Journalism in Ireland: The Evolution of a Discipline

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While journalism in Ireland had a long gestation, the issues that today's journalists grapple with are very much the same that their predecessors had to deal with. The pressures of deadlines and news gathering, the reliability and protection of sources, dealing with patronage and pressure from the State, advertisers and prominent personalities, and the fear of libel and State regulation were just as much a part of early journalism as they are today. What distinguished early journalism was the intermittent nature of publication and the rapidity with which newspaper titles appeared and disappeared. The Irish press had a faltering start but by the early 1800s some of the defining characteristics of contemporary journalism – specific skill sets, shared professional norms and professional solidarity – had emerged.

In his pioneering work on the history of Irish newspapers, Robert Munter noted that, although the first newspaper printed in Ireland, *The Irish Monthly Mercury* (which carried accounts of Oliver Cromwell's campaign in Ireland) appeared in December 1649 it was not until February 1659 that the first Irish newspaper appeared. *An Account of the Chief Occurrences of Ireland, Together with some Particulars from England* had a regular publication schedule (it was a weekly that published at least five editions), appeared under a constant name and was aimed at an Irish, rather than a British, readership. It, in turn, was followed in January 1663 by *Mercurius Hibernicus*, which carried such innovations as issue numbers and advertising. As Munter noted, its readership was limited to the Protestant land-owning class and one of its main sources of news was the Court of Claims that redistributed the estates forfeited to the Crown after the 1641 rebellion. Following the Licensing Act of 1662, which stipulated that newspapers could only be printed under licence, entrepreneurs began to supply subscribers with hand-written letters from correspondents (scriveners) who lived close to sites of news such as parliament or the courts. In time these letters were set in type and in 1685 Dublin witnessed the establishment of *The News-Letter,* which was published three times a week and posted to subscribers.[1]

Up until the mid-1700s newspapers, and by extension journalism, were part of the diverse activities of stationary shops and printers. They were not so much a new entity, more an extension to an existing business. The eventual growth of advertising was what determined the course of newspaper development. Publishers initially used surplus space in their newspapers to promote their own publications and services and other adverts slowly began to trickle in, first for the return of lost property or strayed animals and then, more significantly, for the sale or lease of land. Eventually, newspapers began to solicit adverts and they increased in size and in importance to the stationer's business. While they gradually took a more regular shape they remained an elite form of communication, aimed primarily at the English-speaking, Protestant population. And, since readers bought directly from the publisher, print-runs were small and only large urban areas – Dublin, Belfast and Cork – could sustain newspapers.

In terms of journalism, as Munter put it, 'a journalistic ethic grew up which was the product of two things: the general attitude of the public and the policy of the Irish government, the former by and large a positive and constructive element, the latter a negative and restrictive one'.[2] Newspapers were judged by the veracity and freshness of their news and many titles proclaimed their wares in such terms. *Pue's Occurrences* declared that it carried, 'the most Authentic and Freshest Transactions from all Parts' while the *Dublin Mercury* offered 'a Greater Variety of Authentic News, impartially collected, than in any other Advices now extant'.[3] Then, as now, rumours abounded and publishers had to thread a wary line between publishing false stories and giving competitors an advantage by being too cautious. As an example, George Faulkner of *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* was once forced to publish the following: 'We have a hot report about the Town that a certain Gentleman lately Barberously murder'd his own Wife and two children, but I forebear to name him till I know its full certainty'.[4]

Newspapers were generally one-person operations and there was little or no demarcation between proprietor, printer, editor or journalist. News came from a variety of sources; coffeehouses, political clubs, courts, markets, and the crews of incoming ships all provided publishers with news. The most important source, however, were the newspapers that arrived from London. All local publishers scanned these publications and, depending on their need for content, reproduced entire articles or summaries of

events. As Munter observed, a rather strange journalistic ethos existed among the Dublin papers: 'To copy a part or the whole of an English paper was an everyday occurrence and was considered a fair business practice; to copy from another Dublin paper was condemned – not as piracy, but as passing stale news on to the public'.[5] In terms of pre-nineteenth century politics, the Irish Parliament retained absolute privilege over its proceedings and both houses (Lords and Commons) had powers of compellability, examination, interrogation and detention.[6] While the most frequent charges against publishers were breaches of privilege and contempt, charges of libel and seditious libel were also common.

Charles Lucas and political journalism

By the mid-1700s the increased circulation of newspapers, coupled with political strife among Dublin politicians, resulted in journalism becoming sensitised to the demand for political commentary. The rise of political reformer Charles Lucas, his battles with Dublin Corporation and the House of Commons and the role of the press in the controversies that followed, indicate the growing power of journalism in influencing public opinion. In 1742 Lucas began a campaign for municipal reform and published a series of pamphlets that exposed the internal machinations of Dublin Corporation. By 1747 this campaign extended to include charges against parliament and the judicial system. Wary of making a martyr of Lucas, Dublin Castle published *The Tickler,* the aim of which was to ridicule Lucas. A by-election for the House of Commons in 1748-9 increased further the political temperature. Lucas launched a newspaper, *The Censor,* to promote his manifesto, much of which was based on political reform and legislative independence for Ireland. As Munter points out, the appearance of these two political journals forced the regular press to sit up and take note of their campaigns, and the way in which political comment and controversy were now features of public discourse:

> With the *Tickler* and the *Censor* the age of the political journal was introduced into Ireland, and Lucas as much as any individual can be said to have been responsible for the actual emergence of the political newspaper, for it was the

> controversy that he touched off which forced a public and eventually a newspaper press to respond.[7]

Lucas touched a nerve with the public; he also made the House of Commons nervous. Summoned before the House in October 1749, Lucas was sentenced to imprisonment as an enemy of the state. Although he fled the country the episode left an indelible mark on Irish journalism. It was during this controversy that the phrase 'the freedom of the press' was added to the Irish journalistic vocabulary: Irish newspapers, and by extension, Irish journalism had moved from its cautious beginnings to keeping a wary eye on political institutions.

As political and economic pressures – the American war of independence, the success of the Irish parliament in winning a measure of legislative independence, and the growing aspirations of Irish Catholics – came to the fore in the 1770s and 1780s, the role of the newspaper as a medium for public debate, and of journalism as a means of keeping an eye on the doings of government, continued to evolve. So too did governmental methods for controlling journalism. In 1771 the government conceded the right of printers to publish verbatim accounts of parliamentary debates but in 1774 it imposed a stamp duty on newspapers. This added to the tax on advertising introduced in 1712 and the tax on newsprint imposed in 1757. These taxes were directed against opposition newspapers that did not benefit from government patronage in the form of official announcements that were exempt from the advertising tax or bribery in the form of direct subsidisation or payments to editors. The favouritism exercised by the authorities in Dublin Castle also extended to the distribution of news. The express copies of the London newspapers – which were critical in terms of content for Irish papers – were only distributed to newspapers in favour with Dublin Castle. Thus not only did the authorities bestow an economic advantage on newspapers that were 'on its side', it also bestowed a journalistic advantage. In 1807 the *Evening Post* asked why, since the express delivery from London was paid for out of the public purse, the *Correspondent*, a Castle newspaper, was the sole beneficiary. Laughingly, the *Correspondent* denied the receipt of official favours: it was first with the news, it claimed, by virtue of its efficiency as a news gathering operation.[8]

Journalistic autonomy

As momentum built up behind Daniel O'Connell's Catholic Association, Michael Staunton established the *Morning Register* in 1824. Staunton was a former editor of the *Freeman's Journal* and had established an unsuccessful Catholic newspaper – the *Dublin Evening Herald* – in 1821. In Brian Inglis' account of the development of the press in Ireland, Staunton is credited with radically altering the practises of Irish journalism. Staunton insisted that the newspaper's emphasis be on reports of events in Ireland rather that the traditional practices of 'lifting' content from the London papers or reproducing, verbatim, unedited dispatches from abroad. This change required hiring a newsroom of reporters so that comprehensive coverage could be given to newsworthy events around the country. Staunton achieved his objective, and he essentially forced other Dublin newspapers to do likewise. Staunton also sought to put journalism on a dignified footing. During King George IV's visit to Dublin in 1821, he was to be given a tour of the Dublin Society and passes were sent to the city's newspapers that allowed reporters access to the street outside. Staunton complained that no journalist could be expected to subject himself 'to this inconvenience and, indeed, indignity'.[9] The situation was rectified and reporters were allowed inside the venue. Staunton is also credited with improvements in the appearance and readability of newspapers in the 1820s. New layout and better print quality combined with reportage of O'Connell's countrywide monster meetings and his election victory in 1828 set new standards for Irish newspapers that others were forced to follow.[10] Such was Staunton's influence on Irish journalism that after his election as Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1847 his peers presented him with an 'illuminated address' that praised him as 'the man who, if he be not the father by right of years, does yet, so far as its efficiency is concerned, deserve the title of CREATOR OF THE IRISH PRESS'.[11]

In contrast to Staunton, O'Connell had a different view of journalism. He demanded uncritical coverage of his political manoeuvrings and expected that his speeches would appear verbatim in newspapers. Very often, proprietors and journalists found themselves caught in a 'cat and mouse' game between O'Connell and the authorities who viewed his speeches as seditious. In 1825, the reporters who had been present at one of his speeches were summoned to give evidence against him. They refused. The editor of the *Star* declared 'he would not permit his reporter to be the

accuser of anyone'; the *Morning Post* reporter said he did not think 'the press the proper medium though which the business of a common informer should be transacted'; the *Freeman's Journal* reporter said he could not remember what O'Connell had said and he did not have his notes with him in court; the *Saunders' News-Letter* reporter stated he had been asleep when O'Connell had spoken the supposedly seditious words and so had based his report on the notes of another reporter. The case against O'Connell duly collapsed.[12]

The unity of these reporters in refusing to act as witnesses indicated a growing sense of professional solidarity and journalistic objectivity. This is all the more pronounced given that some of the journalists worked for newspapers that were not supportive of O'Connell or his campaign. Despite such actions, O'Connell retained a rather poor opinion of journalists and in terms of winning the favour of reporters sent to cover his speeches he was not the most tactful. In 1826 he engaged in a public row with reporters present at a Catholic Association meeting:

> In the middle of a speech he broke off to accuse them of interrupting him, threatening them with expulsion from the hall. Not, he continued, that he had any desire to be reported by them; indeed, he would much prefer that they should not report him, for he "never in his life saw anything so shameful, so disgraceful, as the brevity, the inaccuracy and the imperfection of the reports". The editor of the *Evening Post*, who was present, intervened to protest that there surely could be no designed misrepresentation. O'Connell agreed. The fault, he said, rose not from intention, "but from total incapacity".[13]

In response, the reporters held a meeting, refuted the allegation that O'Connell had been misrepresented and claimed he was abusing the press to disguise his own political inconsistency. Whatever the truth of the matter, Charles Gavan Duffy, who arrived in Dublin to take up a position at the *Morning Register,* found that journalism was not quite what he had expected:

> The Dublin journalists, when I came to know them, were a marvel to me. They resembled nothing I had associated in day dreams with the profession I was about to embrace…I thought of a publicist as a man somewhat combative and self-willed perhaps, but abundantly informed, and with settled convictions, for which he was willing to face all odds…But the society into which I was now introduced swarmed with the gipsies of literature, men who lived careless, driftless lives, without thought of to-morrow. The staff of the journals which supported O'Connell had slight sympathy with his policy, and few settled opinions or purpose of any sort…To the reporters, for the most part, public life was a stage play, where a man gesticulated and perorated according as his role was cast by his stage manager…The dream I had had of journalism as a mission had a rude awakening.[14]

As if to prove O'Connell's poor view of reporters and their abilities, in his memoir Duffy recounted the activities of Christy Hughes, then the doyen of Dublin reporters. Having been dispatched to cover one of O'Connell's annual after-dinner speeches to a Dublin charity, Hughes, 'having relished the good things at dinner too keenly, lost his note-book containing the report of O'Connell's speech'. Using the magpie's memory that is the stock of any good reporter, Hughes 'made good the deficiency by turning back to the speech of the previous year, cutting it out of the file of the *Freeman* and republishing it; and nobody, it was said, discovered the substitution, not even O'Connell himself'.[15] Reporters, in turn, had a poor view of editorial staff. When Duffy was promoted to the editorial ranks, Hughes mockingly consoled him by noting that 'when a fellow is found too stupid to be a good reporter they immediately make him an editor'.[16]

Pressures on journalists

Throughout the 1830s Irish journalism continued to flex its autonomy. In May 1838 the country's first representative body (a 'press association') for journalists was established. A meeting of editors and reporters passed a series of resolutions stating that the interest and respectability of the Dublin press would be advanced by such a body, and that it

would help to bridge the disparity between the standing of the literary profession and its influence. A committee of two members from each daily paper, one from each evening and weekly paper, and optional ex-officio membership for proprietors was established. The *Morning Register* welcomed the association by noting that, 'want of a cordial intercommunication and co-operation has left the individual members of the press a place in the social scale far below that to which their collective influence upon society and the importance of their profession justly gives them claim'. However, the association seems to have little impact on Irish journalism: Charles Gavan Duffy blamed a lack of public spirit on the part of editors for its demise.[17]

The failure of this body probably had much to do with the newspapers' dependence on advertising – including the patronage bestowed by O'Connell. This dependence was amply demonstrated in an ugly incident in 1839 when O'Connell clashed directly with the editors of newspapers that were sympathetic to him. Having revived his campaign for Repeal of the Act of Union O'Connell found it stirred little interest among the press. The issue had died in 1834 as O'Connell had concentrated on reform rather than repeal, and editors were wary of giving his new campaign blanket coverage. Advocating the break up of the Union was considered seditious and some editors, particularly Michael Staunton at the *Morning Register*, believed an objective rather than a sycophantic press would be more beneficial to O'Connell. Such views did not sit well with O'Connell: in an after-dinner speech in 1839 he criticised the press for failing to give his campaign the coverage he felt it deserved. Staunton attempted to reply but was shouted down, and, as O'Connell continued speaking, the reporters walked out to a crescendo of hisses and volleys of leftover dinner.[18] The following day, the *Freeman's Journal* and the *Morning Register*, which were generally sympathetic to O'Connell, expressed disgust at the incident and the *Register* published an advert signed by the reporters (including Charles Gavan Duffy) who had been present to the effect that:

> …having respect to our own character, and holding the independence of the press, to be the foundation of public liberty, and considering that a mean submission under the circumstances would be a surrender of those principles which Mr

> O'Connell professes a desire to establish, we hold ourselves justified in total suppression of all the proceedings which took place upon the occasion.[19]

O'Connell's response to this boycott was swift: the Repeal Association contacted the various newspaper proprietors to remind them of the advertising which it purchased. The subsequent edition of the *Pilot* published O'Connell's speech, which, it claimed, had been omitted 'by mistake'. The *Freeman's Journal* sacked the reporter it had sent to the function and published O'Connell's speech. In an open letter to the readers of the *Morning Register* Staunton informed them of O'Connell's actions, but given that the association's adverts were one of the few sources of advertising revenue for liberal newspapers, Staunton settled relations with O'Connell. At a subsequent Repeal Association meeting O'Connell accused the reporters of 'political impertinence in taking what I said to themselves, and refusing to publish the proceedings'.[20]

In 1840 the press established a minor victory in terms of access to meetings of public authorities. That year, the north and south Dublin Poor Law boards decided to allow reporters into their meetings. Shortly afterwards, the Poor Law Commissioners ordered that the boards cease this practice. In their view while the decisions of the boards had to be made public, the deliberations leading to decisions should be kept private. The fear was that board members might be unduly swayed by pubic opinion and that publication of debates might drive capable individuals from the board because their 'well-considered judgment could be liable to be borne down by the fluency of members more practiced in public debate and speaking under the existing influence of having what they say reported in the newspapers'.[21] Faced with opposition the Commissioners bowed to pressure and declared that reporters could be admitted but could also be excluded if any member of the board objected to their presence. This new situation allowed newspapers to draw attention to the meetings from which reporters had been excluded. It also allowed for some misunderstandings to occur: in October 1841 the chairman of the north Dublin board complained of misrepresentation of a board meeting in the *Freeman's Journal*. He subsequently had to concede that no reporter had been present at the meeting and that information (or misinformation) had been passed to a reporter by a board member. This situation, the *Pilot* declared, would not have occurred if reporters had been

present. While journalists did not establish an absolute right to report on the meeting of any public body, from the 1840s onwards readers certainly became accustomed to seeing accounts of these meetings in newspapers. Many public bodies realised that excluding reporters only aroused suspicion.[22]

Journalism in the aftermath of the famine

During the second half of the nineteenth century Ireland's population became more urban centred. This was a legacy of the famine but also a result of railway construction. In 1850 Ireland had roughly 400 miles of railway; by 1870 this had increased to almost 2,000 miles.[23] Newspapers and journalism thrived in this era, and the development of towns along the railway routes prompted the development of the provincial press. As Richard Comerford pointed out, the railway not only carried people and goods it also carried ideas and allowed the postal service to operate at new levels of efficiency and frequency. The railway also facilitated the expansion of the telegraph as the railway lines provided secure routes for telegraph poles and wires. The completion of a submarine cable from Howth to Holyhead in 1852 incorporated the Irish telegraph into the wider system of the British Empire and allowed for the transmission of news almost instantaneously. From this time parliamentary news appeared in Dublin newspapers as quickly as it did in the London papers. As a result, Dublin papers grew in popularity from the 1850s onwards: in 1882 the *Irish Times* informed readers that it was printing from 'sixteen to seventeen or more columns of debates, comprising nearly forty thousand telegraphed words per night'.[24]

Reform of the so-called knowledge taxes also added to the development of the newspaper industry. The tax on advertisements was abolished in 1853, stamp duty was abolished in 1855, and the tax on newsprint was abolished in 1861. Greater literacy also helped. The establishment of a network of Catholic secondary schools around the country assisted in increasing literacy rates: in 1841, 47% of the population aged five and upwards were described as literate; by 1881 this figure had risen to 75%.[25] Political reform also empowered more and more people. Successive electoral reform in 1850 and 1867 extended the franchise and the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872 removed the power of landlords to intimidate tenants into voting for particular candidates. As more newspapers were established the number of journalists employed increased. In the 1861

census editors, authors and reporters accounted for 259 people. These numbers increased to 388 in 1881, 651 in 1891, 807 in 1901 and 1,108 in 1911.[26] Irish newspapers and journalism evolved alongside major political debates and constitutional change and the sector provided an attractive profession for those of average means who were interested in politics. As Maire-Louise Legg put it, 'growing numbers of nationalists saw journalism as a respectable way to live because, unlike law, it could not be seen as supporting the government'.[27]

The growth of the Irish newspaper industry worried the government in London: it was particularly concerned about the Fenian press that emerged in the 1860s. In 1863 the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) leader James Stephens established the *Irish People,* 'a goldmine of separatist declamation'.[28] The failed IRB rising of March 1867 resulted in a clampdown on the press and the imprisonment of several journalists. A. M. Sullivan of the *Nation* and Richard Piggott of *The Irishman* were both sent to prison for the publication of seditious material.[29] Piggott, in particular, irked the government with the publication of a series of articles on the ill-treatment of Fenian prisoners; a series that included the story of how prominent Fenian Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa had been handcuffed continuously (meals and night-time excluded) for thirty-five days as punishment for emptying his chamber-pot over the governor of the prison.[30] After the unsuccessful 1867 rising, attention turned to land reform – a campaign that politicised journalism as never before. Throughout the 1880s the press played a central role in the growth of the Land League and its campaign for land reform: a process helped by the fact that many newspaper proprietors and editors were senior Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) politicians. Since land was at the heart of the political struggle it was also at the centre of journalistic life: land sales, evictions, boycotts, crop raids, Land League meetings and attacks on landlords dominated the work of journalists. Coverage of such events was interpreted as incitement to violence by the London government. One writer went so far as to describe the role of the Irish press in the land war as 'journalistic terrorism'.[31]

Interestingly, in contrast to O'Connell during the Repeal campaign, Home Rule leader and champion of land reform, Charles Stewart Parnell cultivated the company and trust of reporters. As *Irish Times* reporter Andrew Dunlop recalled, 'Mr Parnell, so far as my experience went…was always civil and courteous to journalists. He frequently

travelled in the same compartment with the reporters when going to or returning from a meeting in the country'.[32] But as with the O'Connell's campaigns earlier in the century, journalists often found themselves caught between the Land League and the authorities, and, during the land war, there existed a strong sense of professional solidarity. Sharing transport from town to town, covering the same campaign meetings, court cases and evictions brought them together in a spirit of mutual defence and camaraderie. When, at one function, Dunlop expressed a fear of being asked leave, his colleagues assured him that should that happen then they would leave also.[33] As well as straddling the fine line between reporting the Land League's resolutions and avoiding charges of conspiracy, there was the threat of physical violence. Reporters, who were generally outsiders, had to make sure that they were not mistaken for bailiffs at evictions. In his memoir, Dunlop recounted how, at one eviction the crowd mistook him for a bailiff, and how, at another, he was thrown into a river with a cry of "Down wid ye" by a man who had offered to carry him across.[34]

The importance of shorthand to a journalist could not be overstated. Dunlop described it as 'the "open sesame" to journalistic work'[35], while Bodkin observed 'if a man can write even a hundred words a minute and read them at sight he is worth a trial as a reporter'.[36] Journalists were conscientious too – sometimes to the point of extremity. On joining the *Freeman's Journal*, Mathias Bodkin was told the story of the diligent reporter who, when crossing Carlisle Bridge, witnessed a man sink in the mud of the river Liffey and responded thus: 'Hastily he glanced at his watch as the head of the victim vanished. "My poor fellow", he exclaimed with professional sympathy, "you are unfortunately too late for the evening paper, but I'll give you a good par. {paragraph} to-morrow".[37] Bodkin was later sent to a circus to cover a trapeze artist who, on this occasion, having been propelled by a huge spring towards the centre of the dome, missed both the trapeze and the safely net and ended up in the orchestra's pit. As Bodkin stood 'dizzy with the horror of the scene, not knowing if the victim were alive or dead' a fellow journalist whispered in his ear: 'That will make a good par. for the Press Association if we get it off at once'.[38]

Given their distinctive role and skills, their strong sense of solidarity and the dangers they faced in doing their job, it was not surprising that thoughts turned to a representative association. The formation of the National Association of Journalists of Great Britain in 1884 prompted Irish journalists to meet in 1886 to discuss the establishment of a similar body in Ireland.[39] The Association of Irish Journalists (AIJ) was founded in February 1887 to 'incorporate the profession of journalists in Ireland for their mutual advantage…[and]…to represent the status of the profession and protect its interests'.[40] James A. Scott, editor of the *Irish Times*, was a leading proponent of the association and noted that before it came into being journalists were:

> …utterly unknown to each other; they were jealous of each other; they were often looked upon as in antagonism to one another – they were regarded as people who had no recognised positions. The term Bohemian was very frequently applied to them. Now they had got beyond that. They considered themselves entitled to be regarded as a profession as well as other professions.[41]

The AIJ brought journalists from all four provinces together and one of its first tasks was to establish a benevolent fund for the relief of distress caused by illness or the death of members. The former editor of Parnell's *United Irishman* – and Land League activist – William O'Brien was elected AIJ president in 1888. The following year the association split. It met in February 1889 to consider the imprisonment of a reporter – William Reeves – who had been imprisoned for refusing to give evidence in court. But the meeting also passed an unscheduled motion of sympathy on the imprisonment of its president, William O'Brien, for Land League activities. Two days later, the Ulster members, and a substantial number of Dublin reporters resigned in protest at the AIJ having involved itself in political matters.[42] These reporters established Irish branches of the Institute of Journalists in 1890. The latter organisation was, from 1907 onwards, replaced by the National Union of Journalists (NUJ). Despite the infighting, the emergence of representative organisations helped consolidate journalism as a profession at the cusp of the twentieth century.

In a sense, just as Parnell had politicised the press in Ireland, his fall from grace heralded the de-politicisation of the press. At the very least, it coincided with the rise of the ‘new journalism’ as espoused by T. P. O’Connor.[43] The O’Shea divorce that brought down Parnell split the Irish Parliamentary Party; it also split the nationalist press that had demonstrated a united front during the land war. The eventual realignment of the press resulted in William Martin Murphy launching the *Irish Independent* in 1905. Ireland’s first halfpenny paper, the *Independent* was a wholly commercial enterprise that owed much to T.P. O’Connor’s view that journalism should reflect readers’ tastes and lifestyles rather than solely report on political developments. In 1888, O’Connor had launched the *Star*, in which he promised:

> …plenty of entirely unpolitical literature – sometimes humorous, sometimes pathetic; anecdotal, statistical, the craze of fashions, and the arts of housekeeping – now and then a short, dramatic and picturesque tale. In our reporting columns we shall do away with the hackneyed style of obsolete journalism; and the men and women that figure in the forum or the pulpit or the law court shall be presented as they are – living breathing, in blushes or in tears – and not merely by the dead words that they utter.[44]

This ‘new journalism’ coincided with innovations in printing technology and a growth in advertising that heralded the rise of the mass circulation newspaper. In journalistic terms there was a gradual shift away from concentrating solely on the political issues of the day and a move towards personalised reporting, human-interest stories and interviews. Verbatim reports of parliamentary speeches were replaced by compressed summaries. There were also changes in layout: the paragraph replaced the lengthy column while headlines and crossheads were introduced to break up the masses of text on each page. The success of the *Irish Independent* demonstrated a marked demand for this ‘new journalism’. By 1914 it had a circulation of 100,000 compared to 34,000 for the *Irish Times*, which remained the voice of southern unionism.

Nonetheless, the connections between politics and journalism continued. The cultural nationalist and independence movements of the late 1800s and early 1900s had their own publications and journalists were leading proponents of both traditions. The political press made a potent resurgence with the establishment of the *Irish Press* in 1931. But as the decades passed and the NUJ established negotiating rights with newspaper proprietors in 1947, there was greater emphasis on journalism as a profession. Agreed terms and conditions of employment and shared norms of objectivity facilitated greater journalistic independence and career mobility. By the 1960s the era of the politically partisan press had truly ended and journalism as a distinct profession had been firmly established in Ireland.

Notes

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[1] R. Munter, *The History of the Irish Newspaper, 1685–1760* (Cambridge: University Press, 1967), pp. 6-7 & p. 12.

[2] R. Munter, p. 92.

[3] R. Munter, p. 93.

[4] R. Munter, p. 94.

[5] R. Munter, p. 97.

[6] R. Munter, p. 189.

[7] R. Munter, pp. 184-5.

[8] B. Inglis, *The Freedom of the Press in Ireland 1784-1841* (London: Faber & Faber, 1954), p. 117.

[9] B. Inglis, 1954, pp. 167-9.

[10] B. Inglis, 1954, p. 176.

[11] B. Inglis, 1954, pp. 167-9.

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[12] M. MacDonagh, *Daniel O'Connell and the Story of Catholic Emancipation* (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1924), pp. 135-37.

[13] B. Inglis, 'O'Connell and the Irish Press 1800-42', *Irish Historical Studies*, 8:29, 1952, pp. 19-20 of pp. 1-27.

[14] C. G. Duffy, *My Life in Two Hemispheres* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1898) pp. 27-8.

[15] C. G. Duffy, p. 30.

[16] C. G. Duffy, p. 34.

[17] C.G. Duffy, p. 27.

[18] *The Pilot*, 23 Jan 1839, cited in Inglis, (1952), p. 24.

[19] *Register*, 23 Jan 1839, cited in Inglis, (1952), p. 25.

[20] *Register*, 26 Jan 1839, cited in Inglis, (1952) pp. 25-26.

[21] B. Inglis, 1954, pp. 219-20.

[22] B. Inglis, 1954, pp. 219-20.

[23] R. Comerford, *The Fenians in Context, Irish Politics and Society 1848–82* (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1985), pp. 374-5.

[24] *Irish Times*, 20 March 1882, p. 4.

[25] L. M. Cullen, *Eason & Son: A History* (Dublin: Eason, 1989), pp. 5-7.

[26] L. M. Cullen, p. 7.

[27] M. L. Legg, *Newspapers and Nationalism: The Irish Provincial Press 1850–92* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), p. 72.

[28] R. Comerford, p. 109.

[29] R. Comerford, p. 149.

[30] R. Comerford, p. 171-2.

[31] I. S. Leadam, *Coercive Measures in Ireland* (London: National Press Agency, 1880), p. 29, cited in Legg, p. 157.

[32] A. Dunlop, *Fifty Years of Irish Journalism* (Dublin: Hanna & Neale, 1911), p. 30.

[33] A. Dunlop, p. 39.

[34] A. Dunlop, pp. 62-3 and pp. 137-8.

[35] A. Dunlop, p. 3.

[36] M. Bodkin, *Recollections of an Irish Judge: Press, Bar and Parliament* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1914), p. 28.

[37] M. Bodkin, p. 29.

[38] M. Bodkin, pp. 29-30.

[39] *Irish Times*, 18 September 1886, p. 6.

[40] *Irish Times*, 7 February 1887, p. 6.

[41] *Irish Times*, 19 September 1887, p. 9

[42] *Irish Times*, 18 & 25 February, 1889, p. 6

[43] See T. P. O'Connor, 'The New Journalism', *The New Review* 1 1889, pp. 423- 34.

[44] *Star*, 17 January 1888, cited in A. Havighurst, *Radical Journalist, H.W. Massinghim 1860–1924* (Cambridge: University Press, 1974), pp. 18-9.