How Winnipeg invented the media

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Introduction

The first newspaper published in Manitoba – *The Nor'Wester* – appeared on December 28, 1859; it lasted almost 10 years.

The Nor'-Wester.

Vol. 1.—No. 1. RED RIVER SETTLEMENT, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1859. Price, Sixpence.

Many other publications followed, but none more important than the *Manitoba Free Press*, started by William F. Luxton as a weekly in 1872; it became a daily newspaper in 1874.[1] Near the end of 1889, the *Free Press* absorbed its remaining competitor, the *Sun*, and there was a brief period in early 1890 when the *Free Press* was Winnipeg's only daily newspaper.

But Robert Lorne Richardson, a former city editor of the *Sun*, launched *The Winnipeg Tribune* on January 28, 1890.

In order to pay for its ambitions, the *Free Press* had accepted financial support in 1888 and 1889 from two prominent Canadians, Sir Donald Smith and William Cornelius Van Horne – in effect, from the Canadian Pacific Railway.

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[1] The *Manitoba Free Press* changed its name to the *Winnipeg Free Press* in 1931.

Luxton was not prepared to bend to the editorial dictates of Smith and Van Horne, but he was also not able to raise the funds to buy out their interests in the paper. He was forced out in 1893.[2]

After Luxton left the *Free Press*, he joined forces with a number of Manitoba Conservatives to start a new daily newspaper in 1894, called the *Nor'Wester*, which became the *Winnipeg Telegram* in 1898, although Luxton left the paper in that same year.

In the 1896 federal election, the *Tribune*'s Richardson was elected to the House of Commons as a Liberal representing Lisgar. Later in 1896, in a by-election, Clifford Sifton was elected as a Liberal to represent Brandon in the House of Commons, and was appointed Minister of the Interior in the Laurier Government.

Sifton and Richardson quickly became bitter enemies and rivals in a struggle for control of the Liberal party in Manitoba and the North-West. By the middle of 1897, Sifton had decided that Richardson's *Tribune* could not be relied upon for the kind of political support he felt was necessary, so he entered into negotiations to purchase the *Free Press* from Smith and Van Horne.[3]

To this point, Winnipeg was clearly inventing its own media, for and about the city and the region.

But, starting in 1897, Winnipeg and Manitoba have also been linked to a remarkable number of people and developments that have helped shape the course of the media far beyond the borders of the city, the province, or the country.

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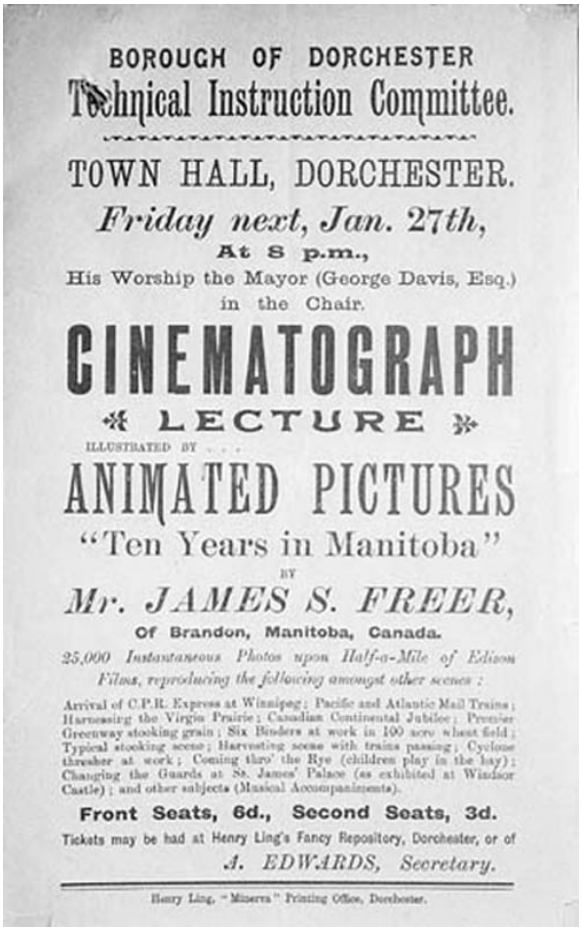
[2] David J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton, Volume One: The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900* (University of British Columbia Press), 1981, pp. 209-229.
[3] *Ibid*.

The first Canadian movie

James Freer emigrated from Bristol, England, in 1888, to farm near Brandon. In 1897, Freer produced the first Canadian movie, titled "Ten Years in Manitoba". In 1898 and 1899, with help from the CPR, he toured Britain and used the film as a way of encouraging people to come to Manitoba.[4]

In 1901, Freer appeared in Winnipeg before the "royal reception executive committee", and asked for a grant of $25 to help him purchase more film; his request was referred to a civic committee.[5]

So, in the space of four years, we have the first Canadian movie, and the first example of a Canadian film-maker asking for a government grant, both right here in Manitoba.



BOROUGH OF DORCHESTER

Technical Instruction Committee.

TOWN HALL, DORCHESTER.

Friday next, Jan. 27th,

At 8 p.m.,

His Worship the Mayor (George Davis, Esq.)
in the Chair.

CINEMATOGRAPH

LECTURE

ILLUSTRATED BY . . .

ANIMATED PICTURES

"Ten Years in Manitoba"

BY

Mr. JAMES S. FREER,

Of Brandon, Manitoba, Canada.

25,000 Instantaneous Photos upon Half-a-Mile of Edison Films, reproducing the following amongst other scenes :

Arrival of C.P.R. Express at Winnipeg; Pacific and Atlantic Mail Trains; Harnessing the Virgin Prairie; Canadian Continental Jubilee; Premier Greenway stooking grain; Six Binders at work in 100 acre wheat field; Typical stooking scene; Harvesting scene with trains passing; Cyclone thresher at work; Coming thro' the Rye (children play in the hay); Changing the Guards at St. James' Palace (as exhibited at Windsor Castle); and other subjects (Musical Accompaniments).

Front Seats, 6d., Second Seats, 3d.

Tickets may be had at Henry Ling's Fancy Repository, Dorchester, or of

A. EDWARDS, Secretary.

Henry Ling, "Minerva" Printing Office, Dorchester.

A handbill from James Freer's tour of Britain, 1899.

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[4] Peter Morris, *Embattled Shadows, A History of Canadian Cinema*, 1895-1939 (McGill-Queen's University Press), 1978, p. 30.

[5] "The Committee on Royal Welcome", *Manitoba Free Press*, August 27, 1901, p. 4. The "royal reception executive committee" was made up of representatives of the Province, the City of Winnipeg, and other prominent citizens; its task involved planning for the visit to Winnipeg of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York in September 1901.

The creation of Canadian Press

The year 1907 marked a turning point in the history of the media in Canada, because of a dispute that started in Winnipeg.

In 1907, the Canadian Pacific Railway Telegraph Company had a monopoly in the distribution of the Associated Press wire service in Canada. In July 1907, the railway telegraph company sent a note from its office at McDermot and Main to its three Winnipeg daily newspaper clients. The note told them they would no longer receive the full New York AP feed every day from Eastern Canada; instead, the telegraph company would decide what to send the papers from St. Paul, Minnesota. And the telegraph company also told the three newspapers that, on August 1, their charges for receiving the AP service would increase substantially.[6]

Shortly after receiving the note from the CPR telegraph company, and despite their rivalries, four people met – R.L. Richardson of the *Tribune*, M.E. Nichols of the *Telegram*, and E.H. Macklin and J.W. Dafoe of the *Free Press*. They decided that the telegraph company had overstepped the boundaries between content and carriage, and they set to work to create an alternative.[7]

Free Press

MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1907. EIGHTEEN PAGES. No. 80.

SHAREHOLDERS OF NOVA SCOTIA MAKE CLAIM

Want to Rank as First Claim Creditors in York County Loan Distribution.

Toronto, Oct. 6.—Shall the Nova Scotia shareholders of the ill-fated York County Loan and Savings company be placed in the "creditors" class and receive a big preference in the distribution of the assets? This was the question placed officially before George Kappelle, the court's appointed referee at noon yesterday by C. A. Masten, counsel for the Bluenoses among the York County shareholders. His contention, generally speaking, was to the effect that the directors of the York County had no legal right to sell shares in Nova Scotia without the sanction of the Nova Scotia legislature. Because the shares were sold to people of that province, he says, they are entitled to rank as first claim creditors.

As the Nova Scotia shareholders number four or five thousand, and hold half a million in shares, or "claims," as they desire to call them, if they were let in on the ground floor as creditors, the shareholders in Ontario and the other provinces would suffer considerably, and their money receive a much larger discount. Consequently, Mr. Masten's application will be fought vigorously by W. M. Douglas, K.C., representing the other shareholders, and Alex. McGregor, for the National Trust Co., liquidators of the estate. If the referee decides in favor of the Nova Scotians, which is thought unlikely, there will probably be an appeal at Osgoode Hall.

TRIED TO PUT ITS COLLAR ON THE WINNIPEG NEWSPAPERS

Interesting and Instructive Correspondence Between the Superintendent of C.P.R. Telegraphs and Winnipeg Newspapers.

C. P. R. Gives the Newspapers the Option of Submitting to Its Conditions or Being Deprived of Press Rates on Their Messages---The Newspapers Decline to Recognize That the C. P. R. Has Any Rights Beyond Those of a Common Carrier---A Proposal to Submit Matter to the Railway Commission Declined---C. P. R. Carries Out Its Threat and Deprives Newspapers of Press Rates.

The Free Press publishes herewith ... to press messages, running into hun-

"that the Manitoba Free Press has been granted exceptionally low rates on special matter, on condition that despatches are for publication in the Manitoba Free Press only at the point addressed."

Will you please oblige me with your authority for this statement. Yours truly,

(Sgd.) JOHN W. DAFOE.

C.P.R. LAYS DOWN THE LAW.

Winnipeg, Sept. 26, 1907.

J. W. Dafoe, Esq.,
Editor, Manitoba Free Press,
Winnipeg.

Dear Sir:—

Your letter of 25th in reply to mine of same date is received. You do not say which part of the statement contained in your letter you dispute, but I presume the latter, as there can be no

Part of the front page of the *Free Press*, October 7, 1907.

[6] For a detailed history of the origins of Canadian Press, see: M.E. Nichols, *(CP) The Story of The Canadian Press* (The Ryerson Press), 1948.
[7] *Ibid*.

The first name they had for that alternative was Western Associated Press, but as the alternative spread to other newspapers across Canada, it adopted the name we know it by today – Canadian Press.

"Ralph Connor" meets the President

A hundred years ago, Winnipeg was home to one of the most famous living Canadians – the novelist Ralph Connor. But "Ralph Connor" was, in fact, the pen name of one of Winnipeg's prominent citizens, the Rev. Charles William Gordon of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church. His fame spread far beyond the borders of Canada, and his fans included Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. In fact, Gordon attended Wilson's inauguration in 1913.

After World War I broke out, Gordon enlisted, at the age of 54, as a chaplain to the Canadian forces. But the British government felt that Gordon's fame could be better used in attempting to encourage the U.S. to enter the war. So Gordon came back to Winnipeg at Christmas 1916, and then, in early 1917, he set off on a speaking tour of the U.S.[8]

On Sunday, February 18, 1917, Gordon spoke to a large audience at the First Congregational Church in Washington, D.C.[9] The next day, he sent a note to the White House. On Tuesday, February 20, 1917, at 4:30 PM, Rev. Charles W. Gordon of Winnipeg was ushered in to meet the President of the United States, and he proceeded to give President Wilson a tongue-lashing over the U.S.A.'s continued neutrality.[10]

Newspaperwomen and the right to vote

In the years leading up to 1916, a different kind of battle had been fought in Manitoba – the political battle to allow women to vote. In her book, *Women Who Made the News*, Marjory Lang talks about the famous "Mock Parliament" held in Winnipeg in January 1914, and notes:

> In the skit that made the Winnipeg Political Equality League famous and Manitoba premier Sir Rodmond Roblin infamous, newspaper-women took the leading roles.[11]

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[8] See: Charles W. Gordon, *Postscript to Adventure, The Autobiography of Ralph Connor* (Farrar & Rinehart), 1938; and correspondence in the Charles William Gordon Papers, University of Manitoba Archives.

[9] "'Ralph Connor' to Speak Here", *The Washington Post*, February 18, 1917, p. 6.

[10] White House Appointment Book for Tuesday, February 20, 1917, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Library of Congress; Gordon, *Postscript to Adventure*, pp. 294-302

[11] Marjory Lang, *Women Who Made the News* (McGill-Queen's University Press), 1999, p. 226. According to Lang: "Kennethe Haig of the *Manitoba Free Press* played the attorney general, Isabel Graham of the *Grain Growers' Guide* was speaker, while Genevieve Lipsett-Skinner, political correspondent for a variety of papers including the conservative *Winnipeg Telegram*, became minister of economy and agriculture. The Beynon sisters, Lillian Thomas and Francis, acted as members of the opposition, while Nellie McClung clinched her place in women's history by her

Two years later, in January 1916, Manitoba became the first province in Canada to extend the right to vote to women.

1920

Let's move forward now, to 1920, when we find that Manitoba had over 100 newspapers of all types, including dailies, weeklies, and many ethnic newspapers serving immigrant communities.

In January 1920, the three daily newspapers in Winnipeg were unable to publish for six days because of a shortage of newsprint. The student newspaper at the University of Manitoba, *The Manitoban*, had sufficient newsprint, and published as a daily for four of those days.[12]

THE MANITOBAN

Published Daily by the Students' Union of the University of Manitoba and the Veteran Press Ltd.

No. 3A — MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 1920 — PRICE FIVE CENTS

RUSSELL CONVICTION STANDS

WIRELESS NEWS OF THE WORLD OVER

Fail To "Shoot" Woodrow

Secret Service Men Intervene.
(By the Manitoban Wireless.)

Washington, Jan. 18.—Two local photographers seeking to emulate the feat of the Dutch photographer who snapped the ex-Kaiser at his exile in Amerongen by "shooting" President Wilson, were foiled by secret service men and taken to the local police court.

It appears that the president was being wheeled around in a chair while recuperating from his breakdown. Two photographers had hidden themselves in a load of hay and were preparing to snap the president as he was wheeled past. The secret service had got wind of their intention and surrounded the load of hay, captured the would-be photographers and escorted them to the jail.

Drifting Ship Asks Aid

S.S. John Adams Loses Rudder in

Private Property Cannot Be Overthrown

Socialist Programme Impracticable—Presidential Nominee Speaks To New York Lawyers

(By the Manitoban Wireless.)

"The institution of private property can never be permanently or even long overthrown by socialist programme," said Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University. He is a presidential candidate for the Republican nomination and was speaking before the New York Bar Association.

Franciscan Mother Dies

(Manitoban Wireless Despatch.)

WILMINGTON, DEL. — Mother Mary Stanislaus, Mother General of the Franciscan Sisters in the United States, died suddenly on the 18th

Called Back Home

LORD JELLICOE.

(Manitoban Wireless Despatch.)

RIO JANIERO.—Owing to the menacing situation in Russia, and to

APPEAL QUASHED ON ALL COUNTS

Jury's Decision Upheld

The Court of Appeal this morning at 11 o'clock quashed the appeal of Robert Cassidy, K.C., for a new trial for R. B. Russell. The judges, Fullerton, Cameron, Perdue, Haggart and Dennistoun brought in a unanimous verdict. The fourteen objections submitted as grounds for a new trial were all ruled out.

Russell was not present at the trial. Robert Cassidy and E. J. McMurray appeared in his defence. Both took the decision calmly. Mr. Cassidy, after hearing the verdict, asked for permission to bring the case before the Supreme Court, but since the Court of Appeal was totally unanimous, this was disallowed. Mr. Cassidy then intimated that he would appeal to the Privy Council.

MOSCOW.—The arrest of Admiral Kolchak at Irkutsk has been confirmed. He has given up central of the all-Russian government in

ELMWOOD PROTESTS UPHELD

The front page of one of the daily issues of *The Manitoban*.
Note the reference to news received by "wireless" (radio).

Since *The Manitoban* did not have access to news services, it monitored radio broadcasts from the U.S. and used them as a source for non-local news. The editor of *The Manitoban* was a young man named Graham Spry, whose interest in radio would later have a profound influence on the development of this new medium in Canada.

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cheeky portrayal of the fatuous manner of the premier himself. Directing the whole production was Harriet Walker, editor of *Curtain Call*."

[12] "News Famine in Winnipeg: Improvised College Daily Only Paper in Manitoba City," *Editor & Publisher*, January 22, 1920, p. 9. *The Manitoban* published as a daily from January 19-22, 1920.

Seditious libel and freedom of the press

A number of trials of the leaders of the 1919 general strike were going on in Winnipeg in early 1920, and one of them had important implications for the freedom of the press in Canada. Two of the strike leaders had been charged with seditious libel. The first of those libel trials to proceed was against Fred Dixon, a member of the Manitoba Legislature, and it started on January 20, 1920. Dixon chose to defend himself, to defend the proposition that a citizen had the right to criticize the government. The jury's verdict was delivered on February 16, 1920 – not guilty. Dixon left the courtroom, walked across Broadway, and resumed his seat in the Manitoba Legislature.[13]

As a result of the Dixon verdict, the Crown decided not to proceed with the seditious libel case against the other person that had been charged – J.S. Woodsworth. Woodsworth was subsequently elected to Parliament, became the first leader of the CCF, and the rest of that story is, as they say, truly history.

In 1835, in Nova Scotia, when he won acquittal against charges of criminal libel, Joseph Howe famously stated, "Leave an unshackled press as a legacy to your children." [14] There is a philosophical link that runs from Howe in Nova Scotia to Dixon in Winnipeg to our current Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Southam and Sifton and anti-competitive behaviour

And that was just in the first two months of 1920. In June 1920, the Southam company purchased *The Winnipeg Tribune*. In October 1920, Southam also purchased the *Winnipeg Telegram*, and merged it into the *Tribune*, leaving Winnipeg with two daily newspapers.[15]

About a year later, Winnipeg was the focus of one of the more interesting chapters in the history of Canadian newspapers. It started with a letter from Wilson Southam to Sir Clifford Sifton. Southam had entered into a series of arrangements to minimize the competition with its rival in Ottawa, and now was seeking to do the same thing in Winnipeg.[16]

On October 25, 1921, Southam wrote to Sifton to suggest that the two publishers form an arrangement in Winnipeg similar to the arrangement that Southam had made with its competitor in Ottawa:

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[13] "Winnipeg Jury Acquits Dixon in Strike Case", *The Globe*, February 17, 1920, p. 11. See also: Jack Walker, *The Great Canadian Sedition Trials: The Courts and the Winnipeg General Strike 1919-1920* (published as a joint project by the Legal Research Institute of the University of Manitoba and the Canadian Legal History Project; edited by Duncan Fraser), 2004, Chapters 17-18.
[14] William Annand, ed., *The Speeches and Public Letters of the Hon. Joseph Howe* (John P. Jewett & Company), 1858, p. 67.
[15] "Southams Purchase Winnipeg Tribune", *Manitoba Free Press*, June 23, 1920, p. 1; "Two Winnipeg Dailies Are Amalgamated", *The Lethbridge Daily Herald*, October 16, 1920, p. 16.
[16] Charles Bruce, *News and the Southams* (Macmillan of Canada), 1968, p. 99.

> I would think the first step in such a task would be to furnish each other with full and complete information in regard to all the departments and details of our respective businesses.[17]

From reviewing the correspondence, it appears that some form of arrangement was developed between the two companies for their Winnipeg newspapers, and that it may have continued (at least to some degree) until the early 1960s.[18]

Radio as "new media"

In the early 1920s, newspapers were still important, but radio was "new media". By 1922, the *Free Press* and *Tribune* had each established radio stations. By 1923, however, the experiments were not going well. At the same time, Manitoba Government Telephones was interested in radio, in part because it saw radio as a potential competitor.

The two daily newspapers agreed to vacate the field, and the telephone system established a new radio station in Winnipeg, CKY. To make that happen, the governments of Manitoba and Canada negotiated a deal in 1923 under which the provincial telephone system would receive 50 per cent of the radio receiver licence fees collected in Manitoba, and would have what amounted to a veto over any other radio station licences in the province.[19]

In 1928, Manitoba Government Telephones added a second radio station, CKX, in Brandon, while exercising its veto over attempts to establish other radio stations in the province.

The head of the Manitoba Telephone System at the time was John Lowry, and it can be argued that, by exercising the powers in the agreement between Canada and Manitoba, he was, in fact, Canada's first regulator of broadcasting.

And here is an interesting historical footnote – in 1923, the federal government indicated its willingness to make similar licence fee sharing arrangements with stations in other provinces, but none of them took Ottawa up on the offer. One can only speculate on how broadcasting in Canada might have developed differently if other stations and/or other provincial governments would have acted

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[17] Letter from W.M. Southam to Sir Clifford Sifton, October 25, 1921; Sir Clifford Sifton Papers, National Archives of Canada.

[18] In *Canadian Newspapers: The Inside Story*, writer Heather Robertson recalls getting her first newspaper job with the *Free Press* in 1963, and then switching newspapers to work for the *Tribune*: "We all knew the fix was in. The editors never admitted it but there was a gentleman's agreement between the *Winnipeg Tribune* and the *Free Press* to preserve the status quo." See: Walter Stewart, ed., *Canadian Newspapers: The Inside Story* (Hurtig Publishers), 1980, p. 134.

[19] For information on the early history of radio in Winnipeg and Manitoba, see: Mary Vipond, "CKY Winnipeg in the 1920s: Canada's Only Experiment in Government Monopoly Broadcasting", *Manitoba History*, Autumn 1986, pp. 2-13; Canada, House of Commons, *Debates* (Hansard), April 27, 1923, pp. 2785-2787; Frank W. Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting 1920-1951* (University of Toronto Press), 1969, pp. 27-28.

on the federal government's willingness to share some of its jurisdiction at that time.

While the business models for radio may have been uncertain, public interest in radio was high. As has been the case with the Internet, teenagers were teaching the technology to adults. One of the teenagers in Winnipeg in the 1920s was a young man named Spencer Caldwell; at 19, he was managing the radio department in the new Hudson's Bay store in downtown Winnipeg. He decided to enter broadcasting as a career. Many years later, in 1961, he was awarded the licence for CTV – Canada's first private television network.[20]

At the same Winnipeg high school Caldwell had attended – Kelvin – two years younger than Caldwell, there was another young man interested in radio – in fact, he had built his own crystal set at the age of 12. His name was Marshall McLuhan.[21]

By the late 1920s, interest in radio had grown sufficiently that the federal government set up the Aird Royal Commission, which recommended a publicly owned system.[22] To support the Aird Commission proposals, Graham Spry, the former editor of *The Manitoban*, helped establish the Canadian Radio League, which lobbied successfully for the creation of a national public broadcaster in Canada.

The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC) was created in 1932 and was replaced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) in 1936. And Spry, of course, is commonly considered to be the father of the CBC.

"The Greatest Man in Canada"

In June 1942, *Fortune* magazine carried an article titled "The Greatest Man in Canada". The article was about one of Canada's greatest journalists, John W. Dafoe, the editor of the *Winnipeg Free Press* from 1901 to his passing in 1944.[23]

Over more than four decades, it was the editorial voice of John W. Dafoe, in the *Free Press*, that helped put Winnipeg on the map. While the *Free Press* tended to favour what might be called a right-wing 19th Century liberalism on economic matters, it was in foreign policy that Dafoe's voice often spoke most forcefully.

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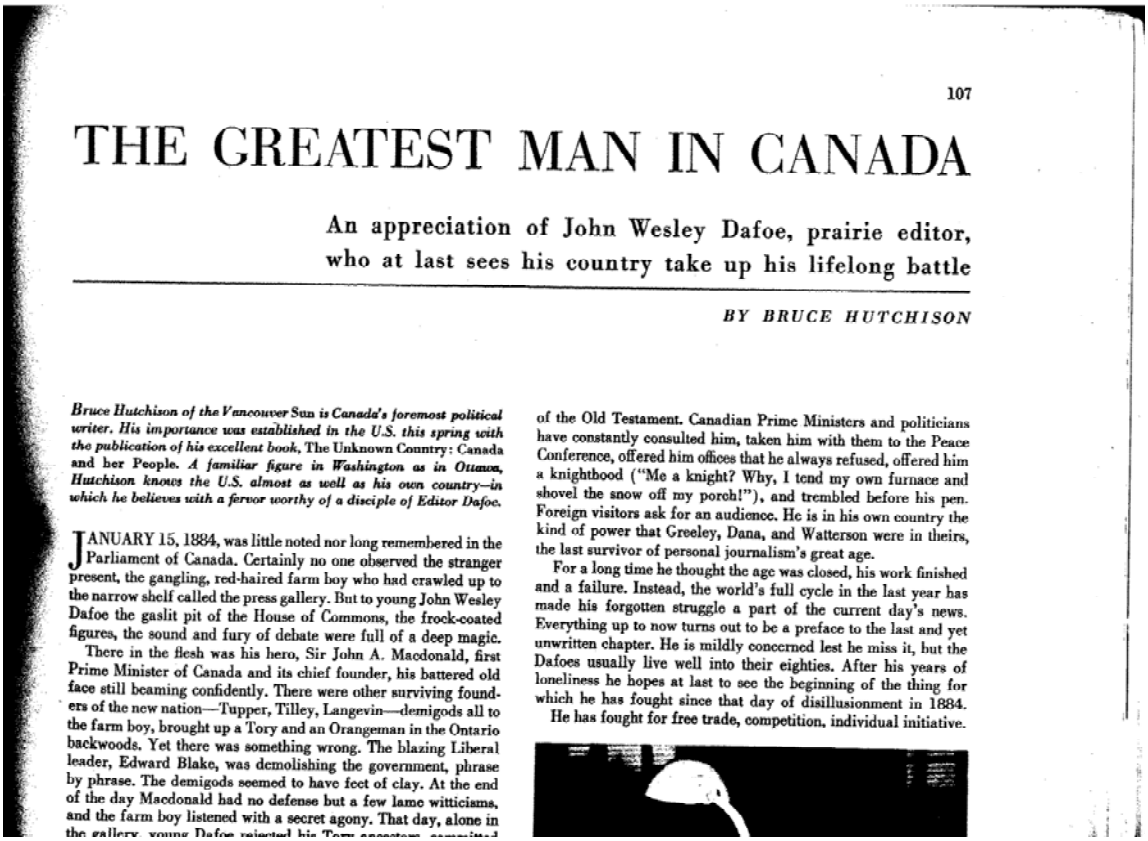
[20] Rae Corelli, "Spencer Caldwell: The Man Who Challenges CBC's TV Supremacy," *The Star Weekly Magazine*, January 13, 1962, p. 20.

[21] W. Terrence Gordon, *Marshall McLuhan: Escape into Understanding* (Stoddart Publishing), 1997, p. 11.

[22] When he was setting up the Royal Commission, Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King asked *Free Press* editor J.W. Dafoe to serve as one of its members, but Dafoe declined. (Letter from King to Dafoe, December 1, 1928; W.L. Mackenzie King Papers, National Archives of Canada.)

[23] Dafoe first came to Winnipeg in 1886, at the age of 20, to work for Luxton at the *Free Press*. Dafoe was one of the original members of the Winnipeg Press Club, formed in 1887 ("Press Club", *Manitoba Daily Free Press*, February 14, 1887, p. 4). He moved to Montreal in 1892, and was attracted back to Winnipeg by Sifton in 1901 to be editor of the *Free Press*.



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THE GREATEST MAN IN CANADA

An appreciation of John Wesley Dafoe, prairie editor, who at last sees his country take up his lifelong battle

BY BRUCE HUTCHISON

Bruce Hutchison of the Vancouver Sun is Canada's foremost political writer. His importance was established in the U.S. this spring with the publication of his excellent book, The Unknown Country: Canada and her People. ***A familiar figure in Washington as in Ottawa, Hutchison knows the U.S. almost as well as his own country—in which he believes with a fervor worthy of a disciple of Editor Dafoe.***

JANUARY 15, 1884, was little noted nor long remembered in the Parliament of Canada. Certainly no one observed the stranger present, the gangling, red-haired farm boy who had crawled up to the narrow shelf called the press gallery. But to young John Wesley Dafoe the gaslit pit of the House of Commons, the frock-coated figures, the sound and fury of debate were full of a deep magic.

There in the flesh was his hero, Sir John A. Macdonald, first Prime Minister of Canada and its chief founder, his battered old face still beaming confidently. There were other surviving founders of the new nation—Tupper, Tilley, Langevin—demigods all to the farm boy, brought up a Tory and an Orangeman in the Ontario backwoods. Yet there was something wrong. The blazing Liberal leader, Edward Blake, was demolishing the government, phrase by phrase. The demigods seemed to have feet of clay. At the end of the day Macdonald had no defense but a few lame witticisms, and the farm boy listened with a secret agony. That day, alone in the gallery, young Dafoe rejected his Tory ancestors, repudiated

of the Old Testament. Canadian Prime Ministers and politicians have constantly consulted him, taken him with them to the Peace Conference, offered him offices that he always refused, offered him a knighthood ("Me a knight? Why, I tend my own furnace and shovel the snow off my porch!"), and trembled before his pen. Foreign visitors ask for an audience. He is in his own country the kind of power that Greeley, Dana, and Watterson were in theirs, the last survivor of personal journalism's great age.

For a long time he thought the age was closed, his work finished and a failure. Instead, the world's full cycle in the last year has made his forgotten struggle a part of the current day's news. Everything up to now turns out to be a preface to the last and yet unwritten chapter. He is mildly concerned lest he miss it, but the Dafoes usually live well into their eighties. After his years of loneliness he hopes at last to see the beginning of the thing for which he has fought since that day of disillusionment in 1884.

He has fought for free trade, competition, individual initiative.

Fortune, June 1942.

In September 1938, Prime Minister Chamberlain of England signed the Munich Agreement with Hitler, effectively giving Nazi Germany control over Czechoslovakia. Many Western media were hesitant to be too critical, since the memory of World War I was only 20 years old. In fact, the BBC deliberately downplayed the opposition to the Munich Agreement at the urging of the British Foreign Office.[24]

Dafoe did not hesitate to be critical. The headline on the lead editorial in the *Free Press* on September 30, 1938, read: "What's the cheering for?" Dafoe took the Munich Agreement apart – and, as a result, there were many in the city that cancelled their subscriptions to the *Free Press* and accused Dafoe of being a warmonger.[25]

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[24] Stewart Purvis, "Why broadcast news was nice to Nazis in '38", *The Times* (London, England), February 4, 2005, p. 54.

[25] Robert J. Young, "Hitler's Early Critics: Canadian Resistance at the Winnipeg Free Press", *Queen's Quarterly*, Winter 1999, pp. 579-586. The article by Young (of the University of Winnipeg) deals with the *Free Press*'s continuing opposition to fascism in the 1930s. Young concludes the article with these words: "The press, at least this one, in this respect, and at this time, had done its job, fulfilled its responsibilities."

By September 1939, events proved that Dafoe was correct. A measure of Dafoe's reputation as an editor can be found in the Dafoe correspondence in the Archives at the University of Manitoba. There is a letter to Dafoe there, dated May 31, 1940. Part of the letter reads:

> ... I and a lot of people with whom I have seen eye to eye have been too soft, too willing to compromise ... I did not have sense enough to see that if I didn't get a real League of Nations, I could not afford the luxury of disarmament. ...[26]

The letter is signed by Arthur Hays Sulzberger, the publisher of *The New York Times*.[27]

"Owned and controlled by its readers"

On Friday, November 9, 1945, *The Winnipeg Tribune* and the *Winnipeg Free Press* both failed to publish – the result of a labour dispute with the International Typographical Union. The next day, Saturday, November 10th, *Free Press* and *Tribune* readers received a strange looking newspaper – a joint edition of the two newspapers. That joint publication would continue until the following February, and it had a number of consequences, some of which are being felt today.

The labour dispute and the joint publication provided impetus to those who wanted a different kind of newspaper in Winnipeg, and so, in 1946, the first steps were taken to create a daily newspaper to be published as a consumer co-operative. Shares were sold door-to-door, with the promise that the new paper, to be called the *Citizen*, would be owned and controlled by its readers.

The *Winnipeg Citizen* actually began publication on March 1, 1948 – a morning newspaper in competition with the two afternoon dailies. The paper lasted 13 months and 13 days, until April 13, 1949, when it went out of business, a victim of being undercapitalized. It was the first time anywhere in the world that anyone had tried to start a daily newspaper as a consumer co-operative.

The *Citizen* provided the first real journalism job for a young writer named Margaret Laurence, who was the paper's labour reporter. When she left, the news editor of the *Citizen* offered the job to an acquaintance from Vancouver named Fred Wilmot, who wanted to break into daily journalism. And Fred Wilmot may have been the first black journalist ever hired by a Canadian daily newspaper.

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[26] Letter from Arthur Hays Sulzberger to John W. Dafoe, May 31, 1940; John W. Dafoe Papers, University of Manitoba Archives.
[27] *Ibid*.

Winnipeg Free Press The Winnipeg Tribune

24 PAGES. WINNIPEG, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1945 Forecast CLOUDY; COLD.

To Our Readers

The Winnipeg Free Press and Winnipeg Tribune are publishing a joint newspaper, very much reduced in size, because of a printers' work stoppage in the composing room of both newspapers.

For the past month negotiations have been in progress between the Winnipeg Local 191 Typographical Union and the two Winnipeg daily newspapers concerning a new contract.

On November 7, in their desire to avoid a breakdown in negotiations, the publishers asked, in accordance with the law, that a conciliator should be appointed by the office of the War Labor Relations. On Thursday, November 8, while the representatives of the Union and the employers were presenting their respective cases before this conciliator, Harris E. Johnstone, the composing-room staffs of both papers went into continuous session at the Labor Temple and failed to report for duty. As our readers already know, the Thursday night shift and Friday's day shift absented themselves, making it impossible for the dailies to produce their regular editions.

The fundamental issue was this: During the negotiations, which have occupied several weeks, the publishers consistently suggested submission to an arbitration board as the best and quickest method of settling all differences. These proposals were -- on all occasions -- rejected by the representatives of the Union.

This, fundamentally, is not a dispute over hours of work and wages; nor does it concern the introduction of a five-day week, since the employers accepted this principle two years ago.

As the Free Press and Tribune stated in their submission to the Curtis Labor Relations Board asking for conciliation:-

"The Union has stipulated that even though there might be a provision in the contract for acceptance of the general laws of the International Typographical Union, the contract must contain a clause that if any dispute arises over the interpretation of the laws of the International Typographical Union, the interpretation of such laws shall not be subject to determination by an impartial body, but that the employers must accept the interpretation of the International Typographical Union respecting such laws.

"The Union will not agree, in the event of dispute, to the submission for investigation of all the terms of the contract to the Joint Standing Committee or to any other body which might be set up to deal with disputes.

Firmly believing in collective bargaining and conciliation, the publishers' offered to submit all matters in dispute to arbitration. Their offer was refused.

When the composing-room men stopped work while conciliation meetings were still in progress, Mr. Labor Relations conciliator, Harris E. Johnstone, withdrew and was superseded by Mr. Justice V. J. Major, who has been appointed by the Minister of Labor as Industrial Disputes Enquiry commissioner to deal with this dispute.

MAJOR NAMED MEDIATOR

Seeks Publisher, Printer Accord

Winnipeg was without its daily newspapers Friday. Printers in the composing room of the Free Press and Tribune did not report for work Thursday night. Instead they went into continuous session with other members of Local 191, International Typographical Union, at the Labor Temple.

This action was taken while their representatives were meeting the Winnipeg publishers in last minute efforts to prevent a breakdown of the negotiations for a new contract which had been in progress for more than a month.

Statements on the background of the dispute issued Friday by the publishers and the Union appear elsewhere on this page.

Earlier this week the publishers had entered the conciliation machinery set up by government for the settlement of industrial disputes. The Dominion department of Labor Friday appointed Mr. Justice V. J. Major as industrial dispute inquiry commissioner.

Mr. Justice Major called both parties into conference at 8 p.m. Friday. The meetings continue today.

Union officials state they are urging the printers to return to work pending Mr. Justice Major's findings.

BRIG. A. HAMILTON GAULT, D.S.O., founder of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, chats with Frank Evans, an old Pat of the last war, following the service commemorating the founding of the famous battalion Friday evening at the auditorium.

Printers' Union Issues Statement

Harry Pinch, representative of the International Typographical union, issued the following statement on the printers dispute with the newspapers Friday night at the Labor Temple:

Members of the I. T. U., local 191, are in continuous session since Thursday 4 p.m., while union representatives are endeavoring to carry on the instructions to secure a union contract in renewal of the expired contract of previous years.

The major issue until today has been the reluctance of the publishers to accept the commitment that the laws of the I. T. U. shall not be subject to arbitration. This commitment has been accepted by publishers all over the country, including newspapers of the Southam chain, of which the Winnipeg Tribune is a unit.

Since the meeting has been in session the wage issue has been introduced into the picture by the union, which involves the same take home pay for five days as they previously received for six days. This offer has been rejected by the publishers and a counter proposal of the publishers has similarly been rejected by the union.

Friday's session between the publishers and representatives of the union was under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice W. J. Major, who is acting under the authority of P.C. 4280, which is incidentally the third statute order issued by the publishers this week.

Union officials are still hopeful of a settlement and on the recommendation of Mr. Justice Major are advising the members of local 191 to adjourn their meeting and return to work pending final settlement.

A meeting was arranged by Mr. Justice Major between Mr. Pinch and J. A. Macaulay representative of the publishers, to negotiate him with the details of the dispute.

Mr. Justice Major's recommendation to return to work was reported to the men at 8:40 p.m. The men remained in session at the Labor Temple until

Victory Loan Over the Top

Manitoba has raised $111,543,400 so far from 158,491 subscribers in the 8th Victory loan, the national war finance committee, Manitoba division, announced, Saturday, closing day of the three-week drive. This is more than $11,500,000 in excess of the provincial objective and more than $19,000,000 above the amount subscribed during the corresponding period of the 8th loan. Many out-of-town returns have not yet been received.

However, the province's buyer total is 6,599 less than at the equivalent stage of the last loan.

The T. Eaton company, limited announced that its Canadian employees subscribed $3,868,350, as compared to $3,508,150 in the last loan. The company subscription was $5,000,000.

Ottawa, Nov. 10-(CP)-Having brushed aside the $1,530,000,000 minimum objective, Canada's Ninth Victory Loan last night appeared headed for new record highs for both the total subscribed and the amount of oversubscription in any loan campaign.

With the returns for yesterday and today still to come the grand total stood at $1,810,420,600 at the close of business Thursday, compared with $1,146,305,950 at the 16-day mark of the eighth campaign.

Ford Men Want 1 Day Stoppage

WINDSOR, Ont., Nov.10--Canada was threatened today with a possible one-day nationwide work stoppage in

BULLETINS

LONDON, Nov. 10--(UNRRA)--A wholly unconfirmed dispatch to the London Daily Mail Friday night revived the persistent rumors that Generalissimo Stalin is ill and asserted that he had turned over the Soviet premiership to Georgi Malenkov, 44, secretary of the Communist party central committee.

Walter Hewlin, Stockholm correspondent for the Mail, said "well informed Finnish sources" told him Zhdanov had arrived in Moscow ready to take over if Stalin's illness continued.

These sources, Hewlin said, believed Stalin was still in the Caucasus, where he went a month ago for a vacation.

Washington, Nov. 10 -- Prime Minister King arrived here today from Britain by ship and will ready for conferences designed to clarify the future of the atomic bomb.

Prime Minister Attlee flew direct from London.

With President Truman, they will endeavor to formulate a common policy regarding the future of atomic energy.

GUTERSLOH, Nov. 10-(CP)-Lt.-Gen. Albert G. Wedemeyer, Commander of forces in China, said flatly today that the United States would not help China move troops into Manchuria. Gen. Wedemeyer predicted all forces in China would be out of the country by early spring.

SAIGON, Nov. 10-(CP)-Approximately 20,000 gallons of high-octane aviation gasoline--practically the entire R.A.F. stock in Indo-China--went up in flames today after Annamese nationalists set fire to an airfield dump here.

Ottawa, Nov.10(Special) There is a shortage at the present time of 700,000 houses, according to charges made in the

The first "joint edition" of the *Free Press* and *Tribune*, November 10, 1945.

Other developments following World War II

In the case of radio, the changes of the early 1930s had put an end to the provincial telephone system (MTS) veto power over competitors, and to the licence fee sharing, but MTS continued to operate CKY and CKX as commercial affiliates of the CBC, until federal policy was changed in 1946 to prohibit provincial government ownership of commercial stations.[28]

In 1948, CKY in Winnipeg was sold to the CBC and became CBW. (The CKY call letters were reactivated the next year for a new private station in Winnipeg.) The government's station in Brandon, CKX, was sold to an automobile dealer named John Boyd Craig.[29]

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[28] In early 1946, the CCF government of Saskatchewan, under Premier T.C. Douglas, entered into an agreement to purchase CHAB in Moose Jaw and applied to the Board of the CBC – which was then also the regulator – for permission to have the ownership of the licence transferred. Permission was denied, and the federal government changed the rules and announced a new policy in May 1946 that prohibited the granting of broadcast licences to provincial governments. (Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting*, pp. 375-377.)

[29] "CKY Station Sold For $200,000 To CBC, Hon. W. Morton Reveals", *Winnipeg Free Press*, January 24, 1948, p. 1.

Another media innovation from Winnipeg also dates back to the 1940s – and it has lasted to this day. Richard Bonnycastle was managing a Winnipeg company, Advocate Printers, and was looking for additional uses for its printing presses. In 1949, he founded Harlequin Books to reprint mass market paperbacks published in the U.S. and U.K. The idea took off, and Harlequin became a major publisher of romance novels. Harlequin has been owned by Torstar since 1981, and has contributed significant profits to that company over the years.[30]

Also in the late 1940s, in Toronto, former Winnipegger Ed Parker was setting up what would become the Ryerson Journalism program. He recruited Ted Schrader to teach in the program. Schrader was a former *Winnipeg Tribune* columnist and past president of the Winnipeg Press Club. Under Schrader's leadership, the Ryerson Journalism program became one of the preeminent programs of its type in North America.[31]

The list could continue, of course – to include the introduction of television in the 1950s and its impact on other media, the formation of FP Publications, or the creation of CanWest in Winnipeg in the 1970s. But I think you get the picture.

Winnipeg links

There are important Winnipeg links to all of the following:

- The first Canadian movie.
- The formation of Canadian Press.
- The creation of the CBC.
- The creation of CTV.
- The regulation of broadcasting.
- Freedom of the press in Canada.
- The world's first co-operatively-owned daily newspaper.
- Harlequin Books.
- The Ryerson Journalism program.
- Many talented writers, of whom I have mentioned but a few, whose influence extended far beyond Winnipeg.
- And Marshall McLuhan, who, among many other observations, predicted the current decline of the newspaper industry – in 1964 – when he said:

[30] Morley Walker, "Selling the Sizzle", *Winnipeg Free Press*, June 20, 2009, p. C1.
[31] http://www.ryerson.ca/journalism/about/index.html (accessed on June 6, 2012); Nicolaas van Rijn, "Ed Parker, 70, newspaperman and teacher", *The Toronto Star*, March 31, 1988, p. A28.

> The classified ads (and stock-market quotations) are the bedrock of the press. Should an alternative source of easy access to such diverse daily information be found, the press will fold.[32]

(One is tempted to speculate on how much of McLuhan's prediction was based on theory, and how much was based on the fact that he grew up in Winnipeg reading the *Free Press*, which dominated the classified advertising market in Winnipeg at that time.)

Why Winnipeg?

But why Winnipeg? A century ago, Winnipeg was one of the fastest-growing cities in North America. It was a magnet for immigrants, for those seeking to build a better life, or make their fortune, or both, in a new country. And immigration itself can be seen as a form of entrepreneurship or risk-taking.

In 1895, Mark Twain visited Winnipeg on a speaking tour. After his visit, his tour promoter, James Pond, wrote this about Winnipeg:

> Winnipeg, of all our visits, seems to have been the most enjoyable. In this isolated furtherest north of all the cities is a colony of people who for interprise, accomplishment & hospitality are hard to beat. They seem about the best read of any community we have found. Their isolation and long winters give them more opportunity for books and social associations. Our audiences were large and appreciative.[33]

In 1907, another famous writer, Rudyard Kipling, visited Winnipeg.[34] And he wrote two sentences that I think describe this city – then and now – better than any other:

> It was the spirit in the thin dancing air – the new spirit of the new city – which rejoiced me. Winnipeg has Things in abundance, but has learned to put them beneath her feet, not on top of her mind, and so is older than many cities.[35]

So, did Winnipeg really invent the media? Obviously, not by itself. But did it contribute to the development of the media above and beyond its size and location? Absolutely.

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[32] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (McGraw-Hill), 1965, p. 207 (originally published in 1964).
[33] James Burton Pond, notebook relating to S.L. Clemens' (Mark Twain) readings and visit to Winnipeg on July 26-28, 1895, New York Public Library.
[34] On his visit to Winnipeg in October 1907, Kipling spoke to a meeting of the Canadian Club; at the event, the toast to Kipling was proposed by the Rev. Charles W. Gordon ("Ralph Connor").
[35] Rudyard Kipling, *Letters to the Family* (The Macmillan Company of Canada), 1910, pp. 62-63.