Torstar gained a twenty-three percent stake in Southam but signed an agreement barring it from purchasing a controlling interest in its rival for at least ten years. For Southam, the Torstar arrangement enabled the Southam

family to retain control of the company while holding only twenty-three percent of outstanding shares.

In 1986, Southam consolidated its newspaper assets by forming the Southam Newspaper Group, led by Paddy Sherman. The company also established four other separate business segments: Southam Printing Ltd, Coles Book Stores Ltd., Southam Communications Ltd., and Southam Inc., which included a thirty percent investment in Torstar. Sales and acquisitions highlighted much of Southam's business activity in 1987. Further expansion continued as Southam expanded into the Quebec French-speaking market by publishing *Le Matin*, an up-scale tabloid daily. In total, for 1987, Southam spent \$77 million on new newspaper acquisitions throughout Canada. Southam also sold its forty-nine percent interest in Sun Publishing Company to majority shareholder L. D. Whitehead and Coles Book Stores sold its forty-eight U.S. outlets to Waldenbooks Inc. of Stamford, Connecticut.

In 1988 the company resolved a bitter, six-month-long strike at the *Montreal Gazette* yet despite this, sales for the year increased by 13.5 percent to \$1.45 billion. In August of that year, Coles Book Stores launched its first Active Minds store in Calgary. The book store is aimed at younger readers. A second store soon opened in Toronto.

In 1989 a slowing Canadian economy was cited as evidence of a need for caution ahead for Southam's business plans. Hugh G. Hallward, now chairman of the company, said in the 1989 annual report: "Looking ahead to 1990, we see ... slower economic growth for Canada as a whole than in 1989, but better in the West than in the East." Hallward was essentially drawing

the lines of the forthcoming recession, which hit Eastern Canada, and especially Ontario, harder than elsewhere. In late 1990, Southam sold the money-losing *Financial Times of Canada*, based in Toronto, to rival Thomson Press, for an undisclosed sum.

Troubles continued into 1991. Southam saw its advertising sales drop five percent compared with a year earlier. A number of acquisitions boosted total company sales, which jumped nine percent to \$1.8 billion in fiscal 1990. But profits were down sharply to \$2.7 million in 1990, compared to \$90.5 million in 1989.

Further complicating Southam's troubles, the government brought an anti-trust case against the company. Southam was ordered to sell three community newspapers it had bought in 1990, all based in and around Vancouver. The government argued that Southam had monopolized the Vancouver market through its ownership of Pacific Press Limited. Divesting itself of the three newspapers, it was argued, would create room for potential competitors in the Vancouver market.

In October 1991, the 114-year tradition in which a member of the Southam family controlled the business empire ended. William Ardell, previously head of the Coles Book Stores chain and Southam Business Communications, was named to succeed John Fisher as CEO. Ardell was seen as the turnaround specialist Southam needed to restructure itself during the early 1990s recession. The downside was that Ardell had no experience running newspapers, Southam's principal business.

Uncertainty regarding the future of the company fed rumors in financial circles about impending takeover. One

persistent rumor was that Torstar, with its partial ownership of Southam, was displeased with its slumping profit line and was again entertaining takeover designs.

In 1992 Conrad Black, head of newspaper and magazine publisher Hollinger Inc., bought Torstar's 22.6 percent stake in Southam for \$259 million. Black indicated at the time he was looking to hold the Southam shares for the long term, and had no takeover plans in mind.

Meanwhile, Ardell moved quickly to stem losses on the newspaper side. In November 1992 the newspaper group was split into two groups--Metro Newspapers and City and Community Newspapers, with Jim Armitage and Ray Elliot appointed presidents of the respective groups. This followed Southam's sale of its Canadian Web Group printing operations to G.T.C. Transcontinental Group Ltd. for just under \$105 million. In order to raise cash, Southam also sold its thirty-five percent interest in Telemedia Publishing Inc. for \$18 million, and sold its entire stake in Torstar.



Beland Honderich



John Honderich

Chapter Ten

Gruff Newsman Built a Giant

Beland Honderich, the gruff newsman who built the Toronto Star into the biggest daily newspaper in Canada, became editor-in-chief of the Star in 1955 and a director a year later. In 1966, he was elected president and publisher of Toronto Star Limited, eventually adding the title of chairman and chief executive officer of the newspaper's parent company, Torstar Corporation. He retired as publisher in 1988.

At Honderich's funeral (he was eighty-six), the Prime Minister at the time Paul Martin, expressed his condolences on Honderich's death. "During his long and distinguished career, Beland Honderich established himself as a determined visionary in the rough-and-tumble world of journalism." He added that Honderich "transformed the Toronto Star and, in many ways, helped transform the craft of journalism. His passing truly marks the end of an era in the continuing story of the media in Canada."

Honderich transformed the Star into a newspaper of substance, said veteran reporter Val Sears, who worked under

him. "He realized, with the advent particularly of television, that the entertainment function of the newspaper had to be replaced by an information kind of newspaper. He transformed the Star from a rather sensationalist newspaper into one that had a huge appeal to the growing middle class throughout Toronto and particularly in the suburbs." Though he was a tough boss, he stood up for his reporters and "what you were always sure of was that he knew what he was doing, what he wanted," Sears added.

Despite being an intimidating figure to editors and reporters who worked in the newsroom, Honderich was also dedicated to maintaining the principles of socially conscious founder Joseph Atkinson. "He had the kind of social conscience that appealed to people like me and others who had a sense that newspapers were more than commodities, but had a social function too," Sears said.

Honderich was also a defender of newspaper independence. In 1970 Honderich appeared before the Davey Commission, which was investigating cross-media ownership in Canada. Although the practice was nowhere near the level it is today, Honderich still saw it as a threat to economic competition, and intellectual and cultural diversity. "Multimedia ownership poses a similar but even more complicated problem than chain ownership," he said at the time. "As the public interest is best served by having many voices in the field of communications, the ownership by one person or company of a newspaper and or radio and television stations must be questioned."

Born in Baden, Ont., near Kitchener, Honderich began his newspaper career as a paperboy. Later, during the Second World

War, he served as a wartime replacement at the Star. He would eventually spend a half-century at the paper, working as a reporter, copyeditor and foreign correspondent before becoming editor-in-chief and then publisher. While he is best known as a publisher, Honderich was a union activist in his early days. In 1948, he helped unionize workers at the paper under the Toronto Newspaper Guild, becoming president of the new union.

Honderich's son, John (born July 6, 1946), was to follow in his father's footsteps, working as editor for six years before becoming the publisher in 1994. Born in Toronto, John Honderich graduated from Neuchâtel Junior College in Switzerland, the University of Toronto and London School of Economics. His newspaper career began in 1973 as an office boy and night reporter for the *Ottawa Citizen*. In 1976, he joined the *Toronto Star* as a reporter and went on to become bureau chief in Ottawa and Washington, D.C.. Later he was deputy city editor, business editor and editorial page editor. He succeeded David R. Jolley as publisher of the Star.

Honderich, who is now chair of the board of Torstar, had blunt words for MPs studying the state of media in Canada at the end of 2016 and the beginning of 2017. "My message to you is a simple one: there is a crisis of declining good journalism across Canada and at this point we only see the situation getting worse." He said newspapers across the country have cut their ranks of journalists, resulting in diminished political and community coverage and less investigative journalism. "If you believe, as we do, that the quality of a democracy is a direct function of the quality of the information citizens have to make informed decisions then this trend is very worrisome," he said.

Torstar publishes the Toronto Star, the country's largest daily circulation newspaper, along with the Metro chain of newspapers distributed nationwide and the Metroland chain of newspapers serving more than 100 communities. This includes The Hamilton Spectator.

Honderich noted that readership remains vibrant both for newspapers and their digital offerings. Instead, it's the business model that has taken a beating. "The digital revolution plus the advent of the Internet have fundamentally changed the business model for newspapers," he said. Honderich, recalled the days when careers advertising brought in \$75 million a year and classified ads filled an entire section of each day's paper, all advertising that has been lost to the Internet.

"All those revenues paid for a lot of reporters. Without that revenue, we simply cannot afford as many journalists. Indeed, the very business model is at risk," he told MPs. Honderich stressed that Torstar has adapted with the times, with websites, such as thestar.com, where online readership is rising, and Star Touch, a tablet offering. But he said the structural pressures have been relentless, forcing newsrooms to shrink. By the end of this year, the Star's newsroom will have 170 journalists, down dramatically from 470 about a decade ago, he said. Other Torstar papers have suffered similar reductions, he said. A \$3.2 million increase in contribution from digital ventures pushed Torstar's earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) to \$13.1 million in the quarter, an increase of \$2.7 million from the prior year. VerticalScope alone reported a forty-two per cent growth in EBITDA.

However, while digital revenue as a whole was up 17.9 per cent across the company, Torstar's core publishing businesses suffered continued erosion in print revenues, which remain a significantly larger source of income than digital. Print advertising revenues fell 16.1 per cent and subscriber revenue fell 7.2 per cent. The publisher has also undertaken major cost reductions following six consecutive quarters with a loss. Torstar has cut five hundred and seventy positions including those at the printing plant – and expects to save thirty-four million dollars annually by the end of 2017, and \$9.9 million in the fourth quarter of this year, from those reductions.

Star Media Group, the division that oversees The Toronto Star, had a loss of six million in the third quarter, bringing total losses in the first nine months of 2016 to \$63.7 million. That compares to losses of \$8.6 million in the third quarter and \$2.2 million in the first nine months of 2015. They publish the *Metro* commuter papers in many large Canadian cities. The company is also making a dramatic reduction in the resources dedicated to Toronto Star Touch – the tablet app its flagship newspaper launched last year in the hopes of establishing a lucrative new revenue source.

Torstar's investment in Star Touch in the fourth quarter is expected to be \$1.5 million, considerably less than the \$9.6 million it spent in the fourth quarter of 2015, and the company said it will invest only two to four million dollars on the app next year. As part of a larger round of layoffs in August, the Toronto Star announced it was cutting twenty-six temporary positions mostly focused on the tablet initiative. Another media division of Torstar is the Metroland Media Group which owns two dailies,

The Hamilton Spectator and the *Waterloo Region Record* as well as more than one-hundred community papers.

Torstar is not alone in voicing its concern regarding the newspaper business. A group of Quebec media firms representing one hundred and forty-eight newspapers banded together to appeal to Ottawa for financial help to help pay their transition to the evolving digital universe. "We are going through a storm, which explains why we need a new way of doing things," Martin Cauchon, the executive chair of *Groupe Capitales Médias*, told the committee.

Cauchon, a former Liberal cabinet minister, told MPs there has to be a "national debate" about the state of newspapers in Canada today. The Quebec newspaper coalition urged the committee to look at federal tax breaks, similar to those handed out to cultural industries. And they also urged MPs to look at changes to federal copyright laws to curb the ability of Internet sites such as Facebook and Google to use Canadian media content without sharing revenue. While American Internet giants are fingered as the cause of media financial woes, two media executives cited a concern closer to home.

Honderich said he now considers the digital offerings of CBC News spending incredibly on its website with unlimited resources, as the biggest competition to the Star. He raised the model of the BBC, the British public broadcaster, which does not accept advertising. That was echoed by James Baxter, founding editor of iPolitics, an online news service, who called CBC News an "uber-predator," a publicly funded news website that competes directly with private media companies. He called on the federal

government to stop funding the CBC's massive expansion into digital only news in markets where there is already brisk competition. He suggested that the CBC's emphasis on digital journalism defies its original mandate to fill a void in rural areas where commercial news was not viable. He said the CBC's digital ambitions have had a "profoundly chilling effect" on media start-ups. "That is the biggest single obstacle to there being a vibrant and innovative marketplace of ideas in the media space," Baxter said.

Still, Baxter urged MPs to be cautious about offering financial supports to traditional media. "I'm not here asking for a handout ... fundamentally I believe that preserving the old media is not an option. I want to suggest you save your money by asking that you not bail out my competitors," he said.



John F. Dafoe Free
Press editor in
1901 said, "Better
editor of the Free
Press than Prime
Minister of
Canada"



Joseph Atkinson took the Toronto Star into a powerhouse

Chapter Eleven

Who had Canada's Best Daily?

Two major newspaper publishers-editors emerged in the late 1800s in Canada, Joseph Atkinson in Toronto and John F. Dafoe in Winnipeg. The *Manitoba Free Press*, the Winnipeg paper that W.F. Luxton in 1872 founded was purchased in 1898 by Clifford Sifton, a prominent Liberal politician and in 1901 Sifton made a young Montreal newspaperman, John W. Dafoe his editor.

The *Manitoba Free Press* was launched November 30, 1872, by William Fisher Luxton and John A. Kenny. Luxton bought a press in New York and they rented a shack at 555 Main Street, near the present corner of Main Street at James Avenue. In 1874 the *Free Press* moved to a new building on Main Street, across from St. Mary Avenue. In 1882, control of the *Free Press* passed to Clifford Sifton, and the paper moved to a building on McDermot Avenue. The organization remained at the McDermot Avenue location until 1900, when it moved to a new address on McDermot, at Albert Street. From 1901 to 1944, John Wesley

Dafoe served as editorial writer, editor-in-chief and president. In 1905 the newspaper moved to a four-story building at Portage and Garry. In 1913 the paper moved to 300 Carlton Street, and remained there for seventy-eight years.

John Wesley Dafoe (1866-1944) was a prominent journalist and a staunch supporter of the Liberal party. Dafoe also wrote several books including a biography of Wilfred Laurier. Dafoe became one of the country's most influential and powerful journalists. During his tenure, the *Free Press* was among the most important newspapers in Canada and was considered by many as one of the great newspapers of the world. His influence extended to the very centre of Canadian power, both through his writing and his close relations with his employers, the Liberal Sifton family.

Dafoe accompanied Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King to several imperial conferences and was asked by the Prime Minister to sit on the Rowell-Sirois Commission studying federal-provincial relations. Dafoe opposed appeasement of fascist dictators and urged the government to prepare for a major war, which he accurately predicted would begin in 1939.

He advocated free trade policies. During his life, he refused a consular position in Washington, a knighthood, and a seat in the Senate of Canada. He also declined to stand for Parliament. His son, Edwin Dafoe, became managing editor of the *Free Press* and his grandson, John Dafoe, became the editor of *The Montreal Star* and later the *Winnipeg Free Press*. His grandson Christopher Dafoe was editor of *The Beaver*.

Today's *Winnipeg Free Press* is a daily (excluding Sunday) broadsheet newspaper and it provides coverage of local, provincial, national, international, sports, business, and entertainment news. Various consumer-oriented features such as homes and automobiles appear on a weekly basis. The newspaper's main competition is the *Winnipeg Sun*, a print daily tabloid. The *Free Press* is the oldest newspaper in western Canada and has the largest readership of any newspaper in the province and is regarded as the newspaper of record for Winnipeg and Manitoba. The newspaper's existence began only two years after Manitoba joined the Confederation in 1870, and predated Winnipeg's incorporation in 1873.

Bob Cox is the current publisher of the *Winnipeg Free Press* and has been instrumental in representing the newspaper industry requesting assistance from the Federal government. According to FP Newspapers Inc. web-site, Cox is listed as senior management who joined the company in 2005. FP Newspapers Inc. purchased the *Free Press* in November 2001 and also publishes the *Brandon Sun* and other community newspapers in Manitoba. Cox is a throw-back to publishers of yester-year, he works, lives and plays in Winnipeg, something media giants today should take note of and emulate.

A tale at the *Winnipeg Free Press* was that Izzy Asper coveted the newspaper more than any other when it was owned by Thomson Corp. It was purchased by Ron Stern and Bob Silver, two independent businessmen who have collaborated on other deals and who were personally wealthy but did not have a huge empire behind them. For \$150 million, they were able to snatch the *Free Press* and the *Brandon Sun* away from the bigger guns of

Izzy's CanWest. "The downturn in the economy helped as the competition was more hobbled," stated Stern. Leonard Asper, Izzy's son freely admits that his family "would have loved to own the *Free Press*. But the decision was made to save the company's access to capital for higher-growth businesses, such as the Internet, call centres or investments in the United States." Still, Asper says, taking the pass was "very, very painful".

FPI owns securities entitling it to forty-nine percent of the distributable cash of FP Canadian Newspapers Limited Partnership (FPLP). FPLP owns the Winnipeg Free Press, the Brandon Sun, and their related businesses, as well as the Canstar Community News division, the publisher of eight community and special interest newspapers in the Winnipeg region and The Carillon in Steinbach with its related commercial printing operations.

Another prominent publisher in Manitoba is the Pembina Group who publishes the Winkler Times, Morden Times, Carmen Valley Leader and the Red River Echo, as well as weekly and daily newspapers in the Interlake region, Portage la Prairie and Kenora (Ontario).

Next door to Manitoba, in Ontario, another newspaper was coming to life at the turn of the century. In 1899, Joseph Atkinson (born in Newcastle, Ontario in 1865) was asked to become managing editor of the *Montreal Star*, then the largest English-language newspaper in Canada. The paper's conservative viewpoint clashed with Atkinson's liberal beliefs, and while he was considering the offer, Atkinson was asked by a group of supporters of Wilfrid Laurier, the Liberal prime minister of Canada at the time, if he would become publisher of the *Toronto Evening Star*. The group included Senator George Cox, William Mulock,

Peter Charles Larkin and Timothy Eaton. Mulock and most other members of the group wanted the paper to be the voice of the Liberal Party, but Atkinson refused to take the job on those terms, insisting that he be given full control over newspaper policy and that the *Star* be run in the best interest of the paper and not of the Liberal Party.

Atkinson travelled to Ottawa and successfully appealed to Laurier for support. Atkinson also insisted that forty percent of his salary be paid in stock at par value and that he be given the opportunity to become majority owner. After some initial opposition, the ownership group accepted those terms. The group took ownership of the paper on December 13, 1899. Shareholders formally approved the hiring of Atkinson five days later, with his employment backdated to start December 13.

Atkinson's name first appeared in the masthead of the December 21 edition. His task was to save a failing newspaper, competing in a conservative city with six daily newspapers. Atkinson succeeded in turning the fortunes of the paper around and by 1913 it had the largest circulation of any Toronto newspaper.

Like printers before him, Mr. Atkinson was imbued with the idea of publishing a paper for ordinary people because as a boy he had known extreme hardship. His widowed mother took in boarders to support her eight children and after she died, Atkinson left school at age fourteen to work in a mill. When it burned down a few weeks later, he had no job with only private charity keeping him from hunger. Along with his Methodist upbringing, his early life convinced him that liberalism was the way to a better future.

The circulation of The Evening Star was at an all-time low when Mr. Atkinson took over. Drawing on his experience as an editor, he quickly revamped and revitalized the paper, ads were moved off the front page to play up broader news coverage and sports pages grew livelier. Society items gave way to a column for the lovelorn as well as meaty articles on women's issues. Its name slightly altered, The Toronto Daily Star caught the public eye with contests, promotions and premiums. At the same time, Mr. Atkinson proved to be an astute businessman, more so than many other editors. He kept a sharp eye on expenses, tabulated his receipts each night and put off capital projects until he could pay for them in cash. After one year, circulation was up from 7,000 to 10,000 and by 1903, it passed 21,000.

He continued to run the *Star* until his death in 1948 at the age of 82.

*Some information in this chapter is obtained from Wikipedia and other sources.
Picture of J. E. Atkinson is from Star.com*



Kenneth Thomson and his father Roy Thomson, newspaper barons like no others

Chapter Twelve

The Thomsons were Champions

Roy Thomson, 1st Baron Thomson of Fleet, (June 5, 1894 – August 4, 1976) was a Canadian newspaper proprietor who became one of the biggest Canadian newspaper moguls when newspapers were really worth ‘the money they were printed on’.

He first came to prominence when he was selling radios in Ontario and in order to give his customers more programs to listen to, he decided to launch his own radio station. Thomson then moved into newspapers buying *The Scotsman* as a salute to his Scottish ancestors, followed by the first Scottish independent television channel.

Roy Thomson was born in Toronto, Ontario, the son of Herbert Thomson, a telegraphist turned barber who worked at Toronto's Grosvenor Hotel, and English-born Alice Coombs. They lived at 32 Monteith Street, off Church Street. Herbert was born in Toronto to parents Hugh Thomson and Mary Nichol Sylvester.

Hugh was one of ten children of George Thomson, son of Archibald Thomson, who immigrated from Westerkirk, Scotland to Canada in 1773. Archibald was brother of David Thomson, first European settler of Scarborough, Ontario.

Thomson's ancestors were small tenant farmers on the estates of the Dukes of Buccleuch at Bo'ness, in the parish of Westerkirk, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. Thomson's ancestor Archibald Thomson, born on May 1749, migrated to British North America in 1773, marrying Elizabeth McKay, of Quebec. The family eventually settled in Upper Canada, but retained a sentimental attachment to their country of origin. Later as a result, Thomson himself made the decision to move to Edinburgh where in 1952 he purchased *The Scotsman* newspaper.

During World War I, Roy Thomson attended a business college, and owing to bad eyesight he was rejected by the army. He went to Manitoba after the war to become a farmer, but was unsuccessful. Thomson travelled to Toronto again, where he held several jobs at different times; one of which was selling radios. However, he found selling radios difficult because the only district left for him to work in was Northern Ontario. In order to give his potential customers something to listen to (as mentioned earlier) he undertook to establish a radio station. By quite a stroke of luck, he was able to procure a radio frequency and transmitter for \$201 and CFCH officially went on the air in North Bay, Ontario on March 3, 1931. He sold radios for quite some time after that, but his focus gradually shifted to his radio station, rather than the actual radios.

In 1934, Thomson acquired his first newspaper. With a down payment of \$200 he purchased the *Timmins Daily Press*, in Timmins, Ontario. He began an expansion of both radio stations and newspapers in various Ontario locations in partnership with fellow Canadian, Jack Kent Cooke. In addition to his media acquisitions, by 1949 Thomson was the owner of a diverse group of companies, including several ladies' hairstyling businesses, a fitted kitchen manufacturer, and an ice-cream cone manufacturing operation. By the early 1950s, Thomson owned nineteen newspapers and was president of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association. He then began his first foray into the British newspaper business by starting up the *Canadian Weekly Review* to cater to expatriate Canadians living in Britain.

In 1957, he launched a successful bid for the commercial television franchise for Central Scotland, named Scottish Television, which he was to describe as a "permit to print money", often misquoted as a "license to print money". In 1959 he purchased the Kemsley group of newspapers, the largest in Britain, which included *The Sunday Times*. Over the years, he expanded his media empire to include more than 200 newspapers in Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. His Thomson Organization became a multinational corporation, with interests in publishing, printing, television, and travel. In 1966, Thomson bought *The Times* newspaper from members of the Astor family.

In the 1970s, Thomson joined with J. Paul Getty in a consortium that successfully explored for oil in the North Sea. A modest man, who had little time for pretentious displays of wealth, in Britain he got by virtually unnoticed, riding the London

Underground to his office each day. Nonetheless, he made his son Kenneth promise to use the hereditary title that he had received in 1964, if only in the London offices of the firm.

Thomson died in London in 1976. At the time of his death, his son Kenneth Thomson became chair of Thomson Corporation and inherited the baronial title becoming the 2nd Baron Thomson of Fleet. Roy Thomson Hall, one of Toronto's main concert halls, is named in his honour as the Thomson family donated \$5.4 million to its construction. Upon the elder Thomson's death a plaque was placed in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral. He married Edna (1895-1951) and had a total number of three children: Kenneth Thomson, 2nd Baron Thomson of Fleet, Irma and Audrey, who inherited stakes in the company.

Kenneth Roy Thomson, 2nd Baron Thomson of Fleet (September 1, 1923 – June 12, 2006), in Canada known as Ken Thomson, was a Canadian businessman and art collector who, at the time of his death, was the richest person in Canada. He was the ninth richest person in the world, according to Forbes.com and had assets of approximately US \$17.9 billion.

Thomson was educated at Upper Canada College in Toronto and at St. John's College of the University of Cambridge in the UK, where he received a degree in Economics and Law. During World War II, he served in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Following the war, he completed his education and entered the family business. In 1956, he married Nora Marilyn Lavis, with whom he had three children: David, Peter, and Lynne (now known as Taylor).

As 2nd Lord Thomson of Fleet, Thomson never used his noble title in Canada or took up his seat in the House of Lords. In a 1980 interview with *Saturday Night* magazine, he said, "In London I'm Lord Thomson, in Toronto I'm Ken. I have two sets of Christmas cards and two sets of stationery. You might say I'm having my cake and eating it too. I'm honouring a promise to my father by being Lord Thomson, and at the same time I can just be Ken." As the peerage title he had was inherited, it did not debar him from retaining his Canadian citizenship, and he never took up his right to a seat in the pre-1999 House of Lords.

He succeeded his father as chair of what was then a media empire made up of extensive newspaper and television holdings. The Thomson media empire added the *Globe and Mail* in Toronto to *The Times* and *Sunday Times* in Britain and *The Jerusalem Post* in Israel. Under Thomson, the corporation sold its North Sea oil holdings and sold *The Times* to Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation and the Jerusalem Post to Conrad Black's Hollinger Inc. The *Globe and Mail* was combined with BCE's cable and television assets (including CTV and The Sports Network) to form Bell Globe media, controlled by BCE with Thomson as a minority shareholder. The company then sold all of its community newspapers to become a financial data services giant and one of the world's most powerful information services and academic publishing companies. Today, the company operates primarily in the US from its headquarters in Stamford, Connecticut. In 2002, The Thomson Corporation was listed on the New York Stock Exchange as "TOC".

Between the time of 2005 and his death, Ken Thomson jumped six positions to become the ninth richest person in the

world with assets of almost \$22.6 billion. Over fifty years, Thomson distinguished himself as one of North America's leading art collectors and has been a major benefactor to the Art Gallery of Ontario. In 2002 he paid the highest price ever for a Canadian painting when he purchased Paul Kane's Scene in the Northwest: Portrait of John Henry Lefroy.

Some information on the Thomson family is courtesy of Wikipedia and other web sites



This was a younger Margaret “Ma” Murray in Fort St. John holding a copy of *Alaska Highway News* in her hands. Murray’s real love (besides her husband and family) was her other newspaper, *The Bridge River-Lillooet News*.

Chapter Thirteen

Lady with the Salty Language

Margaret "Ma" Murray née Lally, was born in 1888 in rural Kansas, the seventh of nine children of Irish immigrants. After leaving school at thirteen, she worked as a maid before training in office procedures which led to a job in a Kansas saddlery where she slipped notes in the saddles that were being sent to Canada. Determined to meet some of the Canadian cowboys who responded, she and her sister Bess worked their way west to Seattle and from there in 1912 to Vancouver, British Columbia. There, a series of temporary positions eventually led to work as a bookkeeper at a Vancouver newspaper weekly, the *Chinook*, published and edited by George Matheson Murray. Despite their contrasting backgrounds, they were married on February 5, 1913.

In 1916, George started a daily, the *Evening Journal*. He produced this journal in addition to the *Chinook*, which he sold in 1919. Once their two children, Georgina and Daniel were a bit older, Margaret Murray returned to newspaper work, first as bookkeeper for the *Chinook*, then later becoming involved with

the *Howe Sound News* and the *Cariboo News*. When the children were school age, Margaret started publishing a magazine, *Country Life in British Columbia*. George published the *Western Lumberman* after his work at the *Province* and *Morning* ended. After they lost *Country Life* in 1928 and the *Lumberman* was sold, George went to the Orient to write a series of articles on trade with British Columbia. Margaret placed the children in boarding school and, using connections made through the magazine, travelled about demonstrating how to hook rugs and make comforters.

Returning four months later, George went to the Peace River district and wrote articles that promoted trade from that area before beginning work at the *Province*. He won the Lillooet riding for the Liberals in the 1933 provincial election and repeated that success in 1937. The wins were due in part to Margaret, who had the necessary common touch. Their campaign taught them much about the area and they felt they knew enough to launch a newspaper there.

The first issue of the *Bridge River-Lillooet News* was published March 1, 1934. Sometime after losing the 1941 election, George went to Fort St. John to begin another newspaper, the *Alaska Highway News*. He had championed for the development of this area long before the needs of World War II led to the Highway's construction. Margaret joined him after putting aside the Lillooet paper, which they later sold. Afterward, George switched his sights to the federal level where he won the Cariboo riding for the Liberals in the 1949 federal election.

While Margaret Murray's forthrightness and salty language may not have been regarded as political assets, they were qualities her readers welcomed, despite her disregard for grammar and other niceties of language. Unafraid to speak her mind, she chastised the Premier of British Columbia of the time for continuing a coalition with the provincial Tories. To her family's dismay, she ran as a Social Credit candidate in Peace River in the 1945 provincial election. In fact, her son Dan, then running the Lillooet paper, used the front page to warn readers that Margaret Murray was related to the family only by blood! She lost, but won the majority of Fort St. John polls. This was her last foray into politics until winning a seat on the Fort St. John town council in 1958.

Her husband's political career led to increased responsibilities at the papers for Margaret Murray. Never short of an opinion for editorials, Ma' did not hesitate to actively solicit advertising, going so far as to dress chickens for the local butcher to free him time to take out space in the paper. Her editorials were reprinted in other papers, letting readers across the country share in the laughter or outraged responses they evoked. Articles about her in national magazines, appearances on CBC television, and her own half-hour, twice a month television program followed. Honors came her way in 1971, with membership in the Order of Canada and an honorary Doctor of Laws. The increased public attention eased her sense of loss after George's death in 1961, and she remained active in publishing. After all, she still had something to say, "that's fur damshur".

Information on 'Ma' Murray was provided by Library and Archives Canada



Rikk Taylor, the last publisher of the Columbian Newspaper, doing what he liked best, fishing.

Chapter Fourteen

The Columbian Newspaper story

The history of the *Columbian Newspaper* can be traced back to 1859 when the *New Westminster Times*, the predecessor of the *Columbian Newspaper*, was published on Sept. 17th, 1859 by Leonard McClure. In 1861, Leonard McClure sold the *Times* to a group of New Westminster citizens who renamed the paper, the *British Columbian* whose first issue appeared on February 13, 1861.

John Robson, a future premier of the province, was appointed as its editor. The newspaper's office was located at the south side of Columbia Street in Lytton Square. In March 1862, the office moved several doors east along Columbia. After the consolidation of the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia in 1868, the local economic conditions worsened and Robson moved the newspaper to Victoria in 1869 where it was eventually bought by a competing *newspaper*, *The Daily British Colonist*.

Robson returned to New Westminster in 1880 and purchased a

local paper, the *Dominion Pacific Herald* in 1880. In August, 1881, his brother, David Robson, joined John and with the help of his brother published the first issue of the new British Columbian in January 1882. However, in 1883, John Robson again returned to Victoria to pursue his political ambitions and left the newspaper in the hands of his brother to manage until 1888, when the newspaper changed ownership.

In that year, the newspaper was purchased by the five Kennedy brothers: George was the editor, Robert, the business manager, with the remaining three brothers being responsible for other duties. Throughout its early years the newspaper was published several times a week, but it was not until 1886, when the newspaper became a daily paper and was renamed the *Daily Columbian*.

After the great New Westminster fire of 1898, the newspaper ceased publication for one month and the newspaper's offices were destroyed and all its records lost. Forced to publish in Vancouver for the next year, on Oct. 8, 1898 the daily issues recommenced after the fire. The newspaper returned to New Westminster the following year. On Sept. 9, 1899 the newspaper moved into a building at Victoria Gardens, on the corner of Sixth Avenue and Clarkson.

In 1900, a group of local citizens with the help of Richard McBride, another future premier, purchased the paper. Ownership of the paper was transferred from the five Kennedy brothers to the following new shareholders: G. E. Corbould, Fred Buscombe, Charles Wilson, T. S. Annandale, W. J. Mathers, J. W. Johnston and George V. Fraser. The new owners were shareholders in the Columbian Company Limited which was

incorporated on May 17, 1900. The Kennedy brothers continued on the staff. In 1900, James Davis “JD” Taylor, a future MP and senator, was appointed as its managing editor. In 1902, JD Taylor became a shareholder and in April, 1906, J. D. Taylor became a director of the company. Subsequently, Taylor bought out the rest of the original shareholders with the Taylor family maintaining ownership of the paper throughout the remainder of its history.

For a time, the Columbian owned several other newspapers. In 1907, the company bought the Chilliwack Progress and operated until 1923. The Columbian also operated the *Delta Times* from 1909 to 1922. C. Davis Taylor, J. D. Taylor’s only son, joined the paper in 1921 and in 1924 and he became a shareholder. In 1927, he became a director and at the time of his early death in 1940, C. Davis Taylor was the managing editor. A year later in May, 1941, J. D. Taylor at age seventy-seven also passed on.

Subsequently, ownership of the Columbian Company was passed to his two daughters Miss Dorothy Taylor and Miss Mary L. “Babe” (Mrs. M. L. Emes), his daughter-in-law, Mrs. C. D. Taylor (Mrs. Walter Goodwin) and grandson, Richard D. “Rikk” Taylor.

During WWII, there was only little or no growth as necessity and equipment were impossible however, during the post WWII boom the Columbian Company was able to expand its operations. Although during its early years, the newspaper was a political newspaper with several owners being politicians, the newspaper took a more independent line during its later period.

The three successive editors were first, R. A. “Mac” McLellan, who retired in 1948. The next editor, Dorothy G. Taylor,

daughter of Sen. J. D. Taylor, was also editor of the popular weekly edition of *The Columbian* that served the Fraser Valley until 1950. She resigned her position in 1954 and retired and was replaced by I. E. "Bill" Hambly from 1954. In 1972, the newspaper moved its operations to North Road in Coquitlam. In 1980, more than 200 staff member were working under the direction of R. D. "Rikk" Taylor. It was one of Canada's few remaining independent family-owned newspapers.

In the early days, the circulation of the newspaper was only a few hundred copies but by 1941, daily circulation was 3,000. In the 1940s the *Columbian* had reached 5,000 in circulation and served only New Westminister, however, by 1964, the paper reached 22,000 and served not just New Westminister, but neighbouring communities as well. With five separate weekly editions, the *Burnaby Columbian*, the *Coquitlam Columbian*, the *New Westminister Columbian* and the *Surrey Columbian*, and the *Fraser Valley Columbian*, daily circulation was 36,000 and by 1980, the daily press reached a high of 39,000. Including the affiliated *Columbian* weeklies, circulation reached a total of 120,000. There were also community newspapers published under the name of *Today* from 1979 to 1983 for Burnaby, Coquitlam, Fraser Valley, New Westminister, and Surrey-North Delta. The Company also operated a commercial printing division, Craftsmen Printers.

Circulation of the newspaper began to decline in the late seventies and burdened by increasing debt, the newspaper laboured to stay in business. A final attempt of the owners to raise more capital by selling a portion of their equity in the paper failed. Forced into bankruptcy, a receiver was appointed on October 11, 1983 to wind up the affairs of the business. The last issue of the

newspaper was published on November 15, 1983 with the Columbian Company dissolving on November 10, 1988.

Another newspaper that was launched in the 1800's in the Lower Mainland was *The Province*. In Vancouver, the newspaper first came to life in 1898, although it started across the waters in Victoria, in 1894 as a weekly by Hewitt Bostocka and Associates. In 1898 the Klondike Gold Rush had started and business was booming in this new town called Vancouver so the powers in charge decided to transfer the operation there. The first issue of *The Vancouver Daily Province* came out in March of that year and one-hundred and nineteen years later is still going strong.



The quintessential newspaper publisher, Mr. Conrad Black surrounded by many of his beloved published newspaper.

Chapter Fifteen

Baron Conrad Black

Conrad Moffat Black, Baron Black of Cross Harbour, KSG was born August 25th 1944. Black went on to become an extremely successful Canadian newspaper publisher who is now an equally fruitful author. He is a non-affiliated life peer and is both loved and loathed by his fellow Canadians due to his up and downs in the newspaper business.

Black controlled Hollinger International which was once the world's third-largest English-language newspaper empire. Hollinger published *The Daily Telegraph* (UK), *Chicago Sun-Times* (U.S.), *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel), *National Post* (Canada), and hundreds of community newspapers in North America. Black left the board of Hollinger in 2004.

Black was born in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, to a wealthy family originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba. His father, George

Montegu Black Jr., was the president of Canadian Breweries Limited, an international brewing conglomerate that had earlier absorbed Winnipeg Breweries (founded by George Black Sr.). Conrad Black's mother was the former Jean Elizabeth Riley, a daughter of Conrad Stephenson Riley, whose father founded The Great-West Life Assurance Company, and a great-granddaughter of an early co-owner of *The Daily Telegraph*.

Biographer George Toombs spoke of Black's motivations that he was born into a very large family of athletic, handsome people. He wasn't particularly athletic or handsome like they were, so he developed a different skill – wordplay, which he practiced a lot with his father. Black has written that his father was "cultured and humorous" and that his mother was a "natural, convivial, and altogether virtuous person." Of his older brother George Montegu Black III (Monte), Black has written that he was "one of the greatest natural athletes I have known," and that though "generally more sociable than I was, he was never a cad or even inconstant, or ever an ungenerous friend or less than a gentleman." The Black family maintains a family crypt at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery in Toronto where Black's parents are buried along with his best friend and his wife's former husband, journalist George Jonas.

Black was first educated at Upper Canada College, during which time, at age eight, he invested his life savings of \$60 in one share of General Motors. Six years later, according to Tom Bower's biography "*Dancing on the Edge*", Black was expelled from UCC for selling stolen exam papers. He then attended Trinity College School where he lasted less than a year, being expelled for insubordinate behaviour. Black eventually graduated from a small,

now defunct, private school in Toronto called Thornton Hall, continuing on to post-secondary education at Carleton University (History, 1965). He attended Toronto's Osgoode Hall Law School of York University, but his studies ended after he failed his first year exams. He completed a law degree at Laval University (Law, 1970), and in 1973 completed a Master of Arts degree in History at McGill University.

Black's thesis, later published as a biography, was on Quebec premier Maurice Duplessis. Black had been granted access to Duplessis' papers, housed in Duplessis' former residence in Trois-Rivières, which included figures from the famous Union Nationale Caisse Electorale (the party war chest), a copy of the Leader of the Opposition's tax returns, and gossip from bishop. Also available to Black were historically significant letters from Cardinal Jean-Marie-Rodrigue Villeneuve side-by-side with handwritten, ungrammatical requests for jobs with the Quebec Liquor Board, unpaid bills, the returns of his ministers who were cheating on their taxes, and a number of scribbled notes for Assembly speeches. Even tidbits of political espionage, compromising photographs, and a ledger listing the political contributions of every tavern-keeper in the province were part of Duplessis papers. Black subsequently had the principal items from the papers copied and microfilmed, and donated copies to McGill, York, and Windsor Universities.

Black became involved in a number of businesses, mainly publishing newspapers, and briefly in mining. In 1966, Black bought his first newspaper, the *Eastern Townships Advertiser* in Quebec. Following the foundation as an investment vehicle of the Ravelston Corporation by the Black family in 1969, Black, together

with friends David Radler, and Peter G. White, purchased and operated the *Sherbrooke Record*, the small English language daily in Sherbrooke, Quebec. In 1971, the three formed Sterling Newspapers Limited, a holding company that would acquire several other small Canadian regional newspapers.

George Black died in June 1976, leaving Conrad Black and his older brother, Montegu, a 22.4% stake in Ravelston Corporation, which by then owned sixty-one per cent voting control of Argus Corporation, an influential holding company in Canada. Argus controlled large stakes in seven Canadian corporations including the Labrador Mining, Noranda Mines, Hollinger Mines, Standard Broadcasting, Dominion Stores, Domtar and Massey-Ferguson. In 1977, Black became a director of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.

Through his father's holdings in Ravelston, Black gained early association with two of Canada's most prominent businessmen, Bud McDougald and E. P. Taylor, president and founder of Argus, respectively. Following McDougald's death in 1978, Black paid thirty million to McDougald's widow and her sister for control of Ravelston and thereby, control of Toronto-based Argus Corporation. Interviews with the two sisters in their retirement homes in Florida were aired in September 1980 in the episode of the CBC's *The Canadian Establishment* entitled "Ten Toronto Street." This episode covered the period during which Conrad Black became chairman of Argus Corporation following the death of John A. "Bud" McDougald. Patrick Watson, the host and narrator of series interviewed the two widows in their Florida retirement homes. Black recorded that the widows "understood and approved every letter of every word of the agreement".

Other observers admired Black for marshaling enough investor support to win control without committing a large block of personal assets. Some of the Argus assets were already troubled, and others did not fit Black's long-term vision. Black resigned as Chairman of Massey Ferguson Company on 23 May 1980, after which Argus donated its shares to the employee pension funds (both salaried and union). Hollinger Mines was then turned into a holding company that initially focused on resource-based businesses.

In 1981, Norcen Energy, one of his companies, acquired a minority position in Ohio-based Hanna Mining Co. In a filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), a disclosure was made to the effect that Norcen took "an investment position" in Hanna. The filing did not include a disclosure that Norcen's board planned to seek majority control. Black subsequently was charged by the SEC with filing misleading public statements. These charges were later withdrawn.

Over time, Black focused formerly diverse activities of his companies on newspaper publishing. Argus Corporation, once Canada's most important conglomerate, divested itself of interests in manufacturing, mining, retailing, banking, and broadcasting. Canadian writer John Ralston Saul argued in 2008, "Lord Black was never a real 'capitalist' because he never created wealth, only dismantled wealth. His career has been largely about stripping corporations. In 1985, Andres Knight, then editor of *The Economist*, asked Black to invest in the ailing Telegraph Group, and Black was able to gain control of the Group for £30 million. By this investment, Black made his first entry into British press ownership. Five years later, he bought *The Jerusalem Post*, and by

1990, his companies ran over 400 newspaper titles in North America, the majority of them small community papers. For a time he headed the third-largest newspaper group in the world.

Hollinger bought a 23% stake in the Southam newspaper chain in 1992 and acquired the Chicago Sun-Times in 1994. Hollinger International shares were listed on New York Stock Exchange in 1996, at which time the company boosted its stake in Southam to a control position. Becoming a public company trading in the U.S. has been called a fateful move, exposing Black's empire to America's more rigorous regulatory regime and its more aggressive institutional shareholders.

Under Black, Hollinger launched the *National Post* in Toronto in 1998. From 1999 to 2000 Hollinger International sold several newspapers in five deals worth a total of US\$679-million, a total that included millions of dollars in "non-compete agreements" for Hollinger insiders. Later in the year, Hollinger International announced the sale of thirteen major Canadian newspapers, 126 community newspapers, internet properties and half of the *National Post* to CanWest Global Communications Corp. Hollinger International sold the rest of the *National Post* to CanWest in the summer of 2001.

The Hollinger group of companies was effectively dismantled as a result of criminal and civil lawsuits in relation to sales of papers and intellectual property to third parties alleging misrepresentation or deliberately misleading accounts. The costs incurred by Hollinger International through the investigation of Black and his associates climbed to US\$200 million. Black claimed

a significant portion of the sums paid by Hollinger International went to Richard Breeden, the lead investigator.

After Black was forced to resign from the board of Hollinger, many of Hollinger International's assets ended up being sold at prices significantly lower than those contemplated by incomplete talks while Black was with the company. By the early 2000s, Black had accurately anticipated the decline in profitability of print media assets and sought to divest those types of assets held by Hollinger before their value was irrevocably diminished. The main criminal sanction on Black not overturned is specifically one of misleading investors. All charges against him were eventually abandoned, rejected by jurors or vacated by the Supreme Court and as some say, “the sentence did not fit the crime”.

Rise to Greatness: The History of Canada from the Vikings to the Present (2014) was the most recent work of Mr. Black. This 1,042 page book may prove to be Black's true legacy (as an historian) and should be a required read of every high school student in Canada and for all new immigrants who arrive on this nation's pristine shores.

This chapter uses information obtained from Wikipedia and other sources including Black's book, Rise to Greatness-The History of Canada. Black's picture is courtesy of The Canadian Encyclopedia.



Israel (Izzy) Asper when he was at the top of his game

Chapter Sixteen

He Tried To Become King of Newspapers

Izzy Asper and his Winnipeg based Canwest Company formed one of the last in a flurry of newspaper mega deals that completely changed the ownership base of English-language papers in Canada, and he did it in 2000 for \$3.2 billion. After Conrad Black gained control of the Southam chain of papers in 1996, there were so many deals going down that almost all major newspapers and many minor ones went through at least one new set of owners. Ontario's *Guelph Mercury* changed hands five times in four years.

New to the playing field, Canwest newspapers included fourteen major urban dailies from Victoria to St. John's and were acquired in the name of the communications industry's infamous buzzword, *convergence*. While the broadcast side of CanWest's business was considered its core operation, "we view our best area of expertise as being television," stated Leonard Asper. The Aspers (mostly Izzy and his son Leonard) newspapers catapulted the company from a mid-sized communications firm to the very top of the heap of media owners in Canada after the purchase.

The deal, something akin to a snake swallowing an elephant, almost quadrupled the number of CanWest employees and nearly tripled its revenues. Given some very public controversies over editorial policy in the Canwest's last few years of publishing, it probably doubled the headaches that came with running a major communications concern.

By now, Conrad Black had more or less completely exited the newspaper business in Canada, as had his erstwhile rival media baron, Ken Thomson, the long-standing owner of the *Globe*. Moreover, competitor BCE was also being trampled in the markets, losing almost twenty per cent of its value as investor confidence in its diversification strategy faltered. The Aspers, newcomers to the world of daily print, picked up the Southam holdings and the *National Post* from Black in a deal that met with skepticism in both the industry and the markets at the time

Ever since his father responded to a call in 1974 for applications for a new television station in Winnipeg, CanWest had been a family enterprise, growing as was the Asper family. Leonard himself had the last word when he said in a *Financial Post* interview, "my acting skills are being challenged even more." For one, he resents "having to tell everyone that the damn company was not closing the fucking doors today" every time an extension deadline came and went. "If only they knew what was really going on. If we weren't public they would not know anything and neither would our suppliers. If we weren't a public company none of this shit would be happening, we would be quietly renegotiating loans behind closed doors," he wrote. "The only frustrating thing is the time I am spending calming everyone else down... and I am frustrated by the reputation hit."

Although he was publicly criticized for Canwest's debt load and for not having done enough to prepare the company for a cataclysmic event, Leonard privately blamed his father. "This mess is Izzy's and everyone knows it, and this doesn't reflect on me," he wrote, struggling to put the unfolding corporate crisis into perspective. "Nonetheless, I have to do what is right for the company, and to end up with something. I have to be mentally prepared to give up control while fighting like hell to keep it."

In Leonard's mind, the banks were culpable as they turned off the taps and refused to give the family time to turn the company around. "Our businesses are the best run in the industry... I've done a fucking good job," Leonard notes. "I didn't realize how badly the Hollinger deal was financed. I think between Izzy's aiming for the pinnacle and no one there to stop him, we should have used more equity but no one came up with that. Lesson learned. I just hope when this is over people see we've run a good ship especially given the asset base we have."

In 2010, the company announced an agreement with Shaw Communications whereby the latter company would buy an eighty per cent voting interest, and twenty per cent equity interest, in the restructured entity. The deal was later modified following a second court ordered mediation. The company's newspapers were not part of the Shaw deal as they had already been sold separately to Postmedia Network in June of 2010 for \$1.1 billion

*This chapter uses from excerpts from Financial Post Magazine,
canadianencyclopedia and Wikipedia*



David Radler has had a remarkable, yet provocative newspaper career.

Pic by John Gress/Reuters

Chapter Seventeen

Radler Soldiers On

David Radler is a newspaper publisher extraordinaire and most would agree that he has had a controversial career. He is a very successful media mogul, but he has had one major hick-up that would have brought lesser men to their knees for good

Radler graduated from Queen's University in 1967 with a master's degree in Business Administration and in the 1980s Radler was in charge of the sale of Argus Corporation's Dominion supermarket chain to The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company, or A&P. Mr. Radler went to Chicago to help Conrad Black's media business that he managed through Chicago-based Hollinger International. Soon he would be publisher of the *Chicago Sun-Times* newspaper and would go onto become president and chief operating officer of Hollinger International.

After buying up the London *Daily Telegraph*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Jerusalem Post*, the Southam chain of Canadian

newspapers and hundreds of small American newspapers, Hollinger International began to suffer from financial strain in the late 1990s which caused Radler and Black to sell off hundreds of their Canadian and American newspapers.

Radler, who has lived in Vancouver, British Columbia, since the early 1970s, created a company called Horizon Publications Inc. and bought up some of these American newspapers that were owned by Hollinger. After controversy developed in 2003 and 2004 concerning \$32,000,000 of 'non-compete' payments made to Black and Radler in the sale of Hollinger newspapers, the US Securities and Exchange Commission (and Canadian authorities as well) announced that Black and Radler were under investigation for their involvement. Radler was eventually charged with five counts of mail fraud and two counts of wire fraud. On 20 September 2005, Radler pleaded guilty in a Chicago court to one count of mail fraud in relation to the 'non-compete' payments.

These payments had been diverted by Radler to a company controlled by himself and Black, Horizon Publications Inc. By disguising the payments as 'non-compete' payments, non-sales proceeds, Radler took advantage of a Canadian tax ruling that made them tax-exempt. The prosecution argued that these moneys belonged to Hollinger International, and had been improperly and secretly diverted to Black and Radler. Radler was sentenced to a fine of \$250,000 and a term of twenty-nine months in prison.

In the fall of 2005, Queen's University, Radler's alma mater, returned the financial donation which Radler had given to

its School of Business. It was widely reported at the time that a Toronto hospital had no intention of returning Conrad Black's financial gift and this prompted some to question the wisdom of Queen's returning David Radler's generous donation. The business school, for its part, explained that the charge that Mr. Radler had pleaded guilty to was "very serious" and not congruent with the values of the school and those it teaches.

On March eighteen 2007, it was reported that Mr. Radler had signed a settlement with the US Securities and Exchange Commission that would see him pay a penalty of almost US\$29 million and prevent him from acting as an officer or director of any public company in the United States. The next day, it was announced that Mr. Radler has settled with the Sun-Times Media Group, agreeing to pay them \$64.1 million.

Radler started serving his twenty-nine month sentence for fraud on February 25th, 2008 by reporting to Moshannon Valley Correctional Center in Pennsylvania. He was transferred to FCI Ray Brook in Upstate New York and was turned over to Canadian authorities on September eighteen 2008. He was paroled from Ferndale Institution in Mission, British Columbia on December fifteen 2008. He served ten months of a twenty-nine month sentence and was released on the grounds that he was unlikely to "commit an offence involving violence" before his sentence expired. The board said it was limited to considering only the matter of physical violence and could not consider the financial devastation caused by his crimes or the victims of these crimes left in its wake. Mr. Radler went back to work in his office in Vancouver running his business, the Alberta (Alta) Newspaper Group, and has done so for many years now.

Alta Newspaper Group Limited Partnership is a publisher of newspapers (dailies and weeklies) in Western Canada and Quebec. Alberta Newspaper Group also known as Alta is one of two Canadian newspaper companies run and partially owned by David Radler. Both Alta and Continental Newspapers are descendants of Horizon Operations (Canada) Ltd., a company Radler founded at the end of the 1990s.

Most of the newspapers that currently make up Alta and Continental were purchased from The Thomson Corporation between 1999 and 2001 by Horizon, a family of companies owned by David Radler and Conrad Black, independently from Radler's and Black's roles as COO and CEO, respectively, of Hollinger Inc. Black sold his interest in Horizon and Radler organized his Canadian holdings into two companies, including a limited partnership for his two Alberta dailies and associated weeklies.

The chain, originally called Southern Alberta Newspapers and renamed Alta Group Newspapers, consisted of the former Thomson dailies *Lethbridge Herald* and *Medicine Hat News*, and a group of weeklies covering suburban and rural communities in the Lethbridge-Medicine Hat area. The oldest of the weeklies was *The Taber Times*, which dated to 1907 and had built the chain in the 1970s before being bought out by Hollinger and then Thomson.

In the mid-2000s, Alta purchased three weeklies in southwestern Saskatchewan, and in 2006 it acquired *The Record* of Sherbrooke, Quebec, from Glacier Media, which took an ownership interest in Alta. Radler noted that *The Record* was a nostalgic purchase, it was the first newspaper that he and Black owned, back in 1969.

The company has not made any major acquisitions lately, although it has bought out bi-weekly newspapers that competed with its dailies in Lethbridge and Sherbrooke. As a private company, Alta Newspaper Group is not required to publish an annual report, and Radler has been "tight-lipped" about its ownership structure, telling reporters that he is "a shareholder" in the company but declining to specify how much he owns. Alta was formed, however, out of a subsidiary of Horizon Publications Inc., a company acknowledged to have been operated primarily by Radler.

In 2006, as part of the deal that added *The Record* to Alta's holdings, Vancouver-based publisher Glacier Media took a fifty per-cent share in Alta. It later increased its ownership share to fifty-nine. Glacier is also part-owner of two other newspaper companies connected with Radler, Continental Newspapers and RISN Operations. Sam Grippo, Glacier's chairman of the board, was a group publisher at Hollinger during Radler's time as chief operating officer.

Although the main company is headquartered in British Columbia, none of its properties are located there. Alta publishes newspapers in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec. Its sister company Continental Newspapers publishes dailies in British Columbia and Ontario. Two dailies and six weekly newspapers in the Lethbridge-Medicine Hat area were part of the original Southern Alberta Newspapers chain owned by Horizon Operations. The *Lethbridge Journal* was added in 2011.

Although it is difficult to tell who owns what newspapers in Canada due to overlapping ownership these towns have these

papers. The following papers cover the cities of Lethbridge and Medicine Hat, the Municipal District of Taber, Cypress County, the County of Forty Mile No. 8 and Lethbridge County: Bow Island; Lethbridge Herald; Lethbridge Journal; Lethbridge Sun Times; Hat News; Prairie Post; The Sunny South News; The Taber Times; The Vauxhall Advance; The Western Canadian Pipeline Magazine. Alta also publishes four weeklies in southwestern Saskatchewan.

Most of the websites associated with Alta and Continental Properties are credited to TriCube Media, a division of Alta Newspaper Group based in Medicine Hat, Alberta, although their web-site states Lethbridge. TriCube Media bills itself as "a full service branding and business development company". In addition to the newspapers, its clients include governments, nonprofits, blogs and private businesses. Services it provides include web design, web hosting graphic design, online advertising and promotions.

Intermission

*(The next two chapters are salted with the author's personal tales
and anecdotes)*



Author R.W. Turcotte holding his first issue of the Morris Mirror, the last community newspaper he would own and publish.

Chapter Eighteen

The Makings of a Small Town Publisher

This author's first involvement with politics and celebrities was long before he became a newspaper man. In 1966, at the age of sixteen, he was Vice-President of the 'Young Socreds', who were an offshoot of the governing Social Credit Party of British Columbia and it was there he met the controversial W.A.C. Bennett or "Wacky" as the media referred to him. In that summer he made a trip to Victoria and it was here that he witnessed a strange event which would shape the way he would report on most politicians for decades to come.

Reed Turcotte was invited to the Parliament buildings and to Premier Bennett's office to discuss ways to get more young voters to support the Premier's Social Credit Party. When entering his office, the Premier was sitting at his desk and immediately asked for Turcotte to sit on the edge of his rather large office chair as he had something to show him. One thought this request a little odd but as the Premier was now Turcotte's newest celebrity and a politician to boot, he did as requested. Bennett immediately spun his chair around so both of them were facing a covered picture hanging on the wall directly behind his desk.

Bennett got up and removed the picture cover and asked Turcotte what he thought of his new plan. What Turcotte was staring at, both excited and shocked at the same time. At that very moment Turcotte's political hero seemed strange and he thought maybe the press was right and that Bennett was really a little "wacky" after all. What his eyes were looking at was a color coded map of B.C., Alberta, the Yukon Territories and Alaska, as least as this author remembers it, some fifty years later. The only problem with this map was that there was no Yukon showing for it was now part of British Columbia.

The young Socred told the smiling Premier that this plan would never get off the ground; he could not annex the Yukon (if this was indeed his plan) as the locals, politicians and the Federal Government would never let it happen. Bennett seemed agitated with young Mr. Turcotte's comments and briskly asked him to leave. Upon exiting Bennett yelled out, "sure would be wonderful though, wouldn't it?" Turcotte never talked with the Premier again and he heard through the grape vine that he took the map down shortly afterwards. One wonders if the map still exists somewhere today.

Shortly after this meeting Turcotte resigned from the Young Socreds and to this day, although he has remained right of centre, he has never again affiliated himself with one political party. Turcotte continued to have an insatiable appetite for politics and as a teenager would listen for hours to Pat Burns and Jack Webster's talk shows on Vancouver radio, drinking in every word they said.

Celebrities that came into Turcotte's life, started with Margaret Sinclair (eventually her last name would be Trudeau)

who he had a forty minute acquaintance with. Turcotte remembers her as an extremely attractive teenager (that is why he approached her at a high school football game) but at the time she seemed too much of a 'hippy' for him and Turcotte being of the right wing persuasion, was way too conservative for her. He never thought that down the road she would marry a Prime Minister and her son would also become P.M. of Canada.

One of the great men Turcotte met in his late teenage years was Chief Dan George (Geswanouth Slahoot) of the Tslei-Waututh Nation located on Burrard Inlet adjacent to North Vancouver. He was not a movie star at that time but just down the road that would change when the hit movie 'Little Big Man' starring Dustin Hoffman with Chief Dan George as his co-star was released in 1970. Turcotte would have coffee almost every Friday night at the restaurant located at the rear of Woolco, the precursor to Walmart, which was located adjacent to the shoe department where this author then plied his trade. The Chief would discuss at length the plight of his people. If he were alive today one wonders what he would think of his people's newest flavour of the day, the term 'Indigenous' that replaces, 'Native American' that replaced the word 'Indian'. Would the good Chief now call his neighbouring tribe the Squamish Indigenous band?

Businessman Jim Pattison, who went to school with Turcotte's late father and remained friends throughout their lives, had Turcotte taking names and phone numbers of people who walked through his Vancouver Main Street car lot on Sundays when the car dealership was closed. One particular Sunday he scared the crap out of this scribe. Pattison flew into the lot in his Cadillac and said, "Reed, you need to come with me right away." Pattison asked Turcotte to drive his Mother's brand new Caddy,

from the compound (waterfront area) where it had just arrived, to her house more than a few miles away. Turcotte had just received his learners licence but did not tell him this and soon after, he was following Patisson through the inner City to his mother's place. All this time Turcotte was thinking, I am going to have an accident in this brand new vehicle. However, make it he did, and when it was all over he was soaked to the skin from sweat and his hands did not stop shaking for hours, or maybe it was days.

The last "celebrity", while Turcotte was still in his teenage years, was businessman Sam Bass, owner of the London Drugs retail chain. In a job interview, Bass had his back to this author as he stood by his chair and huge desk. Bass was facing the outside window while his possible new employee sat in front of his desk answering questions. Turcotte got the position and became acting manager of the New Westminster branch.

Bass, although a very astute merchandiser was arrogant and a bully and about a year later his ranting became too much, so leaving was in order. Saying goodbye to London Drugs was just about the best thing that ever happened to Turcotte as about a month later, in Quesnel, British Columbia, the beginning of a long and sometimes controversial newspaper career began. Over the next four decades many more politicians, businessmen, athletes and celebrities along with their good, bad and ugly stories would grace the pages of publications that Turcotte would produce from small town Canada. During this author's first thirty years in the print media, things were okay, good money was still being made, and the local publisher was both feared and respected.

This author's first newspaper was named *the Quesnel Shopper* and its pages had about seventy percent advertising which was excellent especially since this publishing business was so new to him. Soon after, the name was changed to the Quesnel Tuesday News and from day one the paper would go to press on Mondays in Williams Lake and come out on Tuesdays.

Turcotte at this point had very little writing, reporting or production skills so the first few issues articles were weak and the paste-ups were awful....but they were heavy in ads. Even though company cash was almost non-existent, the paper looked like it might actually make it since the merchants seemed to love their little newspaper.

The paper was competing against *the Quesnel Observer* and they had very deep pockets, so in order to stay competitive, Turcotte had to come up with outlandish promotions that would grab people's attention without offending them. It was the early stages of what would end up been a long career in publishing for Turcotte and he thought that if he gave readers a great front page and a controversial editorial page, than all else would take care of itself. This template Turcotte would use for the rest of his print days.

The Observer was a paid publication but the *Tuesday News* was free and as it hit the stores and stands; the paper was full of wild stories and crazy pictures. Some readers thought the paper was over the top but most laughed and many thought it was fantastic. Yes, the little upstart newspaper was a success.

The first front page picture that was cooked up to create a sensation was a big hit. It was a fake dragon floating in the water of Dragon Lake located just outside Quesnel. This started, what

would become an occasional ritual on Turcotte's newspapers front page. When an issue needed some punch or Turcotte wanted it talked about, he pushed the sensational button. Just after the *Tuesday News* was launched a post office strike took place and as the paper used the mail for delivery, a major problem was at hand right off the get-go. No big deal though, Turcotte rented a snowmobile and spent from seven in the evening to seven the next morning delivering the paper door to door by himself. Would a publisher do that today? Absolutely not as the desire to succeed at any cost is no longer part of a publisher's make-up.

The people of Quesnel enjoyed their little paper including the column *Reed- All -About- It* and they lined up Tuesday mornings to get their hands on a copy. All the commotion was heard from Williams Lake to Vancouver and shortly after, a knock came on the *Tuesday News* office door which would change everything in this author's life.

Alan Black, owner of the Williams Lake Tribune showed up at the Quesnel office with an offer to purchase fifty per-cent of Turcotte's company. The two businessmen finally settled on the sale of forty-nine per-cent of the *Tuesday News*. The Black's *Williams Lake Tribune* was printing the paper and all of a sudden there was no pressure to pay the press bills which were now steadily mounting. As a matter of fact, Turcotte was being told to up the circulation and approximately seven months later he would find out why.

At first things were good and Turcotte was learning a lot (especially paste-up) from the gang at Cariboo Press, publishers of the *Williams Lake Tribune*. Advertising sales were increasing as

the little Quesnel paper was championing the merchant's causes. A civic election was approaching and the newspaper was not a supporter of the mayor who had been in power for many terms. About a month prior to the actual voting date the paper had received a tip that the Mayor Ceal Tingley had stored underground city sewer pipes around the side of his home. A picture was taken and was kept on the docket until the issue closest to the election was to come out. The picture was then prominently placed on the front page and inferred that the Mayor was stealing. Naturally, he lost the election. Generally speaking Tingley was a good guy and eventually a park in Quesnel was named after him for all his civic service. Turcotte was now hob-knobbing with politicians, service clubs and the who's who of downtown Quesnel. He even ran for alderman but lost by just a handful of votes.

During this period, Turcotte met the infamous crusty Ma Murray (see chapter on her), publisher of a small Lillooet newspaper. She was one tough mean mouthed lady who left a lasting impression on him by the way that she would take politicians to task for their wrong doings. Today no newspaper publisher comes close to telling it like it is, as good old 'Ma' did. Her editorial pages were pure magic.

Although business was humming smoothly, Turcotte did not see the storm clouds that were just ahead. David Black, who by now was running his dad's full operation in Williams Lake, came to the *Tuesday News* office and said that the paper owed the Cariboo Press (Black's company) many thousands of dollars in back press bills. At that time, he owned, with his father Allan, forty-nine percent of Turcotte's Quesnel newspaper and Black stated that unless the bill was paid up in the next few months, he

would have to take over full operation of the company and Turcotte would be out. This possibly was a *modus operandi* that Black may or may not have used at other times in the future. Turcotte did not have that kind of money so he regretfully turned the fifty one percent of his company over to David Black. Mr. Black closed the paper and went on to purchase *Tuesday News* competition, the *Quesnel Observer* a few years later.

Turcotte has not conversed with Black since then, even though a minor long distance business relationship at times has played out between them. Black is a tough but successful business man, the king of newspaper publishers in British Columbia to be sure but not necessarily king of the towns his papers cover. One has to reside in the area and be part of the local community, not base oneself out of Victoria as Black does, to be a true community leader. So-called publishers who work today for large media corporations such as Black, Glacier, Aberdeen, Alberta Newspaper Group and Postmedia are really nothing more than glorified, under paid advertising sales people with little power in the town they promote. They are not the leaders of their community as former publishers (owners) like Mackenzie, Robertson, Cosmo, Dafoe, Taylor, Black (Allan), Murray, Traff, and even Duncan Ross were back in the days. All those publishers resided in the community that their newspapers were published in.

Turcotte left Quesnel shortly after with his family. He had a dubious future, or so he thought at the time, but on that day he promised himself that he would never be as gullible and that he would try to control the press part (at least not run up a bill he could not pay) of any future he had left in publishing.

Any sadness felt when he left did not last long. Turcotte had many dealings with the publisher of the *100 Mile House Free Press*, Fred Trapp who also had his paper printed in Williams Lake at Black's press. Turcotte knew that Traff also published a small paper called the *Cache Creek Pioneer* and might be persuaded to unload it. As he pondered this, he was aware that he only had \$1500 in his bank account and no place for him and his family to call home, plus the Pioneer newspaper had no office in the towns they served. With a gift of gab and a plan, Turcotte approached Traff with a legitimate but flimsy offer to buy his *Pioneer*. Turcotte had arrived in Quesnel a young merchant and now he was getting set to put his feet down in Cache Creek as a man with ink firmly flowing through his veins - newspapers were now his life, plus he had learned one thing during the past eighteen months – be careful who you put your trust in.

Traff was truly a great publisher, well respected and a real leader in his community. He was humble and old school and in many ways acted as mentor to the new *Pioneer* publisher. The *Free Press* boss was instrumental in getting Turcotte 'back in the saddle' and he and his newspaper facilities were always available for use by the *Pioneer* paper.

Within a week after arriving in the South Thompson, Turcotte opened an office in Cache Creek that was adjacent to Hungry Herbies restaurant, home of the famous 'monster burger'. This burger remains as big to this day. Turcotte always had an egg, wiener, pickle and extra sauce to go along with the rest of the hamburger and he was addicted to them.

Turcotte then purchased a home (with little down) in Ashcroft and hired an editor, George Whitely. Ashcroft had

another long serving paper, the *Ashcroft Journal*, owned by an elderly husband and wife however it was not long before the *Pioneer* newspaper was number one in the area, which included Clinton, and number one in the heart of the advertisers and readers.

Business was very respectable. Circulation was up and tennis at seven in the morning with buddy Mike Black, from Barton, Black and Robertson insurance took place most Mondays to Fridays. The afternoons consisted of some of the area's prominent locals including Turcotte who would amble over to the hotel in Cache Creek and try to fix the problems of the world over a brew or two and twice a week the new publisher and his wife would hold court at the Wander Inn restaurant over plates of great tasting Chinese food. Turcotte's paper was absolutely the toast of the town.

The Pioneer was printed in Kamloops which was only forty-five minutes away and Turcotte was happy with his surroundings however his wife at the time, wanted to move back to the Coast to be near her family. Turcotte then did something he still regrets to this very day. He ended up selling the newspaper to his editor, for a nice profit, packed up and headed back to the Lower Mainland giving up his dream life in the desert.

Shortly after Turcotte left Cache Creek, the *Pioneer* went from a debt free, profitable business to one of despair. The new publisher, Turcotte's former editor, did not have the business temperament to run the operation and the paper soon died a very quick death. It was just after this period that David Black swooped in and purchased the competing newspaper, the *Ashcroft Journal*,

the first of Black's many acquisitions and the beginning of what would become a very successful newspaper empire. He would also centralize the countless newspapers that he would soon acquire with one publisher (usually the best advertising salesperson) under one roof. This type of centralization would eventually become the architect of the demise of the local community publisher and today it is practiced by most newspaper chains.



Chief Dan George (Geswanouth Slahoot) was a movie star and a friend of this author



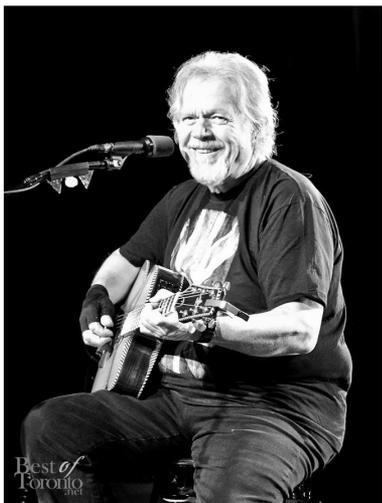
Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau visited Whistler & was not politically friendly to us



W.A.C. Bennett, Premier of British Columbia met with Turcotte, but was not happy with the results



Prime Minister Paul Martin had a voracious newspaper appetite and enjoyed our editorials



Randy Bachmann was interviewed by the Valley Voice Newsmagazine



Tina Turner asked this author to stroke her legs



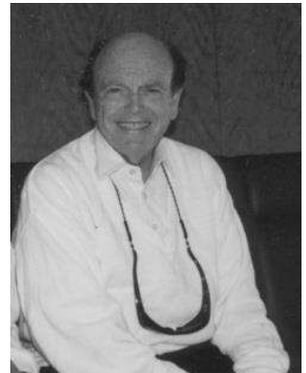
The boys from Trooper stopped in at the office of the *Valley Voice* to meet with my Associate Editor Andrew Blair. Pics courtesy of Google



Ethan Hawke as Ishmael Chambers filmed the movie *Snow Falling on Cedars* in Greenwood, B.C. This picture was taken near the author's office



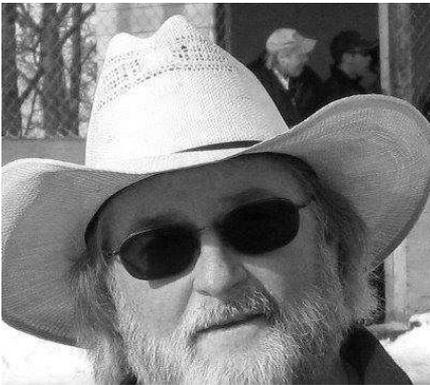
Prism turned it on at the night clubs in Chilliwack, B.C.



Canadian businessman
Jim Pattison
Picture from *Reed-All-About-It...Memoirs of a Controversial Publisher*



Morris Mirror's winning horse at Assiniboine Downs. Lorraine (in the big, white floppy hat) and this author are in the middle of the picture.



Politician Bill Baird was a friend of Turcotte's newspaper



The Valley Voice gang enjoyed Wyonna Judd's performance at the Merritt Country Music Festival.

Chapter Nineteen

Small Town Publisher Lands in Canada's Littlest City

Turcotte's next residence of choice was in Squamish, an hour drive from North Vancouver where both he and his wife grew up. Squamish is located at the northern end of the scenic Howe Sound waterway and today is a desirable place to live but back then, in the late 1970s, the town was a hodgepodge of mills and logging booms.

Turcotte had received an offer to run the advertising department of the *Squamish Times* and a new little start-up shopper for the then small burg called Whistler. The colorful Cloudesley Hoodspith (he owned the *Times* from 1957 to 1992) was the publisher of these papers and the *Lions Gate Times* in West Vancouver as well. Hoodspith's wage to Turcotte was generous and he also offered him part ownership in his Squamish newspaper if he could increase the papers advertising content by twelve percent in Turcotte's first year.

When the first year working at the Times came to a close, Turcotte had added nineteen percent to the advertising base but Hoodspith squashed the deal. He obviously had no intention of selling any part of his paper so Turcotte got angry and got into an argument and told him to “shove it”. Turcotte within the week started his own publications, the *Squamish & District Advertiser* and the *Whistler This Month* magazine.

Turcotte was at Whistler when the shovel hit the ground to kick off the beginning of the Whistler Town Centre. At that time it was similar to Bugsy Segal’s 1944 Las Vegas, basically nothing. Although he was mad at Hoodspith who did not follow through with the partnership deal, Turcotte still liked him and his outlandish ways. “He was around when newspapers were still “kings” and he worked hard at his craft” said Turcotte. It was not uncommon to see Hoodspith selling ads, delivering the newspaper bundles to the vendors and covering events. Everyone in West Vancouver, Squamish and Whistler knew Hoodspith (who passed away tragically in 1994). He could talk a merchant’s ear off and could sell to anyone. Turcotte learned a lot from him.

Another couple of publishers around that time were Paul Burrows of the *Whistler Question* and David Radler, boss of the Sterling newspaper group. The publisher of the *Question* was a hardworking, well respected citizen of Whistler and he put out a quality paper.

Turcotte met Radler once, and as best as he can recall, it was not under good circumstances. Radler went on to have a checkered newspaper career, owning many, many weekly and famous daily papers and to this day he still owns the Alta Newspaper Group (see chapter on Radler). He is remembered

though as Conrad Black's right hand man, (who Turcotte has never met, much to his regret), with the two of them having spent some time in prison in the United States. These were minor indiscretions, and at best, they should have only had to pay an equitable fine, Turcotte suggests.

One evening while he was in Whistler at a night club, Pierre Elliott Trudeau walked in with a bevy of security. A picture of Turcotte and the Prime Minister surrounded by his security hit the pages of many B.C. newspapers a few days later. In the photo both had their index finger in each other's face. Turcotte was chastising the Prime Minister about his left of center ways and told Trudeau in no uncertain words what he thought of Trudeau cozying up to Cuba at the expense of our American friends. It is funny how history repeats itself. Today another Trudeau is in power, who also courted a communist government, this time the country is called China. A \$1 billion dollar donation from two Chinese billionaires to the Trudeau Foundation with \$50,000 of this amount going towards a statue to the elder Trudeau was in the headlines as 2016 came to a close.

Justin Trudeau also appointed so-called independent Senators to the Senate, many who are elitist government or union workers and would never vote Conservative. When Fidel Castro passed, within hours of his death, Justin waxed glowingly on how good a friend Castro was to his late father. He remembered the late president as a "legendary revolutionary and orator". Justin forgot to mention that Castro kept his nation impoverished and isolated for forty plus years, and that Castro was one of the worst dictators since Stalin. According to Conrad Black in his book, Rise To Greatness....The History of Canada, "when Trudeau (Senior)

visited Cuba in 1976, Castro dragooned a crowd of 250,000 to cheer him.”

Business in Squamish was okay but not great, as it was difficult to compete against the bigger more powerful *Squamish Times* who had been around for a long time. Advertising sales may have been tough but Turcotte’s social life was anything but. A store manager named Brent Wood and Turcotte played tennis, met for coffee with other merchants on week days and enjoyed the night life of Squamish and Whistler on the weekends.

A man named Rikk Taylor came into Turcotte’s life much the way Allan Black did eight years earlier. A call to come down to Taylor’s *Columbian* newspaper office in the New Westminster area was received as Taylor had a proposition for Turcotte. Taylor’s timing was perfect as Turcotte was contemplating shutting down his newspaper. He felt that he was burning out after “hustling” in the print business for the past ten years. Taylor offered the position of “boss” of a magazine that his company was starting up titled, *The B.C. Sport Salmon News*. The magazine would come out every second month and could be run from anywhere in the Lower Mainland. Taylor wanted to keep this publication far away from the Union that was representing his newspaper employees and the *Columbian*’s bankers who were becoming very unfriendly.

Turcotte jumped at the chance and immediately shut his newspaper in Squamish down and opened up a small office right on the water at Horseshoe Bay, directly across from the ferries and Sewell’s restaurant. A secretary was hired, some office furniture was purchased and a phone and fax system was installed. All was ready to go and, of course, this was all paid for

by the *Columbian* newspaper. The *Columbian* also paid Turcotte very well. Turcotte purchased his own boat, the “Amanda J” so that on warm days he commuted from his home in Squamish to the office at Horseshoe Bay and often did a little salmon and prawn fishing on the way home.

Turcotte got to know Gary Sewell of Horseshoe Bay really well and during this time called Sewell a friend. If Turcotte was not at the office or visiting a fishing resort throughout the B.C. Coast, he could be found at the quaint Troller Pub in town (Horseshoe Bay) with his friend Jack Mercks, the Post Master in Squamish. *The B.C. Sport Salmon Fishing News* through the *Columbian* newspaper became involved with a major fishing contest that was partially bank-rolled by a popular cigarette brand, Export A. The magazine had use of a brand new boat loaded with graphics complete with a large Mercury outboard motor which was tied to the dock right next to the office. The kick off to the event was held at Trader Vics in Vancouver with the prize boat out front for all to view in the hotel parking lot. The media, sponsors and invited V.I.Ps were all treated to a lavish function where the caviar and liquor flowed freely.

Publisher Rikk Taylor, promotions genius Martin Lewis, National Advertising Manager Laurie Graham and Turcotte were a crazy team who revelled in their good fortune. They treated the magazine like their own personal fun machine and the *Columbian* newspaper dollars flowed like wine. It was spent on charter boats, fishing guides, waterfront resorts, restaurants and booze, of course.

Turcotte still owned his *Whistler This Month* magazine and besides spending time at the resort-town, he was visiting

other places like Painters Lodge, April Point Resort and many other fishing establishments once each month. The fishing magazine, *The B.C. Sport Salmon Fishing News*, was successful and had many of the best outdoor writers of the time begging to get their articles published. It could also have been because the publication paid the writers well for articles and pictures.

The publication in those early days was tabloid in size and was printed on quality magazine paper on the *Columbian's* newspaper presses. The men and women who worked in the composing room and on the presses at the *Columbian* were real pros and they seemed to really enjoy handling the *B.C. Sport Salmon Fishing News* publication. It helped that Turcotte would bring them Tim Hortons doughnuts from time to time including Peter Legge of *T.V. Week* fame who sometimes used the *Columbian's* facilities.

It was time to start a winter magazine (to keep the party going during the winter months) and it would also be financed by the *Columbian Company* (Rikk Taylor). Turcotte named it "*Ski B.C.*" One incident that happened which was laughable to everyone but Turcotte, occurred at Whistler. A group of media and guests were given a chance to ski down the same run that would host the Men's World Cup Ski Race the very next day. The *Ski B.C.* publisher was in line at the bottom of the lift with the Queen of Whistler, Nancy Greene Raine. Both of them were set to head up the mountain to the top of the run. When they sat down on the chair Turcotte's left ski fell to the ground below. Nancy was amused and called him a one trick pony which embarrassed Turcotte as he was worried about how he would get off the chair in one piece. All turned out okay though as Turcotte skied down

the eight foot slope to level ground on one ski and a few chairs later his other ski would arrive.

One particularly exciting event Turcotte got to cover was the “World Marlin Fishing Contest” in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, which became a working holiday for Turcotte. Besides catching two of those beautiful fish he got to hang around with the rich and famous who paid big bucks to become part of this event. One person who stood out the most was the “sausage king” himself, Jimmy Dean, who even sang one of his songs while the fishermen were out at sea.

They say all good things must come to an end, and end it did. The first inkling Turcotte had that things were going sideways was when Rikk Taylor asked him to do next year’s advertising sales projection for the Columbians newspaper’s banker. After presenting the figures to Taylor, the belittled owner became dismayed and told Turcotte to inflate the sales by three times. When Turcotte said to him they could not possibly come close to selling this amount of advertising dollars, Taylor said, “Do it anyways”. The Columbian daily newspaper was bleeding a lot of money and was only kept afloat by their profitable weekly newspapers in the Fraser Valley.

The companies’ bankers had the Columbian organization on a death watch and all the employees knew this, but they had faith in Rikk who was a likeable but inflexible guy who refused to cut his daily newspaper loose. If Taylor had done this and stayed with his weeklies the company might still be alive today. Taylor would not listen to reason, so he took his Columbian company into bankruptcy, which meant I had no one signing the cheques anymore. The party was now officially over.

Turcotte spent September until June that year at British Columbia Institute of Technology helping and teaching students working on their in-house weekly newspaper, *The Link*. It was here he met Michael Kluckner who also worked for B.C.I.T Student Association. Mr. Kluckner was part artist, part businessman with a touch of hippy thrown in, and would have been a great mayor for a city like Nelson, British Columbia.

In Turcotte's next go around, he decided to produce a brand new entertainment weekly paper titled the *Valley Voice and the Cloverdale News* which would publish the news of old town Cloverdale. The *News* handled the local conservative thoughts and advertising of the town and the *Valley Voice* was a wild and crazy celebrity-filled paper serving the Fraser Valley from New Westminster to Chilliwack. These two papers were published by Howe Sound Press Ltd., Turcotte's company of many years, from the top floor of a newer office building in the heart of downtown Cloverdale.

The *Valley Voice* had more than its share of musicians, strippers, football players and entertainers as part of its make-up. These celebrities were to be found throughout the pages of the publication and if they were not in the office for interviews, *Voice* staff could all be found back stage at the entertainer's gigs partying the night away after their sets were done.

Just a few of these celebrities were Tina Turner, Wyonna Judd, Randy Bachman, Trooper, Loverboy, Prism and Chilliwack. A few noteworthy antidotes include the time Turcotte stroked Tina Turner's leg at a press conference before a show she was about to do in Vancouver. He asked her how she kept her legs looking so sexy at her age and before he knew it Turner was asking him up to

the front of the hall to touch them, which of course he did, much to the chagrin of other male journalists in the room.

Turcotte's introduction to Wyonna Judd was at the Merritt Mountain Music Festival where the *Valley Voice* set up shop on the edge of a hill overlooking the entertainer's trailers and the stage area below. It was there one morning that he saw two vans pull up to one of the trailers and pull out bag after bag of ice and transport the cold substance inside the recreation vehicle. When he inquired to what was going on, he was told that Ms. Judd did not like air conditioning (it was very hot outside) and wanted her unit cooled naturally, with bags of ice. This seemed crazy to Turcotte but the show that she did later that night was fabulous so maybe it was not so crazy after all.

Through the *Valley Voice*, Turcotte was a regular at the press box at Lions football games and was even thrown out once for cheering too hard for "his guys", something a respectable journalist did not do. He had his son Rick, who was named after President Richard Millhouse Nixon with him and they both forgot the rules of the press box. Richard (R.W.) Turcotte had just joined the *Valley Voice* so as to add a touch of youth to the program, as the rest of the crew were getting a little too old to understand the new ways, especially when it came to music.

An old friend had also come aboard in this new quest and his name was Andrew Blair a former newspaperman from Eastern Canada. They brought Randy Bachman into the office to do a long interview and a cover shot. That front page picture would say "Roll over Beethoven, He's 'Bach' Man!" Andrew and Turcotte (not Randy) were pounding back the beers and shooters while doing the story late into the night. After saying goodnight to Mr.

Bachman, who was and is a class act, they woke up the next morning on the office floor. Turcotte had his notes scattered about and after picking them up he had trouble reading what was scribbled down on the last three pages. It ended up being a great article and the best ever cover of the *Valley Voice*.

The City of Chilliwack had two incredible night clubs at the time, competing against each other almost every night. This was good news for 'rockers' and the *Valley Voice*. The clubs were called Earth Quake Annies and Greg's Place and managed by outstanding people. Rick, Andrew and Turcotte, as mentioned earlier, could be found back stage with the musicians after they finished performing. Drugs, alcohol and tempting dishes of appetizers were in most cases available. On occasion Turcotte's brother Brent would join the group. His job was to deliver the thousands of *Valley Voice* papers to night clubs, bars, music shops and colleges and he would end his day late at night at one of the two clubs in Chilliwack.

The next morning one would find Reed Turcotte in the office covering stories of Cloverdale and meeting with merchants and local service clubs. The two publications were as different as night and day. The *Valley Voice* was the night publication and the *Cloverdale News* was the day and Turcotte was now the "King" of Cloverdale and the Fraser Valley. During this time he also founded and published the monthly, *Real Estate West Trade News* and *Horticulture West Trade News* business magazines. He also had a newspaper he called *The Cross Border Shopper* that was geared towards Canadian shoppers crossing into the United States at Sumas Washington.

Because of the wet weather conditions on the Coast, the desert like setting of the Interior of British Columbia seemed to always be calling Turcotte back. It was like he was haunted, every night a voice inside his head told him to get the hell out of the Fraser Valley and head back to where it all started, or at least close to ground zero (Cache Creek).

Turcotte moved a lot in his career as the main way he made his money in the newspaper business was to start up a small publication, get it off the ground and sell it for a tidy sum. No surprise that yet another paper caught his attention. This time it was in the tiny hamlet of Greenwood. The sale included not just the *Boundary Creek Times* newspaper but a building on Greenwood's Main Street. He would not be starting a paper from scratch but rather he was looking at taking over a golden oldie which was first launched in 1896.

Turcotte did not purchase the paper and the office right away rather he bought a rundown cabin in Rock Creek, twenty minutes away. He started to fix it up and spent copious amounts of his time and money on it. Shortly after, Turcotte and Lorraine Ayotte, his new wife of a few months, did complete the sale.

Just as the deal went down in December of 1994 the movie *Snow Falling on Cedar* was about to start filming in Greenwood, 'Canada's Littlest City' as the locals called it. Much of the filming took place next door to Turcotte's office building and across the street on the upper floor of the Greenwood Inn (Saloon). For one winter, Greenwood had two newspapers, Turcotte's and the fictional one located right next door where Ethan Hawke portrayed the part of an editor.

Most days Greenwood's new publisher would run into Hawke and in the evening his wife of the time Uma Thurman. Many of the other actors in the movie and production crew were also to be found hanging around the streets and restaurants of Greenwood after filming stopped for the day. The Greenwood Inn (Saloon) was a pub that had a Greek restaurant attached next to it, where Ethan and his wife would hold hands while dining there. Hawke was a bit stand-offish at that time and did not like that Turcotte on one occasion took a picture of him and Thurman as they were dining.

The movie had Greenwood's Main Street shut down one afternoon for filming so Turcotte decided to climb up on the roof of his newspaper building to take a few pictures for his next issue. Hawke saw him up on top and went ballistic demanding that Turcotte come down. The now irate publisher yelled down to him to "stuff it, this is my town". Hawke then went into a snit and told the director that he would not continue acting that day unless the guy on the roof descended. In order to keep the filming going Turcotte did work his way back to ground level. Hawke ended up doing a wonderful job in *Snow Falling on Cedars* and since then has proven to be an 'A' actor. The movie brought a lot of money and excitement into the area along with a lot of wonderful celebrities. It was special occasions like this that made it a pleasure to go to work every day. Turcotte could not wait to get to the office in the morning to take in all the action and report on it in his next week's newspaper.

Wikipedia's description of the movie says *Snow Falling on Cedars* was directed by Scott Hicks, based on David Guterson's award winning novel of the same title. The trial occurs in the midst of deep anti-Japanese sentiments following World War II.

Covering the case is the editor of the town's one man newspaper Ishmael Chambers (Ethan Hawke), a World War II veteran who lost an arm fighting the Japanese in the Pacific War. Ishmael struggles with his love for Kazuo's wife, Hatsue (Youki Kudoh), and his conscience, wondering if Kazuo is truly innocent.

Spearheading the prosecution are the town's sheriff, Art Moran (Richard Jenkins), and prosecutor, Alvin Hooks (James Rebhorn). Leading the defense is the old, experienced attorney Nels Gudmundsson (Max von Sydow). An underlying theme throughout the trial is prejudice. Several witnesses, including Etta Heine (Celia Weston), Carl's mother, accuse Kazuo of murdering Carl for racial and personal reasons. Etta is a stereotypical anti-Japanese person; she represents the part of America that persecuted Japanese Americans during the Second World War.

This stance is not without irony, as Kazuo (a decorated war veteran of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team), experienced prejudice because of his ancestry, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. By the same standard, Etta, a German American, could be blamed for Nazi war crimes.

Also involved in the trial is Ole Jurgensen, an elderly man who sold his strawberry field to Carl. The strawberry field is a contested issue during the trial and the land was originally owned by Carl Heine Sr. The Miyamoto family lived in a house on the Heines' land and picked strawberries for Carl Heine. Kazuo Miyamoto and Carl Jr. were close friends as children. Kazuo's father eventually approached Carl Sr. about purchasing 7 acres of the farm. Though Etta opposed the sale, Carl Sr. agreed. The payments were to be made over a ten-year period.

However, before the last payment was made, war erupted between the U.S. and Japan, and all islanders of Japanese ancestry were forced to relocate to internment camps. In 1944, Carl Sr. died and Etta sold the land to Ole. When Kazuo returned after the war, he was extremely bitter toward Etta for reneging on the land sale. When Ole suffered a stroke and decided to sell the farm, he was approached by Carl Jr., hours before Kazuo arrived, to try to buy the land back. During the trial, the land is presented as a family feud and the motivation behind Carl's murder.

Ishmael's search of the maritime records reveals on the night that Carl Heine died a freighter had passed through the channel where Carl had been fishing at 1:42am, five minutes before his watch had stopped. Ishmael realizes that Carl was thrown overboard by the force of the freighter's wake. Despite the bitterness he feels at Hatsue's rejection, Ishmael comes forward with the new information. Further evidence is collected in support of the conclusion that Carl had climbed the boat's mast to cut down a lantern, been knocked from the mast by the freighter's wake, hit his head, then fallen into the sea. The charges against Kazuo are dismissed.

The Cast in the movie were Ethan Hawke as Ishmael Chambers, Reeve Carney as Young Ishmael Chambers, James Cromwell as Judge Fielding, Richard Jenkins as Sheriff Art Moran James Rebhorn as Alvin Hooks, Sam Shepard as Arthur Chambers, Max von Sydow as Nels Gudmundsson, Youki as Hatsue Miyamoto, Anne Suzuki as Young Hatsue Imada, Rick Yune as Kazuo Miyamoto, Seiji Inouye as Young Kazuo Miyamoto and Celia Weston as Etta Heine.

As filming of the movie came to a close, the West Boundary, as the area was called, still had lots of newsmakers that helped fill the front page of *the Boundary Creek Times*. Bill Baird, the Regional Director for Area E of the Kootenay Boundary, which included Big White Ski Resort, was an astute politician who kept getting re-elected and providing Turcotte with advertising and editorial copy. The Shuman family, owners of Big White and Mr. Baird helped make the ski hill what it is today. "The powers to be would be wise to erect a statue of Baird on the hill in appreciation of his years of political service", Turcotte has reiterated many times.

Frank Pederson, "Frankie", who had a log hit him on the head a few years back and could no longer work in the forestry industry became a good friend of the paper and coined Lorraine Ayotte's (Turcotte's wife) nick-name, "legs". Ralph Stromberg was a Vancouver newspaper veteran who retired, moved to Rock Creek and worked part time for the paper. He gave some of the best written copy ever and was often called upon by Turcotte when he needed grammatical corrections. Many times "ace reporter" Stromberg and Turcotte could be found hunched over a table in Greenwood or at the Rock Creek hotel, brew in hand, working on their next big story.

During this period, the Rock Creek hotel aka the Prospector Pub was owned by the husband and wife team of Emile and Heather and was the place to be seen in town. Once new owner Chris Finlayson took it over she ran it into the ground and eventually the operation went bankrupt, a classic case of a merchant in way over their head which was the sad case of

hundreds of businesses during Turcotte's forty years of publishing. "Everyone who failed, hurt," said Turcotte.

During these 'heady days' the Greenwood newspaper building was completely refurbished inside and out. A brand new façade was put on the front of the newspaper office giving it a 1900s feel along with three different colors of paint that Turcotte saw in a picture of a building in downtown San Francisco in 1908. A back door was added to the rear of the building and down the road a bedroom and shower became part of the back end. On the floor an old stained carpet was pulled out and replaced by locally produced spruce planks. New computers, desks and software were added and for the very first time the paper had a real morgue (where old newspapers are kept) built. The *Boundary Creek Times* newspaper was then operating out of a building that was now a tourist attraction in little Greenwood. Tourists would stop their vehicle and hop out and take pictures of the turn of the century historical buildings in town including Turcotte's.

Even though Greenwood and area was a little off the beaten path, a lot of prominent businessmen from the Okanagan had ranches in 'no man's' land where they could escape to for a relaxing weekend away from the pressures of daily life. Men like the co-owner of the Barley Mill Pub in Penticton and his partner, Larry Lund, founder of the Okanagan Hockey Group, could be found working their ranch near Jewell Lake. Robin Auger, the owner of a Penticton real estate office, the Ramada Inn complex and who was and continues to be big in developing the Penticton area, had an impressive ranch in Rock Creek. Former Air Canada pilot John Finnigan and his ranching co-owner, "Cowboy" and

their friend Ian Christie had large tracts of land up Nicholson Creek as well. Turcotte knew all of these people and spent many enjoyable times with them.

Politicians in Greenwood included a long time colorful Mayor Arno Henning and a host of characters who called themselves his councilors. Henning painted flags of the world on an old abandoned 1900s tunnel located at the edge of town which was considered a bit strange by the papers' readers. Probably due to his advancing age, Henning appeared to be out of touch with a lot of the new residents who had recently moved into Greenwood and was defeated as Mayor by one of his councilors, Colleen Lang.

Was the newspaper responsible for his defeat? Turcotte liked Arno on a personal basis but he also liked Ms. Lang and thought she represented the future and would be the better leader for the next few years ahead. Covering more than a hundred elections taught him that the local community newspaper could have a lot of influence in a political race but not necessarily in every case. In one of the last elections in Greenwood that Turcotte was involved in, a local wealthy business person walked into the paper office, plunked down a thousand dollars and asked Turcotte to do up large political ads for three candidates that he wanted to win. Turcotte took the money (naturally) and gave each candidate, who he knew and liked, a great three quarter page promotion that he thought would push them over the top. Guess what....all three lost.

Turcotte ran controversial editorials that probably should have been published in big city dailies rather than small town newspapers but that was the way he ran his papers. He used old

time, hard hitting journalism on his front and editorial pages and would build up the candidate than tear them down, especially if they were not of his liking, even after as little as a few months in power. Politicians throughout Canada regularly read his editorials (probably to see who he would villainize next) including a certain Prime Minister, Paul Martin. His press secretary (or someone close to him) called Turcotte up one time to congratulate him on one such editorial, although for the life of Turcotte, he cannot now remember what it was he wrote.

A year or so after the movie, *Snow Falling on Cedars* finished filming, a man showed up in Greenwood who would deposit almost as much money in town as the production of the film did. His name was Thomas (Tom) Manning. He and his male companion, Donny were from Seattle and for the next thirteen months, he and his company would be front and center in the pages of the *Boundary Creek Times*.

Greenwood was a mining town at the end of the 1800s and after extracting some silver, gold and a lot of copper, what was left was a black glassy hard substance called slag. Greenwood had a large mountain of it. The product sat on property owned by a local Rock Creek pioneer family, the Falkoskis, and was worthless or so everyone thought except Manning.

He arrived in town, took up residence in a condo and at the local bar, the Greenwood Saloon, and started showering the town with money and an incredible outlandish story. He told the paper that through his new formed company he was going to load up the slag into large trucks, transport the product down to the

Coast of Vancouver, take it to an offshore Georgia Strait Island and then load it on barges where it would end up in Poland to be turned into Polish crystal or something similar.

He held town meetings and told everyone present that many benefits including jobs would result from this project. This helped bring the mayor, council and Turcotte's paper onside as they all wanted to believe in this gift to the town from the heavens above. The money for this project would come from Manning's Russian investors who would be putting up millions of dollars he told all who would listen.

As the weeks turned into months, his promises were actually taking place. He obtained semi-rights to the slag and hired local truck and bulldozer operators. Dollars were being thrown everywhere around town, especially at Turcotte's newspaper and the Greenwood Saloon across the street. He had large advertisements in almost every issue where he promoted the slag, himself and his dog. Yes, even his dog was front and centre in one of Manning's full page advertisements.

Turcotte published it and Ms. Ayotte put it on Manning's charge card and the newspaper was in effect, paid immediately. The paper had a major story, an eccentric celebrity and a major advertiser, all rolled into one, so it was milked it for all it was worth.

Manning loved his booze, so in the afternoons his office moved to the bar across the street from the newspaper where he then set up shop and paid for a lot of his friends' liquor. He had Kevin Thorlakson, the proprietor of the Greenwood Saloon, who

was also a good friend of the newspaper bring in expensive bottles of Scotch, Vodka and Champagne which he had no trouble sharing with Turcotte and others.

At least once, Manning invited a lot of the town's populace for a wing ding featuring fresh lobster from the Atlantic Coast. He flew in hundreds of pounds of lobster and had a town party at the Saloon with the Mayor and Council invited as well. It was partly surreal and partly a gong show but product (slag) was getting to the Coast and people were being paid, so for now the Town and its newspaper publisher just soaked in the good times.

Manning even brought his family and lawyer up from Seattle for a month as well as hiring some of the local down and outs that he called "his lieutenants". About every ten days or so, he and one or two of these lieutenants would head to Osoyoos, cross the border and come back from the town of Oroville with tens of thousands of dollars in cash from the bank. Well at least this is what Manning told the paper. Some of the cronies confirmed this, and they stated that Manning had them stuff the cash inside their shirts so they could get the money safely across the border. This may or may not have been true.

By now, major media outlets were dropping into the newspaper office to get Turcotte's interpretation of what was happening in little Greenwood, a town of about only nine hundred citizens. The newspaper was thick in ads and life in general was never better, but things were about to change once again. Turcotte felt that a downturn in the newspaper business was imminent and over the next six months he would prepare for it.

For now though, the slag had formed a small hill on Texada Island just off the Coast of British Columbia and Manning was getting it ready to be shipped onto Poland. One day Lorraine said that Tom Manning's credit card was declined for the last ad booked. When Turcotte approached him on this he immediately paid in cash. It was around this time people started hearing that some of the workers were late getting paid for work that they had recently performed. Manning himself said he was off to Russia to meet with his investors and then onto Poland to oversee the slag being turned into crystal. When Thomas Manning III left, independent tests paid for by the locals, confirmed that the slag was worthless and could not be turned into crystal or anything else profitable.

The project then came to a sudden halt and some people never did get all the money that was owed to them. To this day, Turcotte does not know what the deal was really about. What he does know is that the slag that was transported in ships did indeed make it to a Poland port where it sat and sat near a container dock. Manning did come back from Russia, and was not killed as was the rumour and the king of slag now lives somewhere in Texas. Although it may have been some sort of con, hundreds of thousands of dollars flowed through Greenwood and area for about a year or so and it was one heck of a party as well as a great story for the newspaper publisher.

Another rumour that went around town was that perhaps something was buried in the middle of the slag, maybe local marijuana. Turcotte had actually named this locally grown pot Rock Creek Red when he did a piece on the many, many pot growers who flourished in the area at that time. What was the

true nature of Thomas Manning's business? We probably will never know.

Another celebrity saviour of sorts showed up at Greenwood's door near the end of Turcotte's run in that town and his name was Bryan Bell. He and his wife Marilyn bought up a chunk of property along Boundary Creek at the edge of Greenwood and proceeded to construct a successful RV park they named Fort Greenwood. The park has log walls similar to Fort McLeod in Alberta and has more than a touch of the old west inside.

Besides the Greenwood newspaper Turcotte's building in town also produced the *Big White Mountaineer* paper and *Snowbirds and R.V. Travelers* magazine. Both these publications were the brain child of Turcotte and his wife. *Snowbirds and R.V. Travelers* was a great addition to Turcotte's *Boundary Creek Printing and Publishing Company*. The magazine was profitable from day one and was a blast to produce. The paper at Big White was not a huge winner but still made money while it existed.

Many people who Turcotte knew and dealt with are no longer at Big White either by divorce, death, closure or sale of their business. One of the people still around however is the gregarious Michael J. Ballingall or Michael J as he calls himself. Ballingall once said to Turcotte (in a condescending voice) "we (meaning Big White Ski Resort) tend to control everything up here". He and his boss Peter Schumann were not overly excited to see Turcotte launch a newspaper in what they considered their private domain. Turcotte found Ballingall pompous and overbearing but to give the man his due, he has been the "voice"

of the ski hill for a long time now and he has been a big booster of the Okanagan tourism.

Forecasting successfully the end of the money making days of the newspaper industry, Turcotte sold his Greenwood paper and the building that it was housed in, to Chuck Bennett, who at the time also published a small paper in Keremeos. A few years later the *Boundary Creek Times* newspaper landed in David Black's hands where it still is today. Turcotte's Snowbirds magazine was put up for sale and quickly after the magazine also had new owners. Two men, a former David Black executive and Jason Tansen who resides in Kelowna took over the reins and kicked the mag up a notch. It still is publishing to this very day as part of the Sun Cruiser Media group. Turcotte says, "I am very proud of the job Tansen and his team have done with the magazine".

After about a year away from the publishing business, Turcotte decided that he missed hanging out with politicians, celebrities and athletes. He decided to give it one more go around and then retire for good. Turcotte and his wife Lorraine had moved to Morris, Manitoba as she had family in the area and the small town of Morris was only twenty minutes from Winnipeg. They purchased three pieces of property, built a house on one and started yet another newspaper, *The Morris Mirror*. The *Mirror* was an instant success and they only had to work at it about twenty-two hours a week. Morris did not have its own local newspaper at that time because the *Scratching River Post* had closed its doors a few years before. That paper had been published by Ed Penner who had a world class command of the written word.

It was at the local curling rink that Turcotte got to meet the Jennifer Jones rink, Chelsey Carey, Jeff Stoughton, Cathy Overton-Clapham and many more famous curlers. A rather provocative picture of Carey graced one of his issues when the *Mirror* covered a Dekalb Curling Event. Turcotte's paper was in small town Manitoba so you could not go wrong putting anything related to curling in the paper.

On the political scene, he got to meet Premier Greg Selinger during one of the many floods that hit Morris. Selinger was too far on the left side and Turcotte was happy to hear that a few years ago he and his N.D.P. party were defeated by the Conservatives. Selinger and his party policies set Manitoba back a few decades as Turcotte saw it. Another politician who Turcotte dealt with and liked a lot was the attractive and brilliant Mavis Taillieu who represented Morris and area for the Conservatives. It was unfortunate that she resigned before her party came to power. She would have made a good cabinet minister.

Although things started out positive for the *Morris Mirror*, there was an underlying negative current in the community that was most likely orchestrated by the town's mayor who was a religious zealot, if ever there was one but to be fair he was the preacher of the Open Door Ministry. Mayor Gavin van der Linde was in Turcotte's opinion a hypocrite who used religion to cover political sins, but the mayor and his "flock" (the populace of Morris) seemed to like him.

It didn't help that Turcotte ran his small town paper as if Morris was the size of Winnipeg and hammered hard at anything he perceived to be a miscarriage of justice. Maybe he shouldn't

have published an article on all the churches in town that showed their total income and expenses and what they really gave back to charity. But hell, it was a story and Turcotte thought it needed to be in print for all to see. Soon after this article it became plain to the *Mirror* publisher, that he was done. He had no appetite to cover any more irritating council meetings, boring bake sales or talk to self-serving merchants. Turcotte knew it was time for him to pull the plug and get out, and this time for good.

Turcotte was negotiating the sale of his *Morris Mirror* with the *Winnipeg Free Press* publisher Box Cox, who he found to be a trustworthy man, even though he thought his paper was too closely associated with the left leaning CBC office in Winnipeg. Of Cox, Turcotte said “at least he resides in the city his newspaper publishes out of and the paper (*Free Press*) Cox produces is a quality paper.” The sale of the paper never was realized.

In early 2013 the Turcottes planned to move back to B.C. in the Okanagan area and they decided their April first issue would be their last. They would go out in a blaze of glory by printing a sensational front page story that would really be an April 1st joke, but they would not tell anyone that the story was in fact, fake. It did not happen that way though, as one small paragraph in their next paper changed everything.

It was January 14th and two sentences published in that issue caused them to leave for British Columbia about forty-five days earlier than they planned. In a Thumbs down, Thumbs up editorial, near the middle of the page they printed, “Thumbs Down to Canada’s native community and those Manitobans who are demanding unrealistic expectations of their government, and

who in some cases, are acting like terrorists in their own country. Indians (natives) want it all but corruption and laziness prevent some of them from working for it.”

This was written at the height of the “Idle No More” movement and Turcotte printed this just after Indigenous people had used what many people thought were illegal means to block major railroads and highways in eastern and central Canada. In his first book, *Reed-All-About-It ... Memoirs of a Controversial Publisher*, Turcotte covered this story in detail. Here is a bit of hindsight on those two paragraphs, the paragraph was insensitive for sure, but at that moment in time it could be considered at the very least, slightly correct. At least that is what thousands of e-mails, phone calls, tweets and Facebook followers through social media thought. Turcotte told the truth in the minds of the white, right wing Canadians. The religious people of Morris and especially Native Americans in Manitoba and Ontario did not agree.

In Conrad Black’s book, “Rise to Greatness”, he states that “they (Indians) were a Stone Age culture and economy that had not (even) discovered the wheel,” controversial for sure but also correct. Black did not publish this sentence during those times of turmoil so he did not get the wave of disgust that Turcotte received, and so he shouldn’t. In Turcotte’s case it could also be considered both bad timing and poor judgement.

One problem child at the time was James Sinclair who was with the Department of Native Studies at the University of Manitoba. He tried to hold an open meeting with Turcotte at his Morris office. Sinclair is an Anishinaabe, originally from St. Peters

(Little Pegas) Indian reserve that was close to finishing a book he was writing. Turcotte smelled a rat and told him he would not meet with him at this time. Sure enough Sinclair showed up anyways with a few natives and Winnipeg left wing media types in tow. The Morris publisher got the last laugh as a little bird told him the gang was on their way, so he closed his office doors and let the rabble rousers stand outside waiting for him to re-open in minus thirty degree weather. Sinclair has since gone to run and win for the NDP in Manitoba and some say he has interest in the leadership of the party.

Turcotte then proceeded to shut his little paper (*Morris Mirror*) down. A year later Sun Media did the same with two of their Manitoba papers, *The Lac du Bonnet* and *Beausejour Review*. At the same time, the Turcottes sold their house in downtown Morris along with other properties that they owned in Manitoba and for the first time in Turcotte's adult life he was a free man.

At this point he no longer needed newspapers (the downward spiral of papers had already begun) and newspapers no longer needed him. Turcotte had the moving company pack the family belongings up and ship the works to the Okanagan, where they reside today. Since then unfortunately many, many more newspapers have closed their doors or publish internet only editions.

Now, Back to the Main Feature

(End of the Intermission)



David Black has re-written the newspaper industry by consolidating his newspapers under central roofs. A press baron, if there ever was one, but also a man of privacy.

Chapter Twenty

Painted, Painted Black

Black Press Group Ltd. is comprised of many daily and numerous community newspapers in British Columbia, Alberta and the State of Washington with its headquarters in Victoria. It is owned (majority) and administered by David H. Black (no relation to the other media mogul Conrad Black). The company is twenty per cent owned by Torstar, publisher of the *Toronto Star*.

Media Mogul David Black knows how... an article in a 2012 edition of the Vancouver Sun stated that when David Black bought his first newspaper, the *Williams Lake Tribune* from his father Alan and partner Clive Stangoe more than forty years ago, he spent two years doing every single job in the place. As this author was in the area at that time, he can confirm that the above statement is one-hundred percent correct.

When a reporter quit and couldn't be replaced for two weeks, Black filled in, filing stories generated in the dusty Central

Interior cow town. He sold ads, took photographs, and wrote the payroll cheques when the accountant left. And when a pressman was sick, he learned how to do plate changes and keep the presses rolling. It was, Black says, the best education he could get about how to recognize business opportunities, a skill he's parlayed into the ownership of more than one hundred and fifty newspapers in Canada and the U.S.A.

"At the end of two years I knew the business cold and nothing's really changed. I can walk into a paper and say we have ten more bodies in this department than we need," he said. "That experience is why I have been able to keep applying the same thought processes and do well in business," Black has stated.

His model for newspaper ownership, buy cheap or distressed properties, cut unnecessary staff, make budgets squeak and consolidate common services such as printing, accounting and human resources in regional centres has totally rewritten the newspaper industry in British Columbia and Washington. His Black Press Ltd. also owns the *San Francisco Examiner*, once owned by Randolph Hearst. At one time all of his papers had a circulation of more than 2.8 million and an annual estimated income of more than half a billion dollars according to published reports.

A few years ago Black stepped outside his area of expertise and looked into a business that no one else in Canada wanted much to do with. Black wished to build a state-of-the-art world class oil refinery on the Coast of British Columbia. Black said it didn't bother him that he didn't have the personal expertise it took to build and run a refinery capable of processing 550,000 barrels of crude oil a day. Why would he when he could hire that

expertise? What he did have, he said, is a patriotic and passionate view that Canada needs to take control of its energy policy, a policy now driven by U.S. interests that stacks the odds against Canadian resource producers.

“From a nation-building exercise, we have really shot ourselves in the foot,” he said. “I am the first to admit that we should be debating whether to develop oil sands that tend to be greenhouse gas heavy, but I believe that should be a conversation Canadians have, not Americans. They’re our resources and we’ve always made a living selling our resources, so it is our decision to make. I think there are sovereignty issues, as well as a hell of an economic issue.” It may seem strange that a man who has spent all of his life quietly buying and investing in newspapers, would at an age when most are thinking retirement (he was born in 1946) decide that he might like to start a new business.

Black said he would be in a publishing conflict in Kitimat and Terrace, due to his support of a refinery in the area and because he owned newspapers there, he wouldn’t tell the editors what to write in news or opinion pieces.

Rollie Rose knew a little bit about how Black operated. Rose, the former owner of the *Ladysmith Chronicle*, sold his paper to Black in the 1980s just as Black was starting to buy up almost all of the independent newspapers on Vancouver Island. “David in my view comes across as a laid-back guy wearing loafers and a sweater and you like him and he’s very personable. But boy, you’d better not mistake him for not being a businessman, because he’s very shrewd. He leaves nothing on the table,” said Rose, a former Ladysmith mayor and executive director of the B.C. Press Council.

“When I sold to him I knew I was mismatched, so I got my brother-in-law who was a senior banker in Vancouver to come over and negotiate for me. Black told me after “that brother-in-law of yours took everything I had, every last quarter.” So he had held right down to twenty-five cents what he was going to pay for my business. That tells you you’d better know what you’re doing because he sure does.” Rose said he once asked Black why he felt it necessary to continue buying newspapers. He said “the deal, I love making the deal.”

Black has served as a chairman of Premier Gordon Campbell’s Progress Board and is a strident supporter of the Liberal’s controversial plan to build the Site C Dam on the Peace River. In the late 1980s he was the chairman of the team that organized the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Victoria, and he has been a generous supporter to the B.C. Cancer Foundation, something he chose to do when his late wife Annabeth was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

Campbell, previously Canada’s High Commissioner to Britain, has called Black “an exceptional British Columbian. David Black, I think, is a very clean thinker. He is smart, he understands not only the world of business but public life as well and he is a man of complete integrity. He doesn’t play games,” Campbell said. “He has a real vision for the province. He has always had a vision for the province. And, in my experience he was always thinking of what was best for British Columbia and what was best for Canada. Whether it was cancer issues in Victoria or the Site C Dam in the north, he has always been someone who looks at what can be accomplished and then he thinks how to do it, as opposed to one of those people who always tells you what can’t be done.

And if David Black gives you his word on something, you know you can count on it. He will never back off it.”

Black says despite his business acumen he’s made “a few boneheaded deals” in his life, like the time he bought the Pulitzer Prize-winning Akron Beacon-Journal from McClatchy Newspapers in 2006 for \$165 million, just before the recession and the decline of major newspaper titles in the U.S. Even after deeply slashing staff he had to take a \$100 million write down. In 2010 a federal U.S. court ordered Black’s company to restore health care benefits it had cut to the newspaper’s retired staff.

He also came under fire for buying and then shutting down the profitable *Honolulu Advertiser* in 2010 in order to make his *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, which he’d bought a decade before, into a money-making operation. More than 430 people lost their jobs, but some experts say Black’s efforts actually saved one newspaper that is now called the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, when both papers might have gone under.

David H. Black was born in Vancouver but moved between Ontario and B.C. He graduated from University of B.C. with a degree in civil engineering and obtained his MBA at the University of Western Ontario. He cut his teeth in management at Crown Life Insurance before being hired by Torstar Corp. in its acquisitions department. The two years he spent there learning why some of the newspaper chain’s properties worked and others didn’t, gave Black the appetite to get into buying distressed newspapers.

That’s different from the trouble he got into in 1998 when he ordered all of his B.C. newspapers not to carry editorials

supporting the Nisga'a Treaty because he felt the NDP government of Glen Clark was publishing "half-truths". Black said he felt the deal would entrench racism by creating "special rights for a special group of Canadians."

Clark accused Black of "a naked abuse of trust", but the B.C. Press Council ruled Black had the right to dictate editorial policy in his newspapers, noting that the edict only applied only to editorials and not to letters, columns or other commentary.

Black has otherwise tended to keep a low public profile. That's in part because he's frequently confused with another, more outspoken publishing Black, that of Conrad, the Lord Black of Cross Harbour. It's almost a given for news stories that involve either men to note that they are "not related". David Black said (tongue in cheek) that he used to get the benefit of good table seating in restaurants just by saying he's "Black, the publisher." Black has two daughters Morgan and Catherine. He also has nine grandchildren.

Information obtained on David Black for this chapter and elsewhere in this book was obtained from this author's memories, the Vancouver Sun, Diana Nethercoll and Wikipedia.



Arianna Huffington was one of the first successful new media publishers and although she started in the United States she eventually brought forward a Canadian edition

Ms. Huffington's picture is taken from the Huffington Post website

Chapter Twenty-one

New Age Publishers take hold

As newspapers started to lose their shine and luster, a new type of internet publication started to take over. These New Age Media publications who in the early days, copied, some would say stole articles from legitimate newspapers. They were a lot less expensive to produce and soon almost every town had one or two of these copycats around for the populace to read. One of the early internet newspaper success stories was created by Arianna Huffington in the United States which was followed-up with a stand-alone Canadian edition.

The Huffington Post, sometimes abbreviated Huff Post, is a left-leaning American online news aggregator and blog that has both, localized and international editions. Huff Post was founded by Arianna Huffington, Kenneth Lerer, Jonah Peretti and Andrew Breitbart. The site offers news, satire, blogs, and original content and covers politics, business, entertainment, environment, technology, popular media, lifestyle, culture, comedy, healthy living, women's interests, and local news.

The Huffington Post was launched on May 9, 2005 as an overtly liberal commentary outlet and alternative to news aggregators such as the Drudge Report, and some still consider it to espouse liberal views. On February 7, 2011, AOL acquired the mass market *Huffington Post* for US \$315 million, making Arianna Huffington editor-in-chief of The Huffington Post Media Group.

In July 2012, *The Huffington Post* was ranked #1 on the fifteen most popular political sites list by *eBizMBA Rank*, which bases its list on each site's Alexa Global Traffic Rank and U.S. Traffic Rank from both Compete and Quantcast. In 2012, *The Huffington Post* became the first commercially run United States digital media enterprise to win a Pulitzer Prize. It has an active community, with over one million comments made on the site each month. Prior to *The Huffington Post*, Ms. Huffington hosted a website called Ariannaonline.com. Her first foray into the Internet was a website called Resignation.com, which called for the resignation of President Bill Clinton and was a rallying place for conservatives opposing Clinton.

In approximately June 2007, the site launched its first local version, *HuffPost Chicago*. In June 2009, *HuffPost New York* was launched, followed shortly by *HuffPost Denver* which launched on September fifteen, 2009, and *HuffPost Los Angeles* which launched on December second, 2009. In 2011, three new regional editions were launched: *HuffPost San Francisco* on July twelve, *HuffPost Detroit*, on November seventeen, and *HuffPost Miami* in November. *HuffPost Hawaii* was launched in collaboration with the online investigative reporting and public affairs news service Honolulu Civil Beat on September fourth, 2013.

The Huffington Post launched its first international edition, *HuffPost Canada*, on May twenty-six, 2011. On July sixth of the same year, the *Huffington Post UK* launched its UK edition. On January twenty-third, 2012, *Huffington*, in partnership with *Le Monde* and Les Nouvelles Editions Indépendantes, launched *Le Huffington Post*, and the launch of French-language edition is the first in a non-English speaking country. On February 8, another French language edition was launched in the Canadian province of Quebec. Arianna Huffington and Nicolas Berggruen announced the launch of the *WorldPost*, created in partnership with the Berggruen Institute. Its contributors have included former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Google CEO Eric Schmidt, novelist Jonathan Franzen and musician Yo-Yo Ma.

In 2011, after its purchase by AOL, *The Huffington Post* subsumed many of AOL's *Voices* properties (including *AOL Black Voices*, which had originally independently established in 1995 as *Blackvoices.com*, and *AOL Latino*). The *Voices* brand was expanded in September 2011 with the launch of *Gay Voices*, a vertical dedicated to LGBT-relevant articles. Other established sections, such as *Impact* (launched in 2010 as a partnership between *Huffington Post* and Causecast).

By late 2013, *The Huffington Post* was taking steps to operate as more of a "stand-alone business" within AOL, taking control of more of its own business and advertising operations, and directing more effort towards securing "premium advertising". In addition to columns by Arianna Huffington and a group of contributors such as John Conyers, Harry Shearer, Leonard Kim, Jeff Pollack, and Roy Sekoff, *The Huffington Post* has many bloggers, from politicians and celebrities to academics and

policy experts who contribute on a wide range of topics. Specialist contributors include spiritual author Craig Taro Gold and health expert Jeff Halevy. Contributors to the site are unpaid, a fact which has engendered some controversy.

Celebrities are allowed to post blogs on the site, and a number have opted to do so over the years. In many cases, such as that of Robert Reich former Secretary of Labor, the content is cross-posted among multiple sites. The site also publishes columns by specialists in fields such as Cenk Uygur and Anand Reddi on global health issues, Alice Waters on food, Taryn Hillin who is the Associate Editor of *Weddings and Post-Divorce*, Harold Katz on dental health, Suzie Heumann on sex, Diane Ravitch on education, Frances Beinecke and Phil Radford on climate change and the environment, Jacob M. Appel on ethics, Howard Steven Friedman on statistics and politics, Auren Hoffman on business and politics, Jon LaPook on medicine, Cara Santa Maria on science, Nancy Rappaport on child psychiatry, and Iris Krasnow on marriage. Colon cancer survivor and awareness advocate Eric Ehrmann, one of the original contributors to *Rolling Stone* in 1968, has been part of HuffPo's group of bloggers since 2009, posting independent political commentary on *The Huffington Post*, *The Huffington Post UK*, *Le Huffington Post*, *El Huffington Post*, and *Al Huffington Post Maghreb*. It publishes scoops of current news stories and links to selected prominent news stories. Author and former Hollywood story analyst Julie Gray writes for the *Post*. Michal Shapiro, former Director of Music Videos, LINK TV, has covered "world music" for the "Post" since April eleven, 2010.

On February seventeen, 2016, it was announced that the Duchess of Cambridge, Kate Middleton, would guest edit a series

of articles as part of a collaboration designed to improve and better understand mental health issues affecting young people. On April ninth, 2016, American Sleep Association (ASA) and *The Huffington Post* announced a partnership to increase awareness about the importance of sleep and the dangers of sleep disorders. Through the collaboration, ASA shared information and resources relating to sleep information between the two platforms. The Huffington Post's, *Off The Bus*, is an online news organization using amateur journalists that is collaboration between *The Huffington Post*, New York University (NYU), and Jay Rosen's NewAssignment.Net.

In August 2006, *The Huffington Post* announced that SoftBank Capital would invest US\$5 million in the site, which had grown in popularity in only a year, to help expand it. Plans included hiring more staff to update the site 24 hours a day, hiring in-house reporters and a multimedia team to make video reports. Alan Patricof's Greycroft Partners also invested. The news marked the site's "first round of venture capital funding". The site has now invested in video blogging, with many of the site contributors contributing via video, capturing clips in the media and posting them on the site.

In November 2008, *The Huffington Post* completed US\$15 million fundraising from investors to finance expansion, including more journalism and the provision of local news across the United States. On February seventh, 2011, AOL announced it would acquire *The Huffington Post* for US\$315 million. As part of the deal, Arianna Huffington became president and editor-in-chief of The Huffington Post Media Group, including *The Huffington Post* and existing AOL properties until her resignation in 2016.

Born Arianna Stasinopoulo Huffington in Athens Greece on July 15, 1950, she was married for eleven years to Republican congressman Michael Huffington. Prior to the Huffington Post, Huffington already had a long career in the media.

Although Huff Post became the world's first big internet newspaper other smaller Internet only newspapers can now be found through-out Canada, one of the better ones is allNovaScotia.com. This internet publication was launched in 2001 by the seasoned newsman and publisher David Bentley. Caroline Wood is the current publisher. In Ontario over 15 years ago (2000), SooToday.com was started as a small website that provided local news in Sault Ste. Marie by Dick Peplow. It was a simple concept that provided local content with an edge, and SooToday was very quickly embraced as demand for more local news began to grow. A couple years later, they opened BayToday in North Bay. Around the same time, another website was created by a competitor to fill the void left by the loss of the local TV station.

In 2013, SooToday acquired LOCAL2 in Sault Ste. Marie and Village Media was born. Village Media now fully owns and operates news sites in Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay, Timmins, Barrie and Guelph. They have exclusive online partnerships in Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Manitoulin Island with leading publishers in each market. The original site SooToday (CEO is Jeff Elgie) has become one of the largest online news sites one would find in community's there size. They receive over 80,000 unique visits per day from about 40,000 unique users.

Another new age publishing company located in southern Ontario, is Dynasty Communication who publishes three alternative weekly papers in Kitchener, Hamilton and the Niagara area.

*Some information on Huff Post & SooToday was provided in part from
Wikipedia and the companies' web-sites*



Paul Godfrey runs a media empire (mainly newspapers) that stretches from Coast to Coast in North America's Great White North

Chapter Twenty-two

Canada's National Publisher

Postmedia Network Canada Corporation, known as Postmedia, is a media company based out of Toronto with an ownership group that was assembled by former National Post CEO Paul Godfrey who, according to James Bradshaw of the Globe and Mail, was paid \$1.76 million for the 2015 fiscal year.

Although it has been a bumpy ride to where they now sit in 2017, the Postmedia story starts way back in 1904 when Southam was being put together by William Southam (see separate chapter on the Southams). He had been a delivery boy for *The London Free Press* and by 1867 had become part owner. Southam bought and transformed the failing *Hamilton Spectator* in 1877 and in 1897 bought up other papers including the *Calgary Herald*, the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Vancouver Province*. The Southam Newspapers were then sold to Hollinger Inc. in 1996. Many acquisitions, including several of the Canadian print media holdings of Thomson Newspapers, were added to their stable. On November 15, 2000, the Southam Newspapers Company was

broken up with the print media holdings and the Southam newspaper name being sold to Canwest.

Canwest examined ways to integrate many of its smaller market papers into its Global television news division but try as they may they could not make it work. On August 9, 2002, Canwest sold many of its smaller market newspapers to a variety of new owners, including Torstar, Transcontinental Media and Osprey Media. In 2003, Southam Newspapers was fully absorbed into Canwest and became Canwest News Service. Canwest News Service began operating in Winnipeg on February 12, 2003, and moved its expanded operations to Ottawa in April 2007.

Postmedia was formed in 2010 when the Canwest newspapers and the *National Post* were bought while under court-supervised credit protection by an investment group backed by Golden Tree for \$1.1 billion. It grew to become the largest newspaper chain in the country when it paid \$316 million to buy Sun Media's English-language news properties, including 175 newspapers and digital publications, notably the Sun chain of papers in Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, Ottawa and Winnipeg, plus The London Free Press. Later the Sun and Postmedia newsrooms were merged in Edmonton, Calgary and Ottawa, with ninety journalists laid off.

The operations included the Postmedia News wire service as well as an online news component through Canada.com. The news agency provided news, sports, entertainment, photography, financial and feature information and data to Postmedia Network's Canadian newspapers, online properties and a number of third party clients in Canada and the United States.

Paul Godfrey of Postmedia was a North York alderman, Chairman of Metro Toronto, President of the *Toronto Sun* and head of the Toronto Blue Jays. He was instrumental in bringing the Toronto Blue Jays to Toronto and had campaigned to bring the National Football League to Toronto. He had been named president and CEO of The National Post, starting in 2009. On November twenty-seven, 2009, Godfrey was announced as the chair of the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation, a role in which he served until being dismissed in 2013. He has been President and CEO of Postmedia Network, since July thirteen, 2010.

Born in Toronto, Paul Godfrey grew up in a working class Jewish family near the Kensington Market neighbourhood and later moved to the Bathurst and Lawrence area of North York. After graduating from C.W. Jefferys Collegiate Institute, he attended the University of Toronto and graduated with a Bachelor of Applied Science in chemical engineering. In 1999, he was made a Member of the Order of Canada and in 2010, he was appointed to the Order of Ontario. Godfrey is married to Gina with whom he has three sons, Rob, Noah and Jay.

He entered politics as an alderman in the borough of North York in 1964, serving until 1973. That year, he was appointed Chairman of Metropolitan Toronto, serving until 1984. In 1984, after he left politics, he joined the *Toronto Sun* as publisher and CEO. In 1991 he succeeded founder Doug Creighton as president and chief operating officer of Toronto Sun Publishing. In 1992 he became CEO of the Toronto Sun Publishing replacing founder Doug Creighton. Creighton was forced to resign by the board of directors and the parent company, Maclean Hunter. In

1996, Godfrey led a successful attempt by Sun management to buy back control, allowing it to become an independent entity once again.

Two years later, Godfrey organized a deal with Conrad Black to swap the Financial Post with four daily newspapers in southwestern Ontario. These included the *Hamilton Spectator*, *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, *Guelph Mercury*, and the *Cambridge Reporter*. In October 1998, Sun Media was approached by Torstar Corporation in an unsolicited takeover bid for \$748 million. Two months later Quebecor Media Inc. made a higher and eventually more successful bid for a reported \$983 million. Godfrey was a key figure in seeking out Quebecor as an alternative buyer. After the sale, Quebecor, initially heralded as a 'white knight' buyer, forced Godfrey to cut one hundred and eighty jobs from his newspapers. In November 2000, Godfrey announced that he was stepping down as CEO of Sun Media.

In 1984 he was appointed to the board of a new crown agency called the Stadium Corporation of Ontario along with Larry Grossman and Hugh Macaulay. Its mandate was to choose the location and design for a new domed stadium that would eventually become the Sky Dome. Godfrey stayed on the board until February 1989 when he resigned. He had been accused of being in a conflict of interest because of his involvement with a group lobbying for a NFL franchise in Toronto. Godfrey denied that there was any conflict and also denied that this had anything to do with his resignation. However, Godfrey remained on the board of directors of the Stadium Corporation, a separate entity, until 1998 when he resigned shortly before the Sky Dome filed for bankruptcy. He claimed that his resignation would have no effect

on the process. Godfrey said "... It didn't make much sense to me to have separate director meetings and shareholder meetings, when the shareholders should be making all the decisions ... My resignation just streamline the process."

Godfrey in late 2016 urged the federal government to become an ally to the print news industry as possible newspaper shutdowns loomed, warning the business is "ugly, and it will get uglier", in a National Post article. Paul Godfrey told the House of Commons Heritage Committee, the doom and gloom Canadians have been hearing about the state of print media, has been "understated".

Godfrey said, "More drastic measures will need to be taken by Canada's newspaper companies to stay in business". Godfrey suggested the government could spend more ad dollars on print media, pointing to federal statistics showing government advertising in newspapers was halved, while online advertising nearly doubled between 2010 and 2015. The bulk of that money instead went to foreign-owned behemoths like Google and Facebook which produce no original Canadian news content.

Godfrey also suggested the government could expand its aid to include daily publications and offer tax breaks to companies that advertise in Canadian publications. Liberal MP Adam Vaughan accused Godfrey of contradicting himself. "Your news organization is one of the fiercest critics of government advertising," he said. Vaughan also criticized a chain-wide editorial endorsement of the Tories and a Conservative Party advertisement which appeared on the front pages of many of the chain's newspapers during the last federal election campaign.

Godfrey's responses to both issues focused on the separation between the views of columnists and the views of management. "Columnists have the right to say what they want," he said. The official position of the newspaper is quite often different." Vaughan further questioned why the government should spend taxpayers' dollars in support of Postmedia, which is partly owned by U.S. hedge fund Golden Tree Asset Management. Godfrey noted the company is controlled by Canadians. "You can be critical of Golden Tree Asset Management, but I can tell you you're barking up the wrong tree," he said.

Towards the end of January 2017 the Public Policy Forum's report on the future of journalism and democracy to assist the federal government enact a number of changes to help Canada's media industry, particularly newspapers, was unveiled (more in chapter 26). Godfrey was as usual, to be found front and center doing an interview on CBC television regarding this report.

Information on Postmedia and Paul Godfrey were obtained from various sources including articles gleamed from the internet including Marie-Danielle Smith and National Post



Duff Jamison of Great West
Newspapers who have ties to
Glacier Media



François Olivier, President and
Chief Executive Officer of
TC Transcontinental

Chapter Twenty-three

Glacier is a Big Part of the Pie

Sam Grippo of Glacier Media in Vancouver and Robert (Bob) Doull of Aberdeen Media, based out of the Okanagan, are two more “media men” who control newspapers in the towns that they publish in. Glacier is a much bigger player in the print and media industry while Aberdeen owns and publishes ten community newspapers and seven speciality publications in the interior of British Columbia.

Glacier Media Inc. is a publicly owned publisher of daily newspapers and weekly newspapers, trade magazines and business information products throughout Western Canada. Its chairman of the board is the spotlight-shy Sam Grippo who was once a group publisher at Hollinger during David Radler’s time as their chief operating officer. The company is also part-owner of four other newspaper publishers. Grippo, like many other businessmen has his tentacles in more than just newspapers. One of the companies he is involved in is Madison Pacific Properties Inc., who according to their January 2017 press release, had a net

income of 11.4 million for the three months ending November 30, 2016. The company owns approximately \$435 million in investment properties and Grippo is chairman of the Board.

Though it is now exclusively focused on media and databases, Glacier was a distributor of bottled water for its first ten years, from 1988 to 1997, under the name Cambridge Resources Ltd. The company's name changed to Glacier Ventures International Corp. in August 1997, and it exited the water business the next year. Glacier Media adopted its current name in 2008. Throughout the early 2000s the company invested in several agricultural and business publications, and entered the general-interest newspaper business in early 2004 with the acquisition of Boundary Publishers Group, a chain of weekly newspapers in Saskatchewan, followed in the next twelve months by three more purchases (Pasquia Publishing, *Weyburn Review*, Pennand Inc.) that made it the largest publisher of weeklies in the province.

Glacier continued expanding its community newspaper holdings in 2005-2006, gaining control of Madison Publishing Group, including *Business in Vancouver* and several suburban Vancouver weeklies, as well as several former properties of Hollinger Inc., including a fifty per cent interest in the Great West chain of newspaper weeklies in Alberta. They also took full ownership of several weeklies in British Columbia including Glacier's first daily newspapers, in British Columbia and in Quebec. Hollinger's assets also included several industry publications that expanded Glacier's trade information division, including the *Western Producer* and *Daily Oil Bulletin*. In all, Glacier paid about \$180 million for the former Hollinger assets.

Late in 2006, Glacier entered into a partnership with David Radler, a former Hollinger executive, to sell the chain's lone Quebec holding, *The Record* of Sherbrooke. Glacier became a fifty percent (later fifty-nine percent) shareholder in Radler's privately held company, Alta Newspaper Group. Subsequent months saw Glacier invest in two other companies with ties to Radler, Continental Newspapers Ltd., publisher of three dailies in British Columbia and Ontario, and RISN Operations, a chain of three dailies and several weeklies in Rhode Island, United States. By mid-2008, Glacier owned twenty seven-plus per cent in these companies. Continental is the successor to Horizon Operations Canada, a company that was owned by Radler.

Black Press, the largest publisher of weeklies in British Columbia, purchased eleven Glacier newspapers that competed with its own weeklies in mid-2010, including the *Nelson Daily News* and *Prince Rupert Daily News*, both of which Black closed down. The sale also included the *Trail Daily Times* and several weeklies in the Kootenay's region of British Columbia. Glacier also sold the *Cranbrook Daily Townsman* and *Kimberley Daily Bulletin* to an independent buyer, who sold them on to Black a year later.

Glacier purchased its largest newspaper, the *Times Colonist* of Victoria, British Columbia, in an \$86.5 million deal in 2011. The deal, which included two other daily newspapers and twenty weeklies formerly held by Postmedia Network, solidified Glacier as one of the leading newspaper publishers in British Columbia, although it did not include either of Postmedia's Vancouver dailies. Besides the *Times Colonist*, the leading daily newspaper of British Columbia's capital city, Glacier owns other

daily newspapers throughout the province including the *Alaska Highway News* of Fort St. John and Dawson Creek.

Through its joint ventures, Glacier is also part-owner of daily newspapers in Alberta (*Lethbridge Herald* and *Medicine Hat News*), Arizona, (*Yuma Sun*), British Columbia (*The Daily Courier* and *Penticton Herald* which are part of the Continental Group), California (*Porterville Recorder*) Ontario (*The Chronicle-Journal*), Rhode Island (*The Call*, *Kent County Daily Times* and *The Times*) and Quebec (*The Record*).

Glacier is part-owner of more than thirty weekly newspapers in Alberta through its fifty-nine percent investment in TriCube Media which is a division of Alta Newspaper Group. They own seven weeklies in the Lethbridge-Medicine Hat area, and have half ownership share in Great West Newspapers, which owns two dozen weeklies in the Edmonton and Calgary areas.

Weekly newspapers owned by Glacier in B.C. are, *Bridge River Lillooet News*, *North Shore News*, *Squamish Chief*, *Burnaby Now*, *Powell River Peak*, *Vancouver Courier*, *Coast Reporter*; *Real Estate Weekly*; *Westerly News*; *Tri-City News*, *Richmond News*, *Whistler Question*, *Delta Optimist* and *New Westminster Record*. Glacier also publishes many twice weekly, bi-weekly and monthly publications.

Manitoba Glacier newspapers include, *Deloraine Times & Star*, *The Reminder*, *Thompson Citizen*, *Melita New Era*, *Reston Recorder*, *Virden Empire-Advance*, *Neepawa Press*, *Souris Plaindealer*, *Westman Journal* and *Nickel Belt News*.

Through its fifty-nine per-cent interest in Alta Newspaper Group, Glacier owns part of two English-language weekly newspapers associated with *The Record* in Sherbrooke, Quebec.

Glacier newspapers in Saskatchewan total twenty-one and include the *Weyburn Review*, *Yorkton This Week*, North Battlefords *News-Optimist* and *Tisdale Recorder* to name a few of the bigger ones. Glacier's holdings also include several publications and publishing groups that cater to businesses or consumers, such as *Farm Business Communications*, Canada's largest agricultural publisher, the *Real Estate Weekly* based in Vancouver and *The Western Producer*, Western Canada's largest weekly farm newspaper. For a complete run down (up-to-date) of Glaciers publications go to glaciermediagroup.ca.

Working with Glacier in the newspaper business is TC Transcontinental who are based out of Montreal and own newspapers in Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Quebec. TC Transcontinental is led by François Olivier who was instrumental in his company's acquisition of some of the Sun Media weeklies over a year ago. Also tied in with Glacier is the Great West newspaper chain in Alberta. Great West Newspapers Limited Partnership is a community newspaper publishing company headquartered in St. Albert. Jamison Newspapers Inc. and Glacier Ventures International Corporation each hold a fifty per cent economic interest in the Partnership.

Great West and its three subsidiaries, Rocky View Publishing Ltd., Mountain View Publishing Inc. and Alberta Business Research Ltd. publish twenty-four titles mostly in Alberta. Gazette Press, the web printing division, provides commercial printing to the group and a wide variety of other

commercial customers. Great West News LP is also a partner in the Glacier agricultural group including Farm Business Communications, Western Producer. Shirley and Ernie Jamison started the beginnings of what became Great West when they purchased the *St. Albert Gazette* in 1966 but before that, they were part-owners of *the Ponoka Herald*. Their son, Duff Jamison is now CEO and president of the company and in a September 22nd meeting of the Chair of Government Relations Committee, Mr. Jamison spoke about weekly newspapers and their needs.

“Good morning from Edmonton, Alberta. My name is Duff Jamison. I am the president and CEO of Great West Newspapers, which publishes eighteen newspapers in Alberta. In my role as government affairs chairman, I am representing the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association today, and I have with me Dennis Merrell, our executive director.

Community newspapers seem to be flying under the radar in the discussion about print media's future. Although they look and feel the same as our larger metro daily cousins, we have some unique qualities that differentiate us.

Print advertising remains the mainstay of any newspaper model, daily or weekly. Community newspapers rely primarily on local businesses, community organizations, schools, and local government, and somewhat less on national advertising and classifieds, which were once the major revenue streams for the dailies. I'm not suggesting that national advertising isn't important; it most certainly is, and this category for us and for the dailies has experienced the greatest decline over the past years.

The majority of community newspapers tend to free distribution and total market coverage. As a result, distribution of

advertising inserts has become an important and reliable revenue stream for all of us. Community newspapers generally serve market populations of less than 100,000, and the majority would be well under that. We are the original hyper-local guys providing the primary source of local news for our residents in a very cost-effective means for local advertising.

Our once or twice per week frequency also distinguishes us from our daily cousins. Our news is rarely of the breaking-news variety, and our readers seem comfortable with the fact that it's not available in print every morning. They need and want to know what's happening in their community, but they don't demand it the minute it happens. When it is important to get the story out quickly, we are all quite capable of doing that on our digital platforms. We may lack the digital horsepower of, say, *The Globe and Mail*, but we're certainly not in the dark ages either.

Free content—the nirvana of the digital age—is old news in the community newspaper industry. Although many paid subscription weekly newspapers remain in small markets, in the larger markets we've long delivered community news free to our residents, paid for by our advertisers wanting total market coverage. Paid circulation dailies, on the other hand, have experienced a significant decline in print penetration as subscribers drop off because national and international news is so freely available online.

The real secret sauce of a successful community newspaper is operating like its community owned. It's not an arm's-length operation, as can be the case in a daily, but is in the trenches as active participants in our communities, a service club of sorts, really. I often tell our local politicians and community

leaders that, like them, we are in the business of building stronger and healthier communities for everyone. We are fully integrated into the community, leaving no doubt in anyone's mind that we have the best interests of the community in mind. When done right, the newspaper earns credibility and respect among its readers and their support when we criticize leaders and institutions that we feel have let the community down.

What is the current picture for community newspapers? Print advertising revenues, far and away the largest source of revenue for Canada's community newspapers, are in decline. Digital advertising revenues tied to our news reporting remain insignificant simply because community newspaper websites and social media feeds do not generate the traffic required to cover the reporting costs. It's not even close today, and we don't think it will be in the foreseeable future.

There are opportunities in providing advertising services on non-print or digital platforms: social media, search, and geo-targeting, and community newspapers are pursuing them where they see benefits for their communities and their customers. It's still to be proven, however, whether a small market can generate sufficient digital profits to support local journalism, and I have to admit that the idea of operating a secondary business to support the news reporting functions of the primary business doesn't feel quite right.

Subscription and newsstand revenues are an important source of revenue for a declining number of paid circulation community newspapers. However, with circulations of less than 5,000 and subscription rates of about fifty dollars, these also fall well short of covering reporting costs. Paywalls help to protect

this revenue, but also reduce online traffic and digital advertising revenue with it. It's very difficult to see a point at which print advertising revenues will not be the major revenue contributor for even paid circulation community newspapers.

There's no reader revenue in a free paper, and most community newspapers in Canada are not paid for, leaving them to rely entirely on advertising to pay the cost of reporting the local news.

These papers tend to be in larger markets, often on the periphery of metro areas also served by dailies and other media. For that reason, no Canadian community newspaper has been able to maintain a paid circulation in the metro markets. We also require total market coverage to satisfy the market penetration needs of our advertisers, both in print and in inserts.

Not often mentioned in the discussion are that many local advertisers and organizations remain dependent on local media to reach local residents and consumers. In most communities under 100,000, print media deliver the largest audience by far. Although most small businesses have websites, Facebook groups, Twitter feeds, etc., it has proven very difficult to build any real mass of followers. Therefore, without the market penetration of local media, most would find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to reach the vast majority of local residents.

On top of their marketing needs, these businesses have their own challenges brought on by globalization and the digital revolution. Online competitors, among them Amazon and mega-retailers like Walmart, threaten the very viability of these local businesses, which are the foundation of advertising support for community papers. Just as is the case with local media,

government, and a well-functioning democracy, the threat to local media's long-standing symbiotic relationship with local advertisers goes much deeper than print media's problems.

Community newspapers, like all media, must compete for the readers' time. We know that time is finite. Time spent on digital devices is made up by reducing time spent on other activities, including reading, watching TV, listening to the radio, etc. Unfortunately, it is not always productive time, things like Candy Crush, Pokémon, and cat videos come to mind, yet somehow publishers must navigate through the clutter to deliver the local news.

Most worrying of all is that it seems fewer and fewer people really give a damn. It brings to mind the old saying that they won't miss us until we're gone. In our affluent western societies, for the most part, people are content with their lives and disengaged from politics to a large extent. Their complacency—and for some, disenchantment—is evidenced by low voter turnouts and lack of interest in joining community and civic organizations created to build better communities. It is unlikely that the general public has given much thought to a world without media watchdogs.

Does government have a role? It probably does. Here are some ideas we should all think about.

The federal government could replenish its print advertising budget. While local governments remain solid advertisers, federal and provincial advertising has nearly dried up. A decade ago, the federal government spent 47% of its ad budget on newspapers: 28% on dailies and 19% on community, ethnic, and aboriginal weeklies. In the 2014-15 fiscal years, it spent 7% in

total on newspapers: one percent on dailies and six percent on weeklies. In that same period, the spending on Internet companies rose from six percent to twenty-eight percent. Most of that money went to U.S. firms, such as Google.

Simply having the federal and provincial governments make a serious commitment to include community newspapers in advertising budgets would go a long way toward supporting local journalism. As the publisher of the *Rainy River Record* in Ontario said to a CBC reporter this week about the closure of his paper next week, the government's decision to pull its advertising budget from newspapers and spend it on social media has made a big difference.

The tax system is another source or possibility. Is there a role for the tax system, as suggested in a recent Quebec report and advocated by some groups, appearing before the Canadian heritage committee? Could Canadians buying subscriptions to Canadian media claim tax deductions on the same level as they do for donations to political parties, a 75% rate? Is there a way for the federal government to encourage Canadian companies to spend their advertising dollars here? This could be in the form of tax credits or penalties for using foreign firms, as we see in the Foreign Publishers Advertising Services Act. The Income Tax Act limits non-Canadian legacy media, but this has not been applied to digital enterprises. Tax incentives could be created to encourage investment in newspapers and other local media”.

Information in this chapter was taken from various sources including company web-sites and Wikipedia

Chapter Twenty-four

New Media has taken over

New Media is a modern catchall term to define all that is related to the internet and the interplay between today's technology, images and sound. New Media evolves and morphs continuously. What it will be tomorrow is virtually unpredictable but it continues to evolve in fast and furious ways. In order to understand an extremely intricate and formless concept, one needs a starting line.

Wikipedia has become the most popular storehouses of knowledge in the new media age and they define New Media as a broad term in media studies that emerged in the latter part of the 20th century. For example, new media holds out a possibility of on-demand access to content anytime, anywhere, on any digital device, as well as interactive user feedback, creative participation and community formation around the media content. Another important promise of new media is the "democratization" of the creation, publishing, distribution and consumption of media content. What distinguishes new media from traditional media is the digitizing of content into bits. There is also a dynamic aspect

of content production which can be done in real time, but these offerings lack standards and have yet to gain traction.

Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia, is an example combining Internet accessible digital text, images and video with web-links, creative participation of contributors, interactive feedback of users and formation of a participant community of editors and donors for the benefit of non-community readers. Facebook is an example of the social media model, in which most users are also participants. Most technologies described as "new media" are digital, often having characteristics of being manipulated, networkable, dense, compressible, and interactive. Some examples may be the Internet, websites, computer multimedia, computer games, CD-ROMS, and DVDs. New Media does not include television programs, feature films, magazines, books, or paper-based publications unless they contain technologies that enable digital interactivity.

As a consequence of the quick embrace of New Media by business, causes, communications, and a multitude of others, the question of "what is New Media?" did not receive an official or standardized response. Instead, responses to this question have often entailed a series of hackneyed keywords or empty phrases whose effectiveness is yet to be determined. The question of New Media isn't that it merely indexes new toys and tools. Rather, there is an underlying difficulty that lurks beneath the bright surface of the screen displaying the images we associate as products or elements of New Media. Instead of asking what is New Media? One would be better to ask, what *isn't* New Media?

The term "New Media" seems to escape its very definition. New Media is a way of organizing a cloud of

technology, skills, and processes that change so quickly that it is impossible to fully define just what those tools and processes are. For example, the cell phone in the late 1980s could be thought of as part of New Media, while today the term might only apply selectively to a certain type of phone with a given system of applications, or even more commonly, the content of those apps. Part of the difficulty in defining New Media is that there is an elusive quality to the idea of “new”. The very prospect of being new denotes an event just beyond the horizon, something that has only just arrived and which we are just beginning to get our hands on. Perhaps in searching for a suitable characterization for this network of tools and ideas is the idea of limitless possibility.

Limitless possibility for communication, for innovation, and education is certainly a fundamental element that shapes our conceptions of new media usage from now on. Nevertheless, in seeking a definition of “New Media” we need some basic tenets that can help us get a better positive understanding of what New Media is beyond what New Media isn’t. New Media can be characterized by the variegated use of images, words, and sounds. These networks of images, sounds, and text data are different from old media formats such as hardcopy newspapers because of the *nesting characteristic*.

Nesting is a way of organizing of the presentation of information according to subjects while paying secondary attention to context. In the place of context, nesting (most commonly seen in text or image hyper-linking) is a format that fosters organization in a way in which elements interact with one another instead of simply following a straight order. This new organization of data does not require a “back story” and each interactive element of information stands alone.

New Media requires a non-linear interpretation, since many sources are often oriented around the same subject-center, but are not always collated. At the end of the day all this means is that one of the primary characteristics of New Media is that it is freed from the linear restrictions of older formats such as newspapers, books, and magazines.

Perhaps this conception of New Media is only part of the whole picture and the skeletal outlines of a much more profound discussion. We recognize that many online interfaces enrich university and office experiences, making nested and comprehensible write-ups, drop-boxes, and support-based chat centers. The first thing that anyone using “New Media” in the twenty first century realizes is that the technology and capability for innovation does not necessarily determine its usefulness or it’s potential. Of course, that all rests on the shoulders of the user, or does it?

New Media has had a profound effect on three of the most essential categories of society in the twenty-first century: economics politics, and the exchange of ideas. Of course, the scope of this article is limited in its ability to name the types of changes that are a product of new media, let alone a sufficient treatment of each category. However, it is important to sketch a brief schematic life of New Media in the Information Age.

Economically, New Media is the globe’s commercial skeleton. Fiber optic wiring networks between the world’s cities connect one to another to another.... Not only does this simple fact make global finance and trade a physical reality, since data networks between firms and investors are universally accessible, but it also impacts the possibilities and conceptions of so-called

“old commercial” enterprises while giving rise to new ones. Every time a customer goes online to shop for that rare book title, or that overstuffed iPod, or even the digital camera from a large retail store available down the block, New Media is on both sides of that transaction. New Media is not only the product but helps to mold the process of electronic commerce.

This means that manufacturing and production are largely focused on making the hardware that supports new media, while “softer” enterprises like news agencies, programmers, and artists adapt their crafts to the flows of the electronic current. If it seems abstract, that’s because it is. New Media processes and communications add another dimension to the business and consumers’ practices we were already used to.

Perhaps the most interesting part of New Media has to do with the restructuring of research, global economics, social interaction, and the currents of writing and dissemination of all information that have accompanied its emergence. Web and blog-writing in particular are not particularly revolutionary or groundbreaking because it changes the way people use language or construct basic sentences. It is ground breaking because it allows people to structure and nest information into documents differently. In today’s average web/blog post, news articles, op-eds are not only entries in mixed media (photos, writing, and video) format, but they are organized according to hyperlink organization.

Hyperlink organization is one of the definitive features of new media, and its implications run deep as well as wide. Nesting, which is frequently in the form of hyperlinking, requires extensive interpretation and research. This organization is beneficial since

old media representation often asserts an artificial context into an article or media piece in order to provide continuity. In nested new media, hyperlinking fosters the ultimate citation resource-apparatus. In traditional reporting found in a print newspaper, scholarly research article, or encyclopedia, information and references are contained within the body of the text. There are certain citations and allusions, but for the most part, the sweeping or narrow nature of the text depends on the structural organization of the piece as well as the reader's contextual understanding of a given subject.

It is well known that data organization differs greatly in twenty-first century new media. Take for instance, the single most influential tool in casual research and data-storage: *Wikipedia*. It is virtually impossible to search an article that is published on *Wikipedia* without coming across a hyperlink to another page of data; in fact, it is more accurate to say that it's difficult to come across an entry with fewer than ten hyperlinks. In addition to the classical mode of citing sources at the end of a document with trusted texts and data, *Wikipedia* exemplifies a style of information technology that is based on the interconnectedness of ideas and events.

Here it is important to note one way that "New Media" may not actually be all that new. During the French Enlightenment, the authors of the famed *Encyclopedie* created a system of footnotes that referred to certain other entries. The subtle structure of such an organization underlies a profoundly partisan representation of facts and images. The same is largely true in hyperlink writing. While the content that is mentioned and presented within an article may be empirically accurate, it is important to note that the selection of sources and outside

connections may still be highly subjective. This quality makes research a more shaded and complex enterprise and sometimes even enriches the reader's understanding of a given issue.

We need to note that New Media is also characterized by an astonishing and uncharted level of personal experience and exposure. Online companies and sites can track the content of personal emails and site visits in order to target advertisements on users' sidebars and preferences.

There are websites whose sole purpose is to compile and share personal data with web surfers. One example is *Speokeo.com*, a website that uses publically cached information (phone numbers, family members, emails, addresses, even shopping trends) and shares them, albeit sparingly without a membership, to all those who wish to search. Concerns over privacy in New Media are legitimate and the biggest concern is whether or not to be concerned.

Perhaps in the fog of shared and linked information across social sites, business networking, as well as email messages and publically recorded data, personal privacy for those who work with new media technology may be a thing of the foggy and distant twentieth century. In reality, there is one important caveat, don't write or reveal anything online that you wouldn't want the world to know!

There is indeed something about New Media that is defined by its capability to reach outside of stagnant information pools. Perhaps the term New Media is more apt to describe the network of networks that overwrites traditional relationships in exchange for new ones. In many ways, traditional media outlets now rely on new media sources for data and information. One

recent article from the French newspaper *Le Monde* charted the evolution of political blogs across Europe in order to assess emerging trends and opinions in the region.

What this signals is two-fold, not only does new media enable the average person to engage in political, cultural, social, and economic action, but it also suggests that old-style reporting and data outlets are secondary and not primary sources for many. New media is an enabler and the new primary source.

The exchange of ideas and images are is of primary importance in considering the potential for new media. Not only are political horizons widened but so too are artistic and educational ones. Today, there is a tremendous ability for individual users who write, paint, report, educate, etc. to make connections to one another in a way that might allow them to circumvent the conventions of institutional and closed opportunities.

One thing is clear, New Media is experiencing the growing pains of “the Wild West” and as a neutral new technology it is evolving all the time. So much of what defines New Media is subtle, unrestricted, and not standardized. But is that good or bad? Just what determines the information and communication traffic across mobile phones, fiber optic wires, and online encyclopedias? Where is New Media really going, and are we, as users, constructing the destination or are we blindly falling into its clutches through necessities and paradigms? Perhaps the potential of New Media is a function of its intermediate development and our social, political, and economic transition within and outside of it. Either way, it remains to be seen whether or not it really is up to us to define the digital frontier.

New Media has taken hold in every nook and cranny throughout Canada and is providing news content, entertainment and advertising to the nation's populace through vehicles like Kelowna's Castanet to PembinaToday.ca or MyToba.ca. Castanet.net itself is celebrating its sixteenth year of operation, and has become a reflection of the Okanagan with over 400,000 visitors each week. On November 2000 the owner of radio station SILK-FM, Nick Frost, launched his website to serve Kelowna and the Okanagan. The site offered news, information and entertainment, targeted towards the local audience. While some sites aimed for a national and international audience, Frost targeted the community directly, a "home town" website.

"We were early by a few years," says Frost. "Our viewers seemed to get it right away. But our advertisers didn't get it right away and so for the first few years we lost a lot of money, but we never gave up." Today Castanet is redefining what local media can be.

"What you learn in media is that if you can get a really big audience then the advertisers eventually will come, but it took a little longer for Castanet.net, that's for sure." Frost knew he had a model that was going to work but as is often the case with any new vision he had to convince others, be it advertisers or bankers, that his plan would be a success.

Although they are technically not a newspaper publisher, Newspaper Direct Inc. operates multi-channel newspaper content through PressReader. They distribute thousands of other company's publications via the internet for all to read and as such they can be classed as New Media also. CEO of this Richmond, B.C. Company is Alexander Kroogman.

Millennium readers in particular love New Media and tens of thousands of these young Canadian's use it many times every day. Because of this and due to the fact that New Media is generally free, New Media is here to stay, something that cannot be one-hundred percent said of newspapers.

*Sources for this chapter include Bailey Socha and Barbara-Schmid,
New Media Institute and Castanet*

Chapter Twenty-five

Now We Face the Final Curtain

Today the old media is in dire straits and according to a recent New York Times article, “plunging print ad sales and an explosion of online outlets spreading inaccurate information threaten to diminish and in some cases extinguish the impact of traditional media companies.”

According to Facebook Inc. in North America, about 1.74 billion users log onto Facebook each day through their smart phones. Facebook’s fourth quarter revenue (latest figures) jumped fifty-one percent to US 8.81 billion dollars.

In a CBC report by Ramona Pringle, regarding social media, she wrote that this was the first U.S. presidential election in which the majority of voting adults got their news from social media. All major U.S. newspapers endorsed Hillary Clinton and that confirmed the world view of her supporters. But the comments under the articles in all those news outlets were full of opposing views. Many were vile and hateful but by not reading the

comments, we choose not to see what is in front of us. Another good read on this subject is by Margo Goodhand.

No one in 1920 would believe that almost a hundred years later, newspapers would be entrenching or shutting down by the hundreds. The demise of papers began when corporations began taking over the little papers located in small towns. The pencil pushers could not understand the town's needs as the previously independent newspaper publishers could. Corporate greed due to bottom line worship and concentrated ownership, along with the invention of the internet and social media, ushered the beginning of the end of the once very profitable and healthy print industry.

New competition from the Internet became a major threat to the news and advertising roles. The decline in newspaper advertising revenue was worldwide caused by the shift from paper media into Internet advertising. Newspaper advertising revenue fell with no end in sight with circulation following steadily as well. The newspaper chains reduced production costs, cut the number of pages, and dropped traditional features, such as detailed stock market reports.

According to a Global News report by Justin McElroy, twenty-three daily British Columbia newspapers have closed in the last ten years (2006 to 2016) with many more merging or publishing less regularly. Some of the small town newspapers in B.C. that have closed in this ten year period included, the *Kamloops Daily Sentinel*, the *Advertiser in 100 Mile House* and *Quesnel*, *Abbotsford Times*, *South Delta Leader*, *North Shore Outlook*, the *News Leader* in both New West Minister and Burnaby, *Tri-Cities Now*, *Richmond Review*, *Oceanside Star*,

Campbell River Courier-Islander, Harbour City Star, Cowichan News Leader, Chetwynd Echo and the Northeast News.

On the Newspaper Death Watch website (yes, things are so bad that such a site exists) they stated that after a spate of closures and layoffs in the latter part of the last decade, the newspaper industry appeared to find its footing over the last few years. But now (the end of 2016) that oasis of stability may be drying up. Papers in every Canadian province and U.S. state have lost newspapers over the past dozen years and the carnage may not end any time soon.

Even the 'big guys' like the New York Times have seen their newspaper advertising revenue drop twenty percent with the adjusted profit falling to 241 million in 2016 from 289 million dollars the year before. As this was being written, the Wall Street Journal offered a bail-out to four hundred and fifty of their employees.

In a CBC story by reporter Vanessa Lu, she quoted that "you can't pick up a newspaper these days without reading about fake news and its apparent conquest of all media. Actually, you can hardly pick up a newspaper at all; they're gradually disappearing."

In Canada, media organizations like Postmedia are choking on a fatal blend of falling ad revenues and rising debt charges. Professional journalists everywhere are heading for the exits, taking buyouts and leaving behind a legion of social media-inspired "citizen journalists". We're also told that we live in a post-factual world. These things are not unrelated. Sadly, 2017 will see

traditional professional media shrink even more and matter less. And with it goes an enormous instrument of accountability, ethics and transparency.

This is not a very rosy outlook and human nature runs contrary to much of this analysis. We're wired to look ahead with hope, to dismiss the naysayers and expect that things will somehow work out for the best. But reason tells us that can't always be so. Now and then, the outlook is every bit as grim as it appears.

To put Canadian newspaper industries problems in perspective, one needs to look at a major player's bottom line. Postmedia Network Canada Corp. which completed a debt restructuring transaction (fall of 2016), wants to cut its salary expenses by twenty per cent through voluntary buyouts, though layoffs are possible if the target isn't met.

The buyout offer came as Postmedia reported a net loss of \$99.4 million, or thirty-five cents per diluted share, in the fourth-quarter ended August 31, compared with a \$54.1 million net loss, or nineteen cents per diluted share, in the same period a year earlier. For the year ending Aug. 31, the company reported a net loss of \$352.5 million, compared with \$263.4 million in the prior year. The company at the time had about 4,000 employees working for 200 brands and publications across the country in big cities and small communities. It includes daily newspapers such as the National Post, Ottawa Citizen, Edmonton Journal as well as the Sun newspaper chain, acquired from Quebecor in 2015.

"The reductions will come from all levels and operations across Postmedia," said president and CEO Paul Godfrey. In its

financial filings, the company reported total compensation expenses of \$361 million in fiscal year 2016. In a memo to staff, Godfrey acknowledged it will be tough to say goodbye to colleagues and friends, but called it “a necessary step for our survival.” He added: “We need to be a leaner, fitter and faster business so that we can survive in a rapidly evolving marketplace, one that has evolved at a lightning pace.”

Postmedia (like just about every other newspaper chain) had been weighed down by debt, but debt holders including New Jersey-based hedge fund Chatham Asset Management approved the company’s proposal to restructure its \$648-million debt. Under the deal, completed last year, Postmedia’s debt has been reduced by about \$307 million, with its annual interest expense cut by about fifty million dollars.

“We achieved the capital restructuring that gives Postmedia more run way for new revenue initiatives to gain traction without the staggering debt pressures this company has faced since its inception,” Godfrey added.” While the debt burden has been significantly reduced, we continue to operate in a disrupted industry. Competitive pressures and revenue challenges persist,” he said.” That is where our energies are focused. We must accelerate the transformation of our business operations to align our cost structure with our revenue outlook,” Godfrey said.

In July 2015, the company announced it would aim to cut costs by \$50 million by the end of fiscal 2017, and then amended the target to \$80 million in net annualized cost savings, by the end of the first quarter of fiscal 2017. The company said it has implemented \$75 million in net annualized cost savings since the program began. Revenues in the fourth quarter were down

thirteen per cent to \$198.7 million, primarily due to decreases in print advertising revenue and print circulation revenue, down twenty-one per cent and eight per cent respectively. Digital revenue only increased by 0.8 per cent in the quarter.

Restructuring expenses in the quarter were \$12.3 million, with about nine million dollars attributed to costs associated with the recapitalization transaction. This is not the first attempt by Postmedia to trim its workforce. Postmedia merged newsrooms in four cities where it owns competing papers and cut ninety jobs.

It is not just Postmedia that are suffering, declines in advertising revenues have prompted other publications to offer buyouts to employees including both the Globe and Mail and the Toronto Star. Last August (2016), the Star announced it would cut twenty-two employees including nineteen full-time journalists and editors, along with twenty-six temporary staffers who worked on the Toronto Star Touch tablet app. Newspaper employees across Canada were dropping like flies as 2016 came to a close.

Tax changes, better copyright protection and fees imposed on Facebook and Google were among the solutions being touted to help rescue Canada's ailing news industry. Those suggestions were prominent in closed-door sessions with news leaders conducted by the Public Policy Forum, a think-tank the federal government has hired to suggest policies in support of Canadian journalism during a period of digital disruption and reporter layoffs.

CBC News obtained summaries of three key sessions last June (2016), as well as an interim report to the Canadian Heritage Department, under the Access to Information Act. The final report by the Public Policy Forum came out in late January 2017. The

recommendations showed top players pressed for federal policies that would extract money from big digital news carriers that produce little original Canadian content. The recommendation agreed and suggested that tax deductions on foreign digital advertising and redirecting the financial benefits to the media.

According to PPF president Edward Greenspon, the move would free up \$300-million to \$400-million that could be “dedicated” to a new Journalism & Democracy Fund, which would be managed independently from the government. The fund would reinvest the money in “digital innovation” and seek to foster “civic-function journalism,” especially local news, investigative journalism and indigenous news operations, the report said.

The move would tap into the ballooning amount of advertising money that is spent on foreign digital platforms, and compensate for the fact a large majority of Canadians don’t want to pay for news. With this recommendation, the Public Policy Forum deliberately refrained from supporting a new tax credit for the media industry, arguing the measure would hurt editorial independence and prove a hard sell with the public.

The Public Policy Forum think-tank on the state of established news media companies in Canada were told in that June 2016 meeting that perhaps copyright laws need to change to make distributors better attribute content creators, perhaps there is a role for a law that creates a payment system for the news industry. The Liberal government has been grappling with turmoil in the Canadian news industry, which has seen venerable newspapers close, hundreds of journalists laid off, Sunday

editions disappear and advertising dollars migrate from legacy print outlets to digital space.

Critics say the disruption undermines democracy by gutting local reporting, removing journalists from legislatures and shifting money to non-Canadian news distributors, such as Google and Facebook. Meanwhile, digital news startups in Canada often lack the resources to fill the growing gap. Or as the Public Policy Forum's interim report said: "Hobbled by falling revenues, legacy costs and lumbering cultures, and desperately trying to make digital inroads, established media companies have reduced their emphasis on the hunting and gathering of original news in favour of processing of existing news. For their part, new entrants generally lack the capital, critical mass or capabilities to produce the sort of professionally based iterative journalism critical to holding public institutions to account."

Section 19 has never been updated to cover digital ads, which means Canadian companies can deduct digital advertising costs no matter whether they place an ad with Google or with a Canadian news provider. "Section 19 should apply to New Media," says a summary of the June 27 session in Ottawa. "Applying Section 19 to the internet may be possible with the current wording." Among the other proposals raised in these sessions include, change tax rules to allow philanthropic support of journalism by charitable or non-profit foundations. "Under existing rules, it becomes difficult to establish the type of independent, non-profit news model that has proven so successful in the United States through ProPublica," says the interim report.

Create tax incentives and exemptions to encourage coverage of local news. Investors, for example, could get special tax credits for putting money into local, non-profit digital news startups. Review the role of the government-financed CBC, which has moved into digital news space and according to some publishers has undermined the private sector's abilities to attract ad dollars. (The CBC has since proposed that it abandon all advertising, relying solely on increased public funding).

The documents also show a broad disdain for direct government subsidies to the news business; a general belief that market forces should prevail; and the hope that any new policies should help all Canadian content producers, regardless of whether they are print, broadcast or digital.

Winnipeg Free Press publisher Bob Cox has been among news-media leaders calling for better copyright protection and changes to tax laws to encourage more Canadian journalism. "No company wants a government bailout," he said. "However, tools are needed to provide more balance for news organizations to compete against the large digital companies. As chairman of News Media Canada, Cox who attended a round table in Regina stated "The status quo is not an option. I've emphasized the need for some kind of policy framework in this area, lest the newspaper industry wither away without any heed to what the consequences may be." The Canadian News Media Association quickly distanced itself from the report, stating the Public Policy Forum's recommendations "won't do much to help us build out sustainable new business models."

“What I don’t see is the money going to news outlets that are currently covering their communities, building out digital platforms and adapting to the new business realities,” said CNMA chair Bob Cox. “This is the bedrock of civic-function journalism in Canada and the best bet for ensuring its survival is to support it directly rather than pouring all resources into early-stage news operations and research on news and democracy.”

On the other hand, The Globe and Mail’s publisher, Phillip Crawley, said the report will fuel a debate on the best way to ensure the basic functions of journalism are performed across the country, such as covering local governments and courthouses. “I think the creation of a fund, through applying a level playing field on taxation, will gather considerable support,” he said in an interview. “How that fund is then used becomes the major item for discussion.” The federal government refused to state whether it endorses any measures in the report, while acknowledging the financial crunch facing the news industry. Two federal departments paid in large part for the PPF report.

“Our government understands the importance of a vibrant, local and reliable news-media ecosystem as it is a pillar of democracy,” said Pierre-Olivier Herbert, a spokesman for Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly. Ottawa can be expected to face vocal opposition if it decides to prop up the media. A number of people inside and outside the industry openly wonder whether it is appropriate for the federal government to assist a sector that is supposed to keep governments in check. Aaron Wudrick of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation said he disagrees with the creation of a new “slush fund”, even though the fund would officially be free to make its decision in an independent fashion

The Public Policy Forum project has cost \$270,000, with the departments of Canadian Heritage and Innovation, Science and Economic Development each contributing \$100,000. The roundtables have included the big media firms, such as PostMedia, as well as ethnic and Indigenous newspapers, broadcasters such as the CBC, digital firms, academics and others.

Sources for this chapter include the Globe and Mail

Chapter Twenty-six

The Industry as it is today

Media denotes any means or technology used to communicate a message to large group of individuals. Forms of mass media include television, the Internet, and newspapers. Media are specifically intended to reach large audiences and the term is often divided into two categories, that of electronic media and that of print media. Electronic media require their audiences to interact with electronics in order to receive the message. They attempt to recreate or represent a message through moving pictures and or sound.

Four common examples of electronic media used in Canadian society are television, radio, films, and the Internet. Print media, on the other hand, refers to any media that is distributed to audiences in a printed form, on paper. Examples of this include newspapers, printed books, and magazines. The media model in Canada is different from the media model of the United States as well as the rest of the world. According to John A.

Irving, mass media functions differently in Canadian society because of a lack of collective identity; this is in reference to Canada's languages and related culture, as well as its proximity to the United States. Irving states that such cultural dualism means that only some of the population responds to the mass media in English while the other portion remains un-influenced by English-based media.

In terms of the proximity to the United States, he explains that "most of the difficulties that threaten the media in Canada are the direct outcome of American economic and cultural imperialism." Due to the United States overwhelming influence on Canadian mass media, Canada has not been able to form its own identity in the media. These two factors have slowed down the process of the creation of a Canadian community. Mass media help in forming a community through communication. When a large group of people is in communication with one another through media, an identifiable culture is formed. Individuals in dialectic experience a sense of membership and collective identity.

Nowadays, certain forms of mass media in Canada are thriving, while others are on the decline. This can be observed through an analysis of the effectiveness of various forms of electronic and print media in Canadian society. The face of print journalism in Canada is undergoing change. Evening newspapers are no longer popular, while morning newspapers (including the *Toronto Star*, *The Globe and Mail*, *the National Post*, the *Vancouver Sun* and free newspapers such as *Metro* and *24*) have survived and continue to bring in an audience. Before the 1970s, *The Globe and Mail* was one of the few surviving morning papers,

while most popular newspapers were distributed in the evening in Toronto.

The newspaper industry in Canada (similar to the newspaper industry in other developed countries including the United States) is controlled by a small number of individual or corporate owners. This is referred to as concentrated ownership. Private or partially private ownership of competitive forms of news media does not promote a great amount of freedom of expression. It may be argued that these privately owned media outlets have their own agenda, and have therefore only contributed to a limited amount of freedom of expression.

It may also be argued that publicly owned media contribute more to freedom of expression than privately owned media; Simeon Djankov, Caralee McLeish, Tatiana Nenova, and Andrei Schleifer, in a joint Harvard-World Bank study, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of publicly owned media outlets in relation to privately owned media outlets. They write that one of the first principles of media is that it is in the public interest, and it is therefore necessary to have outlets owned by the public. In this way, the public keeps a check on the agenda of publications. If there is too much of a bias, the owners (which in this case consist of the public) react and demand a change through various forms of feedback. In contrast, privately owned outlets only have a limited number of voices to give feedback, and these voices may have their own biased agendas.

Two characteristics of electronic journalism in Canada set it apart from print journalism: firstly, broadcasting is a regulated industry which is important to consider in relation to news

sources such as radio and television. This means that in order to start a broadcast station, one must have a license from the Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission. This regulated industry also affects news content because it is constantly being monitored by the agency. Secondly, many radio stations and television stations in Canada are publicly owned. Print journalism has almost always been conducted by private enterprise in Canada, and radio also started as a private enterprise which was subject to regulation by the state. It became a hybrid of private and public broadcasters.

Nowadays, online journalism is on the rise as it provides a new platform for readers to interact instantly with news sources through blog comments and feedback. There are also various multimedia options which are not available with print journalism, for example, videos can be embedded into websites. The first period of Canadian journalism spanned from 1752–1807; the second period spanned from 1807–1858; the third period spanned from 1858–1900; the fourth period spans from the beginning of the twentieth century to current day.

The first period consisted of newspapers brought and inserted into Canadian society by colonies in New England. The first was the *Halifax Gazette*, issued on March 23, 1752. The second period began as settlers arrived from Britain and the United States; newspapers began to gain popularity in the Maritime regions. During the third period, the discovery of gold brought settlers to the Pacific Coast region, and there was a growing interest in domestic affairs. Finally, the twentieth century saw a substantial change in Canadian newspapers. After the two world wars, as well as the industrial developments that followed

these wars, the circulation of French and English newspapers in Canada increased to more than 5.7 million in 1989. By the mid-1980s, there were 110 daily newspapers in Canada. This not the case today, there are far fewer.

Although online readership has been on the rise, studies show that print readership is business as usual. Seven in ten Canadians still read a newspaper each week, and print readership continues to grow at about two percent each year. However, website readership is growing faster, at a rate of four percent. Although print readership is currently larger, website readership, because it is growing at a faster rate, suggests that web will overtake print in the very near future. The baby boomer generations, who are over fifty years old, continue to prefer print to online journalism, while younger adults are more likely to read online newspapers due to easy access. Paid daily newspapers have dominated the market for the last one hundred years but free dailies have gained in popularity in recent years.

Some advertisers continue to rely on print newspapers (including flyer inserts) to reach Canadians in their home or work environments and for these reasons, print newspapers as a mass medium do not seem to be ready to die in Canada. They are not as healthy as they were before competition from online sources, but they are holding their own ground at least with readership, or so says Statistics Canada.

Although the next few pages reflect the newspaper industry in the United States, it represents quite accurately what is happening in Canada as well. Eight years after the Great Recession sent the U.S. newspaper industry into a tailspin, the

pressures facing America's newsrooms have intensified to nothing less than a reorganization of the industry itself, one that impacts the experiences of even those news consumers unaware of the shifts taking place.

In 2015, the newspaper sector had perhaps the worst year since the recession. Average weekday newspaper circulation, print and digital combined, dove a further seven per-cent in 2015. While digital circulation crept up slightly, it accounts for only twenty-two percent of total circulation. Any digital subscription gains or traffic increases have still not translated into game-changing revenue solutions. In 2015, total advertising revenue among publicly traded companies declined nearly eight percent, including losses not just in print, but digital as well. Early returns for 2016, point to even larger advertising losses.

The industry (in the US) supports nearly 33,000 full-time newsroom employees. Indeed, newspapers employ thirty-two percent of daily reporters stationed in Washington, D.C. to cover issues and events tied to Congress, as well as thirty-eight percent of the reporters who cover statehouse legislatures. Still, smaller budgets have continued to lead to smaller newsrooms. The latest newspaper newsroom employment figures (from 2014) show ten percent declines, greater than in any year since 2009, leaving a workforce that is 20,000 positions smaller than twenty years prior. Before 2016 was even over, at least four hundred more cuts, buyouts or layoffs had been announced.

Print newspapers have a core audience and subscriber base that the industry hopes will buy enough time to help ease the digital transition. But recent data suggests the hourglass may

be nearing empty. A January 2016 Pew Research Center survey found that just five per-cent of U.S. adults who had learned about the most recent presidential election named print newspapers as their “most helpful” source, trailing nearly every other category by wide margins, including cable, local and national TV, radio, social media and news websites. About one-third got at least some election news from a print paper, which again trailed behind nearly every other category.

The three television-based news sectors face serious challenges but have benefitted from the fact that despite all the growth in digital, including a surge in digital video developments over the last year, large swaths of the public and thus advertisers remain drawn to that square box in the middle of the room. More broadly, another Pew Research Center survey suggested that as many as one-in-seven Americans have turned away from cable or satellite TV subscriptions. This “cord cutting” has implications not just for cable but for any network or station that benefits from the pay TV system. This coincides with a growing digital video ad market, which has attracted the interest of publishers.

The Center’s survey data reveal that dramatic generational differences already exist, with those under thirty much less likely than those thirty plus, to watch any of the three programming streams. Instead, younger adults are more likely to name social media as a main source of news. Even beyond the young, fully sixty-two percent of U.S. (and Canadian) adults overall now get news on social media sites, many of which took steps over the last year to enhance their streaming video capabilities. With audience challenges already in view and few immediate financial incentives

to innovate, the dilemma facing the TV news business bears an eerie resemblance to the one faced by the newspaper industry a decade ago, except for the fact that the digital realm is much more developed and defined today.

It has been evident for several years that the financial realities of the web are not friendly to newspaper entities, whether legacy or digital only. There is money being made on the web, just not by news organizations. Total digital ad spending grew another twenty percent in 2015 to about sixty billion dollars, a higher growth rate than in 2013 and 2014. But journalism organizations have not been the primary beneficiaries. In fact, compared with a year ago, even more of the digital ad revenue pie, sixty-five percent is swallowed up by just five tech companies. None of these are journalism organizations, though several including Facebook, Google, Yahoo and Twitter integrate news into their offerings. And while much of this concentration began when ad spending was mainly occurring on desktops platforms, it quickly took root in the rapidly growing mobile realm as well.

Increasingly, the data suggest that the impact these technology companies are having on the business of journalism goes far beyond the financial side, to the very core elements of the news industry itself. In the pre-digital era, journalism organizations largely controlled the news products and services from beginning to end, including original reporting; writing and production; packaging and delivery; audience experience; and editorial selection. Over time, technology companies like Facebook and Apple have become an integral, if not dominant

player in most of these arenas, supplanting the choices and aims of news outlets with their own choices and goals.

The ties that now bind these tech companies to publishers began in many ways as lifelines for news organizations struggling to find their way in a new world. First tech companies created new pathways for distribution, in the form of search engines and email. The next industry overlap involved the financial model, with the creation of ad networks and app stores, followed by developments that impact audience engagement (Instant Articles, Apple News and Google's AMP). Now, the recent accusations regarding Facebook editors' possible involvement in "trending topics" selections have shined a spotlight on technology companies' integral role in the editorial process. The accusations, whether true or not, highlighted the human element involved in any machine learning tool, not only Facebook's. The messaging app Snapchat, reports having about seventy-five editorial-level staff members and announced in 2016 that they will begin using an algorithm for news story selections.

Original reporting and writing are the two industry roles largely left to news organizations although there are a handful that are using machines to produce news. None of the others carry much worth without these two key elements so these roles are in some ways critical to tech companies. But it is also true and some nonprofits have found this in their struggle to get audiences that well-reported news stories are also not worth much without the power of strong distribution and curation channels. What is less clear is how the tug and pull between tech and journalism companies will evolve to support each other as

necessary parts of the whole, and what this rebuilt industry will ultimately mean for the public's ability to stay informed.

There is no audited, sector-wide audience or financial data for digital-native news outlets such as the Huffington Post and Vox, but what the Pew Center is able to collect suggests growth in total audience and time spent on these websites. Beyond their home pages, these sites are also pouring efforts into social media, mobile apps and even giving a resurgence to email newsletters. Podcast programming and listenership grew in 2015 and again in 2016, though podcasts overall (beyond just news) still reach a minority of Americans (thirty-six percent) and bring in a fraction of revenue compared with other news genres.

In the past year, there were also some exciting developments and experiments in the original reporting and storytelling in the digital realm by those producing original reporting. Several news outlets including The New York Times and The Des Moines Register are experimenting with virtual reality journalism that can let consumers "experience" the news themselves.

But even for these, the lines of dependencies with technology companies are deep. As these lines continue to solidify it will be important to keep in mind that the result is about far more than who captures the upper hand or the revenue base. It is determining how and with what kinds of storytelling Canadian's learn about the issues and events facing society and the world.

For newspapers, 2015 and 2016 might as well have been a recession year. Weekday circulation fell seven percent and Sunday circulation fell four percent in 2015 alone, both showing their greatest declines since 2010. At the same time, advertising

revenue experienced its greatest drop since 2009, falling nearly eight percent from 2014 to 2015. Fully one-fourth of advertising revenue now comes from digital advertising, but not because of growth in that area as digital advertising revenue fell two percent in 2015. It's just that non-digital advertising revenue fell more, dropping ten percent in 2015. In 2014, the latest year for which data were available, newsroom employment also declined ten percent, more than in any other year since 2009. The newspaper workforce in the US has shrunk by about 20,000 positions, or thirty-nine percent, in the last twenty years.

Weekday circulation experienced a decline not seen since the immediate aftermath of the Great Recession. Average US weekday circulation fell seven percent, the most since 2010. This drop was due to print circulation, which declined by nine percent, while digital circulation increased by two percent. Sunday circulation, meanwhile, fell another four percent following a three percent decrease in 2014. As with weekday circulation, the fall in Sunday circulation was due to a decline in print circulation, which fell five percent while digital jumped four percent.

For both weekday and Sunday circulation, the fall represents a continuation of the trend that began in 2014. After 2009, circulation seemed to be cutting its losses, even showing a small increase in 2013. But after a decline of three percent in both weekday and Sunday in 2014, 2015 saw circulation fall even more rapidly, 2016 figures are not yet available. The reliance on print among dedicated newspaper audiences is especially problematic as the portion of Americans turning to print newspapers continues to decline, given that in 2015, seventy-five percent of newspapers' advertising revenue came from non-digital sources. The Pew Research Center survey found that thirty-

six percent of U.S. adults learned something about the last US election from a print newspaper. This was lower than the portion that learned from radio (44%), digital sources (65%) or television sources (78%). They also recently found that the portion of adults who often get news from print newspapers (20%) falls behind those who learned from radio (25%), news websites and apps (28%) and all forms of television. Until a decade ago, however, newspapers outranked radio and the internet as the public's main source of news.

In other words, the share of Americans getting news on legacy platforms is falling behind those of most other platforms, including radio – but the industry seems not to have found a way to persistently capture that audience online. The overall newsroom workforce experienced its sharpest decline since 2009. According to the American Society of News Editors' Newsroom Employment Census, after falling six percent in 2012 and three percent in 2013, overall newsroom employment was down ten percent in 2014, the most recent year for which figures are available, to 32,900. Canadian journalists have lost their editorial positions at about the same percentage rate as their fellow cohorts in the US.

Even the CEO of one of the largest newspaper publishers in Canada joined the growing chorus of calls for public funding to help the battered print media industry. Francois Olivier, who heads Transcontinental, said the company needs temporary financial help until the digital products it is developing mature. "If not, there's a good chance that there will be less newspapers and less Canadian local content in my business," Olivier said. Olivier declined to say how much he's seeking from both the federal and provincial governments. But he said even a relatively little amount

would send a strong message that local news content is important.

The print industry needs relief from rising environmental costs for recycling and tax breaks or subsidies to help hire reporters, he said. He also pushed for more advertising from politicians and tax breaks to help fund digital investments. Olivier said local community (weekly) publishers have started to feel the pain from lower advertising spending that hit Canada's large daily papers first.

In late 2016, Transcontinental announced the sale of all of its assets in Saskatchewan. Olivier said Transcontinental was able to initially adjust to a two to four per cent annual decrease in ad revenues by improving efficiencies and consolidating. But annual revenue declines have accelerated to ten per cent in the last eighteen months, cutting \$25 million from its bottom line. "So there's a lot of pressure in the system right now, he said. "We are talking to the government to try to relieve some of that pressure for the next three to four years to give us the time to build a new digital audience and new digital products."

Olivier is just the latest media executive to make pleas for public funding for the print industry. "We're asking the government to be an ally, not for a bailout of the Canadian newspaper industry," he said.

Olivier went a step further but said government support, aside from lower recycling costs, should only be short-term. "At some point, the industry needs to be self-sufficient and do their own business model."

He also welcomed a recent study from the Confederation of National Trade Unions in Quebec, which called for urgent involvement by government, including a tax credit on salaries.

Late last year, Postmedia president and CEO Paul Godfrey told a parliamentary committee, studying the industry's future, that Ottawa needs to spend more on Canadian newspaper ads and give greater tax breaks to companies that do the same. Godfrey pointed to federal statistics showing government advertising in newspapers was halved between 2010 and 2015, while online advertising nearly doubled to foreign-owned behemoths like Google and Facebook that produce no original Canadian news content. Godfrey's comments came after five Postmedia executives, including Godfrey, voted to give themselves \$2.275 million in bonuses

According to IBISWorld's 2016 market research report on newspaper publishing in Canada, "the newspaper publishing industry, once the hallmark of the Canadian media sector, is reeling as a result of competition from digital platforms. As a result of the rising adoption of tablets and mobile devices, coupled with next-generation broadband and the app revolution, consumers are increasingly going online for their news, hurting demand for industry products. Looking forward, advertisers will increasingly shift their spending away from print material at the expense of industry operators. However, publishers are expected to ramp up their digital presence. Nonetheless, revenue is forecast to decline in the five years to 2021".

Newspaper author Paul Willcock, in one of his blogs said, "Vancouver-based Glacier had been seen as a newspaper company (to the detriment of its share price). But it also has

information services aimed at more specialized markets - real estate, agriculture, energy and mining, for example.”

And that, management says, is where the corporation’s future lies. Newspapers are in decline. The company’s plan is to extract cash during their remaining time and invest it in businesses with growth prospects. Glacier puts it fairly bluntly: “The Company’s objective is to grow its business information assets and the portion of cash flow generated by these operations, which have higher growth profiles and valuations, and harvest the cash flow from community media assets and reduce the related financial and operating exposure.”

Conventional wisdom has been that, small community newspapers have a brighter future than urban dailies but corporations no longer totally share that optimism. Newspapers do generate significant cash flow and provide scale for companies but efforts will have to be made to restructure community media assets to create greater direct value and simplicity or monetize where appropriate value can be realized.

One can blame the internet for newspapers demise but only partially, as corporate media giants have had their hands in their papers pockets for decades now. Newspapers were gobbled up by companies who not only assumed the papers assets but liabilities as well. What made one organization think it could do better than its predecessor, especially when they took on the same huge debt loads in order to acquire these papers? It left the new owners (CEOs) drowning in that same swamp of debt surrounded by hungry alligators (bankers, creditors and leverage companies). While at the same time in order to keep afloat they continued to cut back on news, sports and entertainment articles.

The future of the newspaper industry looks to evolve through online papers. An early example of an online only newspaper or magazine is "News Report", an online newspaper created by Bruce Parrello in 1974 on the PLATO system at the University of Illinois. Beginning in 1987, the Brazilian newspaper *Jornaldodia* ran on the state owned Embratel network, moving to the internet in the 1990s. By the late 1990s, hundreds of newspapers were publishing online versions, but they did not offer much in the way of interactivity.

The true online only paper is a paper that does not have any hard copy connections. An example of this is an independent web-only newspaper, introduced in the UK in 2000, called the *Southport Reporter*. It is a weekly regional newspaper that is not produced or run in any format other than 'soft-copy' on the internet by its publishers, PCBT Photography. Unlike blog sites and other news websites, it is run as a newspaper and is recognized by media groups in the United Kingdom. A good Canadian example is *allNovaScotia.com*, an online newspaper based in Halifax, Nova Scotia that publishes business and political news six days a week. The website was the first online-only newspaper in Atlantic Canada and has been behind a paywall since starting in 2001.

Many more in the print media are turning to online only publication. The collapse of the traditional business model of print newspapers has led to various attempts to establish local, regional or national online-only newspapers - publications that do original reporting, rather than just commentary or summaries of reporting from other publications. An early major example in the U.S. is the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, which stopped publishing after 149 years in March 2009 and went only online. In the US, technology news websites such as CNET, TechCrunch, and ZDNet

started as web publications and enjoy comparable readership to the conventional newspapers. Also, with the ever-rising popularity of online media, veteran publications like the *U.S. News & World Report* are abandoning print and going online-only. News aggregation technology helps to consolidate many online newspapers into one page or application that can show the new or updated information from many online news sources.

News aggregators like Flipboard and Feedly show users stories from a user defined list of RSS feeds. Others like Google news and Newsprompt are able to cluster similar stories and show top news from across many leading news sites.

In 2015 the percentage of people who reported that print was their preferred method for reading a newspaper was down nearly four percent from 2014. The methods people use to get their news from digital means is at twenty-eight percent, as opposed to twenty percent of people attaining the news through print newspapers. *These* trends indicate an increase in digital consumption of newspapers, as opposed to print. Today, ad revenue for digital forms of newspapers is nearing thirty percent (only five percent in 2006) while print constitutes the remaining seventy percent, but this gap is narrowing by about four percent every six months. Hybrid newspapers are predominantly focused on their online content, but also produce print editions. Trends in online newspapers indicate many Canadian papers may switch to digital methods (online newspapers) in the future.

It is not just newspapers who are having difficulties. The pulp and paper industry (who produce newsprint) has taken a huge hit in the last six years. Of interest is that it's reported that most of the Resolute Paper (mill) capacity that was shutdown was

targeted at the export market, a market that up until now was still going strong. At Kruger, they are converting a newspaper machine at its Trois-Rivieres mill to produce containerboard instead of newsprint and this change over is costing them \$250 million.

Since 2010 nearly two million tons of newsprint capacity has been shut-down, and over the last five plus years nearly three million tons of capacity, or roughly one-third of capacity, has been closed in North America. The Resolute shuts include capacity at three mills in Canada, Baie Comeau, Iroquois Falls (mill closed), and Clermont. It's possible that prices will continue to slide and to counter this will require additional capacity than had been planned in order to return the market to some sense of normal.

The traditional business model for newsprint producers may have reached its limit much as newspapers have. The two industries, up until now, have always walked hand in hand. Also hit hard in the last six years is newspaper printing plants. Since 2011 plants in La Salle, Halifax, Vaughn, Edmonton, Concorde, Vancouver, Regina, Saskatoon and London have shut their doors. These lay-offs have affected over a thirteen hundred well paid union workers. On February 27th 2017 Black Press announced the closure of their Penticton printing plant with the loss of a further twenty employees.

Some information for this chapter was taken from Pew Research Center in their State of the News Media 2016 by Amy Mitchell and Jesse Holcomb. Other sources include Ross Marowitz of the Huffington Post, Wikipedia, H. Cody and PaperAge.

Chapter Twenty-seven

Musings, Forecast & Deduction

Newspaper publishers were the ‘king’ of their town from the late 1800s until the 1920s and as long as the paper was independently owned the publisher was revered and this continued up until the late 1990s. As more and more newspapers came under the umbrella of newspaper chains, the magic that was prevalent up until then, started to wane. With the invention of social media, the wheels fell off the print industry. Newspapers are the casualty and may be gone, at least in paper form, as early as 2022.

While Twitter often bears the brunt of criticism about online toxicity, this kind of behaviour is all too common elsewhere as well. YouTube, Reddit threads, Facebook, Snapchat and even to a smaller extent, Wikipedia are all designs that can promote meaningful engagement but in many cases perpetuates a culture of anger, confusion and fear with people lashing out at each

other. Even newspaper comments are now ripe with this negative nelly form of harassment.

The latest “nail in the coffin” of newspapers may be one of the things that save them. This is what is referred to as “fake news”, which is simply putting untruths on the internet (mostly through social media) and watching it take off and get read by tens of thousands of young people who believe in every word they read. As an example, a couple of twenty year old unemployed men decided to take a number of complete off base stories that they found in yellow journalism rags in the fall of 2016 and kicked it up a notch. During last year’s American presidential election these men (sic) and others like them (including hackers) put together an anti-Hillary Clinton tabloid internet paper that promoted the biggest lies they could think of. Many Americans read the fake news that was being electronically generated by anyone and everyone who wished to interfere with the election and believed it was one-hundred percent true. Fake news is the breakfast of choice for the younger generation and these Millennials through various social media have completely changed the journalism landscape.

These Millennials and even older citizens think newspapers have gone the way of the horse and buggy, the steam engine and the typewriter, and they are right. Today, papers are morphing from newsprint to digital, which is a good thing. Newspapers will survive (readers will tire of fake news) but not in paper form, that one can hold in ones hands, but rather they will be read on the publishing company’s web-sites from a screen. Perhaps President Donald Trump is right and old media (in its past form) is not needed anymore, “the king (4th estate) is dead, long live the king (5th estate).”

As this author sits on his townhouse balcony overlooking the quaint town of Peachland and the incredible Lake Okanagan, he cannot help but think that he truly misses the old cut and paste days, when the newspaper publishers were king of their domains.

The “community” newspaper is no more as there is no real local publisher at the helm steering the ship. Their positions have been mostly illuminated due to corporate cost cutting. Instead, what some of today’s print papers have are a bunch of ‘yesterdays’ men who are desperately trying to escape the guillotine before it gets them, their shareholders and eventually their business. Publishers that worked and lived in their community used to spend a lot of their time with the local merchants and Chamber of Commerce. They felt the euphoria when a new business opened up and felt their pain when they closed. Today CEOs sit in their ivory towers and are not even close to hands-on with their newspaper’s business community.

Newspapers (especially dailies) used to be rivers of gold, now in many cases they are not even worth the paper they are printed on. Some, if not most of the media barons of the last thirty years have used their newspapers as their very own personal cash cows or at the very least they have profited nicely. They did not obtain this massive wealth solely because they owned many community papers. Much of their money came from the fact that they also controlled the presses. The media barons literally had their hands on the lever that pumped dollars from the newspaper to the press and eventually into their hands. It does seem strange that a few of them now want government (taxpayers) to help out their cause. Should these wealthy CEOs (publishers) not put back a small amount of their own finances into their media companies? After all, was it not their newspapers

that made them wealthy in the first place? A level playing field is one thing (yes, tax the US internet giants) but Canadian taxpayers dollars should not be part of a government bailout.

There is light at the end of the tunnel, as big media and their newspapers are disappearing into a kind of fog. They will likely come out of this fog in smaller pieces (single or reduced groups of papers) that publish not just newsprint editions but internet ones as well. Some of the bigger ones will morph into these print and online newspapers like the *Suburban* has. The *Suburban* is Quebec's largest English language newspaper with a print circulation of 145,000 copies. *Suburban's* editor-in-chief, Beryl Wajzman, might be the last old fashioned tough newsman left in Canada and it shows as his paper is top notch. Then and only then will sanity prevail, all-be-it there will be a lot less money to be made as the golden goose has long fled the nest.

What was once a noble career can be again, because surging forward is this second coming of print. These new age newspapers will make publishers "king" again, and if not, at least they once more will command respect in the community they serve.

-30-

*Publisher – a person or company that prepares and issues books, journals, music, or other works for sale; a newspaper proprietor.
Is the latter a dying breed?*

~ 290 ~