

**Family Ties and Chains of Ownership**  
*The Expositor* from Thomas Hiram Preston to Conrad Moffat Black  
1890-1997

by

Kathy Lynn English

Department of History

Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

Faculty of Graduate Studies  
The University of Western Ontario  
London, Ontario  
January, 1998

© Kathy Lynn English, 1998



National Library  
of Canada

Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Acquisitions et  
services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file* *Votre référence*

*Our file* *Notre référence*

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-32479-6

## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the ownership history of *The Expositor*, a mid-sized daily newspaper in Brantford, Ontario. In doing so, it explores the demise of independent family ownership of newspapers and the steadily intensifying processes of consolidation within the Canadian newspaper industry through the twentieth century.

The thesis follows a chain of ownership of *The Expositor* from its 1890 purchase by Thomas Hiram Preston through to its 1971 sale to Southam Press Ltd. and onward to its present ownership by Conrad Black's Hollinger Inc.

Chapter One details the historiography of Canadian newspaper studies and explains the interdisciplinary nature of this work. It examines the dynamics of concentration and the tension between the newspaper as a business and the newspaper as a public service accountable to the community.

Chapter Two focuses on the genesis and development of the Preston family dynasty from 1890 to 1946 when the processes of consolidation emerged. It emphasizes the entrepreneurial skills of T.H. Preston in succeeding in the highly-competitive newspaper industry that developed in the early century.

Chapter Three examines the years from 1946 to 1971 when the third generation Prestons inherited and ran the newspaper through a period when family-owned newspapers were increasingly sold to chains. It focuses on the business and family pressures that led to the sale of their newspaper.

Chapter Four covers the period from 1971 to 1997, exploring Southam's ownership of *The Expositor* and the subsequent takeover of that chain by Hollinger Inc. It concludes that concentration of Canadian newspaper ownership occurred newspaper by newspaper, family by family, as general economic forces and specific business factors caused independent, family newspaper owners to sell their assets to acquisitive newspaper chains.

\*\*\*\*\*

**KEYWORDS:** Newspaper ownership, Family business, Brantford Expositor, T.H. Preston, Conrad Black, Southam Inc., Canadian newspaper industry, Ownership concentration.



# DEDICATION

To my husband, Gregg Serles

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is impossible for a working mother of two young children to embark upon such a project as this without the absolute support of her entire family. I am deeply grateful to my husband Gregg Serles and our children, Samantha and Geoffrey, for their support, encouragement and immense amounts of patience throughout the research and writing of this thesis.

I would especially like to thank my advisor Professor J.J.B. Forster, Chair of Graduate Studies, of the University of Western Ontario Department of History, for inspiring me with the possibilities of business history and encouraging me to see the business of newspapers in an objective manner. His positive, insightful criticisms were immensely helpful in prodding me towards clarity of thought.

I am grateful to Peter Preston, for sharing his family's history with me in numerous interviews and for providing me with valuable family scrapbooks that documented much of the life of T.H. Preston. I must also thank *Expositor* librarian Lynn Colwell for allowing me unfettered access to *Expositor* clipping files and for assisting me in my searches. As well, I appreciate the co-operation of *Expositor* Managing Editor David Schultz.

My appreciation is also extended to my employer, Ryerson Polytechnic University, for granting me a partially-paid leave of absence and tuition assistance to pursue Masters studies. I would also like to thank Ryerson's SRC (Scholarly, Research and Creative) Committee for awarding me a project grant to assist with research costs.

On a further personal note, I would like to thank my dear friend Elaine Bygrave for providing me with accommodation and much-needed respite in London. As well, I am grateful to my mother, Barbara Elliott, for caring for my children during my many research trips. Of course, I also appreciate the lifetime of love and encouragement she has given me. It is from her that I first learned the importance of family ties.

## LIST OF APPENDICES

**Appendix A:** *The Brantford Expositor* 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Souvenir Program.

**Appendix B:** *Toronto Daily Star*. November 10, 1925.

**Appendix C** Engraving of new *Expositor* Building as it appeared in *The Expositor*, 1895.

**Appendix D:** Letters Patent Incorporating Preston and Sons Ltd., 1915.

**Appendix E:** Letter to Mrs. T. H. Preston signed by *Expositor* employees upon the death of her husband T.H. Preston.

**Appendix F:** *Expositor* story announcing sale of *Expositor* to Southam Press. September 13, 1971.

**Appendix G:** Ontario Corporations Act, Corporate Information Return of Preston and Sons Ltd. for 1971 and 1972, listing members of Boards of Directors immediately before and after sale of Preston and Sons Ltd. to Southam Press.

**Appendix H:** *Expositor* report announcing firing of publisher William Findlay. January 9, 1997.

**Appendix I:** Canadian Newspaper Association: Statement of Principles: 1966.

**Appendix J:** Canadian Daily Newspaper Ownership. Selected Statistics.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION . . . . .	ii
ABSTRACT . . . . .	.iii
DEDICATION. . . . .	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	.vi
LIST OF APPENDICES . . . . .	.vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS . . . . .	viii
<b>CHAPTER ONE</b> Canadian Newspaper Ownership . . . . .	<b>1</b>
i. Prologue: The Expositor at Mid-Century – Looking Back and Beyond	
ii. The Interdisciplinary Nature of this Study . . . . .	
iii. The Secondary Literature and the Early History of Newspaper Concentration in Canada. . . . .	
iv. Newspaper Families and Newspapermen. . . . .	
v. The Newspaper Industry in the Modern Era and the Dynamics of Concentration. . . . .	
<b>CHAPTER TWO</b> The Preston Ownership : 1890 - 1946 . . . . .	<b>.26</b>
i Prologue: Death of a Newspaperman . . . . .	
ii The Expositor: The Pre-Preston Years . . . . .	
iii T.H. Preston: His Early Years . . . . .	
iv. T.H. Preston: Editor and Entrepreneur . . . . .	
v. T.H. Preston: Public Servant . . . . .	
vi. T.H. Preston and the Growth of the Canadian Newspaper Industry . .	
vii. Death of a Newspaperman . . . . .	
viii. W.B. Preston and The Expositor . . . . .	

**CHAPTER THREE The Preston Ownership : 1946 - 1971 . . . . . 74**

- i Family Ties and Chains of Ownership . . . . .
- ii The Preston Ownership: The Third Generation . . . . .
- iii. Chains of Ownership . . . . .
- iv. The Price of Succession . . . . .
- v. Family Ties . . . . .
- vi. Economic Factors Leading to Sale . . . . .
- vii. The Sale . . . . .

**CHAPTER FOUR A New Owner . . . . . 124**

- i. Black in Brantford . . . . .
- ii. From Davey to Kent . . . . .
- iii. Epilogue: Southam to Black . . . . .
- iv. Conclusions: Family Ties and Chains of Ownership – T.H. Preston  
to C. M . Black . . . . .

**APPENDIX A . . . . .153**

**APPENDIX B . . . . .156**

**APPENDIX C . . . . .157**

**APPENDIX D . . . . .158**

**APPENDIX E . . . . .161**

**APPENDIX F . . . . .162**

**APPENDIX G . . . . .163**

APPENDIX H . . . . .	.165
APPENDIX I . . . . .	.167
APPENDIX J . . . . .	.168
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	.169
VITA . . . . .	.186

## CHAPTER ONE

### *i. Prologue: The Expositor at Mid-Century—Looking Back and Beyond.*

On the evening of Wednesday November 1, 1950, the entire staff of *The Expositor* gathered at Brantford's <sup>1</sup> Hotel Kerby to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of what was familiarly known as "The Preston Ownership" of the city's only daily newspaper. Employees from the paper's newsroom, pressroom and composing room, as well as its business office and classified and display advertising departments, who together comprised "The Expositor Family", dined on roast turkey with celery dressing, potato puffs, green peas and creamed cauliflower, completed by a dessert of pumpkin pie with whipped cream. <sup>2</sup> The "Diamond Jubilee" affair was a lavish and important social occasion in Brantford. Each guest received a handsomely-printed, illustrated souvenir brochure, as well as an inscribed wallet commemorating the 1890 purchase of the newspaper by family patriarch Thomas Hiram (T.H.) Preston. A bouquet of red roses was presented to Louise Preston, who had assumed the titular presidency of Preston and Sons Ltd. upon the 1946 death of her husband, T.H.'s son, William Buckingham (W.B.) Preston, who had inherited the newspaper in 1925 on his father's death. <sup>3</sup>

Following grace and a toast to the King, Alan Rose, the paper's sports editor, toasted the Preston family newspaper dynasty. Rose reminisced about the three generations of Prestons under which he had served, stressing the family's

---

<sup>1</sup> The city of Brantford is located on the banks of the Grand River, midway between Toronto and London, Ontario. It was incorporated as a city in May, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A. Copy of souvenir brochure. From personal papers of Peter Preston.

“unfailing kindness” towards all employees. The average employee, he said “found that working for an employer under the personal supervision and direction of the proprietors was preferable to being a virtual nonentity in a great, impersonal corporation.”<sup>4</sup>

Executive editor Peter M. Preston, who with his elder brother and publisher John C. (Jack) Preston, represented the third generation of Prestons to own and operate the Brantford newspaper, responded to that tribute, expressing gratitude for his employees’ support, assistance and loyalty. “Loyalty of the high degree exemplified by *The Expositor* family demands reciprocation,” Mr. Preston said. “*The Expositor* is one of the few newspapers in the Dominion of Canada that has not become part of a chain or of a group centrally controlled, “ adding that:

We in the Preston family are fully convinced that the present method of ownership of this newspaper is the best in the interests of all concerned, and we intend to keep it that way.<sup>5</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

Viewed retrospectively, this mid-century evening of triumph occurred at a critical juncture in both the history of *The Expositor* and the evolution of the Canadian newspaper industry. From the vantage point of this celebration of family ownership, we can look back to the 1890 purchase of the newspaper by family patriarch T.H. Preston and the ensuing sixty years of his family’s business and journalistic success. As well, this event provides a significant starting point

---

<sup>3</sup> A full account of this celebration was published in *The Expositor*, Nov. 2, 1950, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



for examining the years ahead to 1971, when despite their best intentions, the third generation Preston scions succumbed to business and economic pressures and sold *The Expositor* to Southam Press. Ltd. of Toronto for \$2,650,000<sup>6</sup> thus abandoning their family newspaper heritage.

Indeed, in 1950, the Preston's independent, family ownership was a notable anomaly in an industry marked by steadily increasing economic concentration through the first half of the twentieth century. In 1911, when Canada boasted its largest number of daily newspapers, 143 newspapers existed and almost all of them were independently-owned.<sup>7</sup> In the ensuing years, as these newspapers were passed down through families, economic factors—including capital-intensive new technology and increased competition for readers and advertisers—forced many independent, family-held newspapers out of business and induced others to sell to emerging newspaper groups eager to expand by acquisition. In the decade from 1911 to 1921, thirty daily newspapers ceased publication.<sup>8</sup> By the mid-1950s, when *The Expositor* was justifiably proud of its independent status, three newspaper chains controlled twenty-five per cent of daily newspaper circulation in Canada.

The fact that *The Expositor* remained for so long within family hands was cause for celebration in 1950 and provides ample material and justification for

---

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Although the Preston family never announced the price of *The Expositor*, Southam's 1971 annual report indicates the chain paid that amount for the newspaper. See Southam Press Ltd., *Annual Report* (Toronto: Southam Printing Ltd., 1971), p. 2. Interviews with Preston family members resulted in similar information, although Peter Preston was unclear about the terms and conditions of the transaction.

<sup>7</sup> C. McNaught. *Canada Gets the News*. (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1940), p. 23.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

this study. However, it is in the ensuing years to 1971, when the newspaper became part of the Southam newspaper chain, that this study of *The Expositor's* ownership history provides a microcosm<sup>9</sup> for an examination of the struggle between independent and chain ownership as a key element in the rise of concentration within the Canadian newspaper industry in the post-war era. Indeed, by 1971, the independent, family-owned newspaper in Canada had become something of an “endangered species”,<sup>10</sup> with three chains then controlling almost forty-five per cent of national circulation and overall chain ownership constituting a full seventy-seven per cent of the circulation of Canadian dailies.<sup>11</sup>

The processes of concentration continued unabated in the years after *The Expositor* was sold to Southam, with the divide between the Preston family ownership and the present demarcated even more profoundly. In 1996, Southam, a chain built upon acquisitions of independent, family newspapers, was itself acquired by Hollinger Inc. a powerful newspaper conglomerate owned by “paper king”<sup>12</sup> Conrad Black. Thus *The Expositor*, a newspaper built by an illustrious newspaperman at the turn of the century and expanded by two generations of his descendants, is now owned and controlled by a media mogul

---

<sup>9</sup> Canadian historian Arthur Lower provides strong justification for this approach in an argument put forth in a speech to the Royal Society of Canada in 1953. Lower said that to begin with the local in studies is to end up with the universal. “There is just as much culture to be distilled out of trying to understand the microcosm as the macrocosm.” See A. Lower (Edited by Welf Heick. *History and Myth and the Making of Canadian Nationalism* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1975), p. 288.

<sup>10</sup> “Keeping Newspapers All in the Family.” *Advertising Age* (March 10, 1986), p. 36.

<sup>11</sup> Davey report. p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> See James Winter. “A Paper King” in *Canadian Forum* (Nov. 1995, Vol. 74, No. 844), p. 9.

who owns more than 500 newspapers world-wide, including sixty of Canada's 104 dailies.

The trail of ownership from paternalistic proprietor T.H. Preston to media mogul Conrad Black is an essential chapter in understanding the intensification of concentration predominant in the Canadian newspaper industry throughout the last half of the twentieth century. In 1997, newspaper chains controlled more than ninety per cent of Canadian newspaper circulation and a mere eleven of Canada's daily newspapers were independently-owned. This examination of the ownership history of *The Expositor* will illustrate the ongoing struggle between family ownership ties and chains of ownership within the Canadian newspaper industry. Ultimately, it will show that concentration of Canadian newspaper ownership occurred newspaper by newspaper, family by family, as general economic and specific business factors related to the problems of family business caused individual newspaper owners to sell their newspapers to acquisitive newspaper chains. That process continued with those same chains being acquired by more acquisitive global corporations.

While the broader economic forces that brought about concentration within the Canadian newspaper industry have been duly examined, scant attention has been paid to the role of independent, family newspaper ownership. Family newspaper owners became an important factor in newspaper ownership by mid-century as newspapers built by entrepreneurial editors in the early century were passed down to heirs. The reasons why the nation's independent newspaper owners sold their newspapers to chains have especially received little study. This

is of course an important part of the concentration equation because in business, “for every purchase, there must be someone willing to sell”.<sup>13</sup>

Though the Preston family has never previously discussed its sale to Southam or its reasons for abandoning the newspaper business, primary research material for this study was obtained through interviews with Peter Preston, the now eighty-one-year old grandson of *Expositor* patriarch T.H. Preston and Peg Preston, the widow of Peter’s brother and former *Expositor* publisher Jack Preston.<sup>14</sup> Interviews were also conducted with several of the fourth generation Prestons, a generation that had little interest in carrying on the family’s newspaper legacy. It must be stressed that this evidence is subject to the limitations of the Prestons’ memories and their willingness to reveal what to them is personal family history and private financial business.

This study also relies heavily on primary evidence provided by the third-generation Prestons some twenty months before the sale of their newspaper to the 1970 Special Senate Committee on Mass Media, chaired by Senator Keith Davey. The Davey report, considered to be the first “national accounting” of Canada’s newspapers and the subsequent 1981 Royal Commission on Newspapers headed by Liberal politician Tom Kent (the Kent commission) together provide the largest available body of primary evidence on the Canadian newspaper industry in the latter half of the twentieth century. In examining the business of newspapers and their economic context, Davey’s three-volume

---

<sup>13</sup> B. Compaigne. *Who Owns the Media*. (White Plains N.Y. Knowledge Industry Publications Ltd., 1982), p. 54.

<sup>14</sup> While Peg Preston readily agreed to discuss the Preston’s record of community service, she was reluctant to discuss the family’s financial affairs and refused to provide verification of the newspaper’s sale price or terms and conditions of the family’s agreement with Southam.

report and Kent's 296-page report and its eight volumes of research, establish the parameters for the discussion of why newspaper concentration has been an issue of concern in Canadian society.

Both Davey and Kent expressed an inherent liberal view that the health of a democracy depends on a vigorous press with many voices and many owners. Both contended that while a newspaper is of course a business that sells information to readers and sells readers to advertisers, and newspaper owners are entitled to a fair profit, newspapers must also be publicly accountable.<sup>15</sup> As Davey put it, "What happens to the catsup or tiling industry affects us as consumers. What happens in the publishing business affects us as citizens."<sup>16</sup> And in the words of Kent, "Few industries are based on philosophical and moral principles as is the press. Business is private, but information is public."<sup>17</sup>

Both Davey and Kent condemned the passing of independent, family newspapers into the control of large chains and conglomerates, arguing that distant chain owners are more interested in corporate profits than in serving readers or their communities. As Montreal professor Henry Mintzberg, "an internationally recognized authority"<sup>18</sup> on corporate organization told Kent's commission, chain ownership, "tends to insulate management from the community . . .

---

<sup>15</sup> U.S. media economist Ben Bagdikian sums up the issue in a more colourful manner. He describes the newspaper as a "a godless corporation run for profit and at the same time a community institution operating for the public good. . . This requires a good publisher to have the mixed qualities of John Jacob Astor and Albert Schweitzer." See Bagdikian, "Newspaper Mergers – The Final Phase", *Columbia Journalism Review* (March-April 1977), p. 17-22.

<sup>16</sup> Davey report. p. 75.

<sup>17</sup> Kent. p. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p. 165.

The loyalty is to the corporation. The loyalty is to the bottom line, and there is a certain mobility built into the fact that, if you don't make it in Montreal, then you can move to Toronto or Winnipeg or what have you, within the same corporation. I think that creates certain tendencies to be less sensitive to local needs, and perhaps sometimes to be less in touch with them.<sup>19</sup>

The view that a newspaper should be something more than a business has been a source of continual debate within the modern Canadian newspaper industry throughout the twentieth century as the industry became increasingly driven by business imperatives. This struggle between the newspaper as a business and the newspaper as a public service accountable to the community, has underscored the steady march to the present-day state of near total consolidation. While this study of more than one hundred years of ownership of *The Expositor* does not seek to resolve the issue of whether concentrated chain ownership of Canadian daily newspapers has resulted in poorer-quality, less-responsible newspapers,<sup>20</sup> it will necessarily examine the issues and arguments that arose as concentration evolved.

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. p. 114.

<sup>20</sup> Numerous studies into the effects of chain ownership on newspaper quality and responsibility have produced ambiguous results because of the subjective nature of that inquiry. In an article in *Newspaper Research Journal*, F.Dennis Hale reports the results of a literature review about the impact of chain ownership on the quality of newspapers. "Some studies say chain ownership harms newspaper quality; some say chains improve newspapers. Most find that ownership makes little difference . . . most numerous in the literature about chain ownership are studies that identify either no influence or a mixture of positive and negative influences." See Hale, "The Influence of Chain Ownership on News Service Subscribing." In *NRJ* (Vol. 12, No. 4, Fall, 1991), p. 34-47.

*The Interdisciplinary Nature of this Study.*

While this study is foremost an ownership history of *The Expositor*, it necessarily draws on research from the fields of the history of journalism and business. Consequently, it is necessary to place this study within a broad historiographical context.

While business history has only recently come to be regarded as a field of specialization within the general discipline of history,<sup>21</sup> University of Western Ontario professor Ben Forster, argues that it is firmly rooted in the discipline of economic history as written in Canada by Adam Shortt and later, political economist Harold Innis.<sup>22</sup> In an extensive bibliographic chapter in *Canadian History: A Reader's Guide*, Forster draws attention to the work of University of Toronto professor Michael Bliss, as a model for modern business history. Bliss, whose *Northern Enterprise* is regarded as a basic text in Canadian business history, espouses a theory of business history—"the interplay between enterprise and opportunity"<sup>23</sup> that fits nicely with this work on *The Expositor* in general and the newspaper industry. In an eloquent article published in *Business Quarterly* in 1992, Bliss outlines a foundation for the writing of business history stating that "every business has its own history; every business history is a different story."<sup>24</sup>

While business historians have now achieved legitimacy within the history departments of North American universities, historical inquiry into journalism has

---

<sup>21</sup> B. Forster. "Business and Economic History" in *Canadian History: A Reader's Guide*, edited by D. O'ram (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), p. 123.

<sup>22</sup> H. A. Innis. *The Newspaper in Economic Development*. (New York: New York University Press, 1942). Innis theorized that advances in the technology of communications were among the main determinants of economic change

<sup>23</sup> Bliss. *Northern Enterprise*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> Bliss. "Canadian Business History at the Crossroads" in *Business Quarterly* (1992), p. 37.

long been relegated to its own “backwater” within universities.<sup>25</sup> Still, there has been some recognition among historians that a gap exists in the study of journalism history within history in general. The *Canadian Historical Review* acknowledged this in 1941 with its publication of an exhaustive thirty-three page “Bibliography of the History of the Canadian Press”, compiled by the Canadian Historical Association and the International Committee of Historical Sciences.<sup>26</sup>

Historian Minko Sotiron’s 1987 bibliography, *An Annotated Bibliography of Works on Newspapers in Canada: 1914-1983*, provides newspaper historians with rich sources for investigating the press and the past as well as justification for doing so. In his introduction, Sotiron declares that the newspaper and its history are important in Canada.

It is a vital institution, economically and socially. It provides the main channel of information through which our society communicates with itself and other societies. Yet in Canada, very little work has been done on their [newspapers] role and function in society.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> In her classic 1923 work *The Newspaper and the Historian*, journalist Lucy Maynard Salmon presents some pious arguments for the historical study of the press. The press is “living exemplification of the biblical phrase, ‘None of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself,’” she wrote. “Probably more than any other single agency, it touches every other activity in human society. See L. Salmon, *The Newspaper and the Historian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1923), p. 85. A 1949 work by journalism professor Marcus Wilkerson that sought to define a research agenda for newly-emerging schools of journalism argued that the history of journalism is an important aspect of all historical inquiry because of the role of the press in society. See M. Wilkerson, *Journalism Research* (New Orleans: Louisiana State University Press, 1949).

<sup>26</sup> “Bibliography of the History of the Canadian Press” in *Canadian Historical Review* (Dec. 1941, Vol. 22, No. 4), p. 416. The International Committee of Historical Sciences was organized in Geneva in 1926 to “encourage investigation of numerous subjects having a bearing on international relations, one of them being the history of the Press”

<sup>27</sup> M. Sotiron. *An Annotated Bibliography of Works on Daily Newspapers in Canada: 1914-1983*. (Montreal: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 1987), p.ii.



Historian Doug Owram echoed that in his 1994 bibliographic work *Canadian History: A Reader's Guide*. "Much work remains to be done on the Canadian media," he declares.<sup>28</sup>

It is with this background in mind that this study has been framed.

*iii. The Secondary Literature and the Early History of Newspaper Concentration in Canada.*

The processes of consolidation within Canadian newspapers began early in the twentieth century when the elite party press of the Victorian era gave way to the mass circulation daily newspaper requiring large amounts of capital. This evolution and growth necessarily fostered the emergence of the newspaper as a business enterprise and is regarded as "the most far-reaching feature in Canadian newspaper history."<sup>29</sup> This need for capital and increasing newspaper competition resulted in a steady march towards consolidation within the industry and a corresponding steady decline in autonomous ownership.

In one of the earliest accounts of Canadian newspaper ownership, journalist Carlton McNaught<sup>30</sup> provided a brief, early history of the press. In his 1940 work *Canada Gets the News*, McNaught attributed the beginnings of

---

<sup>28</sup> Owram. p. 176.

<sup>29</sup> Douglas Fetherling. "The Life and Death of the Party Press" in *The Rise of the Canadian Newspaper* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 78-106.

<sup>30</sup> Ironically, academics have long looked down upon works by journalists as being somewhat substandard. "Books about the media written by journalists have a bit of an unsavoury reputation in academic circles. The journalist is thought to be an unregenerate storyteller who feels a need to excite his audience with colourful anecdotes and easy generalizations," writes historian Paul Rutherford in "Making the News" a review article in *Acadiensis* (Autumn 1982, Vol. 12, No. 1), p. 136.

consolidation of newspapers to the “industrialization of the press.”<sup>31</sup> He argued that by the early years of the twentieth century, newspaper publishing had become a highly-organized, highly-competitive, business requiring considerable capital investment, steady income and numerous personnel. “The day has passed when a few thousand dollars could start a newspaper and the modest returns from the sale of its wares could keep it in more or less flourishing existence,”<sup>32</sup> he wrote. “The newspaper has become the department store of literature and department stores are notoriously expensive to maintain.”<sup>33</sup>

According to McNaught, a “drift” towards concentration of ownership of newspapers began to emerge as a result of this industrialized, profit-dependent press and the economic realities of competition. He cites a 1928 study by the International Labour Office, in Geneva, as an early indicator of this trend. That study declared the press was being rapidly transformed by “this invasion by the methods of big capital” and warned:

A new phenomenon is looming in the newspaper world and tends to accentuate this capitalistic enterprise; it is a process of concentration, the formation of vast trusts aiming at controlling all or part of the Press.<sup>34</sup>

The task of recounting the history of the Canadian newspaper industry was taken on by yet another journalist, W.H. Kesterton in his 1967 work *A History of Journalism in Canada*. Kesterton divided his history into four periods with the

---

<sup>31</sup> *McNaught*. p. 16.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

first two covering the years from 1752 to 1858. His third press period from 1858 to 1900, when newspapers were mainly printed by partisan political interests, is of some use to this study in establishing the roots of *The Expositor*, but it is his fourth press period, which he dated from the beginning of the twentieth century, which is of most interest to this work. Like McNaught, Kesterton focuses on the “striking concentration of newspaper control” that transformed the newspaper industry in this century stating that “the twentieth century newspaper story is thus a story of consolidation and control.”<sup>35</sup> His analysis details the role of new technology and the growth of mass advertising as factors responsible for the decrease in the number of independently-owned newspapers and the increase in consolidation of ownership amongst those who remained in business.

Among modern Canadian historians, the University of Toronto’s Paul Rutherford most deserves the title of media historian. Rutherford’s historical inquiry on the press in Canada—the major secondary work informing this study—exhibits cogent analysis of the media. In his 1978 work, *The Making of the Canadian Media*, touted as a “tour de force” in the *Canadian Historical Review*,<sup>36</sup> Rutherford charts the rise of the newspaper as an economic and social institution in Canada. He charts three principal stages of growth from pre-Confederation, to a “golden age” at the turn of the century, to the modern post-war period.

Rutherford’s work on the evolution of the newspaper industry reflects the tension between the economic forces of capitalism and the social forces of liberal

---

<sup>35</sup> W. Kesterton. *A History of Journalism in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1967), p. 73.

<sup>36</sup> Alan Smith. “Review of *The Making of the Canadian Media*” in *Canadian Historical Review* (Sept. 1979, Vol. 60, No. 3), p. 384.

democracy.<sup>37</sup> This ongoing tension between the newspaper as a business and the newspaper as an instrument of libertarianism<sup>38</sup> responsible to a public of readers is a secondary theme to be explored in this study.

Though Rutherford's work is not particularly intended to be a business history of the newspaper industry, Bliss's *Northern Enterprise* cites it as the only valid Canadian work on the industry.<sup>39</sup> Indeed Rutherford devotes much attention to the growth of the newspaper as a business subject to the "discipline of the marketplace".<sup>40</sup> He carefully details the rise of monopoly, oligopoly and concentration within the industry concluding that by the late 1920s, "the newspaper business was a business like any other wherein reigned the twin gods of Profit and Stability."<sup>41</sup>

In his 1982 work, *A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth-Century Canada*, Rutherford analyzes the evolution of the metropolitan daily press in Canada from its Victorian origins to its emergence as

---

<sup>37</sup> The study of Canadian history -- and indeed Canadian historiography -- reveals a similar tension within the evolution of most Canadian institutions. See C. Berger. *The Writing of Canadian History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986) and the Canadian Historical Readings *Approaches to Canadian History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967).

<sup>38</sup> The Libertarian theory of the press developed in the late 17th and early 18th centuries as part of the basic philosophy of Western Liberalism which held that a government was the trustee to which a populace delegated authority and from which it could also withdraw authority. The Libertarian press theory assumes the press plays a critical role in informing and educating individuals to be able to make rational decisions about their governments and their individual lives. Libertarians assume some of the information the press circulates will be unsound or even false, but that out of a multiplicity of voices the public could decide their truth. Libertarianism also demands a press free from government control or interference. In later years, the Social Responsibility theory of the press evolved from this philosophy. The theory of social responsibility holds that the press has a public responsibility to ensure the public's right to know and that press freedom carries concomitant obligations to society. See F. Siebert, T. Peterson and Wilbur Schramm. *Four Theories of the Press*. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1956), Ch.2

<sup>39</sup> Bliss. *Northern Enterprise*. p. 605.

<sup>40</sup> P. Rutherford. *The Making of the Canadian Media*. (Toronto: McGraw, Hill, Ryerson Ltd., 1978) p. 186

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* p. 52.

an instrument of mass communication in its golden age at the turn of the century. This work, which examines the organization, circulation and finance of newspapers in the context of the forces of industrialization and urbanization, provides the backdrop for the study of *The Expositor* from 1890 onwards.<sup>42</sup>

Minko Sotiron builds on Rutherford's work in his 1997 book *From Politics to Profits: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers*, which is based on his earlier doctoral dissertation. Sotiron focuses on the years from 1890 to 1920 as the key period in the development of the newspaper as a business. He documents the rise of entrepreneurial newspapermen who eschewed partisan political ties and turned their publications into "modern, profit-seeking corporations",<sup>43</sup> increasingly dependent on advertising and mass circulation. Sotiron places his analysis of the emerging Canadian newspaper industry within a more general economic framework of developing Canadian capitalism, concluding that, "the role of the publisher as entrepreneur is key to understanding the present state of concentration in the news media."<sup>44</sup>

Sotiron effectively argues that the most successful newspaper publishers of that period were those who adopted "modern" methods of business management in order to protect and build their investment in their newspaper.

The ethics of business pervaded and transformed the newspaper world through businessmen who bought into the press, or newsmen, who upon becoming publishers were forced by financial considerations to behave like businessmen. The more industrialized publishing became, the more industrious the publishers.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> See also Rutherford's article "The People's Press: The Emergence of the New Journalism in Canada, 1869-99" in *Canadian Historical Review* (June, 1975, Vol. 56, No. 2), p. 169-191.

<sup>43</sup> M. Sotiron. *From Politics to Profits: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920*. (Montreal: McGill, Queen's University Press, 1997), p. 8.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* p. 6.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* p. 159.

Sotiron's work provides a valuable framework for the analysis of the early years of the Preston family ownership of *The Expositor* and the evolution of a Canadian newspaper industry in the early twentieth century. The work of Sotiron and Rutherford provide a theoretical framework and narrative structure for studying and writing about the evolution of the press in Canada in both an economic and a social sense. Yet, since both Sotiron and Rutherford deal mainly with the development of the press of Canada's larger urban areas, the development and role of many small-city daily newspapers in the overall evolution of the Canadian newspaper industry and its trend to consolidation remains to be examined. In this area of study, this present work on Brantford's *Expositor* seeks to make a contribution.

#### *iv. Newspaper Families and Newspapermen*

While the works of Rutherford and Sotiron deal effectively with the broader economic forces that brought about newspaper concentration, they pay scant attention to the role of individual newspaper owners and family ownership which became an important aspect of newspaper ownership by the mid-twentieth century. While little work has explored why the nation's newspaper-owning families sold their newspapers, some research exists. A 1979 article in *Media Probe: The Canadian Journal of Communications* called "Lethbridge-Herald: Factors Involved in Joining Chain", provides an examination of the 1959 sale of Alberta's last independently-owned newspaper to F.P. Publications Ltd., then Canada's largest-circulation newspaper chain. It concludes that the Buchanan

family owners sold the paper because of business problems affecting the newspaper and the family.

The issue of daily newspaper ownership and concentration is also addressed in an unpublished M.A. thesis produced by Vikram Dhawan at Queen's University in 1991. That thesis focuses on the decline of newspaper competition in Canadian cities and examines the 1971 closing of *The Toronto Telegram*. Dhawan also examines the role of economic factors in the liberal democratic vision of a free press.<sup>46</sup>

Other works on individual Canadian newspapers and their family owners illuminate this study of newspaper ownership history. University of Western Ontario journalism professor Michael Nolan's study of the Blackburn family, which owned *The London Free Press* in London, Ontario from 1853 until 1997 when it sold the newspaper to Sun Media, provides insight into the challenges of maintaining a family newspaper dynasty through varying economic, social and political circumstances. Of great aid also is journalist Douglas Fetherling's *A Little Bit of Thunder: The Strange Inner Life of the Kingston Whig-Standard*, a narrative history of the Kingston, Ontario newspaper and its proprietor Michael Davies who sold his longheld family newspaper to Southam Inc. in 1990. Fetherling's book is a sharp indictment of modern corporate journalism and his story of how the *Whig* was swallowed up by the ethos of corporate publishing reads like both the post-mortem and obituary of the family-owned newspaper in the specific and general sense.

---

<sup>46</sup> V. Dhawan. "The Tabloid Revolution: Reversing the Trend to Daily Newspaper Monopolies and the Case of the Toronto Sun" (M.A. thesis, Queen's University, 1991) Abstract.

Much of the secondary literature pertaining to Canadian journalism history and individual newspaper ownership can be found in biographical works about Canadian journalists.<sup>47</sup> The biographical work on early Canadian newspapermen serves to illuminate the political, social and economic milieu inhabited by *Expositor* patriarch T. H. Preston and his descendants. Among these works are Ron Poulton's work on *The Toronto Telegram's* John Ross Robertson, *The Paper Tiger*, Ramsay Cook's *The Politics of John W. Dafoe and the Free Press*, P.D. Ross's autobiographical work, *Retrospects of a Newspaper Person*, Russell Bradon's *Roy Thomson of Fleet Street* and Charles Bruce's *News and the Southams*. Most useful in providing context to the life and career of T.H. Preston are Ross Harkness' *J.E. Atkinson of The Star* and A.H.U. Colquhoun's *Press Politics and People: The Life and Letters of Sir John Willison*, which documents the life of the influential 1890s *Globe* editor who went on to found the independent *News* with financing from the wealthy Sir Joseph Flavelle. Both Willison and Atkinson were also longtime friends to T.H. Preston.

A later perspective on family newspaper ownership can be found in John Porter's 1965 work *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada*. In his chapter on the mass media as an ideological system, Porter places newspaper owning families among the Canadian elite, arguing that "only the very wealthy or those successful in the corporate world can buy and sell large daily newspapers, which have become in effect, the instruments of an

---

<sup>47</sup> See bibliography for full citations of these works. The most magnificent of these works, required reading for any student of Canadian journalism history, is J.M. S. Careless' two-volume *Brown of the Globe*. Although that award-winning work documents an earlier press period than this work concerns itself with, it provides a formidable model of work on a newspaperman and his times.



established upper class.”<sup>48</sup> His argument that newspaper ownership was historically closely held within families, with newspaper wealth passed through generations is of direct bearing to this study of *The Expositor* and its three generations of Preston family owners.

In a 1982 study of the US communications industry called *Who Owns the Media*, economist Benjamin Compaine theorizes that independent, family newspapers are sold for several reasons including weak management, family squabbles, heavy inheritance taxes and overwhelming offers of cash. For this study, these factors have been considered in the light of general theories about the problems of family business; what Harvard business historian Alfred Chandler calls “personal capitalism.”<sup>49</sup> Ultimately, this examination of the ownership history of *The Expositor* will show that in the newspaper business, just as in other industries where merger is a predominant fact, problems of maintaining a family business often become so insurmountable that families are pushed into selling to corporations. These family business factors and larger economic factors contributed greatly to the eventual sale of *The Expositor*, and ultimately to the demise of independent newspaper ownership in Canada.

v. *The Newspaper Industry in the Modern Era and the Dynamics of Concentration.*

There are no better sources for the examination of concentration of ownership within the Canadian newspaper industry in the post-war years than

---

<sup>48</sup> J. Porter. *The Vertical Mosaic*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 462.

<sup>49</sup> G. Jones and M. Rose, "Family Capitalism" *Business History* (October 1993, Vol. 35, No. 40), p. 2, citing A.D. Chandler *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism* (Cambridge, MA, 1990).

the reports of the 1970 Davey committee and the 1981 Kent commission. Davey proposed a Senate committee review of the media in a March 18, 1969 speech to the Canadian Senate because he suspected newspaper concentration had reached a critical point. In his 1986 autobiography *The Rainmaker: A Passion for Politics*, Davey explained his purpose. "I proposed a special Senate committee to determine whether we had the press we need or the press we deserved. More and more Canadians were getting news and other information from fewer and fewer people."<sup>50</sup>

Davey's committee worked for two years, reviewing 500 briefs, and holding public hearings in which 125 witnesses, including John C. Preston, *The Expositor's* publisher, were questioned. At the end, the committee produced a three-volume report that forced the Canadian mass media to examine itself. Davey's report found that seventy-seven of Canada's 116 newspapers (more than sixty-six per cent) were then group-owned. It concluded that "control of the media is passing into fewer and fewer hands and experts agree that the trend is likely to continue and perhaps accelerate".<sup>51</sup> It also warned "this country should no longer tolerate a situation where the public interest in so vital a field as information is dependent on the greed or goodwill of an extremely privileged group of businessmen."<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> K. Davey. *The Rainmaker: A Passion for Politics*. (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Ltd., 1986), p. 143.

<sup>51</sup> Canada. Special Senate Committee on the Mass Media. *Report, Vol. 1, "The Uncertain Mirror"*, Ottawa, 1970, p. 6. (hereafter to be known as Davey report).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

The Davey report provided Canadians with the first public examination of media economics and ownership patterns and showed that the newspaper industry in that post-war modern era was highly-profitable in comparison to other Canadian industries. It recommended the establishment of a Press Ownership Review Board to screen all future newspaper mergers and acquisitions, advising that the board operate from the premise that all transactions that increased concentration of ownership of Canadian newspapers are “undesirable: and contrary to the public interest unless shown to be otherwise.”<sup>53</sup> The report asserted

If the trend towards concentration is allowed to continue unabated, sooner or later it must reach the point where it collides with the public interest. The committee believes it to be in the national interest to ensure that point is not reached.<sup>54</sup>

In the decade between the Davey and Kent inquiries, the number of independent newspapers decreased from forty-five to twenty-nine, with *The Expositor* being one of the first newspapers following publication of the Davey report to give up its independent family ownership and sell to a chain. Overall in that period, chain-owned papers increased from sixty-nine to eighty-eight, amounting to overall control of seventy-seven per cent of Canadian daily newspapers.

This steady continuation of the process of concentration culminated on August 27, 1980, on a day known in the newspaper business as Black Wednesday. On that hot, summer day, the *Ottawa Journal*, owned by Thomson

---

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. p.6.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

Newspapers folded, leaving the Southam-owned *Ottawa Citizen* with a monopoly in the nation's capital. On the same day, Southam shut down the presses of its *Winnipeg Tribune*, leaving Thomson's *Free Press* with the only daily in Winnipeg. The reverberations of shock from journalists, the public and politicians prompted Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government to launch its Royal Commission on Newspapers, giving Tom Kent this mandate:

To inquire into the causes and consequences of an increase in the concentration of press ownership and control and to suggest what measures, if any are required to ameliorate the present situation of the industry. The basis for the Commission's appointment is a presumption that newspapers have a responsibility to the public and that the elimination of newspapers has consequences for individual citizens, for their communities and for the nation as a whole.<sup>55</sup>

The Kent commission proposed a Canada Newspaper Act aimed at halting "significant further concentration of the ownership and control of daily newspapers and of the common ownership of those newspapers and other media."<sup>56</sup> As well, the commission proposed a series of tax measures and incentives to prompt newspaper owners to spend more money on their editorial products. Kent warned that without government action, "the process of concentration will continue to a bitterer end: company will take over company, agglomeration will proceed until all Canadian newspapers are divisions of one or two great conglomerates."<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> Canada. Royal Commission on Newspapers. *Report* (Ottawa, 1981) P. 259. (Hereafter to be known as Kent commission.)

<sup>56</sup> Kent commission. p. 292.

<sup>57</sup> Kent commission. p. 221.

In the recent history of the Canadian newspaper industry, the words of Davey and Kent have proven quite prophetic. In his report, Davey offered the “hypothetical extreme” that if the process of concentration continued “the logical (but wholly improbable) outcome is that one man or one corporation could own every media outlet in the country except the CBC.”<sup>58</sup> Davey need not have qualified his statement with the disclaimer of ‘improbability’, for events of the recent past have shown Canadians how easily that situation could actually come about. Throughout the 1990s, the Canadian newspaper industry experienced an acceleration of newspaper ownership concentration driven by high-stakes mergers and acquisitions driven by shareholders’ demands for larger profits.<sup>59</sup> The result is nearing Davey’s prediction—in 1997, Conrad Black owned more than half the newspapers in Canada.

In concert with this has come the nearly complete demise of independent family newspaper ownership. One by one, Canada’s newspaper-owning families have relinquished their newspapers and their voices in their communities to newspaper chains, which have subsequently been swallowed by even larger corporations. Thus, the era of family newspaper ownership has come to a nearly-complete end in Canada. The fact that the family-owner aspect of the concentration equation has never been fully examined by scholars is a gap that this study aspires to fill through a detailed look at *The Expositor*.

---

<sup>58</sup> Davey report. p. 6.

<sup>59</sup> There has yet to be a fullscale Canadian work on the 1990s corporatization of the newspaper industry, For a discussion of the situation in the U.S. see J. Squires, *Read all About it: The Corporate Takeover of America’s Newspapers* (New York: Random House, 1993) D. Underwood, *When MBAs Rule the Newsroom* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). Both books were produced by journalists who seemingly have little understanding of the historical context of the

To achieve this, this examination has been divided into three subsequent chapters. Chapter Two examines the genesis and development of the Preston family business from 1890 to 1946 when the processes of consolidation of Canadian newspapers began. It focuses on the family newspaper dynasty built by T.H. Preston and passed down to his son William Buckingham Preston. Chapter Three deals with the years from 1946 to 1971 when the third generation Prestons inherited and ran the Brantford newspaper through a period when family-owned newspapers were increasingly taken over by acquisitive chains. It focuses on the business and family pressures that led to the sale of the newspaper. Chapter Four, covers the period from 1971 to 1997, exploring the Southam's ownership of *The Expositor* and its takeover by Hollinger Inc. It focuses on the increasing corporatization of Canadian newspapers as a factor that has brought about nearly complete consolidation of the Canadian newspaper industry.

\*\*\*\*\*

---

newspaper as a business and as such read like naive, anti-business laments for an industry suddenly taken over by big business.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *i. Prologue: Death of a Newspaperman.*

On Monday November, 9, 1925, one of the largest funerals ever held in the city of Brantford took place when Thomas Hiram Preston, proprietor of *The Expositor*, and former Liberal member of the Ontario Legislature, was buried in Farrington Cemetery in a gravesite marked by a simple, black granite headstone. Preston himself had designed that headstone some fifteen years earlier when he had composed explicit directions for his eventual leave-taking. When death by angina took Preston at the age of seventy, those instructions, which had been tucked away in his family bible, were followed faithfully. Preceding the interment at the cemetery, a public service took place at three o'clock at Brant Avenue United Church. As the funeral cortege entered the church, an organist played Handel's Largo, a favourite of the deceased. A full choir sang his favourite hymns, "O God of Bethel" and "Unto the Hills Around, Do I Lift Up My Longing Eyes." The funeral service included a scripture reading from John 14 and a solemn eulogy delivered by Preston's friend of thirty years, Dr. W. L. Rutledge. Following that oration, Chopin's funeral march rang through the church as eighty employees of the newspaper filed solemnly past Preston's casket to pay their final respects to the man who had owned *The Expositor* since 1890.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>F.D. Reville. "Proprietor of *The Expositor* Passes", *The Expositor* (Brantford, Nov. 10, 1925) and "Thousands Pay Tribute to T.H. Preston's Worth" *Toronto Daily Star* (Nov. 10, 1925) From scrapbook of Canadian daily newspaper obituaries of T.H. Preston compiled by Canadian Daily Newspaper Association and presented to Mrs. T.H. Preston, February, 1926. The scrapbook is now in the possession of T.H. Preston's grandson Peter Preston who graciously lent it to the author for this research. This most valuable source will hereafter be referred to as obit scrapbook.

The throng of mourners in Brantford on that Monday afternoon included the leading Canadian newspapermen of the day; representatives of a generation of journalists who had built Canada's mass circulation daily newspapers in the early years of the twentieth century when the party press of the Victorian era evolved into a national newspaper industry. Among them were Sir John Willison, the distinguished former editor of the *Globe* and founder of the by then-defunct *Toronto News*, Joseph E. Atkinson, owner of *The Toronto Star*, P. D. Ross, owner of the *Ottawa Journal*, J. F. B. Livesay, general manager of the Canadian Press, Major H.B. Burgoyne, owner of the *St. Catharines Standard*, L.H. Dingman of the *Time's Journal* of St. Thomas, A.H.U. Colquhoun, Ontario's deputy minister of education and a former managing editor of the *Empire*, and George Scroggie, president of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association. These men, contemporaries, colleagues and close friends of Preston, gathered at Brantford "because they wanted to be there," a report on the funeral in *Canadian Printer and Publisher*, the influential journal of the newspaper publishing industry, later stated, "To all of them he was held in high regard."<sup>2</sup>

The pallbearers, chosen by Preston when he had planned his funeral, included Scroggie and the Hon. Newton W. Rowell, a prominent Ontario Liberal politician and Methodist churchman who was close friends with both Atkinson and Willison. In an interview, which appeared in the *Toronto Star's*<sup>3</sup> front-page account of the funeral, Rowell lamented Preston's passing:

---

<sup>2</sup> Ark, "T.H. Preston --The Man," *Canadian Printer and Publisher* (Nov. 25, 1925), p. 45. Obit scrapbook.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix B. from *Toronto Daily Star* (Nov. 10, 1925).



In the death of Mr. Preston, Ontario journalism has lost one of its most trusted leaders and the province one of its most devoted and public spirited citizens. It has been my privilege to know Mr. Preston a great many years as a journalist, as a member of the provincial parliament and as a leader in philanthropic and social reform work and I have never met a man who served the cause to which he was devoting his energies with greater fidelity, with less regard for personal interest and with a finer sense of public duty. <sup>4</sup>

While Preston was exalted in death as one of the most important newspapermen of his generation, he is a little-known personage in Canadian newspaper history. This is an unfortunate omission as Preston was an influential figure in Canadian journalism in the turn-of-the-century period regarded by historian Paul Rutherford as a “golden age” for newspapers. <sup>5</sup> As this chapter will show, he was a well-respected, much-admired, newspaper proprietor, considered a leader in a generation of bright, young newspapermen who played prominent roles in the emerging newspaper industry and in Canadian society overall at the dawn of the twentieth century.

In his background, philosophies and politics, Preston was strikingly similar to his associates Rowell, Atkinson and Willison, all better-known figures of those boom times. These three, who were all actively involved in the 1896 election that brought Wilfrid Laurier’s Liberals to power, had first become acquainted when Rowell joined the Toronto Young Liberals in the autumn of 1891.<sup>6</sup> Willison, then

---

<sup>4</sup> "Hundreds Pay Tribute to T.H.Preston's Worth", *Toronto Daily Star* (Nov. 10, 1925), p.1. Obit Scrapbook.

<sup>5</sup> See P. Rutherford. *The Making of the Canadian Media and A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982).

<sup>6</sup> Three important works on these men are M. Prang's *N.W. Rowell: Ontario Nationalist* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), R. Harkness' *J.E. Atkinson of The Star* (Toronto: University of

the editor of the *Globe*, was a past-president of the club and Atkinson, then the *Globe's* Ottawa correspondent (a position Preston had held a decade before) was a new member. Rowell, Atkinson and Willison would remain friends with one another throughout their lives and, as evidenced by their attendance at Preston's funeral, each would maintain their acquaintance with the Brantford newspaperman.

While the lives of those three men have already been chronicled by Canadian historians, Preston's role in the growth of the Canadian newspaper industry in one of its most critical periods remains to be told. Preston was influential in the emergence of the industry through a period of striking change when the economics of publishing forced newspapermen to become highly-competitive businessmen. Moreover, like Willison and Atkinson, Preston built a prosperous business without sacrificing his editorial ideals concerning the public responsibility of the press.

In a tribute to Preston following his death, Willison, who was then widely-regarded as the most distinguished newspaper writer in Canada for his commitment to journalistic independence from political parties,<sup>7</sup> lavished high praise on Preston. Writing in his own publication, *Willison's Monthly*, he stated, "No man of his generation had more of the affection and respect of Canadian

---

Toronto Press, 1963) and A. Colquhoun's *Press, Politics and People: The Life and Letters of Sir John Willison* (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd., 1935) Prang first made the comparison between the three in a 1967 article "The Evolution of a Victorian Liberal: N.W. Rowell." in *Profiles of a Province* (Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1967). In reference to Atkinson, Willison and other Rowell contemporaries, she wrote: "Most of the young men of Rowell's acquaintance had grown up in rural Ontario in circumstances very like his own and had found Toronto a highly-satisfactory arena for the exercise of their native talent and their devotion to hard work." p. 128.

journalists than the late T.H. Preston of the Brantford *Expositor* . . . There was no metropolitan newspaper on the continent that he could not have edited with distinction and managed with success.”<sup>8</sup>

Atkinson of the *Star*, who knew Preston through their work with the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association and its predecessor, the Canadian Press Association, wrote in his newspaper that Preston had become an “institution” in both Brantford and the newspaper profession.

Since his acquisition of *The Expositor* 35 years ago, his pen has been constantly at the service of Brantford . . . By his confreres of the Press, his passing will be regarded as an irreparable loss to Canadian journalism . . . In a particular degree, perhaps greater than can be said of any other man, he enjoyed the confidence, respect and goodwill of all who are engaged in newspaper work in Canada.<sup>9</sup>

Preston was both an editor and an entrepreneur. As “the man who made the *Brantford Expositor*”,<sup>10</sup> he exhibited both editorial zeal and business acumen, turning a four-page fledgling paper with a circulation of seven hundred into a well-respected, profitable daily with a circulation of 11,000 at the time of his death. An obituary penned by Willison expressed this dual nature of Preston’s talent: “He combined as few journalists do, a capacity in the business office as great as any that he displayed in filling the news columns and shaping editorial policy.”<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Historian Frank Underhill wrote in 1935 that Willison’s “long struggle for journalistic independence . . . did much to bring about the emancipation of Canadian papers from strict party lines.” In *Canadian Forum*, Dec. 1935. Photocopy in Willison Papers, Ontario Archives.

<sup>8</sup> J. Willison. “Losses of Brantford” *Willison’s Monthly*, obit scrapbook.

<sup>9</sup> “An Appreciation by J.E. Atkinson, Proprietor Daily Star, Toronto”, *The Expositor* (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

<sup>10</sup> *Canadian Printer and Publisher*. Nov. 1925, obit scrapbook.

<sup>11</sup> Willison, *Willison’s Monthly*, obit scrapbook.

As the patriarch of a family newspaper dynasty that dominated the Brantford newspaper field for seventy-six years, Preston's influence both in Brantford and in Canadian journalism was far-reaching.<sup>12</sup> As this chapter will show, T.H. Preston and his eldest son William both assumed important roles in the twentieth century development of the Canadian newspaper industry through their work with the Canadian Press Association and the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association.

*ii. The Expositor: The Pre-Preston Years.*

Though the Preston ownership of *The Expositor* lasted from 1890 to 1971, the paper itself dates back to Tuesday October 12, 1852 with the publication of the first issue of a four-page weekly, called *The Conservative Expositor*. The newspaper emerged in that mid-Victorian period of newspaper history when papers were closely connected to the Conservative or Liberal parties and largely financed through party patronage given in exchange for editorial loyalty. As Kesterton pointed out in his history of Canadian journalism, these newspapers of the pre-Confederation era were started, "not to make a fortune, but to communicate a political philosophy or support a political cause."<sup>13</sup> Their proprietors were most often their editors who imposed their own political views on their papers and the papers they published tended to be no more than four pages

---

<sup>12</sup> Preston was included in a 1956 series of profiles and portraits of "Great Canadian Editors and Publishers" published by the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publisher's Association. Preston was part of the first series of ten newsmen who included J.E. Atkinson, the Hon. George Brown, the Hon. W.A. Buchanan, J.W. Dafoe, L.H. Dingman, Joseph Howe, John Imrie, John Ross Robertson and P.D. Ross. See *A History of Canadian Journalism II* (Ontario Publishing Co. Ltd., 1959), p 257.

<sup>13</sup> W. Kesterton. "A Short History of the Press in Canada" *Gazette* (Vol XV. no. 2, 1969), p. 86.

that were relatively inexpensive to produce. As Rutherford has argued, this party press was the spokesman of the stereotypical Victorian citizen—"sober-minded, learned, but dogmatic."<sup>14</sup>

*The Conservative Expositor* was published by local merchant and auctioneer Henry Racey, who was also a clerk of the Division court. At that time, the town of Brantford had three highly-partisan newspapers, *The Courier*, *The Herald* and *The Tribune*. A dispute between Racey and Major Henry Lemmon, the owner of the *Conservative Courier*, prompted Racey to launch his own newspaper to promote the political policies of the Conservative party and the Orange fraternity. According to published reports, the two men had an argument and Racey told Lemmon he was "not the only man who could run a Conservative newspaper in this place." Racey proved true to his word and launched the *Conservative Expositor*.<sup>15</sup>

The *Conservative Expositor* was of course, Conservative in its politics. In his first edition, Racey stated his intentions for the new journal in a long, lofty "Prospectus" written in the flowery manner of Victorian journalism.<sup>16</sup> He outlined

---

<sup>14</sup> P. Rutherford. "The People's Press: The Emergence of the New Journalism in Canada" *Canadian Historical Review*. (Vol. 56, No. 2, June 1975), p. 173.

<sup>15</sup> "Dispute Between Two Men Gave Birth to *The Expositor*", *The Expositor*, Centennial Edition (Brantford: June 30, 1967), p. 10.

<sup>16</sup> The statement began: "This, the bustling world of everyday life, is an age of progress and impatience, of Railroads, Steam Engines and Electric Telegraphs and in order that the aristocracy of intellect which Canada possesseth in such eminent degree, may keep pace with the spirit and progress of the age, knowledge must be promulgated throughout the land. The most efficient and speedy way of accomplishing this desirable end is through the medium of a well-conducted newspaper." See "The Conservative Expositor", *The Expositor* (Brantford: Feb. 29, 1992).

a comprehensive economic platform, pledging the paper's advocacy of protectionism and firmer bonds with the "the Mother Country."<sup>17</sup>

Racey ran his Tory paper for three years. In 1855, when he brought his son-in-law Charles Stewart into the business, the newspaper dropped the Conservative title from its masthead and switched its support to the Reformers. The paper subsequently became a semi-weekly, a tri-weekly and in 1873, under the editorial direction of Hamilton journalist Herbert F. Gardiner, it became a daily newspaper. Stewart left Brantford to take over the *Times* in Hamilton, but remained owner of *The Expositor* until his death in 1874.

At that time, the newspaper, still a Reform journal, was purchased by Brantford businessman W.C. Trimble, who brought in lawyer William W. Watt, a longtime editorial contributor, to manage the newspaper. In 1880, Watt gave up his law practice and became *The Expositor's* sole owner. Two years later, he formed a partnership with his business manager R.S. Shenstone. In 1890, Watt and Shenstone sold the "plant and goodwill" of their newspaper to T.H. Preston for an undisclosed sum.<sup>18</sup> Their final editorial of February 28, 1890 indicates that the emerging need for larger amounts of newspaper capital and more business-like methods of operation was at least partially responsible for the sale. As Watt wrote:

These have been busy years in which this Canada of ours has been making history fast; years which have witnessed a steady and healthy growth, the development of the town into a progressive city . . . . What is called the provincial newspaper, which is fast becoming a greater power than it used to be, needs no small amount of capital, business enterprise, tact and industry,

---

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *The Expositor* (June 30, 1967).

while it also entails much responsibility to be of value to its owners, and of service to the community in which it is published.<sup>19</sup>

Watt had been considered “one of the really excellent political editors in the province”<sup>20</sup> and his *Expositor* had “long been regarded with much pride by the Liberal party.”<sup>21</sup> In this, he was representative of the mid-Victorian era of newsmen firmly aligned with partisan political interests and clearly out of step with the emerging trend towards the political independence of newspapers identified by Rutherford in *A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth Century Canada*. In that final editorial, Watt defended the partisan approach of his newspaper . . .

We have heard it said, in a depreciating way, that *The Expositor* was too much of a party paper. We are not disposed to deny the affirmation, though we resent it, if meant in a truckling spirit. . . . If there is a time when a Liberal or a director of a Liberal newspaper should stand firm and resolute behind his political principles, and his chosen spokesman, it is when so-called independence stalks abroad and seeks to sow the seeds of political disintegration.”<sup>22</sup>

Watt’s Victorian notions of journalism were becoming outdated and ineffective, both socially and financially. As both Rutherford and Sotiron have clearly shown, a new era of journalism, with newspaper proprietors coming to be more concerned with profit than politics, was dawning even though the new century was still a decade away. In Toronto, the *Daily Mail* had broken publicly

---

<sup>19</sup> *The Expositor* (Feb 28, 1890), p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Buffalo Express* editorial. Reprinted in *The Expositor*, Feb. 27, 1890.

<sup>22</sup> *The Expositor*. Feb. 28, 1890.

with Sir John A. Macdonald's Tories<sup>23</sup> and new ideas about newspapers and political independence began to emerge. At the same time, the costs of producing a daily newspaper were increasing with the development of new printing technology. Newspaper proprietors were beginning to understand the necessity of attracting more readers to bring in more advertising dollars to support their publications. These new economic realities of newspaper publishing were discussed in an article on "modern journalism" which appeared in *Saturday Night* magazine in the same month that Watt completed his sale of *The Expositor* to Preston:

Formerly, the mainspring of daily journalism was partyism. Today it is business, modified in most cases by party considerations. The increased amount of capital necessary to establish and conduct successfully a metropolitan daily newspaper brings the commercial element into increasing prominence. In old times, the leading dailies were started and controlled by some one prominent man of strong individuality and declared public views who made his newspaper a vehicle to advance party objects. But personal organship is rapidly becoming extinct. If the modern newspaper is partisan, it is simply on commercial grounds because there is more money in being so than assuming an independent role. When the two interests clash it is the political and not the commercial object that usually goes to the wall.<sup>24</sup>

From the outset, Preston's purchase of *The Expositor* provoked expectations of change. The announcement inspired positive editorial comment in several newspapers across North America. A selection of those "Fraternal

---

<sup>23</sup> *The Daily Mail*, which had solidly supported Sir John A. Macdonald's Conservatives since its 1872 start, broke with the party in 1886 over the issue of Riel and French rights in Canada. Under editor Edward Farrar, it then entered a period of "splendid isolation" during which it was politically independent. See C. Cumming, *Secret Craft. The Journalism of Edward Farrar*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). In his introduction, Cumming writes that Farrar's editorship of the *Daily Mail* during that period of independence "encouraged a different understanding of the power and function of journalism".

<sup>24</sup> *Saturday Night*. (Feb.1, 1890) in C. Cumming, p. 3.



Greetings” was published in the Brantford paper on February 27, 1890, two days before Watt and Shenstone turned over their presses to Preston. “Mr. Preston is an able, industrious and experienced journalist and no doubt he will make things hum,” stated the *Ottawa Free Press*. “Mr. Preston is a newspaper man of experience and of marked ability and he will no doubt push business for all it’s worth,” wrote the *Lindsay Post*. The *Chicago British American* added its view that “Mr. Preston has made an impressive record as an efficient journalist and business manager.”<sup>25</sup>

Preston published his first edition of *The Expositor* on Saturday March 1, 1890. His first issue clearly indicated this publisher/proprietor was a man aware of changing trends in both the editorial and business sides of newspapers. To attract new readers, he enlarged the newspaper to eight columns, used a new typeface for the paper’s masthead and moved a long-running, monotonous, serialized fictional story off his front page; replacing it with reports from London’s Parliament, the Ontario Legislature and a courtroom in Niagara Falls, Ontario where a sensational murder trial was underway.<sup>26</sup> His inaugural editorial struck a cautiously different note than Watt’s, subtly warning the Liberal party that it could no longer expect unconditional support from *The Expositor*. Preston wrote:

---

<sup>25</sup> *The Expositor* (Feb. 27, 1890).

<sup>26</sup> Serialized novels were a staple of the early Victorian press, comparable to the radio dramas and soap operas of later times, notes P. Rutherford in *The Making of the Canadian Media* (Toronto: McGraw, Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1978), p. 15. “As much as all the sermons, tracts, teachings and editorials, the serial novels helped to mould the social and moral ideals of the century.”

As in the past, *The Expositor* will henceforth render a loyal support to the Reform party and to the representatives of the party, both in Toronto and at Ottawa. At the same time, it will not hesitate to condemn wrongdoing and wrong measures no matter from what source they may spring.<sup>27</sup>

On that same editorial page, Preston served notice of more aggressive business practices than any of the previous owners. He informed readers of a drop in the weekly subscription rate from "\$1.50 to ONE DOLLAR", promising that the newspaper would be retained in its present size and "will be materially improved in many respects."<sup>28</sup> Along with the price reduction, Preston told readers he would "rigidly" insist on payment in advance.

Publishers cannot afford to print newspapers at this price and wait for their money (in too many instances never getting it), and they should not be asked to do so. A man who has not a dollar to pay for his weekly newspaper is too poor to take one and should either borrow his neighbor's or do without. Do not be offended therefore, if, having failed to remit your dollar, you find yourself some day without your copy of *The Expositor*. All will be treated alike in this respect.<sup>29</sup>

Preston also established a home delivery system, which would see the newspaper "delivered daily, rain or shine, before 6 p.m. at the residences of Brantford citizens" at the "low price" of ten cents a week.<sup>30</sup> As well, he took the bold step of hiking advertising rates, promising advertisers he would build the newspaper's circulation.

---

<sup>27</sup> *The Expositor* (March 1, 1890), p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

Heretofore, the rates paid in Brantford have been absurdly low—lower in fact than in many towns in Ontario less than one-half in size—and it is in the best interests of citizens and publisher alike that a change should be made. At the same time, it is the intention to push the circulation in every direction and any advance in rates will, we believe, be more than compensated by the increased value that will be given the advertiser.”<sup>31</sup>

These decidedly entrepreneurial initiatives fit well with historian Sotiron’s recent work on the commercialization of the press. Sotiron argues that around 1890 a generation of more entrepreneurial publishers came to the fore to take control of existing newspapers or found their own publications. This generation of publishers, among whom he includes J.E. Atkinson, of the *Star*, P.D. Ross of Ottawa’s *Citizen* and John Ross Robertson of *The Telegram*, operated in a period of transition from the politically-oriented newspapers of the nineteenth century to the corporate entities of the twentieth. Further, they were part of a generation of entrepreneurs involved in the overall industrialization of Canada in that period. As Sotiron writes, these publishers were, “independent, risk-taking, economic agents whose innovations involved bringing economic resources together in new ways.”<sup>32</sup>

In his Monday March 3 edition of the paper, Preston printed a selection of comments about the first edition of *The Expositor* culled from various editorials through the province. Of course, they were overwhelmingly positive. “The initial number of *The Expositor* under the management of T.H. Preston is in hand and contains plenty of evidence of new energy being infused into what was before a

---

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> M. Sotiron. *From Politics to Profits: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920*. (Montreal: McGill, Queen’s University Press, 1997), p. 7.

high class Reform journal,” stated the *St. Catharines Gazette*. “*The Brantford Expositor* . . . shows a considerably improved appearance and shows an unusual amount of vigor and grit,” wrote the *Berlin News*. “It looks as if the new man will hold his own. From the amount of sail he puts on and the expense he incurs, he evidently has confidence in Brantford’s future.” An article in the *St. Thomas Journal* said that Preston would “give the people of Brantford a newspaper worthy of their city . . . And he’s a man of his word.”<sup>33</sup>

Viewed retrospectively, these comments foreshadow the ensuing thirty-five years of Preston’s ownership of *The Expositor*. Indeed, T.H., as he came to be affectionately known through Brantford and wider newspaper circles, would prove to be a man of his word who devoted the second half of his life to building a profitable newspaper that held true to journalistic ideals of public responsibility and a family dynasty that owned that newspaper for three generations.

### *iii. T.H. Preston: His Early Years.*

Before examining Preston’s thirty-five year tenure at *The Expositor*, it is necessary to consider his early years and the dynamic forces of late Victorian journalism that shaped this man and his work. Preston came to *The Expositor* at thirty-five years of age; exactly the half way point of his life. At that time, he had worked in newspaper publishing for twenty-one years, having learned the business from the ground up, beginning as a printer’s apprentice in 1869 in the inky depths of the press room. The years from 1869 to 1890 when he purchased *The Expositor* represent a bridge between the Victorian era of outright partisan,

---

<sup>33</sup> *The Expositor* (March 3, 1890), p. 2.

political journalism and the mass-market-driven journalism of the new century.

Thus, Preston was a newspaperman who was shaped by one era and who shaped another.

Preston was born on October 22, 1855, in Mount Vernon, Indiana; the son of Methodist minister James Preston, of Lancashire and his wife Emmeline Phelps, whose father Hiram was an early settler to Brant Township and one of its first reeves.<sup>34</sup> Little is known about Preston's earliest years other than the fact that the family came to Canada when Preston was a young boy and he was educated at several Ontario high schools. At the age of fourteen, two years after the Confederation of Canada, he entered his life's profession, in the time-honoured manner of the Victorian era, becoming a so-called "printer's devil",<sup>35</sup> at the Woodstock *Sentinel*. He recalled that first apprenticeship in a speech delivered in 1923 upon his election as president of the Canadian Daily Newspapers Association.

It was my duty to light the fire, sweep the floor, twirl the roller on an old Washington handpress, turn the crank for the power press on publication day, fold the papers, deliver routes, paste bills and incidentally set type—for all of which I received the munificent sum of \$20 the first year . . .<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup>D. Reville. *History of the City of Brantford* (Brantford, The Hurley Printing Co., 1967), p. 202.

<sup>35</sup> The term printer's devil was common nineteenth century newspaper slang for the position assigned to young men apprenticing to be printers and was the common entry point into the newspaper business at the time. According to *A History of Canadian Journalism* "the printing office was a school, enabling many a boy without early advantages to rise to good positions in the newspaper profession and in the service of the State. As he set type, he educated himself, acquired literary tastes, became in turn local and parliamentary reporter, writer of descriptive and leading articles, editor and proprietor of a newspaper of his own." See *A History of Canadian Journalism* (Toronto: Canadian Press Association, 1908), p. 19.

<sup>36</sup> "T.H. Preston Passes on: Widely Known Editor", *Star Weekly* (Toronto: Nov. 7, 1925), obit scrapbook.

Preston's apprenticeship continued in 1870 at *the Stratford Beacon* where he worked under the direction of owner William Buckingham, the adventurous journalist who began the *Nor'Wester* in 1859 at Fort Garry, the chief post of the Hudson's Bay Company, in what was then known as Rupert's Land.<sup>37</sup> In 1871, Preston became a compositor at the *Toronto Globe*, where he participated in the infamous printer's strike against owner George Brown. In his 1923 speech to the CDNA, Preston also recalled that event. "It is fifty-two years since as a mere apprentice, I took part in what is known as the George Brown strike in Toronto—a strike which led to some of the men being put in jail for conspiracy."<sup>38</sup>

Throughout his apprenticeship, Preston was ambitious to enter "the reportorial field"<sup>39</sup> and worked assiduously towards that goal. His next move was to the United States where he worked for several newspapers in an editorial capacity. In 1874 he returned to Canada and joined the editorial staff of the *Ottawa Free Press* where he was speedily promoted to membership in the Press Gallery in the House of Commons. In 1881, at twenty-six years of age, he became night editor of the *Globe* and later, the newspaper's parliamentary reporter.

---

<sup>37</sup> See "History of the Manitoba Press" in *A History of Canadian Journalism* p. 180-192.

Buckingham went on to become private secretary to Prime Minister Alexander Mackenzie and was appointed Canada's Deputy Minister of the Interior in 1878. He later penned Mackenzie's biography.

<sup>38</sup> *Star Weekly* (Nov. 1925), from obit scrapbook. The George Brown strike of 1872 pitted the powerful Typographical Union in Toronto against *Globe* owner George Brown in a battle over the nine-hour work day. See J.M.S Careless, *Brown of the Globe: Statesman of Confederation 1860-1880* (Toronto: Dundurn Press Ltd., 1989), p. 287-297.

<sup>39</sup> *The Expositor* (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

In 1882, happenstance and the toss of a coin<sup>40</sup> took Preston to Winnipeg where he became a partial owner and first managing director of the newly-established, *Winnipeg Sun*. Preston spent the next eight years in Winnipeg, distinguishing himself with his coverage of the 1885 Riel Rebellions. As the first president of the Manitoba Press Association, he was known throughout the west. "Mr. Preston brought to journalism in Western Canada, and Winnipeg in particular . . . a spirit of energy and enterprise little short of phenomenal," lauded an editorial in the *Winnipeg Tribune* upon his 1925 death.<sup>41</sup> In 1890, Preston sold his interest in the *Sun* to the Manitoba Printing Company and the paper was merged with the *Manitoban*. Preston then purchased *The Expositor*, having earned a national reputation of being "one of the most energetic and enterprising editors of that day."<sup>42</sup>

#### *iv. T.H. Preston: Editor and Entrepreneur*

When Preston assumed proprietorship of *The Expositor* in 1890, three dailies existed to serve the editorial and advertising needs of Brantford's population of 14,000. As Rutherford has shown, this highly-competitive situation was common throughout Canadian cities at the end of the nineteenth century,

---

<sup>40</sup> In his 1931 memoir, *Retrospects of a Newspaper Person*, Preston's longtime friend Ottawa Journal publisher P.D. Ross recalled the "accident of accident" that sent Preston west. According to Ross, who was then the telegraph editor of the Toronto *Evening News*, he and Preston were walking along Toronto's King St. when Edward Farrar, editor-in-chief of the Toronto *Mail* stopped them and inquired whether either of them cared to be editor of the *Winnipeg Sun*. Preston assumed Farrar was jesting and replied, "Sorry, but we are going to start a morning paper in Toronto this week. When Farrar indicated he was in earnest, Preston and Ross decided to toss a coin. Preston called heads, the coin was flipped and heads it was. Thus Preston went to Winnipeg.

<sup>41</sup> *Winnipeg Tribune*. (Nov. 25, 1925), obit scrapbook.

<sup>42</sup> *The Expositor*. (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

with a doubling of daily newspapers from forty-six dailies in 1874 to ninety-one in 1891.<sup>43</sup> Rutherford and Sotiron concur that the next three decades—the same years in which Preston built his *Expositor*—brought the end of vigorous newspaper competition in Canada as newspapers became increasingly capital intensive and newspaper publishers waged aggressive campaigns to oust their local rivals and monopolize advertising revenues. In communities across Canada, mass-market newspapers thus emerged, with strong papers coming to dominate their local markets and weaker ones disappearing.

Sotiron contends that this period of intense competition significantly altered the daily newspaper from its primary role as a source of local information to “a commodity that could be sold to a large readership.”<sup>44</sup> He provides strong evidence to suggest that as successful newspaper publishers became more entrepreneurial through the early years of the new century, they became less concerned with the concept of the press as “a servant of the public interest.”<sup>45</sup> A 1905 article in *Canadian Printer and Publisher*, the “bible” of the emerging newspaper industry supports this conclusion:

---

<sup>43</sup> Rutherford. *The Making of the Canadian Media*. p. 49.

<sup>44</sup> Sotiron. p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* p. 8.



In the past, the newspaper's primary purpose was to mould public opinion. The editorial mind has been the controlling interest. The business office was of minor consideration . . . We have changed all that. Today the business office dominates seven days in the week and the editorial mind must be subservient to its necessities. In other words, the newspaper has become a mere commercial enterprise like any other business, having as its main purpose, the accumulation of wealth.<sup>46</sup>

Evidence to be discussed in greater detail further in this section clearly shows that T.H. Preston was a successful entrepreneur who triumphed over his competition. By 1895, *The Expositor* emerged as the leader in the local battle for readers and advertisers, with Preston boasting that his newspaper's circulation was "a larger circulation than any other paper in a city of similar size in Canada."<sup>47</sup> By 1918, *The Expositor's* last competitor ceased business, giving Preston a valuable local monopoly.

However, even though he ultimately proved himself an able entrepreneur, thus fitting part of the pattern suggested by Sotiron, evidence suggests Preston remained an idealistic editor concerned primarily with his newspaper's responsibility to its community. Preston believed that the management of a newspaper was a "public trust".<sup>48</sup> In 1895, he wrote that it would be the "steady purpose" of *The Expositor* "to earn public approval and to retain and extend the large measure of good-will that it has reason to believe is entertained for it by all classes in the community . . .

---

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* p. 51.

<sup>47</sup> "Souvenir Number", *The Expositor* (Dec. 1895).

<sup>48</sup> "The Expositor Mourns Its Editor-in-Chief", *The Expositor* (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

This it hopes to do without sacrificing its convictions on any vital matter. It is not considered essential that the paper should be always on the winning side; all that is hoped is that its daily walk shall be such as to command respect for its honest convictions, honestly expressed even from those who may at times differ widely from it in matters affecting the public weal.<sup>49</sup>

Preston was a prolific writer, known to wield a facile pen. In his early years of ownership of *The Expositor*, he turned his literary talent to the task of crafting an editorial creed. That creed, which clearly expressed his view of his newspaper's public responsibility, became Preston's mission statement and was thereafter hung in a prominent place in his *Expositor* office. It demanded the following of the high-minded publisher and proprietor:

To be accurate, truthful, impartial, fearless and fair, remembering that it is the duty of a newspaper at all times to know and publish both sides of a question and to realize that every man is presumed to be innocent until he is found guilty.

To reflect in my editorial columns my honest opinion and conviction, presented without malice and published in the interests of public welfare, reserving comment for the editorial page. . .

To seek and verify news at its sources; to let facts speak for themselves . . .

To endeavor, in fine, to interpret in the conduct of my publication, the highest ethics of daily journalism, so that when I am called to give account of my stewardship to my Maker, it may be said of me, 'He tried his best to run a decent newspaper.'<sup>50</sup>

Journalists of that era admired Preston's conviction.<sup>51</sup> Some of the highest praise to him is contained in a letter to his son from James Brierley, of the Montreal *Herald*, who called attention to renowned journalist Sir John Willison's assessment of Preston's newspaper. "I well recall Sir John Willison

---

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> "The *Expositor* Mourns It's Editor-in-Chief", *The Expositor* (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

when editor of *The Globe*, saying to me that he read the editorials in only three provincial newspapers—*The Brantford Expositor*, the *Woodstock Sentinel-Review* and the *St. Thomas Journal*. These were the only papers at that time that seemed to him to be doing their own thinking.”<sup>52</sup>

Of course, Preston and Willison were kindred spirits in their views of newspapers and public service. In a 1905 article in *Canadian Magazine*, Willison wrote that “the root motive that lures us into journalism is the public spirit which was born into us and which will not be denied expression.”<sup>53</sup> When Willison abdicated his position as editor of the *Globe* in 1902 to run the independent *News* with the monetary support of financier Sir Joseph Flavelle,<sup>54</sup> Preston sent his good wishes—“Knowing your high ideals and independence of spirit, I am not surprised at your action . . .” he wrote.<sup>55</sup>

Whether it was because of or in spite of, his journalistic convictions Preston succeeded in the highly-competitive, “keen, triangular struggle”<sup>56</sup> of the Brantford newspaper market as he worked diligently to expand the business and “turn back the profits to as great as extent as possible into *The Expositor* for its

---

<sup>51</sup> See Appendix B. Letter of tribute to Preston from The Canadian Press to W.B. Preston. Dec. 3, 1925.

<sup>52</sup> Letter from James S. Brierley to William Buckingham Preston, Nov. 11, 1925. From obit scrapbook.

<sup>53</sup> J. Willison. “Journalism and Public Life in Canada”, *Canadian Magazine* (Vol. 25., No. 6, Oct. 1905).

<sup>54</sup> Like Preston and Willison, Joseph Flavelle also believed in the newspaper’s public responsibility. In an 1896 letter quoted by Sotiron, he wrote, “I am old-fashioned enough to believe that a newspaper has some other duty to the public than to make money and some other responsibility to the public than seeking to inflame prejudice and passion.” See Sotiron, p. 14, citing letter from Joseph Flavelle to Charles Clarke.

<sup>55</sup> A Colquhoun. *Press, Politics and People: The Life and Letters of Sir John Willison* (Toronto: Macmillan Co., 1935), p. 104.

<sup>56</sup> F.D. Reville. “Proprietor of Expositor Passes”, *The Expositor* (Nov. 10, 1925). Reville was the last owner of Preston’s last competitor, *The Courier*. On the subject of competition with Preston,

improvement and enlargement.”<sup>57</sup> In 1895, in a move that can be interpreted as both a symbol and promise of success, Preston boldly built a “new and handsome” newspaper plant at the corner of Dalhousie and Queen Streets for the then staggering sum of \$10,000.<sup>58</sup> The red-brick and sandstone *Expositor* Building, as it was locally known, featured an imposing clock tower that became a downtown Brantford landmark for many years to come.<sup>59</sup> As Preston told his readers in a special “Souvenir” edition published to commemorate *The Expositor’s* “new and elegant home”, the building was equipped with “modern” Goss stereotyping presses and innovative mechanical equipment intended to make production more efficient. “All the working departments of the building have been fitted with everything required for effective work,” the special edition crowed. “With a complete plant and a capable and loyal staff, *The Expositor* is ready for any emergency.”<sup>60</sup>

Preston’s energy and talents extended from the pressroom to the newsroom, with modern technology dominating there also. He initiated the use of leased telegraphic wire services that brought up-to-date national and international news to Brantford readers. Most important to the task of building his readership, he worked “from early morning until late at night”<sup>61</sup> to improve the paper’s news content through vigorous, local reporting. Thomas B. Costain, the renowned Canadian author of historical fiction who began his writing career at

---

Reville wrote: “Mr. Preston’s attitude was always characterized by square dealing. It was a period of hard knocks, give and take, but he always played the game fairly, never hit below the belt.”

<sup>57</sup> *The Expositor*. (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

<sup>58</sup> *The Expositor*. June 30, 1967, p.10.

<sup>59</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>60</sup> “Souvenir Number”, *The Expositor* (Dec. 1895).

<sup>61</sup> *The Expositor* (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

*The Expositor* in 1906 when Preston hired him to be a senior reporter, recalled Preston's editorial involvement in a 1952 article written for a hundredth anniversary edition of the newspaper. He said *The Expositor's* editorial operation consisted of Preston, who wrote the entire editorial page, a news editor who assigned and selected the daily news, a senior reporter and a junior reporter who worked around the clock to "provide quite remarkable coverage of local news."

T.H. Preston, a splendid business director as well as editor, saw to it that his *Expositor* was the liveliest small daily in Ontario. I cannot conceive of a better preparation for the kind of life I wanted to live than my apprenticeship on the newspaper of Brantford. I learned things I had not known about the streamlined activities of the up-to-the minute newspaper.<sup>62</sup>

Costain added "men trained under T.H. Preston had no difficulty getting other jobs." Indeed, Preston hired and trained some of the ablest journalists of the early twentieth century, including W. Rupert Davies who went on to become the publisher and proprietor of the Kingston *Whig*, as well as a Canadian senator.

Preston's expert editorial guidance was recalled in his *Globe* obituary:

A familiar contention of his was that perfection in journalism meant first that a man must be 'a good reporter.' . . . To his staff he continually preached the gospel of accuracy and fairness; but, combined with these other attributes, he prized above all other things, resourcefulness and originality on the part of a reporter.<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> T. Costain. *The Expositor*. (Oct. 11, 1952), p. 19. Costain also wrote. "Thanks to my training as an extremely hard-worked reporter, I've been reasonably expert as a sleuth in the musty archives and cobwebbed attics of the past." Costain's novel *Son of A Hundred Kings: A Novel for the Nineties* (Garden City N.Y. Doubleday and Co., 1950) was set in the fictional city of Balfour, which he admitted was in reality Brantford. It told the story of a young man's work as a printer's apprentice for the Balfour *Star* and the paternalistic newspaper proprietor who took him under his wing.

<sup>63</sup> *The Globe* (Toronto: Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

The editorial content of Preston's *Expositor* often trumpeted the cause of civic progress and community growth. As editor of the local newspaper, Preston exhibited a paternalistic interest in the progress of the city, seeking to make "the welfare of the community which he served his own."<sup>64</sup> On his second day of publication, in an editorial on "Brantford as A Manufacturing Center", Preston wrote that the amount of manufacturing then going on in the city," gives the greatest assurance of future growth."<sup>65</sup> As well, he called attention to the importance of the Grand Trunk railway to Brantford manufacturers. In his 1895 special edition, he reminded readers of the "inspiration of the paper" in the expansion of city limits. In October 1909, Preston published a "Special Industrial Edition" to promote "The Greatest and Best Known Manufacturing City in Canada." The mayor of that time, W.B. Wood, wrote a column for that issue headlined "Why There Must be a Greater Brantford" and praised the newspaper for its support of that cause. "*The Expositor* has done much in days gone by to boost and build up Brantford," he said.<sup>66</sup>

It can be argued that Preston's support for local growth was not entirely altruistic, but rather, made good business sense. Sotiron contends that such local boosterism prevailed on the pages of mass market, urban newspapers as entrepreneurial publishers became part of the local establishment and realized that economic growth in the community led to prosperity for all. "Most publishers used their newspapers unashamedly to 'boom' their communities," Sotiron

---

<sup>64</sup> "Souvenir Number", *The Expositor* (Dec. 1895).

<sup>65</sup> *The Expositor*. March 3, 1890.

<sup>66</sup> *The Expositor*. Oct. 1909.

writes. "Not illogically, they reasoned that growth of their community would result in increased property and growth for their newspaper." <sup>67</sup>

While Sotiron's analysis has some validity, the evidence pertaining to Preston suggests he was primarily motivated by journalistic ideals. Preston was considered an impartial and independent editor. In a tribute after his death, the *Hamilton Herald* stated that though the Liberal Preston was personally involved in partisan politics, he was "so judicially impartial in his expression of opinion as to produce the impression of political independence." <sup>68</sup> Though *The Expositor* consistently advocated social reform and usually supported the Liberal party at both the provincial and federal level, it was far from an unquestioning party organ. Preston refused his party's endorsement in the 1925 federal election because he did not see eye to eye with Mackenzie King's freer trade policies. <sup>69</sup>

Preston's editorial and business practices eventually led to financial success. In 1915, twenty-five years after purchasing the newspaper, Preston applied for incorporation as a private, joint stock company under the Ontario Companies Act. His company would be named Preston and Sons Ltd., strong evidence that Preston intended his business to be a family concern. His application for incorporation indicates the company would be capitalized for \$100,000, divided into one thousand shares of one hundred dollars each. Directors of the company would be T.H., and his sons, William Buckingham and Harold Brant (who both worked at the newspaper at that time), his wife Annie and

---

<sup>67</sup> Sotiron, p. 65.

<sup>68</sup> The *Hamilton Herald*, obit scrapbook.

<sup>69</sup> "The Late T.H. Preston", *Kingston Daily Standard* (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

his daughter Edna Preston.<sup>70</sup> On February 22, 1915, Preston and Sons Ltd.

received its Letters Patent of incorporation granting it permission to:

. . . Print, publish, conduct, circulate, distribute, deliver, manufacture, buy, sell and deal in and deal with newspapers, magazines, periodicals, journals, pamphlets, books, maps, charts, pictures, illustrations and publications of all kinds and generally to carry on the business of newspaper, magazine, periodical and journal publishers and of general publishers and printers.<sup>71</sup>

As well, the company could, "acquire the businesses and assets of the businesses of any person, firm or corporation similar to that authorized to be carried on by the company, and in particular the business and assets of the printing and publishing business now being carried on by the said Thomas Hiram Preston, including *The Brantford Expositor* newspaper."<sup>72</sup>

The company's first official report under the Ontario Companies Act reported that an annual meeting was held on May 10, 1915, at which time T.H. was given five hundred common shares, (representative of \$50,000), in exchange for the transfer of his newspaper business to Preston and Sons, Ltd. At that time, Prestons' sons William and Harold held another one hundred preferred shares, paying a dividend of seven per cent.<sup>73</sup> In 1925, shortly before Preston's death, the business was reincorporated with a capital value of 2,500 shares totaling \$250,000.<sup>74</sup> Preston's will indicates that at the time of his death he

---

<sup>70</sup> See Appendix D. Letters Patent incorporating Preston and Sons Ltd.

<sup>71</sup> Ontario Companies Act. Letters Patent incorporating Preston and Sons Ltd. Toronto: Feb. 15, 1915.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ontario Company's Act documents. 1915.

<sup>74</sup> Letters Patent.



owned 1,181 shares in Preston and Sons Ltd. with a total value of \$118,000.<sup>75</sup>

Thus in the ten years between 1915 and 1925, Preston had more than doubled his wealth in *Expositor* shares.

Preston profited at the expense of his competitors. In 1918, *The Courier*, which had been Preston's fiercest competitor, ceased publication, being unable to attract enough readers and revenue to meet the increasing costs of publishing a daily newspaper in the *Expositor*-dominated market. On December 23, 1918, this notice appeared on the front page of that paper.

We regret to have to announce that as a consequence of the existing handicaps on the newspaper publishing business in Canada, we have decided to discontinue publication of the *Brantford Courier*. That decision has been reached after carefully going into the situation ourselves and, after confirmation of our judgment by outside experts in newspaper publishing, who went thoroughly into the newspaper's affairs, and the newspaper field in Brantford. The subscription lists of this paper have been acquired by *The Expositor* which paper will be delivered to all *Courier* subscribers.<sup>76</sup>

Thus, that period of the early twentieth century newspaper industry characterized by Rutherford as "the era of cutthroat competition"<sup>77</sup> was over in Brantford. In this manner, Preston acquired a monopoly within the city's daily newspaper market, creating conditions for his newspaper and family to prosper through much of the twentieth century. This scenario occurred in cities across Canada, as victims of newspaper competition shut down their presses, leaving victors with lucrative local monopolies. Between 1911 and 1921, the number of daily newspapers in Canada dropped by thirty, from 143 to 113, with some

---

<sup>75</sup> T.H. Preston will. See also Appendix E.

<sup>76</sup> Doug O'Neil. "Death of Brantford's First Newspaper", *The Expositor* (Dec. 26, 1992).

properties closing outright and others merging with their more successful competitors.<sup>78</sup>

Both Rutherford and Sotiron contend that this period marked the beginning of the twentieth century's march towards consolidation and concentration in the Canadian newspaper industry. Notable in this period was the emergence of the Canada's first newspaper chain, the Southam family newspaper group, which evolved from William Southam's 1877 purchase of a share in *The Spectator* in Hamilton, Ont. From that modest beginning, Southam and his sons went on to purchase the *Citizen* in Ottawa in 1897, the *Calgary Herald* in 1908, the *Edmonton Journal* in 1912, the *Winnipeg Tribune* in 1920 and the *Vancouver Province* in 1923.

It is interesting to compare the business routes of T.H. Preston and William Southam, and speculate on why Preston never expanded in the more aggressive, acquisitive manner of Southam, who had incorporated as a joint stock company more than a decade before Preston took that step. While both men were clearly intent on turning a profit and triumphing over their competition, Preston seems to have been more interested in community service than personal profit. Indeed, his record of public service supports such a conclusion.

***v. T.H. Preston: Public Servant***

By the time T.H. had incorporated his newspaper business in 1915, he had become one of Brantford's best known civic leaders, a respected member of

---

<sup>77</sup> Rutherford. *The Making of the Canadian Media*. p. 52.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

the local establishment. Throughout his years there, he was a public school trustee, president of the Children's Aid Society, the Board of Trade, the Brantford Young Men's Christian Association and a governor of the Brantford General Hospital. He was an active member of the congregation of Brant Avenue United Church, having founded and led its Men and Young Men's Brotherhood. The sterling nature of his public service was extolled in numerous letters to his family upon his death. Among them, was one written by Agnes G. Hodge, chairman of the Brantford Board of Education.

His facile pen was known for many years through the medium of his editorials. His business prospered. His character was unassailable. Yet, the bigness of his personality dwelt in his sympathy for all classes of society, his unostentatious philanthropy and his keen interest in the education of those who merited and needed aid and attention.<sup>79</sup>

Preston was known to be generous with both his time and money. He financed scholarships for local students to attend university in Toronto and donated to local charities. As Leslie Axford, local superintendent of the Brantford Children's Aid told Mrs. Preston later, "He had always shown a keen interest in the welfare of children, both in his personal service and in his contribution. His cheque was always the first to be received by us at Christmas."<sup>80</sup>

In 1899, Preston actively entered politics, a move common to journalists of his day whose newspaper careers had begun in an earlier era when journalism and politics were inextricably linked.<sup>81</sup> He was elected to the Ontario Legislature

---

<sup>79</sup> Letter from Agnes G. Hodge, chairman City of Brantford Municipal Board of Education, to Mrs. T.H. Preston. Brantford: Nov. 16, 1925. From obit scrapbook.

<sup>80</sup> Letter from J. Leslie Axford, Local Superintendent, Children's Aid Societies of Brantford and Brant County. Brantford: Undated. From obit scrapbook.

<sup>81</sup> On Preston's death the *Globe* of Nov. 11, 1925 reported that his tenure in the politics was marked by a period of "wide editorial representation" within the Ontario Legislature. Among his

as a Liberal for Brant South from 1899 to 1908, during which time he was instrumental in securing the appointment of a special committee to investigate child labour in the province.<sup>82</sup> His causes were those of a Reformer and he was considered a “friend of workers” for his support of shortened hours of work legislation and various other initiatives to ease the load of the working man. While it is beyond the scope of this work to fully examine Preston’s political career, his success in politics can be understood. Indeed, on April 5, 1900, less than two months after his first day in the Legislature, *The Globe* reported that Preston was “rapidly developing into one of the most useful members of the Legislature.”<sup>83</sup>

In 1906, when Liberal leader Sir George Ross entered federal politics, Preston was offered the leadership of the Ontario Liberal party, but declined because of obligations to *The Expositor*. Though a longtime Liberal, Preston was well-respected by both Liberals and Conservatives and in 1910, Ontario’s Conservative premier, Sir James Whitney appointed him to the new Ontario Parole Board where he served “in the work of human reclamation of which his heart was set.”<sup>84</sup> In 1911, he suffered the only real defeat of his political career when he represented the Laurier Liberals in the federal “Reciprocity Election” of 1911 and lost to the Conservative candidate.

---

press colleagues in the Legislature were Hugh Clark of the Amherstburg *Echo*, George Graham of the Brockville *Recorder*, J.P. Downey of the Guelph *Mercury*, Andrew Pattullo of the Woodstock *Sentinel-Review* and E.J. B. Pense of the Kingston *Whig*. For further discussion of the relationship between journalism and politics see W.S. Wallace, “The Journalist in Canadian Politics: A Retrospect”, *Canadian Historical Review*, (Vol. 22, 1941) p. 14-24.

<sup>82</sup> *The Herald* (Hamilton, Nov. 11, 1925), obit scrapbook.

<sup>83</sup> “Mr. Preston’s Resolution Passes the Legislature”, *Globe*, April 5, 1900.

<sup>84</sup> “Tributes from Canada’s Press: St. Catharine’s *Standard*”. *The Expositor* (Nov. 13, 1925), obit scrapbook.

Preston's success in both politics and journalism sprang from his deep personal belief in the individual's duty towards public service, learned at the knee of his Methodist preacher father. His Christianity affected every aspect of his life, and was undoubtedly ultimately responsible for the high regard in which his professional, political and personal acquaintances and even his employees held him.<sup>85</sup> As his longtime friend D. W. Rutledge said during his eulogy, "Mr. Preston was not one of those who think that Christian men should abstain from public life. He was a keen politician because he was interested in the welfare of the country. In his political life, as in all of his other life, he sought to serve the people."<sup>86</sup> William Banks, a journalist who wrote about the Ontario Legislature during Preston's terms there, believed Preston's political convictions were rooted in "the faith that was in him . . . His was the mind of a true Liberal both in the party sense of the word and in its broader application to the world and its affairs."<sup>87</sup>

In this regard, Preston has much in common with Joseph E. Atkinson, the renowned Liberal editor of the *Toronto Star*. The personal philosophies and reform politics of these two men were strikingly similar, as was their approach to the twentieth century business of newspaper publishing. Though both operated profitable newspapers independent of political influence, their journalism reflected their strong Liberal views. Following Preston's death, Atkinson wrote a long tribute that expressed deep admiration for Preston's personal politics.

---

<sup>85</sup> See Appendix F. Letter from Expositor employees to Mrs. T.H. Preston upon her husband's death. Nov. 11, 1925. From Peter Preston personal papers.

<sup>86</sup> *The Expositor* (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

<sup>87</sup> "T.H.: A Gentleman Unafraid" *The Expositor* (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

He was a Liberal in the broadest meaning of the term. He exemplified the principles which are at the root of Liberalism, the principle of individual freedom of thought. He was both a Liberal and a Reformer. The reforms he was interested in . . . were such as to constitute a tribute to his great heart, . . . for they were reforms which touch closely the less fortunate members of the community.<sup>88</sup>

Clearly, Thomas Hiram Preston was a man guided by high ideals in both his business and public life. Had he not been so committed to public service, Preston may well have poured his energy and zeal into building a newspaper empire in the manner of his contemporary William Southam. While he operated successfully in a period when entrepreneurialism played an important role in the growth of Canadian newspaper industry, Preston was guided more by editorial ideals and community service than the idea of a personal empire.

#### *vi. T.H. Preston and the Growth of the Canadian Newspaper Industry*

Preston and Atkinson were acquainted with one another through their mutual devotion to the advancement of an emerging Canadian newspaper industry. The two journalists each served as presidents of the two organizations most instrumental in the emergence of the twentieth century's highly-organized, professional publishing industry: the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association and its predecessor, the Canadian Newspaper Association, which was organized in Kingston in 1859 to promote "friendly feelings"<sup>89</sup> amongst newspaper publishers.

---

<sup>88</sup> "An Appreciation by J.E. Atkinson, Proprietor, Daily Star, Toronto", *The Expositor* (Nov. 10, 1925), obit scrapbook.

<sup>89</sup> *A History of Canadian Journalism*, p. 10.

In a 1908 history published to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Canadian Newspaper Association, Preston is cited as one of the preeminent journalists actively involved in the association and its efforts to survey and record “the establishment and growth of the Press in all parts of Canada.”<sup>90</sup> That early history of Canadian newspaper journalism is essentially a compilation of the records of the association, listing its members and officers for every year of its existence. The record indicates Preston’s active involvement from the time he took over *The Expositor*. He was elected to the association’s executive committee at its thirty-second annual meeting held in Toronto on August 5, 1890. In 1892, at a meeting in Ottawa, he was again elected to the executive committee, with Atkinson being chosen as secretary-treasurer. In 1893, Preston was selected as the association’s first-vice-president, while Atkinson retained the position of secretary-treasurer. In 1894, Preston became president of the CPA. At that time, John Willison, then editor of *The Globe*, became part of the executive committee. In 1895, Preston, Willison and Atkinson all served as executive committee members.<sup>91</sup> An account of Preston’s 1895 presidential address indicates he was cognizant of the changes occurring in the Canadian newspaper industry as the turn of the century dawned. As the history states:

---

<sup>90</sup> *A History of Canadian Journalism*, vi.

<sup>91</sup> Officers of the Canadian Press Association from 1859 to 1908 are listed in *A History of Canadian Journalism*, Appendix 1, p. 224-233.

Mr. T.H. Preston's speech might have been termed a speech from the throne, so accurately did it reflect the proposals of the time and the outlook before the press of the country. He spoke of the changes involved in the adoption of machine composition; the less rigid adherence of newspapers to party everywhere apparent; . . . the appointment of Sir Mackenzie Bowell to the Premiership of Canada.<sup>92</sup>

While the CPA had begun largely as a fraternal organization intended to give newspapermen an opportunity to socialize, travel together and share their common concerns, it became increasingly more involved in the business of publishing as external threats to newspaper prosperity increased. Its 1908 history dates 1888 as a turning point when the association's annual conventions became focused on "the prosperity of the newspaper industry."<sup>93</sup> It states that the newspaper men were then coming to realize "that a newspaper, to be a power for good, must make money . . .

The price paid for a free, untrammled press, capable of vigilant public service, is financial independence and financial independence is born of a certain devotion to the sordid side of things.<sup>94</sup>

Through the late 1880s and early 1900s, issues such as postal rates, high customs duties on printing equipment, advertising rates and rising newsprint and labour costs all appeared on the association's agenda. In 1900, Preston, Atkinson and P.D. Ross of *The Journal* in Ottawa, led the association's battle against the emerging newsprint combines that were creating an "alarming increase" in the cost of newsprint. In 1905, a special meeting of the association's

---

<sup>92</sup> *A History of Canadian Journalism*, p. 122.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*



daily section resulted in Preston and W.L. Dingman of the St. Thomas *Times-Journal*, being sent to Indianapolis to discuss the implications of an eight-hour workday with the president of the International Typographical Union. Several years later, Preston worked with Dingman again to secure an arbitration agreement between the typographical union and Canadian editors.

By the 1907 meeting, financial concerns so dominated the agenda that Preston rose to the floor to remind the assembled newsmen of their ultimate purpose in newspaper publishing, "Mr. Preston temperately and sagaciously reminded the members that there is a moral as well as a commercial basis to the profession," a report of the meeting said.<sup>95</sup> At that same meeting, Preston also put forward a resolution calling for newspaper proprietors to agree to raise their prices to offset the rising costs of producing a daily newspaper. His resolution, passed by the members, stated: "*Resolved* that the rapid increase in the cost of raw material, labour and plant render the present an opportune time for the members of the association to consider seriously a corresponding advance in subscription rates . . ." <sup>96</sup> In later years, his son William would continue to campaign for higher newspaper prices.

In November 1919, the daily newspaper representatives within the Canadian Press Association formed their own organization, separate from the weekly and periodical owners of the CPA. At its outset, the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association represented ninety-one of the 110 daily newspapers then

---

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.* p. 60.

<sup>96</sup> W. Craik. *A History of Canadian Journalism II* (Toronto: The Ontario Publishing Co. Ltd., 1959), p. 16.

being published in Canada.<sup>97</sup> Members of its first board of directors included T.H. Preston, J. E. Atkinson, Irving Robertson, son of *The Telegram's* J. Ross Robertson, and Lord Atholstan (Hugh Graham) of the *Montreal Star*. Preston, who came to be regarded as "one of the men who had been most active in guiding the affairs of this association",<sup>98</sup> was elected chairman of the group's labour committee and his son William, was chosen to head the advertising promotion committee.

The various committees deemed important by that new association provide much evidence that business concerns were now paramount to this influential group of Canadian daily newspaper owners. Those committees included paper, advertising policy, postal and parliamentary, costs and records, and circulation. Interestingly, there was no editorial committee formed despite the fact that the CPA had established such a committee in 1918 "to secure the interests of editors, to deal with news and editorial matters."<sup>99</sup> Preston had served on that committee along with another renowned Canadian editor, J.W. Dafoe of the *Winnipeg Free Press*. In 1923, at the age of sixty-eight and with fifty-four years of newspaper experience behind him, Preston was elected president of the CDNA. In a letter to his widow, George Scroggie, president of the association, stated that Preston's term as president was marked by "untiring devotion to the business of the association . . . He has occupied almost every

---

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* p. 192.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

office in the association and has contributed perhaps more than any other one man to the welfare of the newspapers.”<sup>100</sup>

*vii. Death of a Newspaperman*

When Preston died in 1925, the probated value of his estate was recorded as \$233,737.99 -- almost a quarter of a million dollars and a substantial fortune for a self-made man of that time. Of that amount, \$118,100 was held in his 1,181 shares of Preston and Sons Ltd. Preston bequeathed his gold watch, his personal library and controlling interest in *The Expositor* to his eldest son William Buckingham Preston, then the newspaper’s business manager.<sup>101</sup> While T.H. had fathered five children—two sons and three daughters—fate decreed that W.B. would be the only Preston son to inherit the family firm of Preston and Sons Ltd. Preston’s second son, Harold Brant Preston, who had spent some time working as an *Expositor* reporter following graduation from University of Toronto, died in France in 1918 when he led his men in a charge on Bourslon Wood while serving in the First World War with the 54<sup>th</sup> “Brant” Battalion of the Canadian forces.<sup>102</sup>

Perhaps the most valuable legacy Preston bequeathed to his eldest son was the example he had set in succeeding as both a community-minded editor and an entrepreneur. An obituary in *Canadian Printer and Publisher* praised that dual ability:

---

<sup>100</sup> Letter from George Scroggie, president Canadian Daily Newspapers Association, to Mrs. T.H. Preston, Toronto: Dec. 12, 1925. See Appendix G.

<sup>101</sup> T.H. Preston will. 1925.

He was known as the publisher of the Brantford *Expositor*, as the man who had taken the paper over when it was struggling to meet the competition of two contemporaries, and as the directing force that had guided the paper to the point where it remained the one outstanding newspaper of the city. There have been few men who have been able to so impress their personality on a paper, in its news columns, in its editorial views, and in the general conduct of the business as did Mr. Preston.<sup>103</sup>

Preston's ambitious entrepreneurism is a near-perfect illustration of the profile of a first generation family business owner, as defined by business theorists. Studies of the founders of family businesses indicate that such individuals work day and night, pouring all of their energy into building their business. A 1971 article in the *Harvard Business Review* entitled "Conflicts that Plague Family Businesses", states that "for the entrepreneur, the business is essentially an extension of himself, a medium for his personal gratification and achievement above all." It contends that family businesses are among the most difficult to maintain because of the inherent difficulties created by family relationships. Among the problems cited are strong-minded company founders who have difficulty delegating and are loath to retire.<sup>104</sup>

In this regard, evidence within the Preston family business indicates that the sagacious vision and direction of the family patriarch was a beneficial factor in its notable longevity. Still, there is much evidence to indicate that T.H. exemplifies this mold of single-minded ambition. Several articles printed at the time of his death point to the fact that even at the height of his career as a

---

<sup>102</sup> When T.H. Preston died *The Mail and Empire* recounted that his late son Harold had "showed exceptional promise in newspaper work after his university career, but he gave his life for the Empire." *Mail and Empire*, (Nov. 9, 1925), obit scrapbook.

<sup>103</sup> *Canadian Printer and Publisher*. Nov. 1925, obit scrapbook.

member of the Legislature, he “never hesitated in an emergency to stick a sheaf of loose paper in his pocket and slip out on the street with his ‘boys’ to help run down ‘big news.’”<sup>105</sup> As well, Preston worked actively at *The Expositor* until his death at the age of seventy, despite having brought his eldest son into the business twenty-two years before in 1903. Upon his death, much was made of the fact that T.H. “died in the harness”,<sup>106</sup> having been into *The Expositor* office to dictate several letters in the days immediately before his attack.

The problems that plague family businesses are most often related to succession difficulties caused by a strong founder’s reluctance to give up his throne and/or animosity between potential heirs and their competing visions. When T.H. died in 1925, his son W.B. assumed clear control of the newspaper, encumbered only by the no-doubt powerful ghost of his father. Thus, as events transpired, W.B. was able to run the newspaper according to his own single vision, one formed by the overwhelmingly strong influence of his father who had trained him through all departments of the newspaper from newsboy to reporter, from advertising salesman to general manager.

#### *viii. W. B. Preston and The Expositor*

When W.B. Preston joined *The Expositor* in 1903, he was a young man of twenty who would remain under the influence of his strong father for the next twenty-two years of his working life. It is interesting to note that amongst

---

<sup>104</sup> H. Levinson, “Conflicts that Plague Family Businesses”, *Harvard Business Review* (March-April 1991), p. 90-98.

<sup>105</sup> “Tributes from Canada’s Press and Leaders”, *The Expositor* (Nov. 10 1925), obit scrapbook.

<sup>106</sup> *The Expositor* (Nov. 13, 1925), obit scrapbook.

Canadian newspapermen, this younger Preston was commonly known by the boy's name of "Billy", a probable indication that he was long regarded as "the son of a prominent publisher."<sup>107</sup> Indeed, it was this younger Preston's destiny to carry on his father's business through the years of the Depression and Second World War when the Canadian economy suffered. Thus, rather than expanding the business in any significant way, he served as caretaker of his father's achievement. When he died, his estate was valued at \$258,381, a mere \$25,000 more than his father's worth twenty-one years before. His shares in Preston and Co. amounted to just over \$181,000.<sup>108</sup> Still, this second-generation Preston achieved his own eminence as a journalist, businessman and public figure, serving like his father on various Brantford charitable and social organizations and within Canadian newspaper organizations.

While there is little direct evidence pertaining to the personal relationship of W.B. and his father, the elder Preston was undoubtedly firmly in charge when he ran *The Expositor*. One indication of T.H.'s domination over his son is contained in the reminiscences of a former *Expositor* employee named Bob Hope who worked at the newspaper from 1910 to 1973, serving as its city editor from 1935 to 1955. As Hope recalled, T.H. frowned upon publishing advance notices of meetings or events because he considered them "free publicity." When a notable speaker was set to come to Brantford, Hope obtained permission from W.B. to write about it in advance. When an angry T.H. saw the article, he ordered

---

<sup>107</sup> "Buchanan's Tribute" *The Expositor* (March 26, 1946) p. 1. In a tribute to W.B. Preston Senator W.A. Buchanan, president of The Canadian Press used this phrase to describe the younger Preston. Just about every tribute to W.B. Preston mentioned his esteemed father.

<sup>108</sup> W. B. Preston will.

Hope and his son to share the costs of advertising space for the announcement.<sup>109</sup>

In all probability, the younger Preston held his father in great respect and aimed to emulate him. On the occasion of the newspaper's sixtieth anniversary celebration, Herbert Christie, the younger Preston's brother-in-law and *The Expositor's* chief editorial writer, indicated that W.B., "a worthy son of a noble father" admired his father greatly.

In an intimate conversation with myself a short time after his father's death, discussing the outstanding influence which his father exerted in public life, it was agreed by both of us that it was due not merely to his journalistic skill and enterprise, but rather to his unswerving integrity and stalwart moral and religious character. In this regard, W.B. Preston was determined to emulate his father.<sup>110</sup>

Christie, the husband of one of the Preston daughters, provides evidence of T.H. Preston's intent to determine the course of the newspaper even beyond his death. Christie said the family patriarch had asked him to join the paper shortly after Harold Preston's wartime death when the founder's health was in a precarious state. "He was particularly concerned that W.B. Preston should have assistance in maintaining the high ideals of the paper of which he was a jealous guardian."<sup>111</sup>

In this, the younger Preston was a success. Editorial tributes published in Canadian newspapers when he died on March 25, 1946, during a vacation in Daytona Beach, Florida, were as expansive as those written about his father in 1925. The *Globe and Mail* described W.B. as publisher of "a newspaper with a

---

<sup>109</sup> Jim Harding. "Bob Hope Puts '30' to a Long Story" *The Expositor*, (1973).

<sup>110</sup> *The Expositor* (Nov. 2, 1950), p. 15.

well-defined influence and sense of purpose, adding that, "Mr. Preston fully accepted the public responsibility which his position imposed."<sup>112</sup> *The Expositor* editorial, written by Christie, stressed Preston's devotion to his father's editorial creed, "to interpret in the conduct of my publication, the highest ethics of daily journalism", written all those years before. "That was his purpose and his idealism never degenerated," Christie wrote.<sup>113</sup>

W.B.'s skill in working with *The Expositor's* employees was considered one of his particular attributes. It was he who first referred to the newspaper's staff as a family. As Christie wrote after his death, "The door of his office was open to everyone . . . but especially to those who belonged to what most appropriately he liked to call '*The Expositor Family*.' From editor to office boy, he knew them all personally."<sup>114</sup> On *The Expositor's* fiftieth anniversary in 1940, employees of the newspaper presented W.B. with a golden printer's rule, which was considered the highest honour that printers can bestow. When he died six years later, The Brantford Typographical Union paid tribute to him.

Twenty-one years marks more than a generation and for that time, it was our privilege to work with and for Mr. Preston. In sharpest contrast with too many relationships of management and labor in the craft, he played the game. Throughout that time, our relationship with him was distinguished by consideration and co-operation of high order.<sup>115</sup>

Like his father before him, Preston devoted himself to both his business and to public service within his community, He was involved in the Patriotic

---

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> "Editorial Tributes to W.b. Preston: Toronto *Globe and Mail*", *The Expositor* (March 30, 1946).

<sup>113</sup> "*Expositor Mourns its Chief*", *The Expositor* (March 26, 1946).



League of the Great War, the Community League in the days of the Depression and the Red Cross and Victory Loan campaigns during the Second World War. He was a member of the Board of Trade and had been its president in 1924. He was a charter member and first secretary of the Rotary Club of Brantford and served on the Board of Directors of the Brant Sanatorium, the YMCA and Zion United Church. "Bill Preston believed in, and through life, exemplified Rotary's precept of 'Service Before Self'," a member of the Rotary Club said of Preston.<sup>116</sup>

Again, like his father before him, Preston's service extended to the industry in which he devoted his life. In 1929, he was elected president of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association, of which he had been involved since its inception in 1919; notably with its "most active"<sup>117</sup> advertising committee, which he chaired from 1922 to 1927. In those years, as newspapers began to derive their chief revenue from advertising, the association's principal activities related to advertising matters, especially efforts to devise standardized daily newspaper practices in regards to advertising agencies which were then uniting to standardize their operations. In 1924, a joint committee of publishers and representatives of the Canadian Association of Advertising Agencies was formed with W.B. at its helm.<sup>118</sup>

Through its advertising committee, the CDNA dealt with the preeminent economic concerns of the mid-twenties; especially those created by the general

---

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> "Union Pays High Tribute", *The Expositor* (March 30, 1946).

<sup>116</sup> "Tribute Paid by Rotarians", *The Expositor* (March 30, 1946).

<sup>117</sup> *A History of Journalism* 11, p. 192.

trend towards amalgamations and consolidations within Canadian business. For newspaper owners, the implications of this involved the question of whether advertising contracts with an individual company should be honoured when it amalgamated with another company. Another issue of concern to the advertising committee was the growth of the "chain store system of advertising" which the committee opposed, taking the stand that publishers should refuse commission to advertising agencies placing advertisements for chain stores because "such advertising placed the independent merchant under an unfair handicap."<sup>119</sup>

In 1929, with Preston at its helm, the CDNA joined with the Canadian Press wire service for the first of a proposed series of dinners "in which all men engaged in daily newspaper publication, whether on the business or editorial side, would join together as one family."<sup>120</sup> This dinner, hosted by Preston and John Scott of *The Mail and Empire*, and attended by over two hundred newspapermen, was significant in publicly recognizing the reality that there were by now two branches of what had once been one newspaper "family." Significant too, is the fact that like his father before him, Preston was actively involved in both the business and editorial sides of the newspaper business. As the *London Free Press* commented on his death, "He knew every side of a paper."<sup>121</sup>

Preston's commitment to the editorial aspect of the newspaper was evidenced by his involvement with The Canadian Press, (CP), the national news gathering co-operative agency started in 1910. Senator W.A. Buchanan,

---

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.* p. 198.

<sup>121</sup> "Editorial Tributes to W.B. Preston: *London Free Press*", *The Expositor* (March 30, 1946).

president of CP when Preston died, said in a tribute that Preston's "fund of practical experience" made his service invaluable adding that, "his counsel always carried much influence."<sup>122</sup> Preston was elected president of CP in 1935 and again in 1936 in "the period between the bad days of the thirties and the mounting threat of the Second World War," wrote M.E. Nichols, an earlier Canadian Press president in a 1948 retrospective. "In that uneasy time, he gave strong, steady leadership. No one in the membership was more highly esteemed than Billy."<sup>123</sup>

The success of *The Expositor* through two generations spanned a period when fluctuations in newspaper ownership in Canada were common, with newspapers constantly changing hands, merging with other papers, or closing outright. In the ten years preceding Preston's death, some notable ownership changes occurred. In 1936, the *Peterborough Examiner*, established in 1885, was purchased by W. Rupert Davies and Harry Muir, who also owned the *Kingston Whig-Standard*. That same year, mining magnate William Wright acquired *The Globe*, from the Jaffray family. In 1939, both the *Fredericton Daily Mail* and the *Saint John Citizen* ceased publication. In 1940, the *Barrie Advance* was absorbed by the *Barrie Examiner*. In 1944, ownership of four independently-held Ontario daily newspapers passed into the hands of future press lord Roy Thomson, who had made his first newspaper purchase in 1934 by acquiring the then weekly, *Timmins Press*. The four dailies were the *Samia Canadian Reporter*, *The Evening Reporter*, of Galt, *The Daily Sentinel-Review* of

---

<sup>122</sup> "Buchanan's Tribute", *The Expositor* (March 26, 1930).

<sup>123</sup> M. Nichols. *The Story of The Canadian Press* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1948), p. 286.

Woodstock and *The Evening Tribune*, of Welland- Port Colborne. A year later, Thomson bought Kirkland Lake's *Northern News*.

The longevity of the Preston family ownership of *The Expositor* through the first half of the twentieth century exemplified a tradition of newspaper ownership that came to be regarded as "family journalism." When W.B. Preston died, many of the editorial tributes in newspapers across Canada discussed this factor. As the *Windsor Star* commented, "Among the finest influences on journalism in Canada are the newspaper families which through two or more generations have contributed to the upbuilding of the craft. Splendidly representative of such a family was Mr. William B. Preston who succeeded an outstanding father and carried on, with distinction, the work he had started."<sup>124</sup> The *Kingston Whig Standard* concurred, "Mr. Preston's career was a fine example in the tradition of family journalism."<sup>125</sup>

Undoubtedly, the strength of the Preston family through two generations contributed to the growth and stability of *The Expositor*. In a 1950 speech to commemorate the sixty years of ownership by the Preston family, company director H.B. Christie, who had married into the Preston family, referred to the longevity of the Preston ownership, in light of what was occurring elsewhere within the Canadian newspaper industry. "In comparison with other newspapers in Ontario, this is a long period . . . It is a remarkable tribute to the editorial wisdom and financial skill of T.H. Preston during thirty-five years and of his son,

---

<sup>124</sup> "Editorial Tributes to W.B. Preston: *Windsor Star*", *The Expositor* (March 30, 1946).

<sup>125</sup> "Editorial Tributes to W.B. Preston: *Kingston Whig-Standard*", *The Expositor* (March 30, 1926).

W.B. Preston for twenty-one years, that amid all this change *The Brantford Expositor* continued to prosper.”<sup>126</sup>

While the Preston family success was notable within the newspaper business, it could also be considered unique in general business terms, according to theories on “family capitalism” which indicate that family businesses are particularly vulnerable to succession crises and “most of them never survive more than a generation.”<sup>127</sup> Businesses that survive beyond a first generation are considered vulnerable once again when the mantle is passed on to a third generation, often because of a lack of interest on a grandchild’s part. The Preston ownership of *The Expositor* would in fact come to be extinct in the lifetime of the family’s third generation owners, and as evidence in the next chapter suggests, lack of interest was indeed a factor in this. However, this was exhibited not within the third generation, but rather, became clear with the coming of age of the fourth generation Prestons, the five children of Peter and Jack who had never known “Grandfather Preston”,<sup>128</sup> the family scion most responsible for the business success and journalistic reputation of *The Expositor*.

In 1946 though, when the ownership mantle was passed to a third generation of Prestons, expectations for continued stability and success of *The Expositor* were high. As the *Stratford Beacon-Herald* wrote:

---

<sup>126</sup> *The Expositor* (Nov. 2, 1950), p. 15.

<sup>127</sup> G. Jones and M. Rose. “Family Capitalism” *Business History* ( Vol. 35, No. 4, Oct. 1993), p. 6.

<sup>128</sup> This is the appellation used by Peter Preston in discussing T.H. Preston.

For more than 50 years, the Preston name has been the best-known name in Brantford newspaper circles. Happily, the family tradition promises to be carried on, despite the much-regretted death of Mr. William B. Preston. For two sons of that publisher have returned from the wars to resume their duties on the newspaper staff. *The Expositor* is thus in its third generation of Prestons, and doubtless, the excellence of an admirable daily newspaper will be maintained.<sup>129</sup>

For Jack and Peter Preston, the way ahead seemed clear. However, as the next chapter will show, the task of maintaining *The Expositor* for a fourth generation would prove to be impossible given the economic factors they could not have envisioned in 1946 as Canada emerged from the Second World War.

.....

---

<sup>129</sup> "Editorial Tributes to W.B. Preston: *Stratford Beacon-Herald*", *The Expositor* (March 30, 1946).

## CHAPTER THREE

### *i. Family Ties and Chains of Ownership*

In May 1957, during its 38<sup>th</sup> annual meeting, the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association <sup>1</sup> elected John Champion (Jack) Preston, publisher of Brantford's *Expositor*, as its next president. Though the installation of a new CDNPA president was usually a routine affair, a special ceremony was held that year to mark the succession to that office of three generations of Preston publishers. The association invited Mrs. W.B. Preston, widow of the second-generation Preston, to Toronto to witness her son's installation and presented her with a bouquet of roses as an expression of the newspaper group's long-held affection for her family. In turning over the office to the third generation Preston, retiring president John Bassett Jr., publisher of Toronto's *Telegram*, <sup>2</sup> and himself the son of a successful Montreal newspaper publisher, noted that the service of a grandfather, father and son was unique to the association. "Your father and grandfather were illustrious men," Bassett told Preston. "They made a most important contribution to the deliberations of this

---

<sup>1</sup> The name of the Canadian Daily Newspapers Association was changed to the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association by supplementary Letters Patent issued by Canada's Secretary of State on May 31, 1954, to reflect the members' views that the name of the group should clearly reflect that it was a publisher's group. See W. Craik, *A History of Canadian Journalism 11*, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Bassett purchased *The Telegram* in November 1952 for a reported \$4.25 million following the death of George McCullough who had owned the newspaper since 1948. Bassett's father, Major John Bassett was long associated with Montreal's *Gazette*, serving as its president from 1937 to 1956. In 1936, the senior Bassett purchased *The Sherbrooke Record*. He sold it to his son in 1947. See W. Craik, *A History of Canadian Journalism 11*, and R. Poulton, *The Paper Tyrant* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co.) and J. Carroll, *The Death of the Toronto Telegram* (Toronto: Pocket Books, 1971)

body and also in publishing a newspaper held in high regard in its community. Such respect for the press is, indeed, the only assurance of a continuing freedom of the press.”<sup>3</sup>

This ritual passing of the CDNPA gavel from the son of one newspaperman to another encapsulates the importance of family ties in Canadian newspaper ownership by the middle of the twentieth century. Indeed, at that point in time, being born into a newspaper family was the predominant route into newspaper ownership in Canada. The era of self-made newspaper entrepreneurs such as T.H. Preston and J.E. Atkinson, though just three generations past, was as sociologist John Porter pointed out in 1965, “lost to history”<sup>4</sup>, due largely to the early twentieth century forces of industrialization which had created significant financial barriers to new newspaper ventures. The capital required to start a newspaper had become increasingly prohibitive, with costs of presses, linotype machines, delivery trucks, rolls of newsprint, barrels of ink and weekly salaries, far steeper than those days a half century before when enterprising young editors “borrowed a couple of thousand, set up a press, hired reporters on half-pay and stock and laid the foundations of a great institution.”<sup>5</sup>

Thus, Canadian newspaper owners of the early post-war era most often achieved their positions through family connections. The junior Bassett had purchased his first newspaper in Sherbrooke, Quebec, from his father in 1947. John Preston and his younger brother Peter inherited equal shares of *The*

---

<sup>3</sup> *A History of Canadian Journalism* 11. p. 257.

<sup>4</sup> J. Porter. *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 484.



*Expositor* when their father William Buckingham Preston died in 1946. This pattern of “generational continuity of ownership”<sup>6</sup> was repeated in cities across Canada, through numerous other families who owned newspapers and increasingly, chains of newspapers. Throughout Canada, names of specific families had become synonymous with specific newspaper titles. In London, the Blackburns’ ownership of *The Free Press* dated back to 1853. In St. Catharines, the Burgoynes had owned the *Standard* since 1892. The Dingman family in St. Thomas had owned *The Times* since 1882. The Dennis family had been associated with the *Halifax Herald* since 1876 and in Vancouver, the Cromie’s ownership of the *Sun* dated back to 1915. The three major newspaper companies of that time, Southam Ltd., F.P. Publications Ltd. and Thomson Newspapers Ltd., were also closely-held within families. Thus, as Porter states, “inheritance through kinship” rather than upward social mobility<sup>7</sup> had become the principal means of attaining newspaper ownership in Canada.

Porter’s analysis of family-held ownership of Canada’s mass media contends that newspaper ownership remained in families for several generations because families regarded their newspapers as something more than businesses. Rather, Canada’s newspaper families saw their newspapers as “performing important public functions”<sup>8</sup> and were generally reluctant to let them pass out of family control. A 1947 article supports this view by journalist William Pinkerton in *Nieman Reports*, the journal of Harvard University’s esteemed

---

<sup>5</sup> W. Pinkerton. “The Newspaperman: The Publisher and His Paper” *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 1, No. 2, April, 1947), p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> J. Porter. *The Vertical Mosaic*. p. 482.

Nieman Fellowship for Journalists.<sup>9</sup> Pinkerton argued that newspaper ownership in the early twentieth century had been valued “as an investment and as a vehicle of trust or power”,<sup>10</sup> with the financial benefits outranked by the public benefits.

The publisher of a newspaper is a potent factor in his community. People read ‘his’ newspaper, sometimes they read ‘his’ editorials, they discuss what ‘he’ had to say on a vital issue of the day and what ‘he’ says is important. He may rank with the banker, the industrialist and the department-store proprietor in the city’s business councils, but in the field of public affairs, he outranks them all. The institution which he heads says its say daily, to a large audience, on matters of public concern and public policy.<sup>11</sup>

When the third generation Prestons assumed ownership of *The Expositor* in 1946, newspaper ownership was closely and proudly held mainly within families. At the same time, public alarms about consolidation and concentration in the newspaper industry were beginning to sound in the shadow of Roy Thomson’s increasing acquisitiveness, which prompted his purchase of fifteen Canadian newspapers in the decade between 1944 and 1954.<sup>12</sup> By the mid-1950s, the three newspaper chains, Southam, Thomson and F.P. Publications,

---

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p. 484.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* p. 482.

<sup>9</sup> The Nieman foundation was established in 1947 in order to “propagate the gospel of newspaper responsibility”. See T. Dearmore “The Growing Responsibility of the Small Town Press” *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 15, no. 2, April 1961), p. 10.

<sup>10</sup> W. Pinkerton, *Nieman Reports*. p. 29.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* p.26.

<sup>12</sup> The properties Thomson purchased were: *The Samia Canadian Observer*, *The Evening Reporter*, Galt, *The Daily Sentinel-Review*, Woodstock, *The Evening Tribune*, Welland-Port Colborne (1944), *The Northern News*, Kirkland Lake, (1945), *The Chatham Daily News* and *The Guelph Mercury* (1947), *The Moose Jaw Times-Herald*, (1949), *The Orillia Packet and Times*, *The Prince Albert Herald*, *The News-Chronicle*, Port Arthur, (1950), *The Oshawa-Times-Gazette*, (1951), *The News-Herald*, Vancouver, (1952), *The Brampton Conservator*, (1953) and *The*

controlled twenty-five per cent of daily newspaper circulation in Canada. While that was far from a majority, indications of further concentration were obvious with Thomson known to be ever-alert to new acquisitions.<sup>13</sup> Thus, while the pressure to maintain a newspaper within a family was no doubt strong, the temptation to sell to a chain lurked as an ever-present possibility for independent owners. This struggle between family ties and the chains of ownership is a critical factor in the late twentieth century trend towards nearly complete consolidation of the Canadian newspaper industry.

The third-generation Prestons withstood that temptation to sell for twenty-five years, maintaining their commitment to the newspaper and their community and fulfilling the vision and plans of their father and his father before him. Still, despite their best intentions, "The Preston Ownership" of *The Expositor* came to an abrupt end in November 1971 when the Preston brothers sold their family legacy to Southam Press Ltd. for \$2,650,000 cash. A September 13, 1971 article on the front page of *The Expositor* announced the sale that ended the Preston newspaper dynasty.

After more than 80 years' ownership by the Preston family The Expositor has been sold to Southam Press Limited, it was announced this morning by J.C. Preston and P.M. Preston, publishers of The Expositor. Southam Press, which owns the Hamilton Spectator, is a Canadian company with broad interests in newspaper publishing, printing and other communications areas in Canada. Its shares are listed on the Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver stock exchanges. The purchase brings to 11 the number of newspapers owned by Southam.<sup>14</sup>

---

*Guardian*, Charlottetown, (1954). Compiled from *A History of Canadian Journalism* 11, Appendix C, p. 293-294.

<sup>13</sup> At annual meetings of the Canadian Press, Thomson would ask publishers, "Do you want to sell?" He was known to repeat that question at every newspaper gathering he attended. See R. Braddon, *Roy Thomson of Fleet Street* (London, Collins, 1965), p. 135.

<sup>14</sup> "Sale of *Expositor* to Southam Press Announced Today", *The Expositor*, Sept. 13, 1971, p. 1. See Appendix H.

The circumstances of the third generation Preston ownership of *The Expositor* and the eventual sale of the newspaper to be discussed in this chapter explain much about the increasing concentration of newspaper ownership in Canada in the latter half of the twentieth century. The ownership history of the Brantford newspaper aptly illustrates how concentration occurred, newspaper by newspaper, family by family, as independent newspaper owners increasingly cashed out their family holdings and relinquished their stake and their editorial voices in their communities. This study of the Preston ownership of *The Expositor* suggests several factors led to the demise of family newspaper ownership in the post-war era. These factors were mainly economic. Foremost was the impact of decreasing advertising revenues created by increasing competition from television and other new advertising media, which steadily undercut the newspaper's lucrative, local monopoly. Other factors included the high-cost of rapidly-changing technology, federal succession duties and family succession problems, and the lure of relatively great wealth offered by acquisitive newspaper chains lurking in the background to buy up troubled newspaper properties. All of these factors support a view that concentration of the Canadian newspaper industry can ultimately be attributed to the triumph of economic factors which forced independent newspaper owners to place their financial status ahead of the public benefit and the social standing newspaper ownership had once conferred.

*ii. The Preston Ownership: The Third Generation*

When W.B. Preston died in 1946 while vacationing in Daytona Beach, Florida, his widow, Louise Preston, assumed the title of company president of Preston and Sons Ltd., while his eldest son John (Jack) became vice-president and general manager of the family company and publisher of *The Expositor*. At that time, the company was capitalized at a value of \$250,000, with 2,500 shares of one hundred dollars each.<sup>15</sup> According to W.B.'s will, his shares at the time of his death were worth just over \$181,000 of that total.<sup>16</sup> W.B.'s two sons had become shareholders and directors of the company well before their father's death, with Jack joining the board in 1939 and Peter following in 1942. Though W.B. had been in good health immediately prior to his death, he had nevertheless carefully planned his succession, ensuring—like his father before him—that his family's ownership of *The Expositor* would be passed on to his sons. His will stipulated that upon his wife's death, her shares in the company should be divided between his two sons, "equally, share and share alike".<sup>17</sup> W.B. also established a five-man management committee of Brantford men and close family friends to guide his sons in the operation of the newspaper. One of them, H.B. Christie, was W.B. Preston's brother-in-law, and thus the uncle of John and Peter. The others were F.W. Pollard, secretary of Preston and Sons Ltd., James McIntosh Tutt, a member of the Preston board and the company's lawyer, and two other board members, J.H. Johnson and C.F. Sanders.

---

<sup>15</sup> Ontario. The Companies Information Act. Return to Provincial Secretary. Information and Particulars as at March 31, 1946.

The firstborn Preston son had apparently always planned to enter the family firm and had been groomed by his father for that destiny.<sup>18</sup> He joined *The Expositor's* circulation department following his high school graduation from St. Andrews College, a private school in Aurora, Ontario. He learned the operations of the newspaper from his father, interrupting this training during the Second World War to join an artillery unit where his job was to interpret photographs taken of enemy positions. In 1945, Jack Preston returned home to Brantford and took his place at the family newspaper.<sup>19</sup> Upon his father's death a year later, he became publisher of *The Expositor*, a position he held until the sale of the paper twenty-six years later.

Though Peter Preston had initially planned a career outside newspapers, having long planned to study mechanical engineering, his ambitions were thwarted by a serious bout of pleural pneumonia, which felled him during his first weeks away at University of Toronto's School of Practical Science. He returned to Brantford to recuperate and then joined *The Expositor* in 1937, serving one year in the business office and then moving to the newsroom where he worked as a reporter, photographer and copy editor. In 1943, he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force becoming a sergeant in charge of photography in the RCAF's Ottawa public relations department. He returned to Brantford and a job

---

<sup>16</sup> W.B. Preston's will, probated December 1946, indicates his financial worth at \$258,381, with \$181,232 of that represented by his stock in Preston and Sons. Ltd. It is interesting to note that W.B.'s worth at his death was just over \$25,000 than his father's worth in 1925.

<sup>17</sup> W.B. Preston will

<sup>18</sup> Author interview with Peg Preston, (Jack's widow). Mississauga, April 12, 1996. Mrs. Preston stated that she knew the Preston family all of her life and believed her husband always intended to join the newspaper.

<sup>19</sup> This information comes from "raw" pre-published copy of Jack Preston's obituary in *The Expositor*, Sept. 14, 1984. Provided by Peter Preston

at *The Expositor* in January 1946, just days before his father's sudden death.<sup>20</sup>

"From then on, Jack and I were the owners," Preston said in a December 1995 interview at his Riverside Dr. home which overlooks the Grand River in Brantford.

"We both had equal shares."<sup>21</sup>

As well as owning and operating *The Expositor*, the Preston brothers continued the strong tradition of community service established by their grandfather and carried on by their father. They exhibited a strong sense of civic responsibility, serving on the executive boards of numerous charitable organizations. Jack Preston headed Brantford's Community Chest campaign, the forerunner of today's United Way, and was instrumental in raising funds for the Brantford Civic Centre. He was a past-president of the Brantford branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses and the founding president of VON Ontario. He was a director of the Ontario Society of Crippled Children and chairman of the annual local Easter Seal campaign for several years. As well, he served as president of the Brantford Rotary Club, the Brant Curling Club and the Brantford Golf and Country Club.

His brother Peter was equally involved in the community. Over the course of his ownership of *The Expositor*, he served as chairman of the Brantford Board of Education, was a director of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and a president of the Brantford division of the Canadian Red Cross Society. He was the president of the Brantford Welfare Council, a chairman of the Brantford

---

<sup>20</sup> This comes from unpublished biographical data provided by Peter Preston and found in his *Expositor* personal file.

<sup>21</sup> Author interview with Peter Preston. Brantford. December 22, 1995.

Community Appeals Review Board, president of the Rotary Club and the founding president of the Brantford Arts Council.

Both brothers also served as elders of Zion United Church, their family's longtime place of worship. Like their father and grandfather as well, these third-generation Prestons were also actively involved in Canadian journalism organizations. Both served on the board of the Canadian Press and both were presidents of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association.

According to Peter Preston, he and his brother were "trained" for community service and believed it was part of their public responsibility as newspaper owners. Because they were well-known in Brantford, they were called on often to serve on various boards and committees. Public service led to more service as they identified necessary community projects. Peg Preston, Jack Preston's widow, believes her husband also regarded community service as a natural extension of his role as publisher of the local newspaper. "In those days, people looked to publishers of newspapers, particularly smaller papers, for leadership and guidance. It was probably because they had such a knowledge and feel for the community," she said in an interview at her Mississauga, Ont. condominium. "My husband was very philanthropically-minded."<sup>22</sup>

The Prestons' view of public service was undoubtedly borne out of their family's longtime commitment to the community of Brantford begun by T.H. Preston when he came to the city at the turn of the century. In his 1947 article "The Publisher and His Paper", Pinkerton contends that the local newspaper publisher traditionally occupied an elite position in his community because of



those ideas about public responsibility of the press expressed so eloquently by T.H. and various other newspapermen of his generation. Pinkerton argues that a community had come to regard its newspaper as something more than a business, and thus saw the newspaper's publisher as something more than a businessman. "Because of its dual function as a business institution and as an institution of public service, the newspaper—and its publisher—enjoys unusual prestige in the community."<sup>23</sup>

While the third generation Prestons maintained family ownership of *The Expositor* for twenty-six years, they rejected at least "four or five requests per year" to sell their newspaper to both Canadian and American newspaper chains.<sup>24</sup> The first offer came in 1946, just three days after their father's death. Jack Preston revealed this fact during the 1970 hearings of the Special Senate Committee on the Mass Media chaired by Senator Keith Davey. While Preston did not reveal the suitor, it was most likely Roy Thomson, then in the midst of one of his newspaper buying sprees. According to a 1965 biography of the future press lord, Thomson believed family newspapers were vulnerable to his advances. In 1946, Thomson convinced brokerage firm Wood Gundy to float a one million dollar public debenture to fund his growing empire by expounding on his theories of expansion and the role of family newspapers. According to Thomson, most of Canada's daily newspapers were then in the hands of families, "passed down from father to son" and often "because they were run on economic or old-

---

<sup>22</sup> Peg Preston interview.

<sup>23</sup> W. Pinkerton, p. 26.

<sup>24</sup> Canada: *Proceedings of the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media* (Ottawa: Second Session, Twenty-Eighth Parliament, 1969), Jan. 21, 1970, p. 10:37.

fashioned lines”, they made little money.<sup>25</sup> Thomson theorized that the succession duties due to the government upon the death of a family publisher (a factor to be discussed further later in this work) was a disincentive for families to maintain their newspaper ownership.

Therefore, Thomson concluded, there should throughout Canada, be a great number of old family newspapers, which sooner or later, to the advantage of both the family and himself, he could buy.<sup>26</sup>

Despite these realities, the Preston brothers were firm in their initial commitment to not only keep *The Expositor* in the family, but to expand and update its operations. In 1952, the Dalhousie and Queen St. newspaper building erected by their grandfather in 1895 for \$10,000, underwent a \$300,000 expansion to which was added another \$250,000 investment for new twin presses capable of handling the newspaper’s increasing circulation.<sup>27</sup> The jubilant Preston brothers held a public “housewarming” inviting citizens of Brantford inside for a look at their newspaper plant, “of singular attractiveness and utility . . . Indeed it is no idle boast to say that it is equal to the best in the field anywhere in North America” asserted a special edition of *The Expositor* printed to commemorate the opening of the new building.<sup>28</sup> In 1952, the Prestons publicly celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the newspaper’s founding. A letter from Allan Holmes, the president of the Canadian Daily

---

<sup>25</sup> R. Braddon. *Roy Thomson of Fleet St.* p. 148.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *The Expositor*. June 30, 1967.

<sup>28</sup> *The Expositor*, Open House Edition, 1952.

Newspaper Publisher's Association, printed in *The Expositor* publicly praised the paper's progress and anticipated its continued success.

At this date, 1952, three generations of the Preston family have discharged the responsibility of giving the people of Brantford and vicinity the news presented objectively. It was my privilege to know the grandfather and father of the present publishers. Both were men of considerable stature in the newspaper business whose high integrity did much in formulating the policies of the newspaper profession. With its impressive building, high-speed presses, extensive coverage of world and local news, *The Expositor* today is equipped to maintain this tradition of high service to its community. We feel sure this responsibility will be more than adequately discharged in the competent hands of the present management. <sup>29</sup>

It is difficult to imagine that the Prestons would not have succeeded in their first decade of ownership. A post war economic boom that boosted Canada's disposable income and with it the demand for consumer goods, was a direct boon to the newspaper industry and, undoubtedly, to *The Expositor* with its local monopoly. Throughout Canada, daily newspaper readership grew and advertisers flocked to dailies to display their products and wares. Between 1947 and 1957, with the combined circulation of all Canadian dailies greater than the number of households in the country, the daily newspaper had become the prime vehicle for delivering advertising to consumers. <sup>30</sup> In 1954 alone, Canadian newspapers took in \$116 million in advertising dollars. The burgeoning advertising and newspaper industries worked together to exploit this rich market. In the early 1950s, the CDNPA launched a vigorous campaign to encourage local retailers across Canada to display pre-printed cards in their store windows reminding shoppers that goods inside were "As Advertised in Your Daily

---

<sup>29</sup> *The Expositor*. October 11, 1952.

Newspaper.” To promote this, the association printed and circulated a “hard-hitting “ brochure called “Effective National Advertising Must Get Local Results”.<sup>31</sup>

To understand the modern relationship between newspaper advertising and editorial content, it is important to understand the economic factors that affected *The Expositor* and other Canadian dailies in the post-war period. While the importance of advertising to the Canadian mass circulation daily grew increasingly through the twentieth century, net advertising expenditures more than tripled in Canada between 1950 and 1968 when advertising revenue constituted sixty-five per cent of the gross income of the newspaper publishing industry in Canada.<sup>32</sup> This mattered greatly to the overall economic health of newspapers because though readers generally purchase a newspaper in order to obtain news, information and entertainment, a newspaper is a business whose primary revenue is derived from advertisers not readers. In essence, the newspaper sells its readers to advertisers. As the 1970 Davey report so succinctly put it: “In the strict economic sense, media require an audience primarily to provide customers for the firms that buy advertising in the media in order to sell their goods and services.”<sup>33</sup>

The role of advertising revenue in the Canadian daily newspaper industry in general and *The Expositor* in particular will be discussed more explicitly further in this chapter. Suffice to state here, that while total advertising expenditures

---

<sup>30</sup> P. Rutherford. *The Making of the Canadian Media*. p. 84.

<sup>31</sup> W. Craik. *A History of Canadian Journalism* 11. p. 258.

<sup>32</sup> Canada. Special Senate Committee on Mass Media. *Vol 2.: Words, Music and Dollars*.p. 120.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* p. 119.

continued to grow between 1950 and 1970, the use of various new media meant that Canadian newspapers' share of advertising revenue did not keep pace with that growth. This would indeed prove to be a factor in the Prestons' 1971 decision to sell their newspaper.

In 1970 however, there was no public indication that the Prestons' ownership of *The Expositor* would soon end. In January 1970, the Prestons were called to testify before Davey's Special Senate Committee established in 1969 to investigate concentration of ownership and control of newspapers, radio and television in Canada. According to Davey, the Prestons were selected to appear before the commission because of *The Expositor's* long-time status as an independent, family-owned newspaper.<sup>34</sup>

In a twelve-page, brief submitted to the commission in advance of their testimony, the Prestons stressed their strong commitment to family ownership of *The Expositor*. "We at *The Expositor* believe that much is gained by having the newspaper owned by people active in management and keenly interested in their community," the brief stated. "This tends to make the paper more a part of the community, and, as a result, the community part of the paper."<sup>35</sup>

The brief clearly expressed the Prestons' commitment to a local news mandate, stating that in the gathering, selection, and presentation of such news, "we bring a local knowledge and sense of values that no publication outside the area could match."

---

<sup>34</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Proceedings*. p. 10:49.

<sup>35</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Brief of the Brantford Expositor*, p. 2.

Consistent with our emphasis on local news and what we consider to be our overall responsibility to our readers, we offer editorial comment on local matters whenever the public need appears to justify it. Thus, we may discuss a city council debate, electoral apathy in municipal elections, the need for far-sighted thinking and action to secure land for recreational use, or other aspects of civic affairs.<sup>36</sup>

On Wednesday January 21, 1970, the Prestons reiterated their commitment to Brantford and their *Expositor* readers while testifying before the Senate Committee in Ottawa. In his opening statement, Jack Preston exhibited a keen understanding of the role of a newspaper in a democratic society and vocalized a sense of his public duty as a daily newspaper publisher:

I am sure that from these hearings will come a better understanding of the complexities newspapers face in providing the flow of information and comment that is vital to a democratic society and thus to the freedom of Canadians. Only in the newspaper can the public find a wide range of reports of public meetings and of the proceedings of legislatures and other public bodies. And besides serving the public's right to know more fully than any other media, newspapers provide, through letters to the editors, an unrivalled channel for the expression of public opinion.<sup>37</sup>

When Preston was asked directly whether he considered group ownership would be "a good thing or a bad thing for the community in Brantford",<sup>38</sup> his response was unequivocal -- "I think we can do a better job for the city of Brantford privately-owned. Have I answered the question?" he said.<sup>39</sup>

Preston was also queried about whether he thought there would be any advantage "news-wise or profit-wise" to be connected with a chain. He admitted

---

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* p. 6.

<sup>37</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Proceedings*. p. 10:36.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10:39.

that a chain would probably run the newspaper more efficiently than his family had, but doubted a better newspaper would be produced.

I know there are economies that any person who bought it would put into effect. There are things because of our associations with people that we close our eyes to, for personnel and things like that, because it is a family concern. There was a time when we used to refer to it as 'The *Expositor* Family.' . . . But as far as producing a better newspaper, as far as the news content is concerned, we like to feel we are publishing as good as newspaper as can be published.<sup>40</sup>

In thanking the Prestons for their appearance before the committee, Senator Davey sought to dispel any confusion about whether the *Expositor* was looking for a buyer. "I should make it clear that you did not say that *The Expositor* was for sale," Davey said. Jack Preston's last words to the committee reinforced that fact—"It is not at the moment for sale, sir,"<sup>41</sup> he replied.

Six months after that testimony, the future of *The Expositor* under the family's continued ownership seemed secure when Jack Preston announced plans for a new \$900,000 Goss Headliner printing press that would increase the newspaper's printing capacity significantly and satisfy advertisers' increasing requests for colour advertising supplements. With the newspaper's circulation then running about 27,000 daily, this was a move conceived to handle the newspaper's circulation and advertising growth for many years to come. Installation of the new press took more than nine months and ended up costing well over a million dollars. In October 1971, the new press went into service.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10:39.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10:38.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10:49.

<sup>42</sup> *The Expositor*, June 30, 1967.

However, this time there was no public celebration. And what should have been cause for at least private celebration for the Preston brothers could have only been bittersweet, for just weeks before the full installation of the presses they had publicly announced the sale of their newspaper to Southam Press Limited. By the end of 1971, a quarter century after this third generation of Prestons assumed ownership, the Preston presence disappeared from *The Expositor* entirely with Jack and Peter resigning from their executive positions as respectively, general manager and executive editor. While Southam president St. Clair Balfour had requested that Jack Preston remain on as publisher of the newspaper,<sup>43</sup> his widow recalls that he refused outright, stating that if he had wanted to continue running the newspaper he would not have sold it.<sup>44</sup>

In November 1971, Southam head office appointed a publisher and an editor, two men with no previous connection to Brantford. Thus, the Preston ownership of *The Expositor* came to its end; eighty-one years after T.H. Preston had purchased the fledgling newspaper and transformed it into one of Ontario's most-respected dailies.

### *iii. Chains of Ownership*

The Preston family offered no public explanation for their decision to sell their newspaper. And neither did Southam disclose its reasons for the purchase. Of course, acquiring family newspapers had long been the principle method of growth for Canada's second-largest newspaper chain, a company later

---

<sup>43</sup> Author interview with St. Clair Balfour. Toronto. February 27, 1997.

<sup>44</sup> Peg Preston. interview.



characterized by media historian Paul Rutherford as “the chief gobbler of newspaper properties”<sup>45</sup> In the three years immediately preceding *The Expositor* acquisition, this “Leviathan of the communications industry”<sup>46</sup> had purchased *The Montreal Gazette*, *The Owen Sound Sun Times* and *The Prince George Citizen*.<sup>47</sup>

Southam’s expansion by acquisition had been well-documented by the Davey committee’s 1971 final report which warned that “control of the media is passing into fewer and fewer hands and experts agree that the trend is likely to continue and perhaps accelerate.”<sup>48</sup> The report found that seventy-seven of Canada’s 116 newspapers (over sixty -six per cent) were then group-owned, with Southam controlling approximately eighteen per cent of total national circulation.<sup>49</sup> Overall, chains controlled fifty-eight per cent of national daily newspaper circulation. In light of these facts, the commission recommended the establishment of a federal Press Ownership Review Board to investigate and regulate ownership concentration in the print media. It advised that the board operate from the premise that all transactions that increased concentration of ownership of Canadian newspapers are “undesirable and contrary to the public interest unless shown to be otherwise.”<sup>50</sup> The report asserted:

The prudent state must recognize that at some point, enough becomes enough. If the trend towards concentration is allowed to

---

<sup>45</sup> P.Rutherford, *The Making of the Canadian Media*. p. 52.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* p. 92.

<sup>47</sup> Southam Inc. "Chronology" Obtained from Southam Inc. Library. Don Mills, Ontario.

<sup>48</sup> Canada. Special Senate Committee on Mass Media. *Vol. 1: Report*. p. 6.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* p. 34.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

continue unabated, sooner or later it must reach the point where it collides with the public interest. The committee believes it to be in the national interest to ensure that point is not reached.<sup>51</sup>

The view that concentrated media ownership is contrary to the public interest lies at the very heart of the Davey report and emanates from the belief that more voices make for a healthier democracy by facilitating and encouraging broader public debate. As the opening page of the report states, “The more separate voices we have telling us what’s going on, telling us how we’re doing, telling us how we should be doing, the more effectively we can govern ourselves.”<sup>52</sup> The conundrum explored by Davey’s committee was the inherent tension between that principle and the economic reality that “more voices may be healthier, but fewer voices are cheaper.”<sup>53</sup> And while concentrated ownership was by then the norm across Canada, Davey argued that it was not too late to bolt the stable-door. “The stable-door is still wide open. Many more newspaper mergers are still possible and it is possible to imagine many combinations that would have serious effects on the public’s access to diverse and antagonistic sources of information.”<sup>54</sup>

Ottawa virtually ignored the Davey committee’s recommendations and the results were exactly as predicted—increased concentration in the following years by Southam as well as Thomson Newspapers Ltd. In January, 1980, Thomson increased its hold on Canadian newspaper ownership substantially by purchasing F.P. Publications Ltd., then Canada’s largest-circulation newspaper

---

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* p. 4.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3.

chain. That move, described by the 1980 Royal Commission on Newspapers as “the biggest transaction in the history of Canadian newspapers.”<sup>55</sup> gave Thomson ownership of forty Canadian newspapers representing 25.9 per cent of daily circulation. As well, it narrowed the ownership of a majority of Canadian newspapers to two companies controlling fifty per cent of daily circulation.<sup>56</sup>

The federal government’s failure to act on the Davey recommendations meant Southam faced no obstacles in acquiring *The Expositor* in September 1971. Further, just over one month after purchasing *The Expositor*, Southam also acquired *The Windsor Star* for \$10,500,000 cash.<sup>57</sup> In the company’s 1971 annual report, St. Clair Balfour, president and director of the company, heralded the company’s new acquisitions and reported that while these newspapers “did not make a significant contribution to earnings in 1971, it is anticipated that they will do so in the future.” He told shareholders:

For many years, it has been Southam policy to expand by acquisition within the communications business when opportunities for investment are compatible with our existing operations. In 1971, the number of such opportunities offered was greater than ever before . . . . With the addition of two new dailies in 1971, this emphasis is continued and strengthened. Although ownership was not assumed until November, both new properties have fitted smoothly and satisfactorily into the Southam pattern of newspaper management.<sup>58</sup>

In testimony before the Davey commission some twenty months before the *Expositor* purchase, when questioned intently about whether Southam

---

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* p. 73.

<sup>55</sup> Kent. p. 9.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Southam Press Ltd. *Annual Report*, 1971.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

intended to continue its expansion by acquisition, Balfour admitted that Southam would indeed be interested in further newspaper acquisitions. He stressed though that the group was not then actively seeking any specific Canadian newspaper properties. He testified that Southam's most-recent purchases in Montreal, Owen Sound and Prince George had come about because, "the proprietors of those newspapers approached us. They knew of course that we would be interested, or would probably be interested, but this was not a case of direct approach by Southam Press to these people. " <sup>59</sup>

Ironically, the spectre of Southam's acquisition of *The Expositor* was raised during the company's public testimony, which occurred six days after the Prestons'. In response to Davey's question, "Is the group interested in further expansion?" this exchange occurred:

**Mr. Balfour:** Yes. The group would be interested if another or other good newspaper became available. We are not going to Brantford and say; "Will you sell your *Brantford Expositor*?"

**The Chairman:** But, if the *Brantford Expositor* was interested in selling, you would go to Brantford then?

**Mr. Balfour:** Not necessarily so, sir, because it is very close to Hamilton. <sup>60</sup>

Balfour explained that the proximity of Brantford to Hamilton would be a factor in whether Southam would be interested in Brantford because the company wanted to avoid "regional concentration" of its business.

The commission had earlier heard Jack Preston testify that while he had received no firm offers for *The Expositor* since his father's death, he had little

---

<sup>59</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Proceedings*. p. 13:11.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

doubt that the major newspaper chains were interested in his newspaper. He also provided insight into how such business was done in the newspaper market.

As far as the local chains . . . if we were to hold up our hand and say 'we are for sale', we would be trampled to death by three and another one who is not in the chain business at the moment. I know quite frankly that we only have to indicate that we would be for sale and I am quite confident the three chains would be nibbling . . . There have been no firm offers. It has been more of a casual conversation. You know, you're sitting around having a drink. And I think it is half kidding and half not, quite seriously—"Well, when are you for sale?" and "Don't forget us."<sup>61</sup>

In an interview for this study, Preston's widow provided further insight into this. She said the family was always aware that if it ever wanted to sell the newspaper, "they (the chains) would want to buy." She believes Southam had long been interested in *The Expositor* and furthermore, would have been "glad to pick up any dailies they didn't already own." She added the Prestons believed Thomson Newspapers had a long-standing interest in acquiring *The Expositor*.

I'm sure they all put the bug in John's ear at one time or other. I well remember Roy Thomson making overtures to J.C. years ago. It was a matter of 'if you ever want to sell we'll be interested . . . you know that don't you'.<sup>62</sup>

Newspaper concentration in Canada came about because of the expansion of newspaper companies into increasingly larger corporations, in much the same way other industries grew. While the Davey report did not explicitly explore the reasons why newspaper chains bought independent newspapers such as *The Expositor*, many of the reasons can be discerned

---

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10:37.

<sup>62</sup> Peg Preston interview, April, 1996.

throughout its text. The report ascribed “the normal human spirit of acquisitiveness”<sup>63</sup>, as a factor in the steady expansion of newspaper groups, referring to a somewhat infamous remark by Roy Thomson reported in his 1965 biography that, “I am in the business of making money and I buy more newspapers in order to make more money to buy more newspapers to make more money to buy more newspapers.”<sup>64</sup> Davey’s report echoed this theme, contending that “there is a strong and deep-seated compulsion towards constant growth and expansion”.<sup>65</sup>

The report predicted the transfer of additional independent newspapers into the control of newspaper chains, pointing to the reality that, “While part of the growth and expansion of the group media owners may take the form of establishing new services, their future appears to rest heavily on the acquisition of existing media outlets either from independents or other groups.”<sup>66</sup>

In a 1982 study that examines why newspaper chains buy and why independent newspapers sell, Harvard University media economist Benjamin Compaigne theorizes that newspaper companies could not grow without acquiring new properties. He argues that the later twentieth century growth of newspaper chains came about because the newspaper industry was by then a “mature industry” that provided virtually no opportunity to create new products since strong monopoly newspapers were well-established in most markets and start up costs for a new paper—especially one to compete with the established

---

<sup>63</sup> *Words, Music and Dollars*. p. 18.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* p. 20.

one—were highly-prohibitive.. “Newspaper firms have followed various strategies for growth. They all recognize however that sizable gains can only come about through acquisition.”<sup>67</sup>

Compaigne contends that newspaper chains realized if they bought an independent monopoly newspaper they stood to profit from their own professional management and more sophisticated business practices. They could theoretically substantially increase the newspaper’s profits because “the objective of a family-owned business is often different from one that is publicly-owned or professionally managed. Minimizing taxes and maximizing cash, rather than earnings per share or return on investment may be the objective of private investors.”<sup>68</sup>

The Davey report concluded that the growth of newspaper chains could also be attributed to the very fact that they could afford to grow. Because chains have larger amounts of cash and collateral to draw on, they are able to borrow funds for new acquisitions, pay less interest and refinance more easily than smaller companies. As well, Canadian tax laws encouraged large firms to retain and invest their earnings to minimize income tax for shareholders. As Davey’s report concluded, “the income tax act also appears to provide a substantial incentive for groups to become eager buyers in the marketplace”.<sup>69</sup> To support this finding, Davey referred to the 1969 White Paper on Taxation to explain how the tax structure supported growth of large corporations:

---

<sup>67</sup> B. Compaigne. *Who Owns the Media* (White Plains, N.Y. Knowledge Industry Publications Ltd., 1982), p. 48.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>69</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Report*. p. 45.

If a corporation which earns a large profit distributes that profit to its shareholders, the present system classifies those distributions as income and levies an income tax on them, just as it does on wages and salaries. On the other hand, if the corporation does not distribute the profits, the values of shares in the corporation will almost certainly increase. If a shareholder realizes on his share of that increase, by selling his shares at a profit, the present system usually classifies that profit as a capital gain and it is tax-exempt.<sup>70</sup>

Corporate profits not distributed to shareholders are called retained earnings. Davey found that large newspaper companies had generally had “a substantial volume” of retained earnings available to invest for future growth and concluded this retained capital was a significant factor of ownership concentration.

Thus the typical profitable corporation—and this applies especially to some corporations which publish large newspapers which are very profitable, -- finds itself with more and more idle money piling up. What to do with it? Like the Mafia, they're tempted, if not actually forced, to invest it elsewhere. And if you happen to be a newspaper publisher, by far the most plausible place to invest it is in another profitable newspaper.<sup>71</sup>

The factors leading to acquisitions of independent newspapers by chains, and subsequently increased concentration within the newspaper industry, differ little from those factors responsible for mergers and acquisitions within Canadian industry in general. The 1978 *Report of the Royal Commission on Corporate Concentration* examined both the motives for selling and the motives for buying in cases of merger and acquisition. Those reasons echo reasons put forward by both Davey and Compaigne in their analysis of the reasons why newspaper

---

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* p. 46.



chains buy independent newspapers. According to the report, the simplest motive for one company to acquire another is that it has excess cash to spare and is presented with an attractive investment opportunity. The report also pointed out that acquiring control of an existing business rather than starting a new business is both cheaper and quicker for a company that wants to expand. A further factor cited by the report is the role of the individual driven to create an empire, an explanation that could directly apply to Roy Thomson, who by the end of the 1960s was recognized as the biggest newspaper publisher in history, with 124 newspapers in eight countries.<sup>72</sup> As the report states:

Acquisitions are sometimes made by companies under the control of confident and dynamic men motivated by the desire to grow and create a corporate empire. Indeed, given the types of men who succeed in business and the kinds of opportunities that arise, it would be surprising if there were not cases of this kind, especially when there are available businesses under the control of others who appear less dynamic and venturesome.<sup>73</sup>

#### *iv. The Price of Succession*

Although the third generation Prestons testified to the Senate committee that their newspaper was not at the time for sale, they did allude to that possibility. Jack Preston indicated he and his brother were grappling with the most basic problem of any type of family business—the problems and costs of succession. Mostly, the Prestons were concerned about the federal taxes on the value of *The Expositor*, which would be applicable upon their death. Preston and

---

<sup>72</sup>J. Winter. "Interlocking Directorships and Economic Power" *Press Concentration and Monopoly*. p.111.

<sup>73</sup> *Royal Commission on Corporate Concentration*. p. 152.

various other newspaper owners referred to this factor repeatedly during the hearings, using the term succession duties in reference to federal estate taxes that then amounted to fifty per cent of the value beyond \$300,000 of an estate passing from one generation to the next. Preston said his family's business lacked the capital to contend with such taxes.

Up to three years ago, we had no thought of ever selling *The Expositor*. Our thinking is getting along the line that we will eventually have to sell it . . . the succession duty problem is much heavier than Peter and I at the moment can contend with. Frankly, at the moment anything that we have is in the shares of *The Expositor*. We have no capital. So therefore, if we are faced with a heavy succession duty something has to give . . . If we were going to sell, we would be selling because we would feel that we could not pass it on, or we could not retain it for our heirs.<sup>74</sup>

Several newspaper owners who testified at the Davey hearings echoed the Prestons' concerns making clear the industry's strong view that government tax policy was a strong factor in the demise of family-owned newspapers.<sup>75</sup>

Walter J. Blackburn, the owner of *The London Free Press*, an independent newspaper owned by the Blackburn family since 1853, told the commission he believed family-owned newspapers were sold to raise cash to pay off estate taxes and thus, the government held "the first ingredient to a solution" to the problem of chain ownership.<sup>76</sup>

It is my view that one of the main obstacles in the way of continued local or family ownership of individual newspapers, or for that

---

<sup>74</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Proceedings*. p. 10:38.

<sup>75</sup> Among the other independent newspaper owners who addressed this issue in briefs to Davey were Michael Davies, publisher of the *Kingston Whig Standard*, W.B. Burgoyne of the *St. Catharines Standard* and George Dingman, president and publisher of the *Times-Journal* of St. Thomas. As well, the *Montreal Gazette* submitted a brief explaining its reasons for its 1969 sale to Southam. See Appendix I. (Senate Committee on Mass Media: Written Briefs, 24-44, 1970).

<sup>76</sup> "Change in Estate Law Asked to Save 'Family' Newspapers", *Editor and Publisher* (Jan. 31, 1970), p. 17.

matter any family-owned business, lies in the tax field. I believe that one of the main reasons for the sale of such businesses is to provide the owners with the necessary liquidity so that estate taxes on death can be paid. In some cases the business will be sold well in advance of the death of the owner, but these sales often represent a reasonable attempt by a prudent businessman to prepare for the eventual liability for death taxes. This factor may not be the only one involved in such sales but I would suggest that it is probably the one which tipped the scales in favour of a sale.<sup>77</sup>

The executives of both Southam and Thomson referred to succession duties in explaining why newspapers were available for sale. St. Clair Balfour, who as president of Southam had many opportunities to buy family newspapers, testified the state had to bear partial blame for the disappearance of independent newspapers. "The sale of newspaper properties is frequently dictated, or at least encouraged, by the combined impact of gift and death duties," he said. "Given the present taxation systems, it seems apparent that small and medium-sized newspapers will in the long run pass from individual ownership . . . One possible solution which we would ask you to consider is that all death duties be abolished".<sup>78</sup> Thomson director and general counsel John Tory, expressed the same view stating that, "perhaps the most important reason why the owner of a newspaper may decide to sell it is to provide for death duties."<sup>79</sup>

In its final report, Davey's committee conceded that "concern among independent owners about the consequences of succession duties, while not necessarily founded on fact, appear to have provided a significant incentive to

---

<sup>77</sup> Special Senate Committee on Mass Media. *Proceedings*. p. 10:9.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* p. 13:9.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* p. 7:41.

sell. “<sup>80</sup> In Volume Two of the report, a specially-commissioned study of the economics of Canadian publishing and broadcasting called *Words, Music, and Dollars*, it delved into the issue further, stating, “it is difficult to imagine an area of more profound contradiction.”<sup>81</sup> The report summarized the above-mentioned views of Canadian newspaper owners who argued that the necessity of paying “high” death duties had contributed to concentration of newspaper ownership, but in its conclusion, it minimized the impact of those duties. The report cited the previous 1967 Royal Commission on Taxation<sup>82</sup>, which had itself, concluded that estate taxes were a minor factor in the sale of Canadian businesses. Thus, stated the Davey report, “estate and succession duties do not appear to be a pivotal factor in the concentration process, although they do constitute one factor.”<sup>83</sup> As well, the report suggested that owners of family newspapers who sold to chains might well have exaggerated the impact of succession duties in order to defend their decisions to their local constituency of readers and advertisers.

---

<sup>80</sup> Special Senate Committee on Mass Media. *Words, Music and Dollars*. p. 20.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* p. 424.

<sup>82</sup> The Royal Commission on Taxation, chaired by Kenneth L. Carter was commissioned by John Diefenbaker's government in 1962 “to inquire into and report upon the effects of taxation . . . upon the operation of the national economy, the conduct of business, the organization of industry and the position of individuals.” Its exhaustive, 2,700-page, six-volume report was tabled in the House of Commons in February 1967. See Canada. *Royal Commission on Taxation*, Ottawa, 1967.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* p 433.

The subjective impression gained from several interviews that the individual that sells a previously private newspaper property feels defensive in community terms. He may be accused by friends or even vocal, organized voices within his community, of selling out the interests of that community for crass profit, even though he may, as an heir, have no personal interest in operating the newspaper or particular competence to do so. In such cases, the estate duty argument, although it may have been a legitimate factor in the decision to sell, may be allowed to assume undue proportion when the fact of the sale is later being justified.”<sup>84</sup>

Interestingly, in interviews for this work, neither Peter nor Peg Preston could clearly recall the issue of estate taxes as a major factor in the eventual sale of the newspaper. For both, a more pressing succession factor was the lack of interest among the fourth-generation Prestons in taking over the newspaper and continuing the Preston family newspaper legacy bequeathed to them by a great-grandfather they never even knew.

#### *v. Family Ties*

Between them, the Preston brothers had five offspring: Jack's two—Margaret and John and Peter's three—Rosemary, Duncan and Bill. According to Peter Preston, although his second son Bill worked in the newspaper's composing room at the time of the sale to Southam, there was no clear indication that any of his or his brother's children were prepared to take over the operation and ownership of the newspaper.<sup>85</sup> This fact was echoed by Peg Preston. She stressed she and her husband did not try to influence their children to carry on the Preston family ownership of *The Expositor*. “It was very strong in our minds

---

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 426.

<sup>85</sup> Peter Preston interview.

that we did not want to push the paper on them in any way, shape or form," she said. "We suddenly realized the children were growing up and there wasn't anyone interested in the paper and as far as we were concerned, that was that."<sup>86</sup>

As the eldest son of the eldest Preston brother, John Preston now resides in Florida where he is a successful shopping mall developer. At the time of the sale to Southam, he was studying at the University of Guelph and was absorbed by his passion for water-skiing and a position with the Canadian national water-skiing team. When interviewed for this study, Preston recalled that he had no interest in a career at *The Expositor*, or in taking control of the family business. Unlike his father, who had been groomed from an early age for a life in the newspaper, this younger Preston never even considered the possibility. Nor did his father press it upon him. Shortly before the elder Preston sold the paper, he consulted with his son who assured him he did not envision a life in Brantford. "If I thought my future was to be in Brantford, I'd be in the newspaper business, but that was the last place I wanted to be," Preston said. "I don't think I ever saw the newspaper as being something exciting that I might want to do."<sup>87</sup>

Preston's recollections were echoed by his sister Margaret Shorey of Oakville Ontario, who was never even approached about an interest in the newspaper. Despite the fact that the eldest child in each family was a daughter, the question of succession was solely centered on the Preston sons. "It was absolutely just a question of the times. My father steered me into secretarial work

---

<sup>86</sup> Peg Preston interview.

<sup>87</sup> Author telephone interview with John Preston. February 27, 1997.

when I didn't know what I wanted to do," Shorey said in an interview. Shorey left Brantford following high school to study at the University of Western Ontario. Upon graduation, her father used his connections to help her obtain a secretarial position with Abitibi-Price, the company that supplied newsprint to *The Expositor*. Later she returned to school for teacher training. Shorey believes her parents always had her best interests and those of her brother John at heart. "Dad probably would have been pleased if John had decided that was what he wanted to do, but he gave us the freedom to do our own thing."<sup>88</sup>

Both Shorey and her cousin Duncan Preston, who now owns a farm in Owen Sound, Ontario, believe the Preston family ownership may have continued into a fourth generation if there had been a clearer line of succession. However, with three sons of two brothers in line to take over the newspaper, there was no single successor and as Shorey stated, "It's not easy working in a family business and one of them would have had to have been in charge. It was never clear who that would be."<sup>89</sup> In a brief interview at his father's home in Brantford, Duncan Preston also expressed this view. "If there had been a direct line maybe one of us would have gone into it, but as it was, none of us had any real interest in that direction," he said. "We could see there would just be too many difficulties within the family. I think the sale of *The Expositor* was pretty well accepted by everyone."<sup>90</sup>

While it may seem difficult to understand why a family would choose to abandon a long-held business and its journalistic legacy, rather than work out the

---

<sup>88</sup> Author interview with Margaret Shorey, Oakville Ont., April 11, 1996.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

serious issues of succession, business theorists contend this is a prime reason for the cessation of family business within any industry. In an article in *Business Horizons*, Richard Peiser and Leland Wooten argue that family-operated firms are more often than not complicated by family interrelationships. They contend that businesses go through various lifecycles and so do the families that run them: "It is this overlap of family lifecycles on top of business life cycles that provide a central issue in making a successful transition."<sup>91</sup> This analysis provides necessary perspective on the Preston situation for clearly the life cycle of the family—especially within its fourth generation whose members came of age near the time of the sale—was at direct odds with the needs of the family's business.

Within the lifecycle of virtually any family, there are also disagreements, misunderstandings and even long-standing feuds. Economist Compaigne contends that "family squabbles"<sup>92</sup> are an important factor in the sale of family newspapers. While none of the Preston family members were willing to discuss how family dynamics affected their family business, it became clear through interviews with various family members that there was probably considerable tension within the family, specifically between Jack and Peter Preston. St. Clair Balfour, the Southam president who negotiated with the brothers to buy *The*

---

<sup>90</sup> Author interview, Duncan Preston, Brantford, Ont., April 9, 1996.

<sup>91</sup> R. Peiser and L. Wooten, "Life-cycle Changes in Small Family Businesses" *Business Horizons* (Vol. 26, No. 3, May-June 1983), p. 58.

<sup>92</sup> Compaigne. *Who Owns the Media*. p. 47.



*Expositor* believed that was indeed a factor in their decision to sell. “I don’t think Jack and Peter were particularly compatible,” he said in an interview.<sup>93</sup>

Peter Preston did speak briefly about an early disagreement between the two brothers which involved some question of one of them purchasing their mother’s shares in the company.<sup>94</sup> That never did come about and Preston was firm in maintaining his refusal to discuss the issue for the historical record. He said the matter was resolved and the two were able to work together to run the newspaper. Despite the Preston brothers working relationship, evidence indicates their families were not particularly close. Jack Preston’s daughter Margaret Shorey recalls dining at her Grandmother Preston’s home every other week because “one Sunday she would have the Jack Preston family and the next Sunday the Peter Preston family.”<sup>95</sup>

Clearly, family dynamics and family lifestyle were an important factor in this family’s decision to relinquish its family newspaper business. Still, it is necessary to realize that while the historian relies on hindsight to seek to identify factors that led to specific events at a specific time and thus produce a neat package of explanation, real life lived in real time is always much less definitive. Thus as Peg Preston explained, the sale of *The Expositor* essentially came about with little foresight. “You don’t really plan these things. So often they just happen.

---

<sup>93</sup> Author interview with St. Clair Balfour.

<sup>94</sup>This interview took place in February 1997 at the Brantford nursing home where Preston had been relocated since the author’s initial interview.

<sup>95</sup> Margaret Shorey interview.

I remember my husband saying 'maybe it's time to sell.' He talked to Peter who thought it wasn't a bad idea and then it just got going."<sup>96</sup>

*vi. Economic Factors Leading to Sale.*

While Peter Preston admits his recollections about the sale are now somewhat hazy, he stressed that financial factors were a strong consideration.<sup>97</sup> Simply, the newspaper's revenue was decreasing, at the same time its costs were increasing, which amounted to less profit for Preston and Sons. A dire combination of decreasing revenue and increasing costs cut into the Prestons' profits at the same time the succession and lifecycle issues discussed previously were coming to a head. It is Peter Preston's recollection that those circumstances brought about a situation in which he and his brother Jack somehow decided "it might be a good idea to sell if we got an offer.

The revenue was going down, we were financially sound but the indications were there that it was getting too expensive . . . If we had stayed in we would have probably gone broke.<sup>98</sup>

While Preston could not provide specific details of *The Expositor's* financial situation, data culled from the Davey committee's study of the economics of Canadian newspaper publishing support this anecdotal evidence. The report indicates that newspapers in the 10,000 to 50,000 circulation range—which included *The Expositor*—were the least profitable of daily newspapers. In 1967, those papers reported an after-tax rate of profit on equity of six per cent;

---

<sup>96</sup> Peg Preston interview.

<sup>97</sup> Peter Preston interview.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

less than half of the thirteen per cent profit rate for the overall newspaper industry.<sup>99</sup> The report explained:

The reason for the pressure on profits of newspapers in this size range would appear to be explained by costs having grown more rapidly than revenues. Advertising rates have not increased as rapidly as for papers in other size-groups and costs have generally been growing at a more rapid rate than for other size groups.<sup>100</sup>

During his testimony to the Davey commission, Jack Preston expressed concern about falling national advertising lineage, traditionally a newspaper's most lucrative type of advertising because newspapers charge more for national ads than local ones. National advertising in *The Expositor* dropped from 131,000 inches in 1956 to 79,000 inches by 1968,<sup>101</sup> a decrease characterized by Senator Keith Davey as "rather dramatic."<sup>102</sup> Preston admitted he was concerned about the situation, adding his own research indicated, "We are the only newspaper in an under-50, 000 circulation last year, 1969, that showed a decrease in national advertising."<sup>103</sup>

We are worrying about it. We have men on the road; so to speak, making calls two days a week in Toronto. And twice a year they spend a week in Montreal calling on the agencies and advertisers. We are sending out promotion material at all times.<sup>104</sup>

Preston testified he believed some of those national advertising dollars had been diverted to television and since ten area television stations served the Brantford area, national advertisers may well have decided they didn't need to

---

<sup>99</sup> *Words, Music and Dollars*. p. 234 and 236.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* p. 242.

<sup>101</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Proceedings*. p. 10:41

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10:42.

advertise in the local newspaper. As Preston suggested to Davey, a former advertising executive, “You have been in the advertising business yourself, sir, and you realize people say, ‘Well I can cover Brantford with overflow TV,’ . . . It is very easy for an advertising agency buyer to say, ‘Well, Brantford is covered, fine.’”<sup>105</sup>

There is no question that the emergence of television as a mass medium in the mid-1950s profoundly affected the social role and economic position of Canadian daily newspapers. Although newspaper publishers had worried about competition from radio when it emerged during the Depression years, radio had never really become a serious threat to the local newspaper’s advertising base. Television however, would not be so benign. The period between 1955 and 1965 was one of significant decline in the rate of growth of advertising revenue for daily newspapers,<sup>106</sup> with national advertising most vulnerable to what historian Rutherford has termed the “apparently inexorable march of television.”<sup>107</sup> Rutherford’s argues that advertisers “scrambled to use the airwaves” as sales of television sets took off through the 1950s and television broadcasting became established across Canada through the national CBC network. The Davey report supports that as well, pointing to the fact that, “the strongest competitor cutting into the circulation of dailies during the post-1955 period has no doubt been television.”<sup>108</sup> Television became, in Rutherford’s

---

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10:41.

<sup>106</sup> Rutherford. *The Making of the Canadian News Media.* p. 86.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Words, Music and Dollars.* p. 167.

words an “unbeatable mass medium”<sup>109</sup> and thereafter the daily newspaper was unable to recover its pre-eminence of times past in either advertising or circulation.

Not all competition for advertising dollars came from television. In Brantford, the increasing use of pre-printed advertising “flyers” or “throw-aways” that bypassed the newspaper and were distributed directly to local homes, was another factor that affected the newspaper’s revenues. Peter Preston recalls that the flyers—which advertised both local and national goods and services—were as much of a threat to *The Expositor* as television. His brother Jack’s testimony to the Davey committee indicates that though *The Expositor* held the local newspaper monopoly, its owners did not believe it monopolized local advertising dollars. In his opening statement to the committee, Preston stated:

Even in a one-newspaper city, we face strong competition for the advertising dollar from radio, TV and throw-aways distributed either by the Post Office or distributing agencies. All of these take advertising dollars from us.<sup>110</sup>

A newspaper receives revenue from two sources, advertising and circulation. According to the Davey report, daily newspaper advertising revenue in the period leading up to the Preston’s sale of their newspaper generally accounted for approximately seventy-five per cent of overall revenue, with circulation accounting for just a quarter of the revenue pie.<sup>111</sup> Of course, circulation is proportionately more important to a newspaper than that figure would suggest because circulation figures are tied directly to advertising rates,

---

<sup>109</sup>Rutherford. *The Making of the Canadian News Media*. p.

<sup>110</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Proceedings*. p. 10:36.

with advertisers paying the highest rates to newspapers that reach the most consumers. In 1968, with a circulation of almost 23,000, *The Expositor's* estimated annual gross circulation revenue amounted to \$763,940.<sup>112</sup> In the years from 1957 to 1968, the paper's circulation increased almost twenty-three per cent, with 86.4 per cent of Brantford households receiving the newspaper daily.

The third generation Preston brothers faced lagging revenue at the same time their costs of producing the newspaper were increasing. Most significant, the certification of the American Newspaper Guild (ANG) in *The Expositor's* newsroom and mailing room in 1957 meant that labour costs could not be in their control. While the newspaper's printers had been unionized since T.H. Preston's time, unionization of journalists was a much later development with the first Canadian local of the ANG formed in Toronto in 1937 and the first contract with a Canadian newspaper reached in 1948 at *The Star*. By the end of the 1950s, the Guild had contracts in six Canadian cities—Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Vancouver, Victoria and Brantford, with Brantford being the only small-city newspaper to have a unionized newspaper.

The Brantford workers organized in 1957 and arrived at a contract with Preston and Sons. Ltd. in 1958. That contract was not achieved without conflict however. In the fall of 1958, after negotiating with *The Expositor* for a year, the Guild called a strike at the newspaper. The striking journalists and mailroom

---

<sup>111</sup> *Words, Music and Dollars*. p. 173.

<sup>112</sup> Special Senate Committee: Research Studies. *Canadian Daily Newspapers*. This study collected data from Canadian daily newspapers on circulation, readership, revenue, expenses

workers were supported by printers and compositors who refused to cross the picket line. The strike, which ended three days after it began, provides evidence that this third generation of Preston owners were not so adept at labour relations as T.H. and W.B. Preston.

As well as higher labour costs, the Prestons faced rising costs of production with new computer technology constantly evolving and changing the way the newspaper was physically produced. Just prior to the sale, they had spent more than a million dollars to equip *The Expositor* plant with the up-to-date Goss Headliner printing press that would increase newspaper printing capacity from forty-eight pages to eighty-eight pages, at a speed of 50,000 copies an hour.<sup>113</sup> The new press would also be capable of printing in colour and thus would satisfy advertisers' increasing requests for colour advertising supplements, a move no doubt intended to bolster the newspaper's competitive position vis-a-vis the advertising flyers.

The investment of 1.3 million dollars in new printing technology at a time when revenue was lagging was undoubtedly a significant business risk for the Prestons. While Peter Preston has stressed that the newspaper was still profitable at the time of the sale—albeit less profitable than in previous years—it is probable that the Prestons realized the heavy debt of the presses would cut even further into their profit. It is probably not coincidental that they chose to sell the newspaper at the very time the new presses were being installed. To repeat

---

and various other measurable factors. It provides a means of comparison of newspapers in similar sized markets.

<sup>113</sup> "Press Expansion Cost \$1,300,000", *The Expositor*, July 25, 1970.

the words of Peter Preston stated earlier in this section, “if we’d have stayed in, we’d have probably gone broke.”<sup>114</sup>

*vii. The Sale*

At some point in the late summer of 1971, the Prestons decided to sell their newspaper. According to Peter Preston, he and his brother then approached Southam Newspapers through some “good friends” at *The Spectator* in Hamilton, Ontario and a meeting was arranged in Toronto. The two Preston brothers, as well as their chief financial officer Fred Pollard, attended the meeting with Southam. According to Preston, negotiations were relatively simple. “We set the price and they didn’t argue about it very much,” he recalled.<sup>115</sup>

In an interview for this work, St. Clair Balfour, the then Southam president who negotiated with the Prestons for their newspaper, concurred that the transaction was a relatively amiable one. He recalls travelling to Brantford on two occasions, once to discuss the sale and a second time to sign the documents finalizing the sale. That transaction occurred in publisher Jack Preston's *Expositor* office, the same office where his grandfather T.H. Preston had written his crusading editorials three-quarters of a century earlier. Balfour also concurred that the newspaper was profitable when Southam purchased it, but could not recall the extent of its profitability. He said the \$2.65 million Southam paid for the Brantford newspaper was based on its circulation and a multiple of its earnings, a formula regularly used by Southam to value possible new acquisitions. Balfour

---

<sup>114</sup> Peter Preston interview.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*



was unable to recall whether Southam had assumed the debt the Prestons had incurred for their new presses. Balfour also said he believed Roy Thomson, by then Lord Thomson of Fleet, was prepared to pay more for *The Expositor* than Southam had.<sup>116</sup>

The Prestons knew Thomson was strongly interested in their newspaper. However, Southam was always its first choice of a buyer, Peter Preston recalled:

We didn't want to sell to Thomson because we thought if we told our staff that they would kill us because they had a lousy reputation. Southam had a good reputation. We thought the paper would be getting into good hands with Southam.<sup>117</sup>

Of course in 1971, when the Prestons were considering selling *The Expositor*, the journalistic reputation of the Thomson chain was at its lowest point in its nearly forty-year history. The Thomson chain had never built a reputation for quality journalism, due largely to Roy Thomson's reputation for putting large profits before all else and his penchant for telling anyone who would listen that his small-town newspapers were "cash boxes". Davey's final report released early in 1971, soundly criticized the Thomson newspapers for their "numbing journalistic conformity", stating, "We believe the evidence is overwhelming that the Thomson chain is doing an inadequate job for its readers in terms of the profits it earns."<sup>118</sup> As well, the report stated that, "the dailies published in Canada by the Thomson chain are almost uniformly disappointing."<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>116</sup> St. Clair Balfour interview. This was echoed by Jack Preston's son John. While he could not provide specific details, Preston believed the family had turned down a higher offer from Thomson.

<sup>117</sup> Peter Preston interview.

<sup>118</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Report*. p. 68.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* p. 89.

In comparison to Thomson, Southam Press Limited, Canada's oldest and most diverse newspaper group, was generally regarded within the Canadian newspaper industry as the "good chain".<sup>120</sup> Long considered the most benign of the three major newspaper chains, Southam had achieved a reputation for striking a balance between business and community service and for allowing editorial freedom amongst its individual newspaper holdings. While expansion through acquisition had made Southam Canada's second largest newspaper chain by 1970,<sup>121</sup> the company's philosophy had seemingly long encompassed more than the bottom line. As a Southam editor stated in 1937, "The newspaper is a business true enough—but this is the strange thing about it: the newspaper that is operated strictly as a business becomes in a few years, a business that isn't worth owning."<sup>122</sup>

That strength of the Southam name was obviously highly-valued by the Prestons when they decided to sell *The Expositor*, given that the Thomson chain apparently would have paid more for the newspaper. But, the Prestons valued Southam's reputation as a family firm and thus believed it would be the best

---

<sup>120</sup> While newspaper groups such as Southam were commonly referred to as newspaper chains, Southam apparently disliked that label. In testimony to the Davey committee, Southam vice-president and managing director Gordon Fisher expressed the "dislike we feel at being called a chain... I suppose the reason is that we are conscious that chains are used for many things and the common characteristic of the application is that when you pull one end of the chain all the little links in between and indeed the end follow along in a very predictable way. I think you will find when you are through with us today if you pull one end of the Southam Press Ltd. all the other ends will react differently." See Special Senate Committee, *Proceedings*. p. 13.11.

<sup>121</sup> In 1970, Southam controlled 11 daily newspapers in Canada with a total circulation of 949,364 and held substantial minority interest in three other dailies. It also owned 50 per cent of Pacific Press Ltd., publisher of both the Vancouver *Sun* and *Province*. The group also owned half of Southstar Publishers Ltd., publisher of *Canadian* magazine, *Canadian Homes* and *Canadian/Star Weekly*. It also published the *Financial Times of Canada* and more than 40 trade magazines. See Special Senate Committee, *Report*. p. 33-34.

<sup>122</sup> C. Bruce. *News and the Southams* (Toronto:Macmillan of Canada, 1968), p. 372.

owner for *The Expositor*.<sup>123</sup> It is interesting to note that in their final months of ownership, when faced with a choice between a buyer with a reputation for public responsibility and an opportunity for higher profit from a less reputable newspaper company, the third generation Prestons opted for responsibility over profit. Undoubtedly their idealistic, crusading grandfather T.H. would have concurred.

Of course for these two lifetime Brantford newspaper owners, the more than two million dollars Southam was offering was a sizable sum; it was certainly more cash than they had ever envisioned making in their lifetimes. For Peter Preston, the idea of liquidating the family's capital was a compelling one. "All of a sudden I'd be a rich man," he said.

There really was no money before then. I had always had a salary and while it was a good one, I didn't really have anything put aside. Of course, in a sense we had never really put anything into it. The original money came from my grandfather T.H., and he passed it on through my father.<sup>124</sup>

As the Davey report stated, newspaper chains were pleased to do business with "family-owned newspapers with aging proprietors."<sup>125</sup> The situation the report uses to describe this reads like a prophecy of the sale of *The Expositor* as it transpired just over a year after the Senate Committee's report.

---

<sup>123</sup> While Southam Press Limited was a public company with shares listed on the Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver stock exchanges and held by some 2,500 individuals, control over the company remained in the hands of a large number of Southam family members or persons related to the Southams through birth or marriage. See *Words, Music and Dollars*, p. 101.

<sup>124</sup> Peter Preston interview.

<sup>125</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Report*. p. 46.

These men as they approach the Golden years are sometimes unable or unwilling to bequeath their property to their heirs. Selling out to a group begins to look attractive—especially if the proprietor is interested in the continuance of his newspaper. A group can afford to pay a good price.<sup>126</sup>

It must be pointed out that Jack and Peter Preston were far from their golden years when they decided to sell their newspaper. Born in 1913, Jack Preston was fifty-eight years old when he sold the family firm. His brother Peter was three years younger. But, what may well have made the sale of their newspaper even more attractive at that particular point in their lives was the looming prospect of federal legislation to halt the sale of independent newspapers to chains. Southam's St. Clair Balfour believes that was indeed probably a factor for the Prestons at that time. Other independent newspapers had also approached Southam around that same time and the chain ended up buying the *Windsor Star* shortly after it purchased *The Expositor*.

Indeed, the Davey committee hearings in 1970 and the subsequent release of its report in early 1971 had signaled the start of what journalists labeled "A Great Communications Think-in",<sup>127</sup> with newspaper owners and the journalists who worked for them avidly discussing the Davey report and its recommendations. The most controversial of Davey's recommendations was the very first one in its report—that the federal government establish a Press Ownership Review Board to "represent the public interest"<sup>128</sup> in future mergers or takeovers of Canadian publications. It suggested that any further mergers that

---

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Dick Macdonald. "What Good Will it Do?" *Content*. January 1971.

<sup>128</sup> Special Senate Committee. *Report*. p. 255.

increased concentration of ownership by the three newspaper chains, Thomson, Southam and F.P. Publications should be prevented.

Canadian newspaper owners were, not surprisingly, solidly opposed to this recommendation: the chains because it would halt their growth by acquisition and the independents because it would end their marketability. The newspaper chains led the chorus of opposition, predictably arguing that such a board would curtail their business freedom and freedom of speech in Canada. In May 1971, both Davey and Balfour were keynote speakers at a conference in Ottawa called Media '71. In a paper called "Power and Ownership: Are Review Boards the Right Response", Balfour argued against such unilateral government intervention in the newspaper industry:

If some government authority has power to approve or disprove any sale or acquisition of a newspaper by subjective standards, its power over publishers will be very great. It seems to me that interests of freedom of the press make it essential that any legislation as to takeovers apply only to cases where the takeover is likely to represent a reduction in competition and where there is a shortage of other competitive voices which would secure the public interest. If dynamic changes occur in the nature of communications, the power to prevent any newspaper from making any acquisitions or entering into joint ventures to meet such changes will give the holder of that power tremendous power over the future of newspapers.<sup>129</sup>

Most important of all, argued Balfour, "It should be recognized that the merger of a failing newspaper is preferable to its death."<sup>130</sup>

The recommendations of Davey's Special Senate Committee were virtually ignored by Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government. In a 1976 retrospect on

---

<sup>129</sup> St. Clair Balfour. Reprinted in *Content*. April, 1971.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

his report, Davey suggested the government failed to act because of a general belief—and one fostered by both chain and independent newspaper owners—that the existing Combines Investigation Act could sufficiently control concentration within the Canadian newspaper industry. That act, introduced by the then Labour Minister Mackenzie King in 1910, to police the increasing corporate combinations emerging within the then-booming Canadian economy, represented the federal government's main thrust towards intervention in Canadian mergers, trusts and monopolies within the overall economy. However, as the Davey report concluded, "this statute has played no role in stemming the tide" of newspaper mergers.<sup>131</sup> It pointed out the fact that combines legislation had never prevented a newspaper sale, consolidation or merger, and further concluded, "As a result it is often said that anti-combines legislation in this country has no bearing whatsoever on concentration of newspaper ownership."<sup>132</sup>

The report indicated that proposed changes to the legislation suggested by the Economic Council of Canada's 1969 Interim Report on Competition Policy might possibly strengthen the power of the Combines Act to intervene in newspaper mergers. Yet, "much can happen between the publication of an interim report and its eventual translation into legislation,"<sup>133</sup> the report somewhat pessimistically suggested. As the next chapter will show, Canadian combines legislation failed to prevent even greater degrees of concentration within the Canadian newspaper industry in the decade immediately following the Davey

---

<sup>131</sup> *Words, Music and Dollars*. p. 23

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.* p 422.

report as well as in the years thereafter. For all practical purposes, Davey's recommendations to halt newspaper concentration were for naught.

In Brantford, that meant there were no barriers to Southam's acquisition of the newspaper business owned by the Preston family since 1890. Thus, the Preston ownership of *The Expositor* came to its official end on November 1, 1971. By the end of that year both Jack and Peter quit the newspaper leaving it in the hands of its new corporate owners who would never exhibit the same commitment to the community of Brantford as had the Prestons through their three generations of public service. The corporate press had arrived in Brantford and from thereon in the fate of *The Expositor* would be determined by the business cycles and bottom line of what would become Canada's largest newspaper chain. And, as the next chapter will show, that chain would itself be buffeted by economic and social trends that have had a profound effect on the Canadian newspaper industry at the close of the twentieth century.

While the Preston family had maintained its independent newspaper ownership considerably longer than many Canadian daily newspapers in the twentieth century, the pressures of maintaining a family business ultimately caused this family to relinquish its ownership and voice in both its community and in the Canadian newspaper business. The same forces that led to the sale of *The Expositor*, particularly problems of succession and financial pressures caused by increased advertising competition, ultimately contributed to corporate concentration within the entire Canadian newspaper industry. The interrelationship of family and economic pressures meant Canada's newspaper-

---

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

owning families essentially could not expect the same profits as they had traditionally enjoyed in their local monopoly positions. Thus, they came to believe they could not afford to own their newspapers anymore -- especially not when the nation's wealthy and acquisitive newspaper chains were waiting in the wings with vast pools of ready cash.

\*\*\*\*\*



## CHAPTER FOUR

### *i. Black in Brantford*

On November 9, 1992, exactly sixty-seven years from the day T.H. Preston was buried in Brantford's Farrington Cemetery, the newspaper he built in the early years of the twentieth century entered a new era in its ownership history. On that day, *The Expositor* reported that Canadian "media mogul" Conrad Black, who owned more than 200 newspapers on four continents, had become the single biggest shareholder of Southam Inc., Canada's largest newspaper chain and owner of *The Expositor* since 1971. A story in the Brantford paper told readers that "in a lightning-quick maneuver that caught nearly all involved by surprise", Black's international holding company, Hollinger Inc. had paid \$259 million for a twenty-three per cent stake of Southam previously held by TorStar Corp., the corporate owner of the newspaper built by Preston confrere Joseph E. Atkinson.<sup>1</sup>

*The Expositor's* coverage of Black's acquisition of Southam's largest block of stock continued the next day with a story speculating on whether Black planned a takeover bid of Southam. Hollinger vice-president of finance, Jack Boulton, said that possibility was "absolutely unknown". What was known though, was that Hollinger expected higher profitability from Southam: "We want the share prices to rise astronomically," Boulton said.<sup>2</sup> Black, reached in Israel at his *Jerusalem Post*, sought to assure Southam employees that they had no

---

<sup>1</sup> "Black buys Southam stake", *The Expositor*. Nov. 9, 1992.

<sup>2</sup> "Will he or won't he: Conrad Black isn't saying if he plans to takeover Southam", *The Expositor*. Nov. 10, 1992.

cause for concern about Hollinger—an international newspaper company known for its extreme cost-cutting. “Not to be precious about it, but I can’t imagine what would be invoked to justify such mortal terror,” Black told the *Globe and Mail*. “If I were them, I would sleep soundly and not feel I needed either defibrillation or anti-perspirant.”<sup>3</sup>

Less than four years later, on May 24, 1996, Hollinger Inc. nearly doubled its investment in Southam Inc., in a \$294 million deal that gave Black control of forty-one per cent of the newspaper chain. Black, chairman and chief executive officer of Hollinger, took over the same jobs at Southam, vowing to pursue majority ownership of the company and increase its profitability. True to his word, Black purchased seven million more Southam shares in the fall of 1996, giving him 50.1 per cent ownership of Southam and control of sixty of Canada’s 104 daily newspapers. In May 1997, Hollinger Inc. offered \$922.7 million to purchase all remaining Southam common shares, but shareholders rejected that offer.<sup>4</sup>

Black’s game of newspaper Monopoly resulted in his ownership of Brantford’s *Expositor*. And while the Brantford newspaper, part of Southam’s “City and Community Newspaper Group”, was a relatively small piece of Black’s Southam acquisition, it would not escape the management measures intended to drive up Southam’s share value. In 1993, as part of its across-the-chain, cost-cutting campaign, Southam shut down *The Expositor’s* presses—long a source of pride to the Preston family—in order to rationalize resources by having the newspaper printed at Southam’s *Spectator* plant in Hamilton, Ont. A number of

---

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

longtime *Expositor* printers lost their jobs at that time. Over the next three years, the newspaper's expenditures were slashed to 1989 levels.

This last chapter in the trail of ownership of *The Expositor* from the reform-minded, paternalistic proprietor T.H. Preston to right-wing media mogul Conrad Black, focuses on the Canadian newspaper industry in the final years of the twentieth century. In that recent period, increasing corporatization driven by public share ownership of newspaper companies created nearly complete concentration of the industry, with chain ownership coming to account for more than ninety per cent of Canadian newspaper ownership. The Davey report's 1971 "hypothetical extreme" that if newspaper concentration in Canada continued unabated, "one man or one corporation could own every media outlet in the country" had nearly come to exist by the end of the 1990s with Conrad Black controlling almost half the daily newspaper circulation in Canada. Indeed, Davey had unwittingly aided the rise of Black's empire. When Black was searching for possible newspaper acquisitions, he referred to an appendix in Davey's report that listed Canada's remaining independent newspapers.<sup>5</sup>

The years since the Preston family sold their newspaper to Southam, brought the nearly-complete demise of family ownership of Canadian newspapers with just eleven of the country's dailies remaining in the hands of independent owners in 1997. In the 1990s alone, three longheld family newspapers, the *Kingston Whig-Standard*, the *St. Catharine's Standard* and the *London Free Press* passed out of the hands of families and into the grasp of

---

<sup>4</sup> According to stock analysts, the bid was rejected by Southam shareholders because they expected their stock to rise higher than Black's offer. See *Toronto Star* (June 24, 1997), p. D3.

corporate chains. The central irony of this period to be explored in this chapter is the fact that Southam, the family-owned chain that acquired *The Expositor* and so many other independent, Canadian newspapers in the post - World War Two era, was itself ultimately taken over by an even more acquisitive, market-driven conglomerate with international newspaper holdings. Further, as this section of this thesis will show, the interplay of economic and family factors that had led to the end of independent family ownership of Canadian newspapers led also to Southam's demise.

*ii. From Davey to Kent*

While this thesis is primarily an ownership study of *The Expositor*, this chapter necessarily documents the late twentieth-century history of Southam Inc., for when the independent *Expositor* became part of the Southam chain, its future became inextricably enmeshed with that of the country's largest newspaper chain. Following the November 1971 sale, the Preston name disappeared entirely from the company's board of directors as well as the newspaper's masthead. On November 15, Southam appointed seven of its top executives as directors of Preston and Sons Ltd., replacing both Jack and Peter Preston and five other Brantford men who had long served the Preston family.<sup>6</sup> One of the board appointees, E.H. Wheatley, a Calgary native who had most recently served as marketing director for the Edmonton *Journal* was named publisher of *The Expositor*, replacing Jack Preston who had held the job since his

---

<sup>5</sup> P. Newman. *The Establishment Man* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix J.

father's death in 1946. Later that month, Kenneth J. Strachan, a Montreal native and editor of the *Financial Times*, replaced Peter Preston as the newspaper's managing editor.

By all accounts, Southam was financially successful in the years immediately following the *Expositor* purchase. The company's 1973 annual report cited record levels of revenue and profit throughout the chain due to a strong demand for the daily newspaper and its advertising. "The year's results exceeded our most optimistic expectations," the report said. From 1973 to 1980, Southam achieved a compound annual growth rate of consolidated gross revenues of 7.4 per cent. In those same years, it consistently reported increased profits and earnings-per-share and hikes in shareholder dividends. Those years also brought significant gains in circulation of Southam newspapers.<sup>7</sup>

While the Davey report generated much public concern about the effects of chain takeovers of independent newspapers, arguing that the loss of local voices threatens public discourse, it is impossible to ascertain the effect of Southam's purchase of *The Expositor* in this regard. There is little reliable evidence with which to gauge either the quality of the newspaper or its role as Brantford's central provider of public information following the sale to Southam. However, a 1978 study of the *Windsor Star* following its 1971 acquisition by Southam, may be of use here. That study concluded that the change of ownership of the independent *Star* to Southam had had little effect on the

---

<sup>7</sup> Financial data on Southam in this period is cited in the Royal Commission on Newspapers: Report (Kent report). p. 93.

newspaper's content or quality of local coverage. In fact, the study found that the newspaper's Canadian content had risen with the use of Southam news services.

As discussed previously, Southam had long possessed a reputation for striking a balance between the financial and journalistic roles of its newspapers. A 1974 "social audit" of the company conducted for the investment committee of the United Church of Canada, also supports this conclusion. That study, based on interviews with Southam's top executives and employees from four of its major newspapers, sought to verify the assertions of head office management concerning its social responsibility and examine the social attitudes of Southam employees. It concluded that, "while no organization is perfect, Southam Press is operated in a socially responsible manner and its employees have socially responsible attitudes."<sup>8</sup>

Though it was regarded as "the good chain", Southam was undoubtedly a corporation engaged in "an inexorable march to expansion"<sup>9</sup> largely through acquisition of independent newspapers. In the decade following the Davey report, it purchased papers in Brantford, Windsor, Sault Ste. Marie, Owen Sound, Ontario and Prince George, Alberta, bringing its holdings to fourteen Canadian daily newspapers. In the newspaper industry overall, in 1970 to 1980, a "decade of wrenching change"<sup>10</sup> brought increased rationalization, with chain ownership of daily newspapers jumping from fifty-eight to seventy-seven per cent of all papers published, and the number of independent newspapers dropping from forty-five

---

<sup>8</sup> L. J. Brooks. "Attitude Survey Approach to the Social Audit: The Southam Press Experience", *Accounting, Organizations and Society* (Vol. 5, No. 3.), p. 341-355.

<sup>9</sup>Kent report. p 178.

to twenty-nine. Consolidation in that period extended to the chains themselves, with the January 1980 sale of F.P. Publications to Thomson Newspapers, leaving almost sixty per cent of the nation's newspapers in the control of two large corporations, Southam and Thomson.

Newspaper consolidation reached a dramatic climax though on August 27, 1980, when two of Canada's oldest newspapers folded. On that day, Southam closed its 90-year-old Winnipeg *Tribune*, leaving Thomson's Winnipeg *Free Press* with a monopoly in that city. At the same time, Thomson shut down the 95-year-old Ottawa *Journal*, leaving the Southam-owned *Citizen* sole control of that market. Thomson also sold Southam its fifty per cent interest in Pacific Press, the holding company that publishes the Vancouver *Sun* and the Vancouver *Province* and handed over its twenty-five per cent interest in the Montreal *Gazette* to its competitor chain.

The "shock and trauma"<sup>11</sup> of those transactions left more than 700 people without their newspaper jobs and led to the creation six days later of the Royal Commission on Newspapers chaired by Tom Kent, a longtime Liberal and former journalist<sup>12</sup> As well, charges against both Southam and Thomson were laid under Canada's Combines Investigations Act. The Ontario Supreme Court eventually acquitted both companies on all charges.

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Kent, Dean of the Faculty of Administrative Studies at Dalhousie University at the time of his Royal Commission appointment, entered journalism in Britain as an editor-writer for the *Manchester Guardian* and also served as assistant editor of *The Economist*. In Canada, he was editor of the *Winnipeg Free Press* before leaving journalism to pursue a career in business. From 1963 to 1966, he served as policy secretary to Liberal Prime Minister Lester Pearson. Subsequently, he was a deputy minister responsible for organizing two new federal government departments, Manpower and Immigration and Regional Economic Expansion.

Kent's 1981 report found that in the decade since Davey reported, newspaper concentration had intensified, concluding that "concentration engulfs Canadian daily newspaper publishing." The report recommended that Ottawa pass immediate legislation through a Canada Newspaper Act to halt any further concentration of Canadian newspapers. It also made a direct connection between the economic and social roles of the newspaper industry, arguing that the more a newspaper spends on news and editorials, the less money it makes. It slammed the editorial quality of Canadian newspapers and criticized newspaper owners for regarding their newspapers "first and foremost as a business, which "obeys the imperatives of profit and loss." <sup>13</sup> Like the Davey committee a decade before, it sought to define the newspaper industry as a business like no other.

The simple, inescapable fact is that newspapers are *not* like any other business venture. The public's interest in vigorous competition among newspapers is not one that can be quantified in any dollars and cents terms.<sup>14</sup>

The report dismissed claims from the newspaper industry that competition with other media was endangering profits. It indicated that Canadian newspapers then made an average of twenty-five cents return on every dollar invested. That compared to twenty cents for wood products, ten cents for the food industry, seven cents for textile mills and five cents for wholesale trade. "It (the newspaper) can yield a rate of return on capital higher than companies in many industries dare dream about," the report said. <sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 27.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. p. 59.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. 84.



Kent concluded that Canada's two major newspaper chains differed greatly in the quality of their newspapers and their sense of public responsibility. Southam Inc., the chain the Preston family had chosen to sell to despite a higher offer from Thomson, was praised by the royal commission for spending, "out of journalistic conscience, many millions of dollars to produce somewhat better newspapers . . . than would be necessary on a hard-nosed business calculation."<sup>16</sup> The report suggested the fact Southam remained a family company engaged solely in communications, was largely responsible for its attention to editorial quality:

Southam Inc. is the Canadian exemplar of a media conglomerate with interests in communications only. It is not only our view, but the consensus of informed critics that it takes its social responsibility more seriously than the mixed industrial conglomerates, being motivated in part by a family tradition that imparts a sense of something like *noblesse oblige*.<sup>17</sup>

Ironically, the spectre of Southam's eventual takeover was foreshadowed by the commission which predicted Southam's high level of spending on editorial costs made it vulnerable to a takeover by a conglomerate with strictly financial motives. "Clearly it is ripe for takeover by a conglomerate such as Thomson which will pay what the shares would be worth with the unnecessary costs eliminated and the bottom line improved sharply," the report stated. "The newspaper owner who takes his public service objective seriously is at a financial disadvantage."<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Kent report. p. 93.

<sup>17</sup> Kent report. p. 177.

ibid. p. 102.

As events unfolded over the next fifteen years, Kent's report proved prescient in predicting a takeover of Southam. But the takeover "villain" would not be Thomson, but Hollinger Inc, an international newspaper conglomerate built by financier Conrad Black in the years following the Kent commission.

*iii. Epilogue: Southam to Black*

While the 1990s takeover of Southam Inc. exists in the realm of recent business history, and thus, merits more thorough future study, it is necessary here to both document and attempt to interpret the events that led to the takeover. In the chain of ownership that links T.H. Preston to Conrad Black, understanding the takeover of Southam is key because of the irony that Southam was swallowed by Hollinger for much the same reason that the Prestons' *Expositor* was lost to Southam; namely that the lifecycle of the family and needs of the company conflicted while outside economic pressures created by increasing corporatization of the newspaper industry intensified.

In the spring of 1985, Gordon Fisher, Southam's president and chief executive officer, and a great-grandson of company founder William Southam, was diagnosed with terminal liver cancer. Though Southam would remain within family control for another decade, Southam insiders regard that tragedy as the beginning of the end of the Southam family newspaper dynasty. According to St. Clair Balfour, whom Fisher had replaced as president in 1975, Fisher's death in August 1985 left the corporation without a clear successor within the Southam

family and rumours of a takeover became rife on the Toronto Stock Exchange.<sup>19</sup> Stock analysts suggested a breakup and sale of Southam's assets would be worth more than the market value of the company at that time. Balfour, then seventy-five, returned to run the company, making great efforts to maintain family control by uniting the large number of Southam descendents who owned company stock.

But as takeover rumours grew louder, the value of Southam stock and stock dividends slid and the fourth and fifth generation of family stockholders—who had for the most part inherited their shares and lacked strong connections to the family business—unloaded their Southam stock on the open market. In late 1985, as the value of the shares continued to drop along with the percentage of shares owned by the Southam family, Balfour struck a deal between Southam and TorStar Corporation to swap shares in each other's companies. TorStar gained a twenty-three per cent interest in Southam, but also agreed not to pursue any further interest in Southam for at least ten years. That deal enabled the Southam family—which now held just twenty-three per cent of Southam shares—to retain control of the company.<sup>20</sup>

In 1986, Southam was restructured with its newspaper holdings consolidated in the Southam Newspaper Group (SNG). Its president, Paddy Sherman, was charged with the task of rationalizing Southam's newspaper

---

<sup>19</sup> Author interview with St. Clair Balfour. Feb. 27, 1997. Toronto, Ont.

<sup>20</sup> Balfour stated in an interview that he fervently believed Southam's deal with TorStar represented the company's best hope of staving off a hostile takeover. Some twelve years after the fact, he expressed deep regret that it eventually led to further problems for Southam.

resources to enhance the company's share value. In a 1989 interview in Southam's in-house publication *The Torch*, he discussed this challenge:

With Gordon Fisher's untimely death . . . the world of Southam irrevocably changed. It had always been taken for granted by analysts and most others that Southam was untouchable in a takeover sense because of family shareholding. When he died, we learned that this was not so . . . It gradually became clear that to remain independent off into the future, Southam had to be seen as a well-run company that made the kind of profits made by other newspaper groups.<sup>21</sup>

Sherman's corporate vision was carried on by his SNG successor Russell Mills. According to Mills, Southam's historic "beloved culture" which had long valued the independence of the newspapers, had become detrimental because it impeded co-operation within the chain."<sup>22</sup> He warned employees:

No one can say where this will all end, but it is clear that the market believes Southam can be run better than it has been in the past. If present management cannot close the value gap between the company's performance and its potential, there will eventually be a new owner who will get a chance to do better. That's what happens to public companies in a free market system.<sup>23</sup>

In December 1990, the Southam Newspaper Group launched a national readership task force to examine how to increase readership of the chain's dailies. An introduction to a draft report of the task force called *Adding Value, Keeping Faith*, made it clear Southam's financial future was at risk:

---

<sup>21</sup> "Sherman heads west -- but not into the sunset." *The Torch* (Fall, 1989), p. 16-17.

<sup>22</sup> "The Southam Story -- Autonomy: A past president's perspective." *Moving Up*. (Jan. 1993), p. 7-8.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

Southam Inc. is under the gun from the financial community: make more money the demand goes or you'll be taken over and run like a soap company. With our high fixed costs and tradition of editorial quality, we're sometimes seen as the Cadillac of newspaper enterprises; our bottom line has been compared unfavourably with those of Thomson.<sup>24</sup>

The task force visited every Southam daily. Its draft report lauded Brantford's *Expositor*, as a "good local paper well connected to its community," stressing what the former Preston family owners had long known—that "in a paper this size, the perception of the paper's community involvement is seen as important."<sup>25</sup> The task force found that Brantford's circulation was relatively flat, but stressed its circulation figures were still "numbers most newspapers would kill for," with seventy-eight per cent of the local population reporting they read the newspaper daily.<sup>26</sup>

Southam's quest for increased profitability was ultimately thwarted by factors extending beyond its corporate culture. In the early 1990s, as a deep recession battered the Canadian economy, the Canadian newspaper industry faced unprecedented difficult economic times and a reckoning of the newspaper's place as a form of mass media. Throughout the nation, ad rates and circulation dropped dramatically, newspaper employees were laid off and newspapers scrambled to salvage falling profits. In 1991, Southam recorded its first operating loss in a century and consequently, Southam shares were so depressed that the company dropped off the Toronto Stock Exchange. By September 1991, the price of Southam shares had declined fifty-three per cent

---

<sup>24</sup> *Adding Value, Keeping Faith: Draft Report of the Southam Readership Task Force.* (Toronto: Southam Newspaper Group, 1992) ,p. 15.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* p. 256.

for the year (compared to a poor twenty-two per cent for the entire printing and publishing category). In 1992, at the company's annual meeting, William Ardell, formerly head of Coles, Southam's chain of bookstores, was elected president and chief operating officer of Southam, the first time in the company's history that it was led by a man outside the family and outside the newspaper stream. Family member David Ker told shareholders the company could no longer be considered a family enterprise. "What William Southam had dreamed of has simply disappeared," he said.<sup>27</sup>

In 1992, TorStar, itself suffering from the industry's economic woes, sold its Southam shares to Conrad Black's Hollinger Inc. for \$259 million. Black immediately vowed to increase profitability of the newspaper chain through deeper cost cutting. In his 1993 autobiography, *A Life in Progress*, Black contended that Southam then employed at least a third more people than necessary and "restoration of profitability required a serious assault on costs above all other things."<sup>28</sup>

In March 1993, a block of Southam shares equal to Black's was purchased by Paul Desmarais, through his Montreal-based conglomerate, Power Corporation of Canada. Black and Desmarais, two of Canada's richest men, became Southam's largest shareholders and agreed to share the chairmanship of the company. The two magnates agreed to give each other first right of refusal on each other's shares should either choose to sell. Both also concurred that

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Patricia Best. "How an Empire was Lost." *Toronto Star* (June 9, 1996), p. D6. A postscript to the article stated that business journalist Best was working on a book about the demise of the Southam family empire to be published by Macfarlane, Walter & Ross.

they expected a stronger return on their investment than Southam had been previously earning. As Black later wrote, "We agreed . . . on a community of objectives, especially profit enhancement."<sup>29</sup>

In the following years, Southam was "restructured" several times with more than 2,000 employees laid off or bought out of their jobs, slashing the number of employees from a high of 12,000 in 1991 to 7,800 in 1996. In January 1996, the company announced it would chop yet another 750 jobs.<sup>30</sup> *The Expositor* suffered its share of cuts with numerous longtime employees originally hired by the Preston family moving on. In 1992, Southam decided to shut down the presses installed by the Prestons in 1971 and have the newspaper printed at the plant of *The Spectator*, in Hamilton.

In 1995, Southam losses continued. A sharp drop in advertising that year contributed to a net loss of 53.4 million dollars (seventy cents a share) in 1995 compared with net profit of 44 million dollars in 1994. Hollinger president David Radler, reputed to be Hollinger's toughest cost-cutting executive, told *The Financial Post* that those results were disappointing:

These are some of the finest assets in Canadian newspapers . . . Historically they have been mismanaged . . . The return on capital employed in this company is totally inadequate by any standards. We'd be far better off to invest in bonds than to continue to run newspapers.<sup>31</sup>

By May 1996, Hollinger's patience with Southam management ran out and Black purchased Power Corp's 16.3 million shares of Southam, seizing a forty-

---

<sup>28</sup> Conrad Black. *A Life in Progress* (Toronto: Key-Porter Books, 1993), p. 498.

<sup>29</sup> Black. p. 501.

<sup>30</sup> "Southam to Chop 750 Jobs" *The Toronto Star* (Jan, 17, 1996), p. B7.

<sup>31</sup> "Plummeting Advertising Hurts Southam." *The Financial Post* (Feb. 24, 1996), p. 18.

one per cent stake of the company once controlled by the Southam family. Hollinger also announced plans to increase its Southam holdings to fifty per cent and eventually make an offer to acquire the entire company. In a press release issued immediately after the sale, Hollinger announced it had been “frustrated by the resistance of some Southam Inc. directors to sensible proposals to enhance editorial quality and corporate profitability “ adding he was “confident that further cost-cutting can still occur and that significant enhancements to revenue will be achieved.”<sup>32</sup>

A few days later, on May 29, 1996, at Hollinger Inc.’s annual meeting in Toronto, Black publicly blasted Southam management, charging it had “long accepted inadequate returns for the shareholders, published generally undistinguished products for the readers and received exaggerated laudations from the working press for the resulting lack of financial and editorial rigour.”<sup>33</sup> Further, Black chided Southam for its 1985 move to seek protection from TorStar Corp., noting that TorStar had eventually sold its Southam shares to Hollinger. “If Southam’s management had been a little more courageous, it might still be a family-owned company.” Black said.<sup>34</sup>

While Black had indeed been involved in newspapers for some thirty years, he was a relative newcomer to the large-scale Canadian chain ownership that had secured the Thomson and Southam family fortunes in earlier years. In the 1960s, while studying at Montreal’s McGill University, this second son of wealthy financier George Black started an ad-sheet called the *Eastern Township*

---

<sup>32</sup> *Globe and Mail*.

<sup>33</sup> *Toronto Star*.



*Advertiser*, for which he both sold advertising and wrote copy. He sold that publication a few years later and used his profits to buy the Sherbrooke *Record* with his friends David Radler, now Hollinger Inc.'s president, and Peter White, who went on to become an advisor to Conservative Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. The three, who were known to run a frugal operation,<sup>35</sup> realized there were strong profits to be made in newspapers. Black, White and Radler then formed Sterling Newspapers and began aggressively searching for papers to acquire.<sup>36</sup> At the time of the 1980 Kent investigation, Sterling was Canada's third largest newspaper chain in terms of numbers of newspapers, but relatively small in circulation terms; owning small dailies and weeklies in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island.<sup>37</sup>

By then Black had inherited several million dollars and parlayed that fortune into ownership (with his brother Montegu) of Argus Corporation of Canada, once Canada's wealthiest conglomerate. The Black brothers dismantled much of Argus piece by piece, turning it into Hollinger Inc., which eventually purchased Sterling Newspapers. In the mid-1980s, Black focussed his company on the publishing industry, buying more small newspapers as they became available through Canada and the U.S. In 1986, Hollinger scored a major coup in

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Much of Black's reputation as a cost-cutting newspaper proprietor can be attributed to P. Newman's 1982 unauthorized biography *The Establishment Man*. Newman's quote from a Sherbrooke lawyer has been oft-repeated in the days since Black began aggressively acquiring Canadian newspapers. "Conrad could have given a few lessons to Lord Thomson, right down to counting rolls of toilet paper and the number of pencils used by reporters," said lawyer George MacLaren. p. 51.

<sup>36</sup> According to David Radler, the three once went through a Canadian media directory and telephoned "dozens of proprietors . . . and asked if they were interested in selling." See Newman p. 52.

<sup>37</sup> See Kent report. p. 94 for a fuller report of Sterling Newspapers.

moving it into big-league newspaper circles when it purchased London's *Daily Telegraph*, Britain's largest-circulation quality daily. That was followed by the purchase of the Jerusalem *Post* and an interest in Australia's second largest newspaper chain, Fairfax Newspapers.

With its worldwide presence firmly established, the company began a Canadian buying spree in 1993 with its first Southam stock. In the summer of 1995, when Thomson Newspapers decided to sell some of its small dailies and concentrate its business in computer information technologies, Black acquired nineteen Canadian newspapers. In December 1995, Hollinger purchased Saskatchewan-based Armadale Co. Ltd., and its flagship newspapers, Saskatoon's *Star-Phoenix* and the Regina *Leader-Post* from its longtime family owners, the Siftons. In early 1996, a month before increasing its share in Southam, Hollinger purchased another thirteen Canadian dailies from Thomson Corp. Those transactions, which all occurred after the two exhaustive Canadian public hearings on newspaper concentration, gave Black control of sixty of Canada's 104 daily newspapers. This was forty-two per cent of newspapers published daily in Canada, making Black, in the words of University of Windsor communications professor James Winter, "Canada's premier newspaper baron."<sup>38</sup>

Hollinger's Southam purchase was approved in advance by Canada's federal Competition Bureau, which ruled there were no detrimental economic

---

<sup>38</sup> J. Winter. *Democracy's Oxygen: How Corporations Control the News*. (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1997), p. 24. Winter devotes an entire chapter to Black's Canadian press ownership. The chapter is a left wing analysis of Black's newspaper investments that reads like a diatribe against him.

consequences because the deal would not lessen competition in local advertising markets.<sup>39</sup> Still, members of the federal New Democratic Party called on the Liberal government to quash the Southam deal and establish a press ownership review board to reject mergers that increased concentration in the newspaper industry—a proposal initially made twenty-six years before by both the 1970 Davey committee and the 1980 Kent commission, but disregarded by Canadian governments with little public dissent.

Throughout the late 1990s, the Canadian news media spent much ink and airtime discussing Conrad Black's global newspaper empire. Many argued Black would bleed the Southam papers dry to hike Hollinger's profitability. Some contended that Black actually cared deeply about newspapers as more than profit-centers and would not compromise their editorial responsibility. All agreed on one point—the newspaper industry and its Canadian readers would have to just wait and watch.

For his part, Black maintained while he expected large profits, the newspapers would maintain their public responsibility. But, he expected those newspapers to change. "We're going to try and recruit the very best people we can and produce the best newspapers we can, and publish them to the highest standards we can," he said in October 1992. "That means separating news from comment, assuring a reasonable variety of comment and not just the

---

<sup>39</sup> In September 1996 the Council of Canadians asked the Federal Court of Canada to order a judicial review of the Competition Bureau's approval of Black's takeover of Southam. The council, a non-profit, left-wing organization, argued that the bureau should have considered limitations to editorial diversity in assessing the deal. "Newspapers are not like widgets and cannot be assessed from a purely economic or advertising perspective," Toronto lawyer Clayton Ruby, said in an affidavit filed with the court. See *Globe and Mail*. July 26, 1996. P. B4.

overwhelming avalanche of soft, left, bland, envious pap which has poured like sludge through the centre pages of most of the Southam papers for some time."<sup>40</sup>

At Southam's 1997 annual meeting, in response to union allegations that diversity of opinion in his newspapers was declining, Black defended his investment in the Canadian newspaper industry:

Our associates and I have put an awful lot of money—a lot of it our own money—into this business because we believe in the whole project of trying to inform the country, entertain it in a responsible way, enlighten it, promote diversity of views and resist precisely the kind of conformity we feel was the bane of the newspaper industry in the past in this country.<sup>41</sup>

Throughout Black's first year of ownership, Southam did indeed undergo change in both its editorial and business operations. Hollinger fired editors and publishers throughout the chain, replacing them with journalists and businessmen approved by Black. Business-wise, the new owners dismantled Southam's national advertising sales force, eliminated its new media unit and fired numerous head office executives deemed to be superfluous to operations. Consequently, Hollinger profits jumped fivefold during the company's first year of owning Southam.<sup>42</sup> According to Hollinger's chief financial officer Jack Boutbee, Hollinger found more ways to cut costs at Southam than it had even expected. Further, he expected Southam's daily newspapers could produce operating profits of thirty-five per cent of revenue --

---

<sup>40</sup> "Turning the Page at Southam Inc." *Globe and Mail* (Oct. 2, 1996), p. C1.

<sup>41</sup> "Black rejects assertion that unions leaning to right." *The Globe and Mail*. May 6, 1997. p. B3.

<sup>42</sup> Hollinger's annual report for 1996 showed a profit of \$31.7 million (US) or thirty-seven cents a share, compared to \$6.2 million or eleven cents in 1995. In that period, revenue almost doubled to \$1.9 billion from \$964.3 million. See "Hollinger unit's profit soars." *The Globe and Mail*. Feb. 27, 1997. p. B1.

In Southam, . . . we've been discovering opportunities to improve business, cut costs and increase revenue at an ever-increasing rate. It's way beyond what we imagined. These are papers that can get thirty-five per cent and even more.<sup>43</sup>

Editorially, there is little evidence at present to support concerns that Black's highly-concentrated ownership will somehow destroy editorial diversity in and the quality of journalism in Canada. He has appointed new editors with strong journalistic reputations and actually increased editorial budgets at several newspapers including Ottawa's *Citizen* which he envisions becoming a much more influential newspaper.<sup>44</sup> In June 1997, Hollinger announced that it was exploring the possibility of starting a new national newspaper, a tremendously expensive proposition.

In Brantford, Black's ownership of *The Expositor* has created much trepidation amongst the newspaper's employees. While many initially believed the Brantford property—one of the smaller newspapers in the Southam stable Black acquired—would be too insignificant to merit Black's attention, the management of Hollinger Inc. is known for its fastidious attention to the individual balance sheets of each and every property it owns. In January 1997, Hollinger made its first overt move in Brantford; firing publisher William Findlay, a thirty-year Southam employee lauded by the managing editor who worked for him for "remaining true to *The Expositor's* tradition and responsibility as a community leader."<sup>45</sup> Michael Pearce, vice-president of Hollinger's Vancouver-based,

---

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> See "Winds of Change: Black orders a shakeup at The Ottawa Citizen." *Macleans*. Nov. 11, 1996. p. 62.

<sup>45</sup> See Appendix K. "Expositor Publisher Fired." *The Expositor* (Jan, 9, 1997) p. 1. The comments were made by *Expositor* managing editor David Schultz, who added, "Under Findlay, *The Expositor* has been a newspaper that has pushed causes, expressed opinions and committed to

Sterling Newspaper Group, replaced Findlay. A story in *The Expositor* informing Brantford readers of Findlay's firing, provided his explanation that, "The newspaper's bottom line has not been as good as they would like it to be. They are looking for a person who will make the bottom line more acceptable to the new regime."

*iv. Conclusions: Family Ties and Chains of Ownership—T.H. Preston to Conrad Black.*

This thesis is primarily a business history of Brantford's *Expositor* examining the chain of ownership that links T.H. Preston to Conrad Black through a dynamic century of the Canadian newspaper industry in which the forces of consolidation steadily intensified and independent family ownership of newspapers virtually ended. The connection between highly-concentrated chain ownership of newspapers and the near-total demise of autonomous family ownership is a critical one. Indeed newspaper concentration in the twentieth century came about newspaper by newspaper, family by family, as newspaper owners -- buffeted by the increasingly challenging economics of newspaper publishing -- sold their businesses to affluent, acquisitive chains.

Family ownership of Canadian newspapers was a significant phase in the twentieth century evolution of newspaper ownership from its roots of sole proprietorship to its present-day state of near-total consolidation. The tradition of what came to be known as family journalism was well-established by mid-century

---

special projects. <sup>9</sup> Findlay was appointed publisher of the paper in 1989 after serving in various capacities with Southam. While Findlay served as Brantford's publisher for eight years, he never lived in the city but commuted to Brantford from Burlington, Ont.

as the newspapers started in earlier years by entrepreneurial editors were passed down to second and third generations who proudly continued their family newspaper businesses. Family owners such as the Prestons valued their newspapers not only as businesses that provided a solid income, but also as important vehicles for attaining power and trust in their communities. As prominent members of the local establishment class, they participated in the development of their communities and were regarded as civic leaders. They had strong vested interests in the communities they published their newspapers and raised their families in and regarded community service as part of the mandate of a local newspaper publisher.

In the years following the Second World War, pride in family newspaper ownership was severely tested as the processes of consolidation that had begun earlier in the century intensified. In Brantford, the third generation Preston brothers staunchly affirmed their intention to continue their family's ownership of *The Expositor*, despite having already received at least one unsolicited offer to sell to a newspaper chain. For twenty-five years, the duo maintained their commitment to their newspaper and their community despite repeated overtures from newspaper groups. In 1971 though, they sold the daily to Southam Press, Canada's largest newspaper chain. Twenty years later, Southam was taken over by Conrad Black's Hollinger Inc., giving ownership of *The Expositor* to a global newspaper firm that controls sixty Canadian dailies.

The ongoing struggle between family and chain ownership within Canadian newspapers is directly tied to the processes of consolidation that have

shaped the newspaper industry through the twentieth century. Newspaper consolidation began early in the century when the party press of the Victorian era gave way to the mass circulation daily requiring large amounts of capital. As newspapers became increasingly competitive for readers and more importantly, advertisers, capitalization demands increased. This need for larger and larger amounts of capital to cover costs of production resulted in a steady march toward consolidation that would ultimately bring about the end of independent ownership.

When T.H. Preston acquired *The Expositor* in 1890, the concept of the newspaper as a profit-dependent business was just emerging. Preston was at heart a journalist, not a businessman. Of course, his newspaper was his business and he expected to make money. In this regard, Preston is illustrative of entrepreneurs of his era as described by historian Michael Bliss in his 1974 work *A Living Profit*. Bliss contends that while making “a living profit” was important to businessmen in the early twentieth century, they were also motivated by such values as duty, character and commitment to a work ethic. Such men believed profits were rightfully theirs’ as “a byproduct of excellence in business”.<sup>46</sup>

Preston’s excellence as an editor and an entrepreneur became evident as financial imperatives forced newspaper publishers to become more business-like to survive. He controlled both his editorial office and his business office and actively sought success in both venues. By 1918, Preston’s competitors shut

---

<sup>46</sup> M.Bliss. *A Living Profit*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974), p. 136.



down their presses, leaving him triumphant in the capitalist's quest for monopoly and setting the stage for the Preston family newspaper dynasty.

Still, as an idealistic journalist, Preston heartily believed his newspaper was a public trust. To him, the newspaper was something more than a business and he used his newspaper pages to promote his community and his Reformist causes. In this, Preston was guided by a mission statement rather than a profit-statement. Moreover, as the newspaper industry itself became more business-oriented, Preston emerged as standard-bearer within the newspaper industry for the public responsibility of the press. It was Preston who rose to the floor of the 1907 meeting of the Canadian Newspaper Association to remind publishers that there was a moral as well as a commercial basis to the calling of newspaper publishing.

Preston's ideals and his newspaper survived through a second generation through a balance of business acumen and editorial integrity, with his son W. B. maintaining the family business and the family's respected status in its community. The newspaper became increasingly more of a business concern however and most of W.B.'s involvement with national newspaper organizations centered on the financial challenges of newspaper publishing. When W.B. died in 1946, his sons John and Peter inherited *The Expositor* ushering in a third generation of the Preston newspaper dynasty.

The Prestons were proud of their newspaper and the status it conferred upon them within their community. But, even as they celebrated their family ownership, the processes of consolidation within the newspaper industry were

intensifying to erode the tradition of family journalism. By the mid-1950s, three newspaper chains controlled one quarter of daily circulation. Moreover, the chains were becoming increasingly acquisitive and looked to expand by offering relatively high prices for independent, family-held newspapers. At the same time, independent newspaper owners faced increasing business difficulties created by a combination of economic factors that caused newspaper revenues to decrease at the same time production costs increased. Exacerbating this were generational problems common to many family businesses, specifically problems of succession.

This thesis has shown that this interrelationship of economic and family pressures combined with the lure of ready cash, caused family newspaper owners to abandon their newspaper legacies and thus contribute to the ever-increasing fact of newspaper concentration. When the Prestons sold their newspaper to Southam for more than two million dollars cash, a long struggle between their family ties and the chains of ownership ended in Brantford. The corporate press had finally triumphed and *The Expositor* would never again be published by owners with the commitment to the community of Brantford that the Prestons had long and overwhelmingly exhibited. From thereon in, absentee corporate owners, driven more by corporate than local concerns, would determine the direction of Brantford's only daily newspaper.

Shortly after the Prestons sold their newspaper, the Canadian newspaper industry came under intense public scrutiny as Senator Keith Davey's 1970 Senate committee and Tom Kent's 1981 Royal Commission examined the

increasing concentration of Canadian newspapers. Both bodies sought to define the newspaper business as a business like no other and called for government legislation to protect the public's interest and force newspapers to consider public service as much as profits. Both politicians and the public virtually ignored those recommendations and the processes of concentration intensified with mergers and takeovers of the very chains that had once taken over Canada's independent family newspapers.

Through the 1990s, increasing corporatization driven by widespread public share ownership created nearly complete concentration of Canada's newspaper industry, with large newspaper companies coming to control more than ninety per cent of daily newspaper circulation. By 1997, just eleven of 104 Canadian daily newspapers remained in the hands of independent owners. It is important to stress that the issue of concern here is not so much that newspaper ownership is concentrated, but rather that distant corporate owners are inherently more interested in the wealth of the corporation than the welfare of local communities. Of course, the ethos of newspaper publishing has changed greatly since Preston's 1890 purchase of *The Expositor*. In the century-long struggle within the newspaper industry to reconcile the newspaper's demand for profits with its duty to a greater public good, the victor is clear. Profit reigns and the newspaper has proved to be a business just like any other, subject only to the laws of the marketplace.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> It must be pointed out that the Canadian Newspaper Association's Statement of Principles drafted in 1995 defines a balance of responsibilities for newspapers, but gives most weight to its service and responsibility role. "The newspaper has responsibility to its readers, its shareholders, its employees and its advertisers," the statement reads. "But the operation of a newspaper is a public trust and its overriding responsibility is to the society it serves." The CNA

Indeed, since Hollinger Inc.'s acquisition of Southam, and with it *The Expositor*, demands for higher profits have intensified throughout the entire chain. Still, it must be pointed out there is no conclusive evidence that the quality of the chain's newspapers or their editorial integrity has been compromised through those demands.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, despite pages and pages of scholarly and government inquiry, an essential puzzle in the concentration issue is the reality that it is virtually impossible to generalize about the negative or positive impact of group ownership. Some newspapers were at their zenith with independent ownership. Others thrived under the editorial and business acumen of some chain management.

Nor is it possible to ascribe "good" or "bad" labels to owners of large newspaper groups. It is especially impossible to pigeon-hole Conrad Black in this manner. While Black's critics contend he will bleed the Southam papers dry to hike Hollinger's profitability, Black maintains he cares deeply about newspapers as more than profit-centers and will improve their editorial responsibility. Certainly his stated intention to launch a new national newspaper in Canada is not the mark of a media mogul concerned merely with profits.

---

is the industry organization of Canadian daily newspapers, representing 101 Canadian dailies. It was formed in 1996 by the merger of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association (formed in 1919) and the Newspaper Marketing Bureau (formed in 1972). See Appendix L. for entire text of Statement of Principles.

<sup>48</sup> A 1996 study of Black's purchase of the Regina *Leader Post* by University of Regina journalism professor Jim McKenzie found that under Hollinger ownership, the newspaper carried a slightly higher proportion of news copy as opposed to advertising. However, the proportion of locally-written news was lower under Hollinger. The study also concluded that there was no evidence of Black imposing his political views on the newspaper. Overall, the study concluded the newspaper was as mediocre under Hollinger's ownership as it had been under its previous longtime owners, Armadale Communications. See *Globe and Mail*. Dec. 6, 1996. P. C4.

However, that intention may well be the mark of a mogul obsessed with power and influence. Peter Newman, Black's biographer and a longtime Black-watcher believes the enigmatic magnate will use his newspapers to "perpetuate the old-fashioned notion of proprietorship" in much the same way as legendary newspaper proprietors of the past who used their newspapers to further their political and social views. As Newman wrote in a 1996 article in *Maclean's* magazine, "Most of Canada's great publishers – Joe Atkinson, J. W. McConnell, Max Bell, Victor Sifton and John Bassett – regarded their newspapers as extensions of themselves." <sup>49</sup>

Indeed, evidence supports an argument that Black is intent on building a global newspaper empire much as entrepreneurial newspaper proprietors of the early twentieth century were intent on building their local newspapers and family newspaper dynasties. While the chain of ownership that links T.H. Preston to Conrad Black may seem vast, perhaps the two are more similar than it would first appear. Both are ambitious empire builders – but with an entire century separating their reigns of newspaper ownership, the empire Conrad Black can pursue is much more expansive than anything Preston could have ever envisioned. Both are driven by political ideology, with Preston espousing Liberal views and Black believing the Conservative way is the route to a better society. Is the difference between the two newspaper owners just a question of politics then?

---

<sup>49</sup> P. Newman. "Conrad Black's Private Agenda", *Maclean's* (June 17, 1996, Vol. 109, No. 25), p. 34.

Indeed not. While T.H. Preston was a successful journalist who excelled at business, Conrad Black is a successful businessman who has yet to excel in journalism. Moreover, there is an essential difference between the two in their motivation for owning newspapers. One was an idealist, while the other is an ideologue. Black undoubtedly enjoys the power and influence derived from newspaper proprietorship. As he told British author Nicholas Coleridge in a 1993 book called, *Paper Tigers*, "Let us be completely frank, the deferences and preferments that this culture bestows upon the owners of great newspapers are satisfying."<sup>50</sup> That stands in strong contrast to T.H. Preston's high-minded mission statement written a century ago and bequeathed to his heirs – "To endeavor, in fine to interpret in the conduct of my publication, the highest ethics of daily journalism so that when I am called to give account of my stewardship to my Maker, it may be said of me, 'He tried his best to run a decent newspaper.'"

\*\*\*\*\*

---

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

# The Brantford Expositor

Brantford, Ontario, Wednesday, Nov. 1, 1950.



T. H. PRESTON  
*Publisher 1890 to 1925*



W. B. PRESTON  
*Publisher 1925 to 1946*

SIXTIETH  
KERBY HOUSE

60<sup>th</sup>

ANNIVERSARY  
NOVEMBER 1st, 1950



60

SIXTIE  
ANNIVERSARY



JOHN C. PRESTON



PETER M. PRESTON

MRS. W. E. PRESTON



*Menu**Celery**Olives**Pickles*

\*

*Fruit Cup Cocktail*

\*

*Soup*

\*

*Roast Turkey*  
*with Celery Dressing and Cranberry Sauce*

\*

*Potato Puff**Green Peas**Creamed Cauliflower*

\*

*Pumpkin Pie with Whipped Cream*

\*

*Hot Rolls**Cheese and Crackers*

\*

*Coffee**60<sup>th</sup>*

SIXTIETH  
ANNIVERSARY

# TORONTO DAILY STAR

TORONTO, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1926.

## Hundreds Pay Last Tribute to Brantford Editor and Public Spirited Citizen

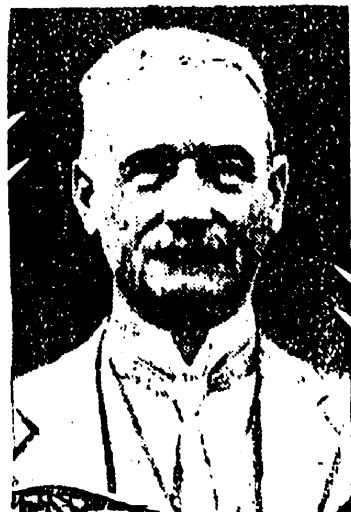


### T. H. PRESTON IS LAID TO REST IN FARRINGTON CEMETERY

Hundreds of Brantfordites and citizens of other sections of Ontario, yesterday followed the body of T. H. Preston, publisher of the Brantford Expositor, and widely known as a legislator and public spirited citizen,

to the grave. Mr. Preston died suddenly on Saturday, after an illness which had not been regarded as dangerous. At the LEFT, above, the body is shown being borne from Brant Avenue United Church, Brant-

ford, which the deceased attended, and where the funeral services were held. At the RIGHT is shown the grave in Farringdon cemetery. Below is a recent photograph of the late Mr. Preston.

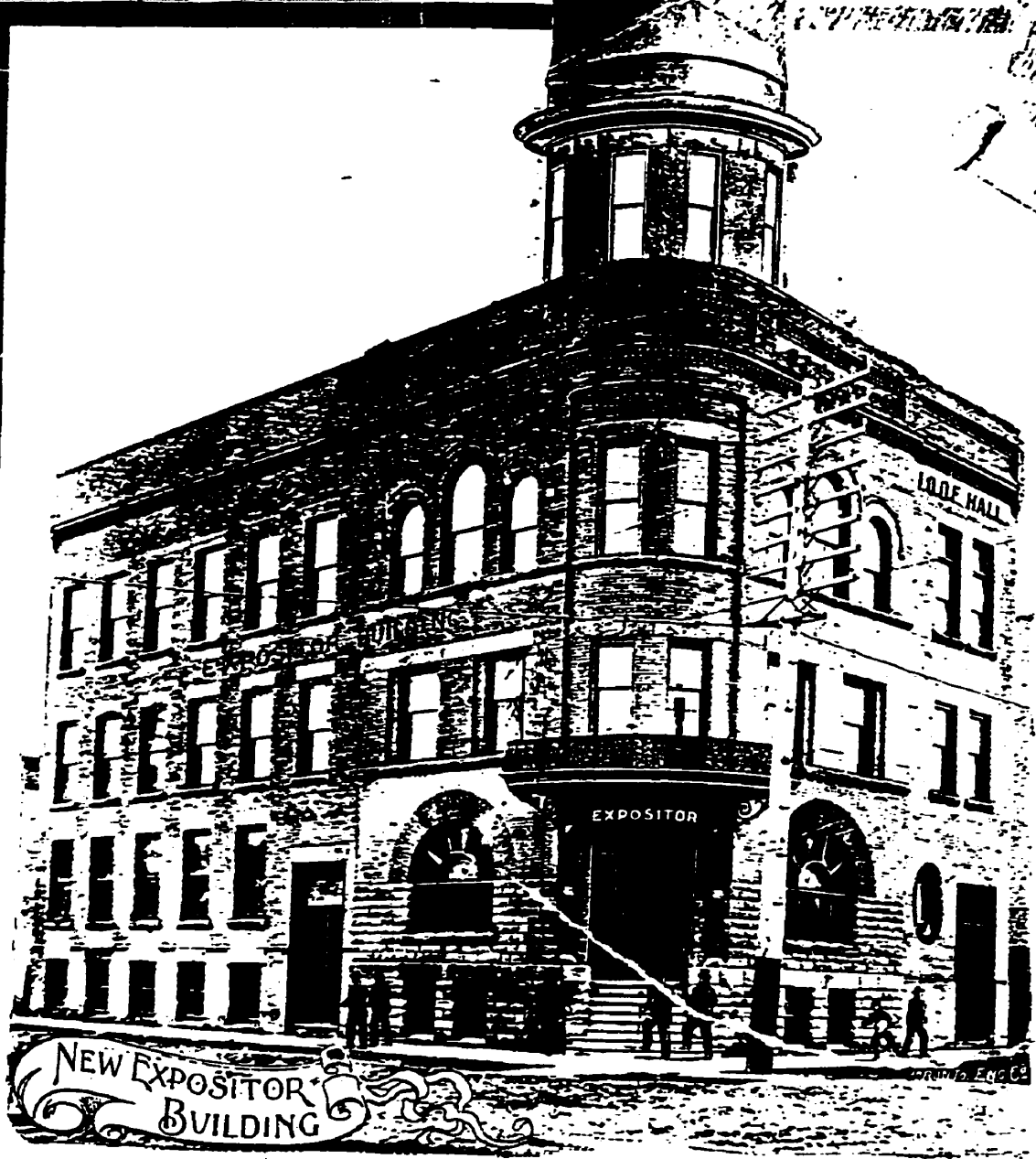


LOAN

ST. CENT.

THE

Coll

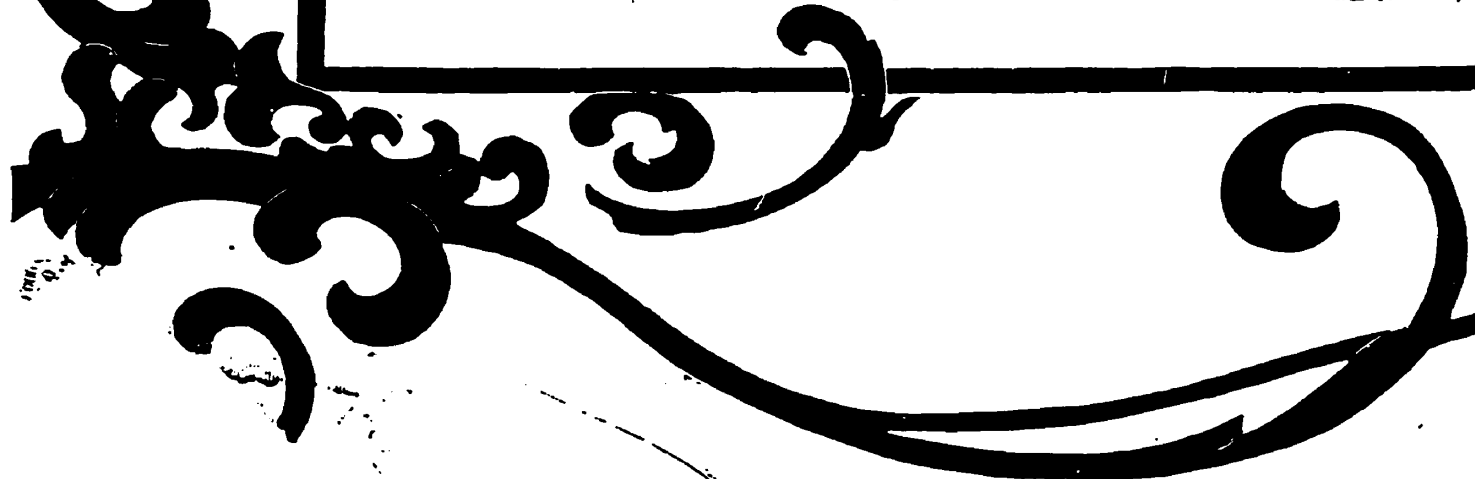


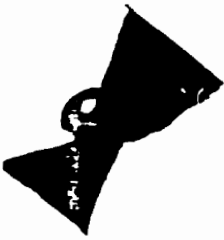
LOAN HALL

EXPOSITOR

NEW EXPOSITOR BUILDING

giv  
yca





*dated* 22nd February 1915.

# Letters Patent

*Under the Ontario Companies Act*

Incorporating

P R E S T O N   A N D   S O N S ,  
L I M I T E D .

(Private Company)

Recorded this 3rd  
day of March 24. 1915  
no. 45  
in file 162

*L. H. Snow*  
*asst*  
Deputy Provincial Registrar.

(To be executed in duplicate; both to be sent to, and one deposited in, the office of the Provincial Secretary.)

PRESTON AND SONS LIMITED

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT AND STOCK-BOOK

We the undersigned do hereby severally covenant and agree each with the others to become incorporated as a company under the provisions of The Ontario Companies Act under the name of PRESTON AND SONS LIMITED

or such other name as the Lieutenant-Governor may give to the Company, with a capital of One Hundred ~~-----~~ Thousand ~~-----~~ dollars, divided into One Thousand shares

of One Hundred ~~-----~~ dollars each. (a) The said Company to be a private Company and the following provisions to apply thereto; (a) The shares of the Company shall not be transferable without the consent of the Board of Directors; (b) The number of its shareholders, exclusive of persons who are in the employment of the Company shall be limited to fifty, two or more persons holding one or more shares jointly being counted as a single shareholder; (c) Any invitation to the public to subscribe for any shares, debentures or debenture stock of the Company is prohibited.

And we hereby severally subscribe for and agree to take the respective amounts of the capital stock of the said Company set opposite our respective names as hereunder and hereafter written, and to become shareholders in such Company to the said amounts.

Witness our hands and seals.

Name of Subscriber.	Seal	Amount of Subscription.	Date and Place of Subscription.		Residence of Subscriber.	Name of Witness.
			Date, 1915	Place.		
<i>W. A. Preston</i>	●	\$100	Feb. 15	Brantford	Brantford, Ont.	<i>Preston</i>
<i>W. B. Preston</i>	●	\$100	Feb. 15	Brantford	Brantford, Ont.	<i>Preston</i>
<i>H. B. Preston</i>	●	\$100	Feb. 15	Brantford	Brantford, Ont.	<i>Preston</i>
<i>A. J. Preston</i>	●	\$100	Feb. 15	Brantford	Brantford, Ont.	<i>Preston</i>
<i>C. B. Preston</i>	●	\$100	Feb. 15	Brantford	Brantford, Ont.	<i>Preston</i>

176

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, under the provisions of The Ontario Companies Act, Letters Patent have been issued by the Secretary of the Province of Ontario; under his Seal of office, bearing date the

22nd day of February, 1915, constituting

Thomas Hiram Preston, Publisher; William Buckingham Preston, Business Man; Harold Brant Preston, Reporter; Annie Marie Preston, Married Woman; and Edna Byrd Preston, Spinster, all of the City of Brantford, in the County of Brant, and Province of Ontario

and any others who have become subscribers to the Memorandum of Agreement of the Company, and persons who thereafter become shareholders in the Company, a Private Company for the following purposes and objects, that is to say:-



;the Corporate Name of the Company to be

LIMITED;

PRESTON AND SONS,

the Capital of the Company to be 100,000 dollars,

divided into 1000 shares of 100 dollars each;

the Head Office of the Company to be situate at the said City of Brantford

and the Provisional Directors of the Company to be

Thomas Hiram Preston, William Buckingham Preston, Harold Brant Preston, Annie Marie Preston and Edna Byrd Preston, hereinbefore mentioned.

Private Company

Exp. Cl.

*Handwritten signature and date: E.A. Armstrong 7/2/15*

E.A. ARMSTRONG, Assistant Provincial Secretary

November 11th, 1925.

Mrs. T. H. Preston,  
112 Dufferin Avenue,  
City.

Dear Mrs. Preston,-

We realize that at a time of sorrow, like yours, mere words can do little to assuage grief, but it does help to know of the deep affection and esteem in which the departed one has been held, and to all of us, in the employ of The Expositor, Mr. Preston was ever the kind and considerate friend. We felt that we could always go to him with any trouble, in the assurance of a sympathetic hearing and wise counsel, and knew, in the administration of the many departments of which he was the supreme head, that absolute justice and kindly thought always animated him in his dealings with each of us. You are well aware of the stress and strain associated with the publication of a daily paper, but through it all he was ever the equable head with advice and encouragement constantly in evidence, and any necessary admonitions were always conveyed in a firm yet tolerant way. We had all learned to look up to and honor him, and to each of us his passing came with a deep sense of personal bereavement.

Assuring you and yours of our heartfelt sympathy, but with the mitigating thought which must come to all of the reward of such a life in the world beyond, we are,

Yours sincerely,

E. J. Pittman	Lewis Ashton	J. H. Johnson
E. W. Downes	Geo. A. Moore	J. A. Macaulay
W. M. Hoggood	Jno. F. Walsh	J. B. Matthews
W. S. Buskard	A. S. Booker	W. J. Comerford
R. G. Scott	E. W. Haring	A. J. Bennett
B. Styles	Charles W. Lyman	C. Cox
F. A. Ford	G. W. Stead	H. Langdale
Geo. E. Bolton	A. S. Whitaker	A. M. Falconer
J. E. Partridge	R. H. Hope	D. Humphrey
J. W. Finch	P. H. Martin	D. Haterison
W. B. Shaw	A. Rose	W. E. Rowley
A. Hurley	Adams	M. E. Lynchman
W. T. Drumpf	J. P. Jones	W. E. Clement
J. Walker	E. J. Jay	O. M. Hall
M. Clews	F. J. Deville	W. Turner
W. L. Reeves	G. M. Adams	Corney Summers
E. J. Ginson	Wm. L. Bowden	J. D. Hanley
R. G. Stuart	A. Nichols	
A. E. Carter		

# Sale of Expositor To Southam Press Announced Today

After more than 80 years' ownership by the Preston family, The Expositor has been sold to Southam Press Limited, Toronto, it was announced this morning by J. C. Preston and P. M. Preston, publishers of The Expositor.

Talks between the two companies have been taking place during the past few weeks, and an agreement to purchase was approved this morning by the directors of Southam Press.

Southam Press, which owns the Hamilton Spectator, is a Canadian company with broad interests in newspaper publishing, printing, and other communication areas in Canada. Its shares are listed on the Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver stock exchanges.

## Separate Entity

The purchase brings to 11 the number of daily newspapers owned by Southam.

The Expositor will continue to operate as a separate entity, and its editorial and news policies will remain the responsibility of the publisher and his staff.

As a member of the Southam group, The Expositor will have access to the Southam news services, with bureaus in Ottawa, Quebec, Toronto, Washington, London and Paris, and to the financial reports of the Financial Times.

For the employees this transaction will mean wider opportunities and future security, and it will open up new avenues of service to the public.

For Southam, the acquisition will add a newspaper with a splendid reputation to those it already operates with high standards in other parts of the country.

It is planned to complete all details of the agreement before the end of 1971.

St. Clair Balfour, pres-

## Drag Racer Is Killed

GEORGETOWN (C.P.) — Dick Harrell, a drag racer from California, was killed on Sunday at the Toronto international dragway when his car blew a front tire and crashed into a hydro pole.

ident of Southam Press, said:

"Southam Press is proud to be associated with Brantford through our purchase of The Brantford Expositor from the Preston family.

"We are happy to welcome its staff to the Southam group. It has been the long-established policy of this company to encourage each of its newspapers to operate as an independent local unit whose main interest is the welfare of the community in which it is published.

"We are happy to have been given the opportunity to purchase this newspaper, because we believe in the future of The Expositor and of Brantford."



Appendix

RETURN AS OF **MARCH 31, 1971** 1209330 2 0024507

FILED	\$10.00 - PAID IN FULL
FILED	\$10.00 - PAID IN FULL
FILED	\$10.00 - PAID IN FULL
FILED	\$10.00 - PAID IN FULL

FAILURE TO MAKE A RETURN WITH THE FEE MAY RESULT IN CANCELLATION

REQUIRED **\$10.00** PAYABLE TOTAL FEES PAYABLE **\$10.00**

**PRESTON AND SONS, LIMITED**  
**COACHHOUSE ST.**  
**BRANTFORD ONT.**

DATE OF INCORPORATION: **26 JANUARY 1925**  
 PROVINCE OF INCORPORATION: **ONTARIO**  
 TYPE OF BUSINESS: **LETTERS PATENT**  
 DATE OF LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: **APR 16 1966**

FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY  
 EDP - 1: **21307**  
 EDP - 2: **70256**  
 2 19659 000 010.00

PLEASE MAIL WHITE COPY TO THE DEPARTMENT  
 MAKE CHEQUE PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF ONTARIO

FOR ALL CORPORATIONS  
 X **1** Newspaper Publishing

APR 16 1966 2 196 12093307

NAME	FULL RESIDENCE ADDRESS (INCLUDING STREET AND NUMBER)	DATE CLASSIFIED AS A DIRECTOR
Preston, Mrs. W. B.	122 Dufferin Avenue, Brantford, Ontario.	30 3 46
Preston, J. C.	15 Gaywood Gardens, Brantford, Ontario.	6 2 39
Preston, P. M.	15 Riverview Drive, Brantford, Ontario.	26 3 42
Preston, Mrs. P. M.	16 Riverview Drive, Brantford, Ontario.	26 9 53
Preston, Mrs. J. C.	15 Gaywood Gardens, Brantford, Ontario.	10 4 64
Strong, Thomas N.	30 Springfield Drive, Brantford, Ontario.	25 2 69
Pollard, E. W.	41 Parkside Drive, Brantford, Ontario.	18 11 58

PERSONS AND CLASSES BEING DIRECTORS DURING LAST 12 MONTHS

NAME	FULL RESIDENCE ADDRESS (INCLUDING STREET AND NUMBER)	DATE CLASSIFIED AS A DIRECTOR

OFFICERS

NAME	FULL RESIDENCE ADDRESS (INCLUDING STREET AND NUMBER)
J. C. Preston	15 Gaywood Gardens, Brantford, Ontario.
E. W. Pollard	41 Parkside Drive, Brantford, Ontario.
E. W. Pollard	41 Parkside Drive, Brantford, Ontario.
J. C. Preston	15 Gaywood Gardens, Brantford, Ontario.

FULL HEAD OFFICE ADDRESS X

REVERSE CARBONS AND FORMS BEFORE COMPLETING OTHER SIDE. PLACE WHITE COPY ON TOP. **FORM 478**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE SIDE

1968	FILED	\$10.00	FOR FULL
1970	FILED	\$10.00	FOR FULL
1971	FILED	\$10.00	FOR FULL
THIS RETURN IS REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS AFTER		REQUIRED	\$10.00 PAYABLE
			\$10.00

JANUARY 1975		FOR DEPARTMENT USE ONLY	
LETTER'S PATENT		78876	
ONTARIO		78875	
C.N.	<i>JH</i>	FEB - 7 1975 2491959 000-010.00	

IS THE CORPORATION OFFERING ITS SECURITIES TO THE PUBLIC?  YES  NO

INDUSTRY: Newspaper Publishing

DIRECTORS AS AT DATE OF THIS PLAN

NAME	FULL RESIDENCE ADDRESS (including street and number)	DATE OF BIRTH	DATE OF APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR
Balfour, Sr. Clair	17 Ardwood Gate, Toronto 176, Ontario.	15 11 71	
Fisher, G. N.	177 Dunvegan Road, Toronto 199, Ontario.	15 11 71	
Southam, W. W.	Apt. 1604, 9 Deer Park Crescent, Toronto 195.	15 11 71	
Ward, J. S.	19 Viamede Crescent, Willowdale 432, Ont	15 11 71	
O'Callaghan, J. P.	16 Parfield Drive, Willowdale, Ontario.	15 11 71	
Shelley, B. H.	33 Valentine Drive, Don Mills, Ontario.	15 11 71	
Wheatley, E. H.	10 Gaywood Gardens, Brantford, Ontario.	15 11 71	

OFFICERS

NAME	FULL RESIDENCE ADDRESS (including street and number)	DATE OF BIRTH	DATE OF APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR
G. N. Fisher	177 Dunvegan Road, Toronto 199, Ontario.	15 11 71	
F. W. Pollard	41 Parkside Drive, Brantford, Ontario.	16 11 58	
F. W. Pollard	41 Parkside Drive, Brantford, Ontario.	16 11 58	
E. H. Wheatley	10 Gaywood Gardens, Brantford, Ontario.	15 11 71	

DATE OF LAST ANNUAL MEETING: 3 2 1971

FOR EXTRA PROVINCIAL CORPORATIONS LICENCED TO CARRY ON BUSINESS IN ONTARIO:

FOR ALL CORPORATIONS: E. H. Wheatley

BILL FINDLAY

# Expositor publisher fired

BY ELIZABETH YATES  
EXPOSITOR STAFF  
Brantford

**B**ill Findlay was fired as publisher of *The Expositor* on Wednesday.

Findlay, 53, was told during a meeting in Hamilton with Southam officials that his termination is effective Jan. 31. A new publisher, whose name was not revealed, is to take over in February.

Findlay leaves after seven years at *The Expositor*, where he acknowledged using his position to push for editorial excellence and involvement in the community.



Findlay

"The newspaper's quality is first class," he said during an interview. "... I hope the company will continue to produce a newspaper worthy of the community in the future."

Findlay's firing follows last year's takeover of Southam Inc. by newspaper magnate Conrad Black's Hollinger Inc. Black controls 59 of Canada's 105 daily newspapers, representing about a third of daily circulation.

"I was told I had been swimming upstream," Findlay said.

"The newspaper's bottom line has not been as good as (Southam) would like it to be. They are looking for a person who will make the bottom line acceptable to the new regime."

## 'EXCITING'

Expositor managing editor Dave Schultz said Findlay was "an exciting man to work for."

"He constantly challenged those working for him to their best, to make *The Expositor* a paper that everyone could be proud of — employees and readers alike," Schultz said.

"He guided it through some tough times and many big changes, revitalizing and modernizing it, yet all the while remaining true to its tradition and its responsibility as a community leader. I'm sad to see him go."

Under Findlay, *The Expositor* has been a newspaper that pushed causes, expressed opinions and committed resources to special projects.

The newspaper's involvement in a campaign to push for completion of Highway 403 had a tangible payoff for the city last year, when final approval came to finish the job.

"The newspaper played a big role in getting Highway 403 through here," he said. "At some point, that will really pay off."

A loud booster of Brantford and its downtown, Findlay joined the Brantford Regional Chamber of Commerce in 1990, and was the first member to serve two years as president, in 1994 and 1995.

He is also a member of the city's Rotary Club, and has served on "a million committees," including the local literacy council.

Findlay's firing ends a 30-year career with Southam Newspapers. He emigrated to Canada from Scotland in 1967, and became assistant editor of Heating, Plumbing and Air Conditioning, a Southam Business Publication.

He joined the *Hamilton Spectator* two years later, and held a number of editorial positions. In 1983, he was named assistant to

See FIRING, **PAGE 22**

FROM PAGE ONE

## Firing latest in a series of changes at Southam

the general manager, and later that year, assistant to the publisher. In 1985, he became the newspaper's human resources director and industrial relations director.

In November 1987, he became publisher of Brant Newspapers, a chain of weekly papers owned by Southam. He was named publisher of The Expositor in September 1989.

Findlay's steady rise capped a career he began at age 17 in Aberdeen, Scotland. "My father was a coalman carrying 125-pound sacks," said Findlay, in a voice whose burr proclaims his origins. "That did not seem like a good idea to me, so I went to Grade 8, and then became a reporter."

Asked what drew and kept him in the industry, he described a deep affection for journalists.

"(They) are inherently honest people," Findlay said. "I am so happy to

have been part of their community ... I hope there will continue to be a place for them in the future."

Findlay lives in Burlington with June, his wife of 30 years. They have two sons, Mark, 24, a bio-

chemist with Searle, and Ross, 22, a geology student at Brock University.

After leaving Brantford, he expects to consider his options for some time.

"I have had the time of my life ... I loved my time in newspapers, and now I will go and do something else."

Findlay's firing is the

latest in a series of changes at Southam since the Hollinger takeover, including the resignation Wednesday of chief financial officer Christian Paupe and the departures last year of former president William Ardell and the editors of the Montreal Gazette and Ottawa Citizen.

*"I have had the time of my life. I loved my time in newspapers, and now I will go and do something else."*

EXPOSITOR PUBLISHER  
BILL FINDLAY

**CANADIAN NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION**  
**ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES JOURNAUX**

## Statement of Principles

### PREAMBLE

This statement of principles expresses the commitment of Canada's daily newspapers to operate in the public interest. A newspaper is a vital source of information and a private business enterprise with responsibility to the community it serves.

### FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Freedom of the press is an exercise of every Canadian's right to freedom of expression guaranteed in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It is the right to gather and disseminate information, to discuss, to advocate, to dissent. A free press is essential to our democratic society. It enables readers to use their Charter right to receive information and make informed judgments on the issues and ideas of the time.

### INDEPENDENCE

The newspaper's primary obligation is fidelity to the public good. It should pay the costs of gathering the news. Conflicts of interest, real or apparent, should be declared. The newspaper should guard its independence from government, commercial and other interests seeking to subvert content for their own purposes.

### ACCURACY AND FAIRNESS

The newspaper keeps faith with readers by presenting information that is accurate, fair, comprehensive, interesting and timely. It should acknowledge its mistakes promptly and conspicuously. Sound practice clearly distinguishes among news reports, expressions of opinion, and materials produced for and by advertisers. When images have been altered or simulated, readers should be told.

### COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

The newspaper has responsibilities to its readers, its shareholders, its employees and its advertisers. But the operation of a newspaper is a public trust and its overriding responsibility is to the society it serves. The newspaper plays many roles: a watchdog against evil and wrongdoing, an advocate for good works and noble deeds, and an opinion leader for its community. The newspaper should strive to paint a representative picture of its diverse communities, to encourage the expression of disparate views and to be accessible and accountable to the readers it serves, whether rich or poor, weak or powerful, minority or majority. When published material attacks an individual or group, those affected should be given an opportunity to reply.

### RESPECT

The newspaper should strive to treat the people it covers with courtesy and fairness. It should respect the rights of others, particularly every person's right to a fair trial. The inevitable conflict between privacy and the public good should be judged in the light of common sense and with decency.

*--Adopted by the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association in 1977, revised 1995*

## Canadian Daily Newspaper Ownership: Selected Statistics

### 1) Number of Daily Newspapers: 1990 –1996

Year	Number	Daily Circulation
1900	121	567,892
1911	143	1,324,909
1921	113	1,609,317
1938	97	2,122,244
1946	90	2,927,329
1970	116	4,640,000
1980	117	5,409,000
1996	104	5,177,678

### 2) Group Ownership of Canadian Daily Newspapers:

Year	Percentage of Total Newspapers
1938	17.5
1958	25
1970	58
1980	77
1996	90

### 3) Canadian Daily Newspaper Ownership: 1997

Newspaper Group	Number of Daily Newspapers
Hollinger (includes Southam Inc. and Sterling Newspapers)	60
Sun Media	11
Thomson Newspapers	9
Quebecor	4
Power Corporation	4
New Brunswick Publishing	2
Summit Publishing	2
Southwestern Ontario Publishing	2
Independents	11

• Source: Canadian Newspaper Association

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### ARCHIVAL SOURCES

#### *Archives of Ontario:*

Brant County Surrogate Court Record # 6199 (Last Will and Testament of Thomas Hiram Preston).

Brant County Surrogate Court Record #10967 (Last Will and Testament of William Buckingham Preston).

Peel County Surrogate Court Record # E67484 (Last Will and Testament of John Champion Preston).

Sir John S. Willison Papers.

Newspaper Microfilm Introduction Book.

Account book of William Watt and T.S. Shenstone (1889-1914).

#### *Brant County Museum Archives:*

W. Ross Macdonald Papers

#### *Southam Inc. Archives*

Southam Papers.

Southam Press Ltd. *Annual Report* (Toronto: 1971).

Southam Inc. *Annual Report* (Toronto: 1994).

Southam Inc. "Chronology". Unpublished document provided by Southam Librarian Maille Reeves, March, 1996.

#### *Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs -- Companies Branch:*

File 3688 (Preston and Sons Ltd., 1915-1946).

File 000024340 (Preston and Sons Publishing Co. Ltd. 1946-1971).

#### *University of Western Ontario Library Regional Collection:*

Fred Landon Papers

## INTERVIEWS

St. Clair Balfour. (former chairman, Southam Press Ltd.) Toronto, February 27, 1997.

Senator Keith Davey. Telephone interview. May 9, 1996.

Thomas Kent. Telephone interview. May 9, 1996.

Peter Preston, Brantford Ont., December 20, 1995, March 1996, April 9, 1996, August 29, 1996, February 28, 1997.

Margaret Preston (Widow of John C. Preston), Mississauga, Ont., November, 1995 and April 12, 1996.

Duncan Preston (Son of Peter Preston), Brantford, Ont., April 9, 1996.

Margaret Preston Shorey (Daughter of John C. Preston), Oakville, Ont., April 11, 1996.

John Preston, (Son of John Champion Preston), Telephone interview, February 27, 1997.

David Schultz, (Managing Editor *The Expositor*), Brantford, Ont., April 9, 1996.

Albert Vandermay (Retiring News Editor, *The Expositor*), Brantford, Ont., March 13, 1966.

## GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS:

Canada. *Report of the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission*. Ottawa: 1960.

Canada. *Royal Commission on Taxation*. Ottawa: 1967.

Canada. Special Senate Committee on the Mass Media. *Report, Vol. 1: "The Uncertain Mirror", Vol. 2: "Words, Music and Dollars" and Vol. 3: "Good, Bad or Simply Inevitable"*. Ottawa: 1970.

Canada. Special Senate Committee on Mass Media. *Proceedings: (Second Session, Twenty-Eighth Parliament, 1969)*. Ottawa: 1970.



Canada. Special Senate Committee on Mass Media. *Briefs*. Ottawa: 1970.

Canada. Royal Commission on Corporate Concentration. *Research Study: The Newspaper Firm and Freedom of Information*. Ottawa: 1977.

Canada. Royal Commission on Corporate Concentration. *Report*. Ottawa: 1978.

Canada. Royal Commission on Newspapers. *Report*. Ottawa: 1981.

Canada: Royal Commission on Newspapers. *The Newspaper as a Business: Research Studies on the Newspaper Industry*. Ottawa, 1981.

Canada: Royal Commission on Newspapers: *The Journalists*. Ottawa, 1981.

## **NEWSPAPERS**

*Brantford Expositor*  
*Brantford Courier*  
*Canadian Printer and Publisher*  
*Financial Post*  
*The Globe*  
*Globe and Mail*  
*Hamilton Herald*  
*Kingston Daily Standard*  
*Kingston Whig-Standard*  
*London Free Press*  
*The Mail*  
*Mail and Empire*  
*St. Catherine's Standard*  
*Star Weekly*  
*Stratford Beacon-Herald*  
*Toronto Daily Star*  
*Willison's Monthly*  
*Windsor Star*  
*Winnipeg Free Press*  
*Winnipeg Tribune*

## **REFERENCE WORKS**

Cates, Jo. *Journalism: A Guide to the Reference Literature*. Englewood, Co.: Libraries Unlimited Inc., 1990.

*Encyclopedia Canadiana, Vol. 8.* Toronto: Grolier Society of Canada, 1958.

Gilchrist, J. Brian, (ed). *Inventory of Ontario Newspapers: 1793 -1986.* Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1987.

*International Directory of Company Histories, Vol. 7.* Detroit: St. James Press, 1993.

Owram, Doug. *Canadian History: A Reader's Guide, 2: Confederation to the Present.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

Sotiron, Minko. *An Annotated Bibliography of Works on Canadian Newspapers: 1914-1983.* Ottawa: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, 1987.

## **JOURNAL and PERIODICAL ARTICLES**

Adam, Stuart, G., review of *The Making of the Canadian Media* by Paul Rutherford, *Carleton Journalism Review* (Vol. 1, No. 6, Winter 1978), p. 6-7.

Auletta, Ken. "Behind the Times", *The New Yorker* (June 10, 1996), p. 44-51.

Bagdikian, Ben. "Newspaper Mergers --The Final Phase", *Columbia Journalism Review* (March-April, 1977), p. 17-22.

Bain, George. "Conrad Black and the Benefit of the Doubt", *Maclean's* (Vol. 109, No. 26, June 24, 1977), p. 48.

Barlow, Maude and James Winter. "The Horse's Mouth. *Canadian Forum* (Vol. 126, No. 864, Nov. 1997), p. 20-22.

Beattie, Earle, J. "Canadian Mass Media: Development and Economic Structure", *Gazette* (Vol. 15, No. 2, 1969), p. 125-137.

Beatty, Bryan. "Monopolies and Oligopolies of the Media", *Media Probe: The Canadian Journal of Communications* (Vol. 3, No. 3, Winter 1976), p. 1-22.

Beaven, Brian. "Partisanship, Patronage and the Press in Ontario, 1880-1914" *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 64, No. 3, 1983), p. 315-352.

Bliss, Michael. "Canadian Business History at the Crossroads", *Business Quarterly* (1992) p. 33-37.

Boswell, Randy. "Press Barons Lumber Towards Extinction", *Content* (March/April 1992), p. 7-10.

Brooks, L.J. "Attitude Survey Approach to the Social Audit: The Southam Press Experience", *Accounting, Organizations and Society* (Vol. 5, No. 3), p. 341-355.

Busterna, John. "Trends in Daily Newspaper Ownership: 1920-1986" *Journalism Quarterly* (Winter, 1988), p. 831-838.

Careless, J, M.S. "The Toronto Globe and Agrarian Radicalism - 1850-1867", *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 29, No. 1, 1948), p. 14-39.

Careless, J.M.S. "Mid-Victorian Liberalism in Central Canadian Newspapers" *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 31, No. 3, Sept. 1950), p. 221-237.

Clarke, Robert. "Concentration Countdown" *Content* (70:Jan.1977), p. 12-19.

Cobb, Chris. "Bill Ardell: Tough Thoughtful Style", *Content* (Jan.-Feb. 1992), p. 14-15.

Cooper, William H., review of *A Victorian Authority* by Paul Rutherford, *Ontario History* (Vol. 70, No. 4, Dec. 1982), p. 428-431.

Coulson, David. "Impact of Ownership on Newspaper Quality", *Journalism Quarterly* (Volume 71, No. 2. Summer 1994), p. 3-10.

Cowles, John. "Fewer Papers Mean Better Papers", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 5, No. 3, July 1951), p. 3-5.

Dafoe, J.W., review of *Press, Politics and People* by A.H.U. Colquhoun, *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 17, No. 1, 1936), p. 59-64.

Dalglisch, Brenda. "Black Power: An Enigmatic Media Baron Defies Critics and Extends His Empire", *Maclean's* (Aug. 3, 1992), p. 27-30.

Dearmore, Tom. "The Growing Responsibility of the Small Town Press", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 15, No. 2, April, 1961), p. 9-13.

Demers, David Pearce. "Structural Pluralism, Intermedia Competition and the Growth of the Corporate Newspaper in the United States", *Journalism Monographs* (Sept., 1993), p. 1-43.

Dertouzos. "Scale Economies, Newspaper Chains and Government Policy", *American Economist* (Spring, 1982), p.11-15.

Driedger, Sharon Doyle. "Black All" *Maclean's* (May 13, 1996), p. 42-43.

Dryden, Alex. "Daily Newspapers: Can They Ever Become the Number One Medium Again", *Marketing*. (Nov. 30, 1980), p. 44.

Fitzgerald. Mark. "Hollinger Gains Control of Southam", *Editor and Publisher* (Dec. 7, 1996), p. 12, 33.

Fooks, Georgia. "The Lethbridge Herald: Factors Involved in Joining Chain", *Media Probe: The Canadian Journal of Communications* (Vol. 5, No. 3, Winter, 1979), p. 40-49.

Ford, Arthur. "The Canadian Press", *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 23, No. 3, Sept., 1942), p. 241-246.

Fulford, Robert. "The Built-in Bias of the Press", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 16, No. 2, April, 1962), p. 14-18.

Gameau, George. "Selling Family Jewels", *Editor and Publisher* (April 27, 1996), p. 20-21, 98.

Glorde, Wallace. "Keeping Newspapers All in the Family", *Advertising Age* (March 10, 1986), p. 36.

Graham. Donald. "New Times, Old Values", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 38, No. 3, Autumn 1984), p. 35-39.

Grotta, Gerald. "Consolidation of Newspapers: What Happens to the Consumer", *Journalism Quarterly* (Vol. 48, No. 2, Summer, 1971), p. 245-250.

Hale, F. Dennis, "The Influence of Chain Ownership on News Service Subscribing", *Newspaper Research Journal* (Vol. 12, No. 4, Fall, 1991), p. 34-46.

Hutchinson, Brian. "Headline Grabber: Conrad Black . . . Now owns Most Canadian Daily Newspapers", *Canadian Business* (Vol. 69, No. 8, July 1996), p. 369, 42-3.

Jones, Geoffrey and Mary B. Rose. "Family Capitalism", *Business History*. (Vol. 35, No. 4, Oct., 1993), p. 1-42.

Jones, Tim. "Wall Street and the Future of Newspapers", *Columbia Journalism Review* (Nov.-Dec. 1996), p. 42-45.

Kesterton, Wilfred. "A Short History of the Press in Canada", *Gazette* (Vol. XV. No.2, 1969), p. 86-92.

Laver, Ross. "Conrad Black's Next Move: Is the Media Tycoon's Talk of a New Daily Merely a Ploy?" *Macleans* (Vol. 110, No. 27, July 7, 1997), p. 48-49.

Levison, Harry, "Conflicts that Plague Family Business", *Harvard Business Review*. (March-April, 1991), p. 90-98.

Lyons, Louis. "A Free and Responsible Press", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 1, No. 2, April, 1947), p. 1-5.

Lyons, Louis. "The Individual Standards of Journalism", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 5, No. 1, Jan. 1951), p. 15-18.

Mathewson, G.E. "Notes on the Price Effect of Marketplace in the Canadian Newspaper Industry", *Canadian Journal of Economics* (May, 1972.), p. 298-301.

Morton, John. "Farewell to More Family Dynasties", *American Journalism Review* (Vol. 17, No. 8, Oct., 1995), p. 9.

Nerone, John. "The Problem of Teaching Journalism History", *Journalism Educator* (Vol. 45, No. 3, Autumn, 1990), p. 16-24.

Newman, Peter C. "Conrad Black's Private Agenda", *Macleans* (Vol. 109, No. 26, June 17, 1996), p. 34.

Nixon, Raymond and Tae-youl Hahn. "Concentration of Press Ownership: A Comparison of 32 Countries", *Journalism Quarterly* (Vol. 48, No. 1, Spring, 1971), p. 5-16.

Nord, David Paul. "Intellectual History, Social History, Cultural History . . . and Our History", *Journalism Quarterly* (Vol. 67, No. 4, Winter, 1990), p. 645-648.

Oakes, John B. "Concentrations of Press Power", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 32, No.3, Autumn 1978), p. 26-31.

Overbury, Stephen. "Conversation with a One-time Reporter: News Baron Ken Thomson", *Content* (Nov.-Dec. 1982), p. 16-19.

Patterson, Graeme. "Harold Innis and the Writing of History", *Canadian Literature* (No. 83, Winter 1979), p. 118-129.

Peiser, Richard and Leland M. Wooten. "Life Cycle Changes in Small Family Businesses", *Business Horizons* (May-June 1983), p. 58-65.

Pelrine, Eleanor Wright. "Conversation with Jim Fleming", *Content* (July-Aug., 1982), p. 8-17.

\_\_\_\_\_. "At Last, The National Newspapers' Act", *Content* (June-July 1983), p. 14-15.

Pilgrim, Tim. "Newspapers as Natural Monopolies: Some Historic Considerations", *Journalism History* (Vol. 18:1992), p. 3-10.

Pinkerton, William. "The Newspaperman: The Publisher and his Paper", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 1, No. 2, April 1947), p. 25-28.

Quinn, John. "The Big Myth", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 26, No. 2, Sept., 1972), p. 9-11.

Radolf, Andrew. "Family Ownership: Beating the Odds", *Editor and Publisher* (July 15, 1989), p. 7-9.

Ray, Royal. "Economic Forces as Factors in Daily Newspaper Concentration", *Journalism Quarterly* (Vol. 29, No. 1, Winter, 1952), p. 31-42.

Romanow, W.I. and W.C. Soderland. "The Southam Press Acquisition of The Windsor Star: A Case Study of Change", *Canadian Journal of Communications* (Vol. 24, No. 4, 1978), p. 255-270.

Rutherford, P.F.W. "The People's Press: The Emergence of the New Journalism in Canada, 1869-99" *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 56, No. 2, June, 1975), 169-191.

Rutherford, Paul. "Making the News", *Acadiensis* (Vol. 12, No. 1, Autumn, 1982), p. 136-144.

Scanlon, Joseph. "After Keith Davey--What?" *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 25, No. 1, March, 1971), p. 3-6.

Seymour, Forrest. "Why Worry About Newspaper Monopolies?" *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 2, No. 1, Jan., 1948), p. 3-5.

Silburt, Dave. "The Naked and the Read, or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Newspaper Chains", *Content* (Oct.-Nov., 1983), p. 12-16.

Silburt, Dave. "No Conspiracy and No Detriment", *Content* (Winter, 1984), p. 8-13.

Smith Carol and Carolyn Stewart Dyer. "Taking Stock, Placing Orders: A Historiographic Analysis of the Business History of Newspapers", *Journalism Monographs*. (Vol. 132:1992), p.1-56.

Smith, M. Ian, review of *The Making of the Canadian Media* by Paul Rutherford, *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 60, No. 3, Sept. 1979), p. 383-385.

Sotiron, Minko. "Concentration and Collusion in the Canadian Newspaper Industry: 1895-1920", *Journalism History* (Vol. 18:1992), p. 26-32.

Steven, William. "The Social Responsibility of the Press", *Nieman Reports* (Vol. 21, No. 1., March 1967), p. 12-18.

Swerdfager, Ann. "Still Publishing After All these Years: The Dingmans of Stratford. *Canadian Business* (Vol. 69 No. 8, July 1996 p. 39.

Waite, P.D., review of *A Victorian Authority* by Paul Rutherford, *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 63, No. 3, Sept. 1982), p. 356-357.

Wallace, W.S. "The Journalist in Canadian Politics: A Retrospect ", *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 22, 1941), p. 14-24.

Winter, James. "The Paper King", *The Canadian Forum* (Vol. 74, No. 844, Nov. 1995), p. 9.

Zwicker, Barry. "Reflections on the Kent Commission", *Content* (May/June 1992), p. 7-13.

Zwicker, Barry. "In Conversation with Gordon Fisher," *Content* (March 1976), p. 2-6.

"Bibliography of the History of the Canadian Press", *Canadian Historical Review* (Vol. 22, No. 4, 1941), p. 416-433.

"Canada's News Media Called to Long Public Examination", *Editor and Publisher* (Nov. 8, 1969), p. 9-10.

"Special Tax Concessions Advocated for Newspapers", *Editor and Publisher* (Jan. 3, 1970), p. 11, 24.

"Change in Estate Law Asked to Save 'Family' Newspapers", *Editor and Publisher* (Jan. 31, 1970), p. 17, 28-29.

"Canadian Dimension Brief to the Senate Hearing on Mass Media", *Canadian Dimension*, (Vol. 7: Aug. 5, 1970), p. 35-42.

"Canadian Senate Seeks Power to Halt Future Press Mergers", *Editor and Publisher* (Dec. 12, 1970), p. 9,11.

"The Newsroom Enters the Electronic Age", *Editor and Publisher*, (June 5, 1971), p. 17, 22.

"167 Groups Own 1,047 Dailies: 71% of Total Circulation", *Editor and Publisher*, (July 9, 1977), p. 10-11.

"Black Steps Up Bid for Southam", *Maclean's* (June 3, 1996), p. 33.

## **BOOKS**

Audley, Paul. *Canada's Cultural Industries: Broadcasting, Publishing, Records and Film*. Toronto: James Lorimar and Co., in association with the Canadian Institute for Economic Policy, 1983.

Bagdikian, Ben. *The Information Machines*. New York: The Rand Corporation, 1971.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Media Monopoly*. (Fifth Edition) Boston: Beacon Press, 1997.

Barlow, Maude and James Winter. *The Big Black Book: The Essential Views of Conrad Black and Barbara Amiel Black*. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1997).

Barnouw, Eric, et al. *Conglomerates and the Media*. New York: The New Press, 1997.



- Berger, Carl. *The Writing Of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing Since 1900 (Second Edition)*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986.
- Black, Conrad. *A Life in Progress*. Toronto: Key-Porter Books, 1993.
- Bliss, Michael. *A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business, 1883-1911*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Northern Enterprise: Five Centuries of Canadian Business*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987.
- Bruce, Charles. *News and the Southams*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1968.
- Canadian Press Association. *History of Canadian Journalism*. Toronto, 1908.
- Careless, J.M.S. *Brown of The Globe, Vol. 2: Statesman of Confederation, 1860-1880*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Careless at Work: Selected Canadian Historical Studies*. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1990.
- Careless, J.M. S. and Brown, (eds), Craig. *Part One of The Canadians: 1867-1967*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1968.
- Carroll, Jock. *The Death of The Toronto Telegram and other Newspaper Stories*. Toronto: Pocket Books, published by Simon and Schuster Canada, 1971.
- Charlesworth, Hector. *Candid Chronicles: Leaves from the Notebook of a Canadian Journalist*. Toronto; The Macmillan Co., 1925.
- Cloud, Barbara, *The Business of Newspapers on the Western Front*. Reno, NE.: University of Nevada Press, 1992.
- Coleridge, Nicholas. *Paper Tigers: The Latest, Greatest Newspaper Tycoons and How they Won the World*. London: William Heinemann Ltd. 1993.
- Colquhoun, A.H. U. *Press, Politics and People: The Life and Letters of Sir John Willison, Journalist and Correspondent of The Times*. Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd. at St. Martins's House, 1935.

Compaine, Benjamin. *Who Owns the Media: Concentration of Ownership in the Mass Communications Industry*. (Revised Second Edition). White Plains, NY.: Knowledge Industry Publications Inc., 1982.

Costain, Thomas B. *Son of a Hundred Kings: A Novel of the Nineties*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1950.

Craick, W. A. *A History of Canadian Journalism II*. Toronto: The Ontario Publishing Co. Ltd., 1959.

Cranston, J.H. *Ink on My Fingers*. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1953.

Creighton, Donald. *Canada's First Century*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1970.

Cross, Michael S. and Gregory S. Kealey, (eds). *The Consolidation of Capitalism: 1896-1929*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1983.

Cumming, Carman. *Secret Craft: The Journalism of Edward Farrer*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992.

Davey, Keith. *The Rainmaker: A Passion for Politics*. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co. Ltd., 1986.

Desbarats, Peter. *Guide to Canadian News Media*. Toronto: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich Canada, 1990.

Donnelly, Murray. *Dafoe of the Free Press*. Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1968.

Emery, Edwin. *History of the American Newspaper Publishers Association*. St. Paul, Minn.: North Central Publishing Co., 1950.

Eamon, Ross A. *The Media Society: Basic Issues and Controversies*. Toronto: Butterworths, 1987.

Fetherling, Douglas. *The Rise of the Canadian Newspaper*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Little Bit of Thunder: The Strange Inner Life of the Kingston Whig-Standard*. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1993. Toronto: Collins Publishers, 1988.

Firth, Edith, (ed). *Profiles of a Province: Studies in the History of Ontario*. Toronto: Ontario Historical Society, 1967.

- Ford, Arthur. *As the World Wags On*. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1950.
- Fulford, Robert. *Best Seat in the House: Memoirs of a Lucky Man*. Toronto: Collins Publishers, 1988.
- Ghiglione, Loren, (ed). *The Buying and Selling of America's Newspapers*. Indianapolis: R. J. Berg and Co., 1984.
- Goldenberg, Susan. *The Thomson Empire*. Toronto: Methuen, 1984.
- Harkness, Ross. *J.E. Atkinson of The Star*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963.
- Hayes, David. *Power and Influence: The Globe and Mail and the News Revolution*. Toronto: Key Porter Books Ltd., 1992.
- Holmes, Helen and David Taras, ed. *Seeing Ourselves. Media Power and Policy in Canada*. Toronto: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich Canada, 1992.
- Hutchinson, Bruce. *The Far Side of the Street*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976.
- Innis, Harold. *The Bias of Communication*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951.
- Johnston, C.M. *Brant County: A History 1784-1945*. Toronto: Oxford University Press , 1967.
- Keate, Stuart. *Paper Boy*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co. Ltd., 1980.
- Kesterton, Wilf. *A History of Journalism in Canada*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1967.
- Liebling, A.J. *The Press*. New York: Pantheon Books, Second Revised Edition 1975,
- Lower, Arthur. Edited by Welf H. Heick. *History and Myth and the Making of Canadian Nationalism*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1975.
- McCalla, Douglas, (ed). *The Development of Canadian Capitalism: Essays in Business History*. Toronto: Copp, Clark, Pitman Ltd., 1990.
- Macmillan, David S., (ed). *Canadian Business History: Selected Studies 1497-1971*. Toronto:McClelland and Stewart, 1972.

McNaught, Carlton. *Canada Gets the News*. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1940.

Middleton, Jesse Edgar and Fred Landon. *The Province of Ontario -- A History, Volume 11*. Toronto: The Dominion Publishing Co. Ltd, 1927.

Newman, Peter. *The Establishment Man*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1982.

Nichols, M.E. *The Story of the Canadian Press*. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1948.

Nolan, Michael. *Walter J. Blackburn: A Man for All Media*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1989.

Osler, Andrew. *The Evolution of Journalism in Canada*. Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1993.

Picard Robert and Maxwell McCombs, James Winter and Stephen Lacy, (eds). *Press Concentration and Monopoly*. Norwood, N.J.: Ablex Publishing Corp. 1988.

Picard, Robert. *Media Economics: Concepts and Issues*. Newbury Park, Ca.: Sage Publications Inc., 1989.

Porter, John. *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965.

Poulton, Ron. *The Paper Tyrant: John Ross Robertson of the Toronto Telegram*. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co. Ltd., 1971.

Prang, Margaret. *N.W. Rowell: Ontario Nationalist*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975.

Ralph, Julian. *The Making of a Journalist*. New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1903.

Reville, Douglas. *History of the City of Brantford*. Brantford: The Hurley Printing Co., 1967.

Romanow, Walter and Soderland, Walter. *Media in Canada: An Introductory Analysis*. Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1992.

Ross, Philip Dansken. *Retrospects of a Newspaper Person*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1931.

Rutherford Paul. *The Making of the Canadian Media*. Toronto: McGraw. Hill Ryerson. Ltd., 1978.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth Century Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982.

Salmon, Lucy Maynard. *The Newspaper and the Historian*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1923.

Siebert, Fred and Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm. *Four Theories of the Press*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1976 (first edition published 1956).

Siklos, Richard. *Shades of Black: Conrad Black and the World's Fastest Growing Press Empire*. Toronto: Reed Books Canada, 1995.  
Singer, Benjamin, (ed)., *Communications in Canadian Society*. Toronto: Addison-Wesley Publishers, 1983.

Smith, Anthony. *The Newspaper: An International History*. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1979.

Smith, I. Norman. *The Journal Men: Three Great Canadian Newspapermen and the Tradition they Created*. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974.

Sotiron, Minko. *From Politics to Profits: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997.

Squires, James. *Read All About It: The Corporate Takeover of America's Newspapers*. Toronto: Random House of Canada Ltd., 1994.

Stewart, Walter. *Canadian Newspapers: The Inside Story*. Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1980.

Taras, David. *The Newsmakers: The Media's Influence on Canadian Politics*. Toronto: Nelson Canada, 1990.

Taylor, Graham and Baskerville, Peter. *A Concise History of Business in Canada*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Underwood, Doug. *When MBAs Rule the Newsroom: How the Marketers and Managers are Reshaping Today's Media*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

Vipond, Mary. *The Mass Media in Canada*. Toronto: James Lorimar and Co., 1992.

Winter, James. *Democracy's Oxygen: How Corporations Control the News*. Montreal: Black Rose Books Ltd., 1997.

Zwicker, Barry and Dick MacDonald, (eds). *The News: Inside the Canadian Media*. Ottawa: Deneau, 1979.

## **THESES and DISSERTATIONS**

Avery, Lydia. "Evolution of the Canadian Daily Newspaper Industry: 1867-1920s," M.A. paper. University of Western Ontario, 1981.

Berry, Donald. "USA Today, The London Free Press and the Rationalization of the North American Newspaper Industry," M.A. thesis. Concordia University, 1993.

Carroll, Glenn R. "Publish and Perish: A Dynamic Analysis of Organizational Mortality in the American Local Newspaper Industry from 1800 to 1975," Ph. D. diss., Stanford University, 1982.

Daugherty, David. "Group-owned Newspapers vs. Independently-Owned Newspapers: An Analysis of the Differences and Similarities," Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1983.

Dhawan, Vikram. "The Tabloid Revolution: Reversing the Trend to Daily Newspaper Monopolies and the Case of *The Toronto Sun*," M.A. thesis, Queen's University, 1991.

Eckrich, Christopher. "Effects of Family Business Management and Psychological Separation on the Career Development of Late Adolescents," Ph.D. diss., Purdue University, 1993.

Neiva de Figueiredo, Elizabeth, Maciver. "Pressing Change: The Consolidation of the American Newspaper Industry, 1955-1985," Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1994.

Pearce Demers, David Kevin. "Structural Pluralism, Competition and the Growth of the Corporate Newspaper in the United States," Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1993.

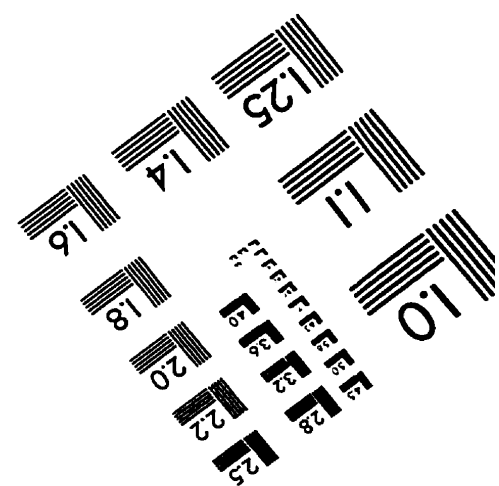
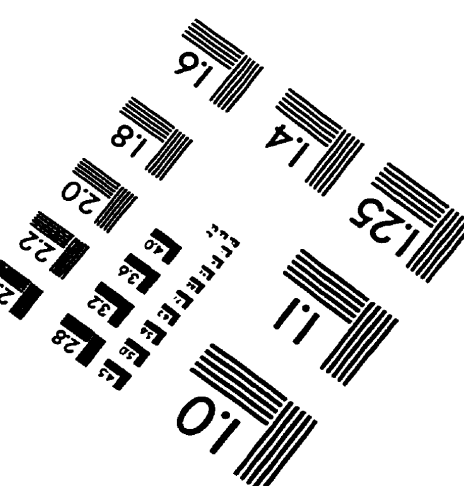
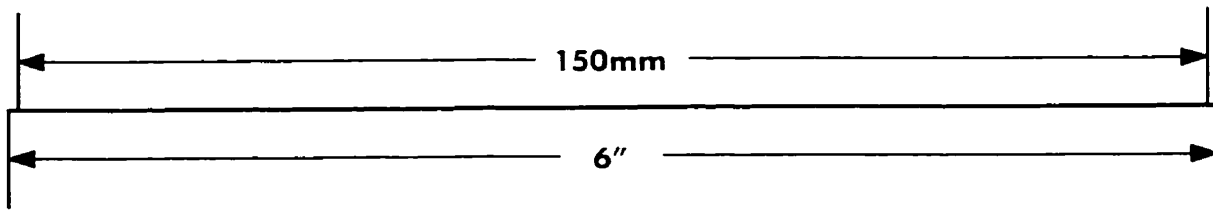
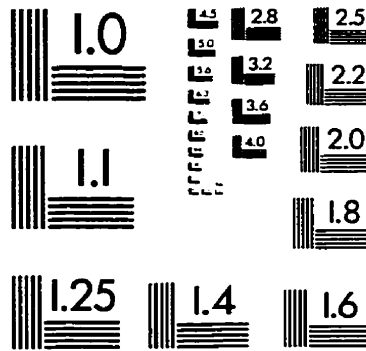
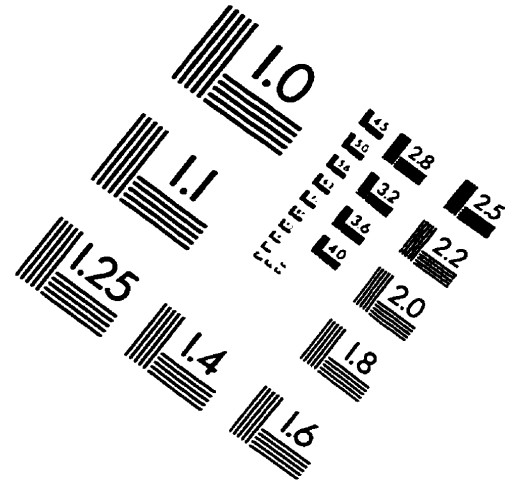
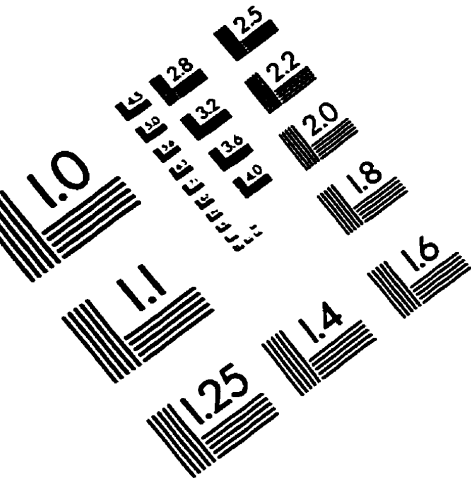
Ray, Royal Henderson. "Concentration of Ownership and Control in the American Daily Newspaper Publishing Industry," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1950.

Swayne, Elizabeth Eames. "The Last Families: A Study of Metropolitan Newspaper Ownership," Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1969.

Thompson, Tracy A. "Business Logics in Professional Organizations: Adaptation in the Daily Newspaper Industry," Ph.D. diss. Northwestern University, 1994.

Walkom, Tom. "The Daily Newspaper Industry in Ontario's Developing Capitalistic Economy: Toronto and Ottawa: 1871-1911," Ph.D. diss. University of Toronto, 1983.

# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



**APPLIED IMAGE, Inc**  
 1653 East Main Street  
 Rochester, NY 14609 USA  
 Phone: 716/482-0300  
 Fax: 716/288-5989

© 1993, Applied Image, Inc., All Rights Reserved